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BIG WINS AT THE CAPITOL!
ADD 3 MORE LAWS TO THE LIST

Since 2012, we've helped pass more than 9 bills into law. Bills that affect everything from cottage food to composting to food co-ops. This year, we're proud to add 3 more bill to the list (pending the governor's signature).

That's 12 laws since 2012! We think that has a nice ring to it.

But more importantly, with your help, we've been laying the foundation, brick by brick, law by law, for vibrant, resilient, and just local food systems. Each law, no matter how big or how small, is a part of that foundation.

Tomato Bill (SB2895 Sen. David Koehler):
Thanks to you, farmers can now take their excess tomatoes and turn them into fresh salsa, pasta sauce, and other canned tomato products and sell them at farmers markets, giving shoppers the convenience they crave and giving small farms an additional source of income.

Industrial hemp farming (SB2298 Sen. Toi Hutchinson)
Thanks to you, Illinois soils and waters can be revitalized through industrial hemp, which helps suffocate weeds and build soil diversity, and can be turned into over one thousand products from feed to food to fiber.

Thanks to you, Illinois has the opportunity to invest $500,000 so that families of all income levels can afford fresh fruits and veggies at their local farmers market through a statewide SNAP match program, which also keeps money local.

Learn more about the bills and what they do at www.ilstewards.org

There is still work to be done. These bills need the governor’s approval and appropriations in the state budget before they become law.

CALL AND URGE GOVERNOR RAUNER TO SIGN: 217-782-0244

REBECCA SAYS
Rebecca Osland, Government Relations

Our Annual Membership Drive is going on May 15 - June 30th and there has never been a better time to join or renew your membership with the Alliance. We're stirring up change at the Capitol and mobilizing our members across the state to create real, lasting change in the food system. Read on to find out what we've been up to and how you can get plugged in!

Above: Nick Lucas and members of Advocates for Urban Agriculture snap a selfie with Rep. Theresa Mah during the Alliance’s Local Food Lobby Day in April. Nick said of the Alliance, "A huge thank you for organizing yesterday! The level of groundwork you’d already laid, the orientation you gave, and materials you put in our hands allowed us all to parachute in, hit the ground running, fan out across the capitol, kick butt and take (co-sponsor) names! I and AUA so deeply value our partnership, and your dedication, passion, and professionalism."
On the Federal Front
UNJUST HOUSE FARM BILL VOTED DOWN

On May 18th, the House of Representatives voted down the House Farm Bill, with 30 House Republicans joining every Democrat in voting ‘no.’ Thank you to every one of our members, allies and supporters who called, emailed, wrote letters and met with Illinois Representatives.

Defeating the House Farm Bill was a bittersweet victory because we know that now there may not be enough time for Congress to re-write a better farm bill before the current bill expires on Sept 30, 2018. But this House bill was considered the worst farm bill ever. The latest speculation is that the House will return for a vote on the farm bill on June 22. So there’s nearly a month to make the critical fixes to the ways the House Farm Bill falls short.

- GUTS LOCAL FOOD- the House Farm Bill abandons local farmers by cutting all funding for several programs that invest in helping farmers connect to local and regional buyers and in improving healthy food access.
- FAILS BEGINNING AND SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS - the House bill misses the mark by failing to invest more in beginning farmers, military veteran farmers, and farmers of color. With the average age of farmers continuing to rise, the status quo is not enough to ensure the success of these key farmer communities.
- ELIMINATES CONSERVATION RESOURCES FOR FARMERS- the House bill erases support for resource stewardship on 70 million acres (that’s an area the size of Nevada) of working farm and ranch land by completely eliminating the Conservation Stewardship Program. CSP is popular with Illinois farmers for its ability to improve soil, water, and profitability.

There’s GOOD NEWS though! The Senate just released a bipartisan draft of the Farm Bill which makes great strides in supporting local food and conservation. But we still need to get the House on board. Will you urge your House Representative to vote No on the House Farm Bill and follow the Senate’s lead to redraft a bipartisan Farm Bill? Make a quick call today!

