



June 2023

It is always humbling for me to be part of the Memorial Day Ceremonies, in my hometown of Thawville, Illinois, as a participating member of the American Legion Post 700 Color Guard. During the ceremony there is a roll call for those who served and are now at forever peace, many of whom I knew over the years as a part of the agricultural community. This is my time to reflect on how lucky I was to be raised in this hard working, loyal, and patriotic community.

While downstate I had a chance to take a good look at crop conditions on farms we manage and my own farm as well. Everyone got off to a relatively early planting season, with soil conditions almost perfect without the usual heavy rains that can cause some wet field conditions. We did have adequate subsoil moisture for good germination, but an indicator of conditions at lower levels was limited amounts of moisture to cause field tile to drain. Not a good sign through most of May.

Each day over the weekend I observed the corn entering unusual stress for this time of year. Yes, dry weather is sometimes good during this time of the growing season to encourage plant root development for deeper moisture needs during June, July, and August. I did not dig down to examine the roots, but my farm operator said that very good "crowned" root systems were in fact developing nicely, there is some advantage from the dry weather.

But for this growth stage I did observe some leaf twisting and, in the mid-afternoon, some "white leaf" which is a sign of stress. The question now is how long will these dry, hot temperature conditions prevail. We are starting to see some scattered showers, but so far, no appreciable amounts. The recent USDA report indicated corn conditions at 69% good/excellent. The five-year average is

55%, so not bad. Soybean conditions are looking good. We have not seen significant "weather" influencing commodity markets, but we are seeing a roller coaster soybean market with daily swings of 20-40 cents per bushel.

The market will always tend to turn bearish without strong bullish news. The latest bear news is the 800-pound gorilla China, economically, is experiencing a factory sector slump to a five-month low, the second straight month of contraction in factory activity. Hard to tell what that means, but maybe other countries importing from China are becoming a little more self-sufficient. A bearish market interprets this as lower buying power.

A bigger potential issue for soybean meal fed to hogs is California Proposition 12, which bans the sale of all pork from farms anywhere in the United States that confines pregnant pigs in gestation crates. This is a standard practice and protects the piglets from mom laying on them. Otherwise, they get squished. The soybean market is reacting to the potential for less swine production due to onerous laws, such as California Prop 12, perhaps spreading to other states as well. The United States Supreme Court, in a divided vote, upheld the California law.

As for the corn market, China can buy Brazilian corn for approximately \$4.45 per bushel at this time, whereas corn cash bids for 2022 inventory are currently at approximately \$6.00 per bushel.

I try to stay away from politics when writing this newsletter, but everyone should be made aware of WOTUS (Waters of the United States). This is a Rule that defines "waters of the United States" to include traditional navigable waters, the territorial seas, and interstate waters. The Rule evolved from the 1972 Amendments to the Clean Water Act that provides authority for the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers to define waters of the United States regulations.

The issue has been control, expansion, or contraction of the regulations. One political party wanted the regulations to encompass the current definition, but when in control, the other political party wanted expanded regulatory authority which would include any bodies of water, both permanent (which may be understood) and temporary ponding, or for that matter, a farm pond for watering livestock. No doubt the discharge from field drainage as well.

The United States EPA (state offices) along with the Army Corps of Engineers are to enforce and monitor any infractions of the regulation. The current administration decided to rewrite the regulation in favor of more regulation and enforcement, overturning that of the previous administration. A strong coalition of agricultural and real estate associations and organizations heavily lobbied Congress to not approve the revised regulation.

They failed, but fortunately this case went to the United States Supreme Court which essentially ruled (on May 25, 2023) in favor of less "overreach" by Federal authorities. More information can be found at [Sackett v Environmental Protection Agency](#), a clear example of government overreach.

Right now, the land market is basically status quo with not much activity. There will be some sales in June and July to help us get a feeling for the market trend and to see if demand will remain as strong as it was in 2022. There are always buyers for land, but last year will be hard to match.

Roller coaster commodity prices, lower futures prices, some weather uncertainty as to yields, inflationary inputs, and equipment costs all may have some bearing on land prices in 2023. I do not foresee a “bust” but some downward market pressure is possible. We will most likely hear of some auction “no sales” because the seller(s) may have set a reserve at an aggressive price level based on past sales.


If you are considering selling your farm, or maybe buying one, or perhaps looking at professional farm management services, please contact [Land Pro LLC](#) at your earliest convenience. This is a good time for some forward planning.

Have a great June and watch for updated information after Independence Day. By then we will have a much better understanding of crop conditions and initial land value trends.

~ Ray

Ray L. Brownfield, ALC AFM
Designated Managing Broker | Owner
Accredited Land Consultant
Accredited Farm Manager
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Land Pro LLC Listings



Craddock Farm

20th ANNIVERSARY
2003 - 2023

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69.017± surveyed acres
(67.42 tillable acres)
PI 133.4

Mittan Road
German Road

N

Craddock Farm

Productive Class A Soils

The Craddock Farm consists of 69.017± surveyed acres of quality, productive soils well located adjacent to I-39 and just south of Rt. 30, in Willow Creek Township, Lee County, Illinois. The 67.42± tillable acres have a Productivity Index (PI) of 133.4 with predominant soils of Catlin, Wyanet, Flanagan, and Blackberry. The farm’s eastern boundary is I-39, Mittan Road forms the southern boundary, and the western boundary is German Road.

