**Farmdoc and 4-H receive portion of $2 million gift from Farm Credit Services**

URBANA – Two popular University of Illinois programs will benefit from a $2 million investment from Farm Credit Services of Illinois and 1st Farm Credit Services. An announcement was made in late December that the two organizations each gave a $1 million endowment to agriculture programs that educate young people, train future agricultural leaders, and support higher education agriculture.

The two $1 million gifts will be dispersed differently.

The $1 million gift from Farm Credit Services of Illinois will be set up as permanent endowments that will produce annual income for specified programs. At the University of Illinois, the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences will receive $50,000; the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics will receive $350,000 toward the Farmdoc website; and Illinois 4-H Youth Development will receive $50,000.

“Farm Credit has supported financial and risk management activities in the Department for the last three decades,” said Paul Ellinger, professor and department head of Agricultural and Consumer Economics in the College of ACES. “These gifts will be used to support farmdoc, the department’s gateway to farmers, lenders, and agribusinesses. The farmdoc website is an unparalleled source of unbiased, highly relevant information and decision tools used by more than 1 million visitors per year. Financial support is necessary to be innovative and continue to provide easily accessible information and cutting-edge decision tools. We are very grateful for the generous support provided by Farm Credit Services of Illinois and 1st Farm Credit Services.”

The $1 million gift from 1st Farm Credit Services will be dispensed through a donor-advised fund with the Illinois Agricultural Association Foundation (IAA).

“Farm Credit Services has been a longtime and strong supporter of programs in the college, and we are most appreciative,” said Robert Hauser, dean of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. “During times of dwindling state support, their support is particularly meaningful and important to us as it allows students to get more bang for their buck in the classroom, and faculty to do the type of research and outreach that is useful to the Illinois food and agricultural sector.”

The Mahomet-based Farm Credit Services of Illinois serves the states southern 60 counties whereas the Normal-based 1st First Credit Services serves 42 counties in the northern half of Illinois.

“1st Farm Credit and Farm Credit Services are long-term friends of Illinois 4-H,” said Denise Legvold, assistant dean and director of 4-H Youth Development. “Many of their employees and clients are actively involved in 4-H or are 4-H alumni. That physical involvement along with their commitment to financially support 4-H into the future mirrors 4-H’s goal to develop youth who make a positive difference in the communities in which they live.”

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