WE'RE DISHING ON THE FARM BILL - YOU CAN TOO!
The next few months are a great opportunity to get together and take action. If you haven’t already, come Dish with us on the Farm Bill at one of several upcoming events, or consider hosting your own. We’ve made it so easy with our all-in-one “Dishing on the Farm Bill” party kits, featuring everything you need to get your favorite people together, learn about the politics behind our plates, write letters to your legislators, and stir up a little change. Now you can sip wine with your friends AND do good! It’s free, it’s fun, and it will make a difference. Join us a Dishing event near you or host your own!
Learn more at: https://www.ilstewards.org/policy-work/dishing-on-the-farm-bill/

FARMERS ROUND TABLE WITH REP. RODNEY DAVIS
Small farms from across central Illinois gather to speak with Rep. Rodney Davis and ask for his support in the Farm Bill during a Round Table Discussion organized by Illinois Stewardship Alliance at GreenTop Grocery in Blommoington in March. As a member of the House Ag Committee, Rep. Davis has the ability to support- or not support- the needs of family farmers across Illinois. There’s still time to call and urge him to include local food and conservation programs are in the Farm Bill. Call Rep. Davis’ Washington Office at: 202-225-2371

LIZ SAYS...
Liz Stelk, Executive Director
The Farm Bill is a major piece of federal legislation that only comes around once every 4-5 years. It ultimately determines what types of food end up on our plate. If we want to see local, sustainably raised food, we must secure a place for local food and conservation programs in the Farm Bill. Luckily, Illinois has 8 members of Congress who are helping to draft this bill, meaning Illinois has the opportunity to make a real impact! We’re working with a coalition of organizations across the nation, and at the same time working with farmers and eaters across Illinois to demand a fair Farm Bill. And it’s working! We already helped vote down a bad draft of the bill. We hope you’ll check out our Dishing on the Farm Bill program to learn how you can make a difference.
HOT OFF THE PRESS: 2018 BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL DIRECTORY

The new and improved Buy Fresh Buy Local Central Illinois Print Directory is finally here, bringing you a one-stop guide to finding the freshest local food around! The 2018 directory features:

- Over 100 farms, their farming practices, the products they raise, and the sales avenues where you can find their products
- Easy-to-use map to help you locate farms and local food businesses in your area
- Searchable Index: Looking for grass-fed beef? Certified Organic farms? Leg of lamb? Check out the new index at the front of the directory to help you quickly find what you’re looking for.
- More than 30 farmers markets, restaurants, retailers, institutions, and distributors that have pledged to source locally whenever possible.

Download the Directory at www.buyfreshbuylocalcentralillinois.org

BRINGING NEW FARMERS TO MARKET

Have you met Maggie Leigh Ray of Winding Creek Farm? Thanks to the new Local Food Business Opportunities Act going into effect on June 1st of this year, you’ll be seeing her at farmers markets this year.

Maggie and her husband Todd own a 4 acre plot of land in Macon county, just outside of Argenta. For the last three years they’ve been raising free range chickens, lambs, and goats. This past winter, they began making plans to take their products to local farmers markets for the first time, but when they found out their health department required commercial grade refrigeration that would cost thousands of dollars, that plan was almost derailed.

Then Maggie learned about the Local Food Business Opportunities Act, championed by Illinois Stewardship Alliance in 2017. In a nutshell, the new law streamlines regulations across the state and prevents health departments from requiring expensive mechanical refrigeration.

Maggie says, “The Illinois Stewardship Alliance is one of the only reasons we are able to sell at farmers market this coming season. There are so many people who don’t know that they can buy food locally— that they can actually get their chickens from a real farm and not a grocery store. The Stewardship Alliance is helping break down those walls and connecting people back to their food.” Read more or Maggie’s story at www.ilstewards.org

MOLLY SAYS...

Molly Gleason, Communications Director

“We’re shaking things up this year with our local food programming! This year we are pausing Central Illinois based events, like the Local Flavors series, in order to expand our Buy Fresh Buy Local chapter across the state. I’m excited to help make it easier for shoppers in all regions of Illinois to connect with local food and farms in their area. We’ll also be growing our Eat Local Challenge campaign in September and establishing connections with institutions to get more local food into hospitals and universities. Stay tuned for more Buy Fresh Buy Local updates coming soon!”

ALLIANCE’S WINTER MARKET WRAPS UP SECOND SEASON

An average of over 300 shoppers attended each of the four markets, generating an estimated $14,000 in sales for local farmers and food vendors. The market gives farmers an additional venue to sell products in the slow winter months, giving shoppers greater access to locally grown food and which gives Illinois Stewardship Alliance the opportunity to serve our community in Springfield and learn more about the challenges and opportunities facing winter markets across the state.