[Jason Lestina](#) ALC AFM, Broker

Deer Creek Estates



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Deer Creek Estates

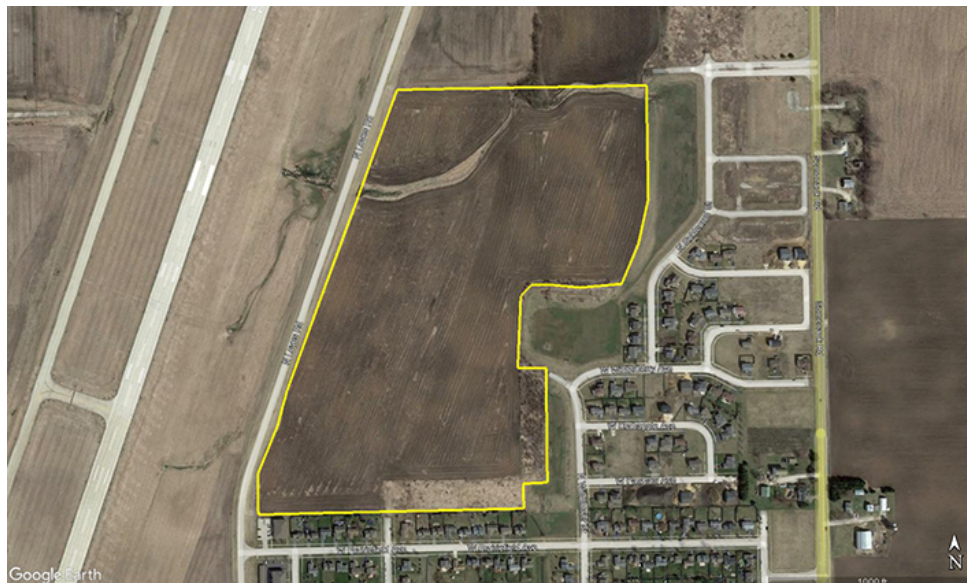
*Future Residential Development
Platted for Subdivision*

This good-quality 47-acre Will County property is well located just west of US Hwy 53 and south of River Road in Wilmington, Illinois, adjacent to United States Cold Storage. The farm is annexed into the city of Wilmington and is preliminary platted for residential and residential townhouses. Sewer and water are on site.

The property is situated near distribution and transportation hubs only 5 miles from the CenterPoint Intermodal facility, 3 miles east of Interstate 55, and 17 miles west of Interstate 57.

Deer Creek Estates is ready to be developed with the ability to attract an array of buyers with both single and multi-family options.

[Jason Lestina](#) ALC AFM, Broker



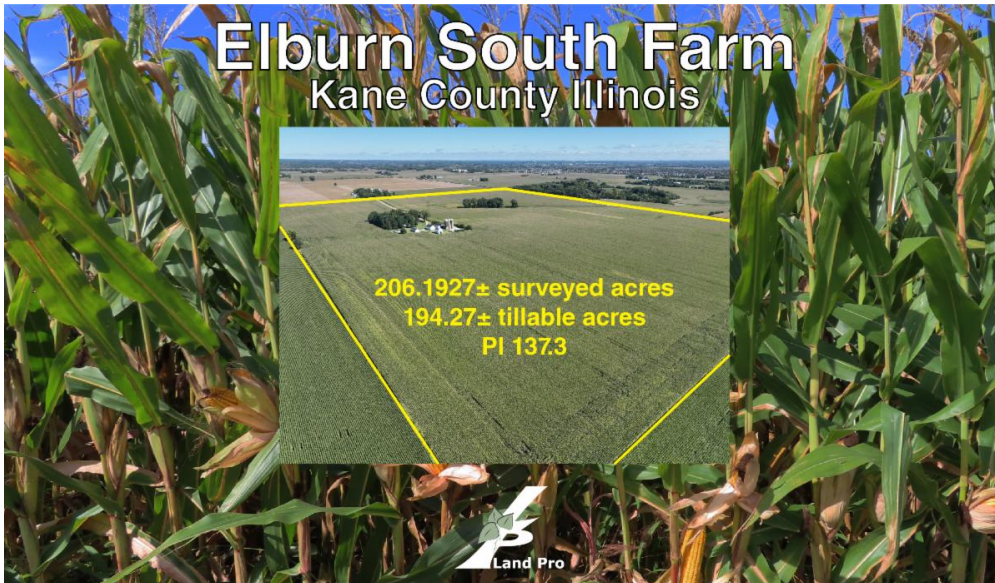
Cortland Farm

*Future Residential Development
Annexed to Cortland, Illinois
Platted for Subdivision*

The Cortland Farm located in Section 17 of Cortland Township and contains 56.64± surveyed acres (53.69± tillable acres). The soils have a PI of 138.2 and are comprised mostly of Danabrook and Elpaso.

The 2021 real estate taxes were \$2,811.64 (\$49.64/ac), there are no buildings, the property is multi-zoned, is annexed to Cortland, Illinois, and is adjacent to DeKalb, Illinois.

[Dave Oster](#), Broker



[Elburn South Farm](#)

High Quality. Class A Soils. Well Drained.

The Elburn South Farm is a 206.1927± surveyed acre high quality Class A soil farm with a Productivity Index of 137.3. It contains 194.27± tillable acres which are leased for 2023 at a very attractive cash rental rate. There is a set of farm buildings along with a 3-bed, 2-bath home that is rented through the end of 2022.

The location is excellent with Hughes Road frontage on the north side and Bunker Road frontage on the east side, only 1.5 miles southeast of Elburn, 6.8 miles west of Batavia, 7.3 miles southwest of Geneva, 11.7 miles southwest of St. Charles, and 47.0 miles west of Chicago. The Illinois Route 47/I-88 interchange is only 2.5 miles southwest of the farm. It is an excellent investment opportunity with potential for future development.

[Ray L. Brownfield](#) ALC AFM, Broker

Thinking of Selling FARMLAND?



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