



## OFFICE OF ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

MICHAEL W. FRERICHS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 13, 2015

CONTACT:

Paris Ervin 217.524.5749

Greg Rivara 312.814.1901

### **Treasurer Michael Frerichs Encourages Students to Participate in Photo Contest Promoting Agriculture** *Cream of the Crop Winners to be in Ag Invest Materials*

**SPRINGFIELD** – Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs encourages young photographers to participate in the *Cream of the Crop Photo Contest*. Winners will be featured in Agricultural Invest (Ag Invest) program marketing materials, including a calendar and a display at the Illinois State Fair. Ag Invest is a program that is aimed at providing qualified farmers and agriculture professionals below-market rate loans to start or enhance their farm operations.

“We want students to showcase their creativity, learn about Illinois agriculture, and capture the beauty of our great state,” Frerichs said. “The Ag Invest program helps farmers and the agriculture industry and is a wonderful platform to showcase our talented student photographers.”

Illinois students ages 8 to 18 should snap unique images that depict their vision of agriculture in our state. Winning photographs will be chosen in three categories: ages 8 to 10, 11 to 14 and 15 to 18. Each student may submit up to two photos at [www.illinoistreasurer.gov](http://www.illinoistreasurer.gov). Contest deadline is July 9. Rules and information are available at the website and 217.558.6217.

The Treasurer’s office, through Ag Invest, partners with eligible lenders to offer farmers low-interest loans for operating expenses, equipment purchases, livestock purchases, and construction related expenses. More than 550 loans currently draw from an available \$68 million, making Ag Invest one of the nation’s most successful linked deposit programs. The program was established in 1983 and has given out over \$1 billion in loans over its history. To learn more about the Ag Invest program and what types of loans are available, visit [www.illinoistreasurer.gov](http://www.illinoistreasurer.gov) and go to “Ag Invest” under “Featured Programs.”

The Illinois Treasurer is the state’s chief investment officer and Frerichs is a Certified Public Finance Officer. He protects consumers by encouraging savings plans for colleges and trade schools, increasing financial education among all ages, and removing barriers to a secure retirement. The \$27 billion investment portfolio includes \$5 billion on behalf of local and state government units and \$7 billion in savings for college or trade school. The investment approach is conservative to ensure the safety of principal. Funds also are invested in support of community

development efforts. The Treasurer's office predates Illinois' incorporation in 1818. Voters in 1848 voted to make it an elected office.

###