OLD CAPITOL FARMERS MARKET KICKS OFF

The Old Capitol Farmers Market is officially open, and we’re proud to take on our third season of managing the day-to-day operations in partnership with Downtown Springfield Inc. and the Springfield Area Arts Council. Join us in downtown Springfield every Wednesday and Saturday from 8am - 1230pm from May 19 - October 27. The market serves as a living lab to test new ideas, inform our state policy efforts— like the law that helped bring Maggie to the market— and connect directly with farmers, eaters, and our community in Springfield to better understand our food system.

www.ilstewards.org
CONVERSATIONS IN CONSERVATION

WOODY SAYS...

Woody Woodruff, Conservation Associate

Healthy food and clean water start with healthy soils. That’s why I’m so proud of our Soil Health Video Series, which is helping farmers learn from other farmers to build healthy soils across the state. To date, I’ve delivered the Soil Health Video Series to Soil and Water Conservation Districts in all 102 counties in Illinois and these districts are already scheduling video screenings and promoting the videos to the farmers and landowners in their area. The Video Series is just one way we can meet farmers where they are at and get more conservation practices on the land.

NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR FARMERS TO DIVERSIFY WITH POULTRY

Central Illinois farmers have a new opportunity to diversify their farming operations by turning grain into a value-added product through pasture-raised poultry.

On April 19th, Petersburg Poultry Processing founder, Cavan Sullivan, invited the Alliance and the Illinois Institute of Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University to host an event to help local producers learn about the opportunity to add poultry to their operations. Cavan has the market relationships and the processing capacity but needs more local farmers raising birds to meet the consumer demand. For more resources, visit www.ilstewards.org/pastured-poultry-new-opportunity-for-area-farmers/

INTRODUCING THE NEW "FARMER-TO-FARMER" SOIL HEALTH VIDEO SERIES

There’s no one-size fits all model for soil health. Each farmer has to make decisions based on their soil type, landscape, time, and finances. While there’s no perfect prescription, there are plenty of farmers out there figuring out what works best for them. The Alliance captured their stories and experiences on film to create a network of knowledge that farmers can use to learn, grow, and share.

The Alliance’s new Farmer to Farm Video Series features 12 videos with real farmers from across Illinois leveraging conservation practices on their farms to build healthy soils, maximize nutrients, and improve their bottom lines. Watch the videos at www.ilstewards.org

CONSERVATION CROPPING SEMINARS

The 5th season of the Conservation Cropping Seminars wrapped up in January of this year. These annual workshops are organized by Illinois Stewardship Alliance, the Illinois Department of Agriculture, the Illinois Natural Resource Conservation Service and American Farmland Trust and rotate to different cities and regions of the state each year. They are designed to build conservation champions in Illinois by connecting farmers to local and national conservation experts as well as farmer-led panels. This year, the events were held in Bradley, Olney, and Peoria and attracted around 300 farmers from all 102 counties in Illinois. Mark your calendars for the 2019 Seminars: January 22, 2019: Princeton, IL; January 23, 2019: Springfield, IL; January 24, 2019: O’Fallon, IL. More details coming soon!

Liz Says...

Liz Rupel, Policy Organizer

There are two Liz’s on the Alliance team now! I joined the Alliance in March as the new Policy Organizer, and I’m excited to work with farmers across the state to build a strong network of soil health champions. Together we’ll build support for policies protect our soils and keep waters clean, but that also work for family farmers.

Meet the Alliance’s Newest Team Member

www.ilstewards.org
GET INVOLVED

GOING ON NOW: DISHING ON THE FARM BILL
Sign up to host a "Dishing on the Farm Bill" event and get your friends together to learn everything you need to know about the Farm Bill and write letters to your legislators. Learn more at www.ilstewards.org

SUMMER SHINDIG: JUNE 24
The Summer Shindig is our annual Membership Appreciation Event. Held at the end of our Membership Drive, it’s our way of thanking all of our members and getting to know you better. Join us at Rolling Meadows Farm and Brewery on June 24th. RSVP at www.ilstewards.org

HOG RAFFLE AT DFV: JULY 6
"Go Pig or Go Home"
Raise the roof with us at Danenberger Family Vineyards on the night of the official end of our Membership Drive. Enjoy free entrance to an amazing concert featuring Midnight River Choir and Deep Hollow, and grab tickets to win a half hog from Sugar Grove Family Farms. Get your tickets in advance at www.ilstewards.org

