



Bryleigh Morris, tending her flowers, is already a member of the Mason County Junior Master Gardener 4-H Club which currently has club membership openings. Youth ages 5 to 18 are invited to join. 4-H volunteers will lead the club members in hands-on gardening activities.

BUSHELS FOR BABIES



Did you know you can donate grain directly to the SPOON RIVER PREGNANCY CENTER and make your donated dollars go further? IT'S TRUE!

Deliver a load of corn or soybeans to a local elevator or river terminal and designate Spoon River Pregnancy Center as the seller.

Proceeds bypass federal, state and self-employment taxes and go directly to the SRPC, where they can use it to help families and children in our community.

NOTES TO REMEMBER:

- Grain gifts should come from unsold crop inventory • On delivery, list SRPC as the seller
- Make SRPC the only seller, not as a split off of your settlement sheet

Participating grain elevators:

WGM, Russell Grain, Akron Services, Ag-Land FS

Don't see your grain marketing facility listed? Let us know and we'll add them!

For more information or to make a grain donation,

Call Brett Chatterton at (309) 255-2766 or brettchatt@yahoo.com.

For more on SPRC and their mission, visit www.spoonriverpregnancycenter.com, call (309) 435-7130 or email director@spoonriverprc.org.

Farmers Hub

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than they ever got anywhere else.

How they do it Down at the Farm

One of the biggest problems for farmers venturing outside of conventional farming ending with trips to the elevator is how do they get paid?

Under Travis' model, it is by check. Weekly.

They start with a service agreement with each farm setting the prices for all products."We have one set price for each product. It might be \$2.50 per pound for this and \$5 per pound for that. We do this in conjunction with our chefs. We ask them what do you want to pay for that?" Travis said.

"Most of the farmers say they never get that much, but we are targeting the person who will pay that," he added.

While growing for this market is almost always labor intensive, Travis said they try to match the demand of the product to the farms that can handle it, looking for that sweet spot.

"We create a pie big enough so everyone gets a big piece," he said.

Super simple - with a spreadsheet

Travis stressed that their participating farmers have to be responsible business owners and do the few things that are

required.

Every Friday the farms report what product they are going to have and Travis creates a spreadsheet that is shared with 350 chefs, groceries and individuals. They respond which what they want and then the farmers know what they will need to harvest, and where it will be going.

Ordering is shut off on Monday and each farm is sent a confirmation of what has been ordered from their farm. They are required to send an invoice before the end of the day on Tuesday. "You can't get paid if you don't get an invoice in," Travis said.

His next job is consolidating the orders into a single page invoice for the customer. That invoice includes the name of the farm, the product and the totals.

The customers write one check.

"When we deliver on Wednesday or Thursday, we swap goods for a check, and we pay the farmers on Thursday or Friday," Travis said.

The farmers are responsible for getting the product to Fairbury but Travis takes care of the rest. The farmers get 82% of the amount paid for their products and the 18% that Down at the Farm retains is used for their expenses.

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FACTS ABOUT MASON COUNTY

TAKEN FROM THE 2018 USDA CENSUS OF AG



Well Mason County farmers provide safe and healthy food for 94,080 local people!

NUMBER OF FARMS

490



TOTAL POPULATION

13,507



MARKET VALUE OF AG PRODUCTS SOLD

\$201,167,000

SIZE OF FARMS	1-499 acres	324
	500-999 acres	64
	1,000+ acres	102

LAND IN FARMS

289,841 ACRES



PRINCIPAL OPERATIONS BY PRIMARY OCCUPATION

FARMING 286



OTHER 204

Visit: <http://www.specialtygrowers.org/prairie-bounty.html> for a list of local farmers' markets and to learn about what foods are produced and grown in Illinois