



## OFFICE OF ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

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### **Treasurer Frerichs Makes Changes to Ag Invest Program to Help More Farmers Succeed** *Loan Program to Provide Better Access to Capital, Help Farmers Budget for Future Costs*

**SPRINGFIELD** – Listening to the concerns of Illinois farmers and agriculture community leaders, Treasurer Michael Frerichs has made some important improvements to the Ag Invest Program to better address the needs of today's Illinois farmer.

“Agriculture is the number one industry in Illinois, making it even more important that we are offering the right tools to help farmers succeed,” Treasurer Frerichs said. “With the Ag Invest Program, we are providing the financial support needed to assist farmers with annual operating expenses and capital improvements to help grow their businesses.”

The Ag Invest Program partners with approved financial institutions across the state to provide qualified farmers and agriculture professionals below-market interest rate loans to start or enhance their farm operations. In an effort to ensure the program was providing the best lending practices, the Treasurer's Office made changes to the program. The changes went into effect on January 1, 2016.

Under the changes to the Ag Invest Program loan amounts will increase to \$400,000 per farmer and \$800,000 per farm operation, up from \$300,000 per farmer and \$600,000 per farm operation. The allowable spread will increase from 3.50% to 3.75% and the annual operating line of credit program will operate on a calendar year, instead of the fiscal year.

The long term program loan amount will increase to \$300,000, up from \$200,000 and loan terms and refinancing existing loans will be easier. These programs help farmers pay a reduced interest rate on their annual operating loans or investments on major expenses like machinery, building construction, and irrigation systems.

Since 2008, the Ag Invest Program has loaned more than \$1 billion in annual and long-term loans, making Ag Invest one of the most expansive loan programs in the nation. For more

information about the changes to the program, contact the Treasurer's Office at 217-558-6217 or visit [www.illinoistreasurer.gov](http://www.illinoistreasurer.gov) and click on programs.

Treasurer Frerichs was born in the downstate farming community of Gifford, Illinois. He also served as Chairman of the Senate Agriculture and Conservation Committee.

### **About the Illinois Treasurer**

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 college or trade school, increasing financial education among all ages, and removing barriers to a secure retirement. As the state's Chief Investment Officer, and Certified Public Finance Officer, he actively manages approximately \$25 billion. Currently, the portfolio includes \$13 billion in state funds, \$7 billion in college savings plans and \$5 billion on behalf of local and state governments. The investment approach is cautious to ensure the preservation of principal and returns \$28 to the state for every \$1 spent in operations. The Treasurer's office predates Illinois' incorporation in 1818. Voters in 1848 chose to make it an elected office.

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