EAT LOCAL CHALLENGE: SEPTEMBER 1-30
September is one of the most abundant times of the year for local farmers, but it’s also the month when attendance drops off at farmers markets. Sign up to take the Eat Local Challenge and pledge to spend $20/week on locally-grown food during the month of September. We’ll make it easy with weekly recipes, meal plans, and opportunities to win delicious local prizes. Learn more at www.buyfreshbuylocalcentralillinois.org

HARVEST CELEBRATION: SEPTEMBER 23
Five amazing chefs, seasonal cocktails, local ingredients, live music, and good company! Don’t miss our annual 11th annual Harvest Celebration on Sunday, September 23. Get your tickets now at www.ilstewards.org
Want to help make this event the best ever? Join our amazing host committee, donate a live or silent auction item, or become a sponsor. Get tickets and learn more at www.ilstewards.org.

CONSERVATION CROPPING SEMINARS: JANUARY 22-34
In 2019, it will be our sixth year talking to and learning from innovative farmers who successfully use stewardship as part of a sustainable operation. The time is now to add conservation to the conversation with your landowner or tenant. Join us to learn more: January 22, 2019: Princeton, IL; January 23, 2019: Springfield, IL; January 24, 2019: O’Fallon, IL. More details coming soon!
2017 Members & Supporters

We are grateful to all of our members, partners, donors and funders whose financial gifts in 2017 helped advance our work to build vibrant, resilient and just local food systems. Your annual gifts mobilize Alliance members and our supporters and allies across the state to create fair food and farm policy; fund programs that connect farmers and eaters; and support the development of tools, field days, and resources that help farmers improve water quality and land conservation. We could not do the work we do without you. Thank you for believing in, and supporting, family farmers and wholesome food for all.

$1000 CHAMPION
Anne Patterson, Living Earth Farm
Sister Julia Huiskamp
Peter Berka

$500 HARVESTER
Robert C. Woodruff

$250 CULTIVATOR
Abby Buoy
Angie Satchivi
Arlin Peebles
Dan & Maylan Kenney
David Gage
Doreen Garza
Davis Financial Group
Sharon O'Donnel
Eric Schenck

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR FARM BILL CONTRIBUTORS: $100/MONTH

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Prairie Rose Alpacas, LLC
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Urbana’s Market at the Square
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Hendrick House
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Illinois Farmers Union
Midwest Permaculture
Nature’s Farm Camp

* Thank you to our many members that made additional contributions throughout the year

Membership Drive Going on Now, May 15 - July 6th
www.ilstewards.org
2017 Members & Supporters

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* Thank you to our many members that made additional contributions throughout the year
MEMBERSHIP DRIVE HOG DRAWING: JULY 6

Our annual Membership Drive is going on now, and to celebrate, we’re raffling off a pasture-raised half hog from Sugar Grove Family Farms. The drawing will be held on July 6th at Danenberger Family Vineyards during their FREE First Friday Concert Series featuring The Deep Hollow, Bo Brumble, and Midnight River Choir. Get your hog drawing tickets now for your chance to win a half hog for just $10!

$10 for 1 ticket  
$25 for 3 tickets  
NEW MEMBER SPECIAL: $50 for 6 tickets + Free Membership to Illinois Stewardship Alliance ($25 value).

Purchase your drawing tickets at the event or get them in advance at www.ilstewards.org or by calling 217-528-1563. Need not be present to win.

HARVEST CELEBRATION: SEPTEMBER 23

Where can you find central Illinois’ finest chefs, most delicious food, and toe-tapping-ist live music all in one place? At Illinois Stewardship Alliance’s Annual Harvest Celebration, that’s where! Join us for our 11th annual Harvest Celebration on Sunday, September 23 at 5:00 p.m. at the picturesque Erin’s Pavilion in Springfield. Get tickets at www.ilstewards.org

ROLLING MEADOWS FARM & BREWERY
SUNDAY, JUNE 24

YOU’RE INVITED

Register at www.ilstewards.org or call 217-528-1563

Brewery: FREE for members & $25 for non-members. Tasting, live music, free party games, and $3 off our membership drive. 50% of proceeds go to support our mission to build urban farms and local food systems.

Illinois Stewardship Alliance
230 Broadway Suite 200
Springfield, IL 62701