

IL Corn Growers Association Political Action Committee Newsletter **MAIZE MATTERS**



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PLANTING INFLUENCE, HARVESTING RESULTS

Like harvest, the work pays off—see the yield inside

OCTOBER 2025



TL: Rep. Budzinski with IL Corn Growers Association (ICGA) M: ICGA, staff, and Illinois FFA section presidents TR: IL Corn with Speaker of the House of Representatives, Emanuel Chris Welch BR: Jeff Scates and Illinois FFA section president, Abigail Hildebrand



POWER OF REPRESENTATION

As the fall season brings in the yields of a year's hard work, Illinois farmers also count on a strong delegation in legislation to deliver results. Illinois is represented by 16 Democrats and 3 Republicans in Congress and 108 Democrats and 59 Republicans in the state general assembly. Working across the aisle—like rows in a field—they play an important role in shaping the policies that impact our farms, families, and future markets.



Sen. Duckworth with ICGA

HARVESTING MORE THAN CROPS

Farmers know better than anyone that a good harvest depends on the seeds you plant. The same is true for advocacy. IL Corn PAC plants the seeds of influence so that we can harvest results — protecting the family farm, strengthening rural communities, and ensuring agriculture's voice is always at the table.

Every contribution ensures farmer voices are heard in Springfield and Washington, building strong relationships in policy so family farms can thrive, markets can expand, and the next generation has a future in agriculture.

FROM FAMILY FARMS TO CAPITOL HILL

The IL Corn Growers Association advocated for their peers on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. The National Corn Growers Association also held their annual Corn Congress, where IL Corn Growers Association (ICGA) and IL Corn Marketing Board (ICMB) leaders met with farmer leaders from other corn states to discuss policy priorities and goals.

The Illinois congressional delegation heard firsthand from Illinois corn farmers about the downturn in the agricultural economy. During IL Corn's time in D.C., ICGA and Illinois FFA District Presidents (FFA) met with 17 congressmen and both Senators.

IL Corn invited the 25 Illinois FFA District Section Presidents to Washington D.C. to meet with ICGA, ICMB, and industry partners to learn more about corn systems, strategies, and the various avenues that affect corn in agriculture. IL Corn's policy priorities for the 119th Congress in July 2025 focus on farm economy, conservation, trade, renewable fuels, and lock and dams.

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T: Brooke Appleton B: Illinois FFA section presidents with Rep. Eric Sorenson



L: Jon Hurst with vendors R: Executive Director of Pilsen Neighbors Community Council, Juan Soto with Jon Hurst

FIESTA DEL SOL

IL Corn proudly took part in the 53rd Annual Fiesta del Sol, a vibrant, free, four-day celebration of Latino culture in Chicago's historic Pilsen neighborhood.

As an organization rooted in agriculture, IL Corn welcomed the chance to connect with families who use corn daily in their meals and traditions. Corn is more than a crop, it's a shared cultural thread that ties us together.

IL Corn celebrated with the Latino Caucus in collaboration with the Illinois Pork Producers Association and the Illinois Beef Association by offering to cover a portion of food costs for vendors using products produced by Illinois farmers. This helps connect small businesses and farmers across the state.

Fiesta del Sol is the largest Latino festival of its kind in the country, organized by the Pilsen Neighbors Community Council.

Up to 63% of membership dollars were used to fund ICGA political activities in the 2025 fiscal year.

FARMER PRIORITIES AT THE STATE FAIR

The Illinois State Fair showed the importance and strength of our state's agriculture community. IL Corn farmer leaders showed up for our members on days like Agriculture Day, Governor's Day, and Republican Day.

IL Corn Growers Association (ICGA) farmer leaders



L: Senator Willie Preston with IL Corn R: Representative Mary Miller with ICGA

2025 FARM PROGRESS SHOW

IL Corn and Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) wrapped up our fourth Farm Progress Show in a shared booth space.

Achievements during the 2025 Farm Progress Show:

- 345 IL Corn Grower Association members checked in
- 400 farmers completed a survey, sharing their perspectives about the farm economy
- Six state and federal elected officials visited the tent and learned more the Illinois ag economy



L: ICGA with Governor Pritzker R: Representative Rosenthal with Shane Gray

met with senators, representatives, and congressmen to discuss key issues that impact corn farmers. The leaders brought forward issues like supporting higher ethanol blends, market access, and the farm economy. These conversations ensure that Illinois farmers are heard in Springfield and Washington, D.C.

The Illinois State Fair continues to bring together farmers, policymakers, and the public to celebrate agriculture's role in feeding and fueling the world.



IL Corn's farmer leaders served as a resource for many media interviews. Our organization loves the opportunity to help farmers understand the farm economy, share updates on projects, and generally serve as a resource for Illinois agriculture.

IL Corn and Illinois Farm Bureau were proud to host Lance Nacio, a shrimp harvester from Louisiana to the Farm Progress Show this year. Lance has become a part of our storytelling about nutrient loss, hypoxia zone, and the biggest problems for fishermen in the Gulf.





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GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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GROWING TOGETHER: LATINO CAUCUS AND ILLINOIS AGRICULTURE

IL Corn hosted an event with the Latino Caucus in partnership with Illinois Pork Producers Association, Illinois Beef Association, Illinois Farm Bureau, and Illinois Department of Agriculture. During this event, speakers from each industry spoke to the Latino Caucus about various agriculture priorities and the support they need during this time in the poor ag economy.

Two Latino Caucus members, Representative Angelica Guerrero-Cuellar and Senator Karina Villa also spoke at the event to share their personal connection to agriculture and the importance of it.

The event was a success in creating stronger connections and bolstering important conversations. The Latino Caucus shared their immense appreciation for the IL Corn Growers Association in their efforts to support them over the past year.



T: Mark Bunselmeyer, Tim Thompson, Brad Stotler, and Jon Hurst talking to Latino Caucus B: Sen. Villanueva