



OFFICE OF ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

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Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs Opens 2024 Cream of the Crop Photo Contest

Contest for Young Photographers Marks Its 12th Year

SPRINGFIELD – Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs is encouraging young Illinois photographers to submit photos for the 2024 *Cream of the Crop Photo Contest*, which provides students with a creative opportunity to share their vision of agriculture in our state. Students ages 8 to 18 may submit contest entries until the deadline of June 14.

Bright Start scholarships of \$1,000, \$500 and \$250 will be awarded to students who place first, second or third in each of the three age categories.

“Our great state is a leader in the agricultural industry, thanks to skilled workers, millions of acres of rich farmland, and diversity in products,” Frerichs said. “The Cream of the Crop competition is designed to inspire students to pick up their cameras and phones, go out and explore, and showcase the beauty of Illinois agriculture.”

The Treasurer’s Office is accepting electronic submissions for the *Cream of the Crop Photo Contest* at www.CreamoftheCropContest.com. Top photographs will be chosen in three age-based categories: ages 8-10, 11-14 and 15-18. Each student may submit up to two photos by **June 14, 2024**.

To read the rules, terms, and legal conditions associated with this contest, visit our website at www.CreamoftheCropContest.com or contact Teri Whitfield at 217.900.0075.

Now in its 12th year, the photo contest offers Illinois students an opportunity to showcase their most innovative or scenic pictures that depict their vision of agriculture in our state. More than 700 students have participated in the contest since it debuted in 2013, and they have submitted over 1,200 photos.

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The *Cream of the Crop Photo Contest* is part of the Illinois State Treasurer's Ag Invest program. Winning photos will be featured in Ag Invest marketing material and next year's Cream of the Crop calendar, as well as at the 2024 Illinois State Fair.

Ag Invest is one of the nation's largest agricultural linked deposit programs, celebrating 41 years in 2024. It helps hundreds of Illinois farmers and agriculture professionals. The State Treasurer's Office, through Ag Invest, partners with eligible financial institutions to offer farmers and ag businesses operating lines of credit and long-term, low-interest loans which can be used for operating costs, equipment purchases, construction-related expenses and livestock purchases.

About the Illinois Treasurer

The Illinois State Treasurer's Office is a powerful economic engine that invests in people to drive prosperity, development and growth throughout the state. As State Treasurer, Michael Frerichs (FRAIR'iks) is the state's Chief Investment and Banking Officer and actively manages approximately \$55 billion. The investments help families pay for college and trade school; workers save for a dignified retirement; and local governments process bill payments more efficiently so they can pass along the savings to taxpayers. The office provides financial institutions money to loan to farmers, small business owners, and qualified individuals at below-market rates because better jobs create stronger communities. The office operates the state's largest consumer-protection initiative, the missing money I-Cash program, which has returned a record-breaking \$1.8 billion since Frerichs was elected.

For more news about the State Treasurer's Office, please follow Treasurer Frerichs on X (formerly Twitter) at [@ILTreasurer](#), Threads [@iltreasurer](#), Instagram at [ILTreasurer](#), [LinkedIn](#) and on Facebook at [Invested in You – Treasurer Michael Frerichs](#).

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