

HENRY COUNTY FARMER



Official Publication Of The Henry County Farm Bureau, Cambridge, IL 61238

HENRY COUNTY FARM BUREAU DATEBOOK

MARCH

- 2**..... Henry County Pork Producers meeting, HCFB Office, 7pm
- 4**..... Rules for the Road, Aledo Fire Station - 211 SE 3rd Street, Aledo, IL, 10am
- 6**..... HCFB Foundation Scholarship application deadline
- 9**..... Henry County Young Leaders Meeting, HCFB Boardroom, 6:30pm
- 12**..... Market Outlook Seminar featuring Darin Newsom, Lavendar Crest Winery, Registration required, 6:15pm
- 17**..... Henry County Farm Bureau Executive Committee meeting, HCFB office, 6:30pm
HCFB Board of Directors Meeting, HCFB Boardroom, 7pm
- 27**..... Women in Agriculture Conference, Bally's Quad Cities, Rock Island, Pre-Registration required
- 28**..... Large Animal Rescue Operations Course, Black Hawk College - East Campus

APRIL

- 3**..... HCFB Office closed in observance of Good Friday

BUSHEL FOR HUNGER GRAIN DRIVES MAKES 16TH YEAR DONATION

Area farmers are helping local families with a donation to the River Bend Food Bank through the Bushels for Hunger program for the 16th straight year. After 16 years, total contributions by the Bushels for Hunger program will exceed \$354,000 with this year's \$8,369 contribution. This year's total contribution now brings the total amount of meals donated to over 1.77 million.

Mercer County Farmer, Jeff Kirwan and Gold Star FS Grain Department Manager, Mike Secymore, presented the donation of \$8,369 to Chris Ford, President and CEO of the River Bend Food Bank in Davenport.

"Thanks to the generous donations of thousands of bushels of grain to the Bushels for Hunger campaign, local farmers worked together to fight hunger in the Quad City community with these funds" Kirwan said.

"With heartfelt appreciation, we extend our deepest thanks to the Henry, Mercer and Rock Island County Farm Bureaus and participating grain elevators,



for 16 years of unwavering support and generosity through the Bushels for Hunger program" said Chris Ford, President and CEO of River Bend Food Bank. "Your commitment has helped provide over 1.7 million meals—bringing hope and relief to countless individuals in need. Partnering with you enables River Bend Food Bank to continue making a meaningful LOCAL impact in our community. Thank you for being a vital part of our mission—your kindness truly makes a difference!"

The Bushels for Hunger program is a joint program coordinated by the Henry, Mercer and Rock Island County Farm Bureaus, in conjunction with the following area grain elevators and ethanol plants: Atkinson Grain, Big River Resources, Cargill, CHS Annawan, Gold Star FS, Hillsdale Elevator and River Valley Cooperative.

THE HENRY COUNTY BEEF ASSOCIATION WILL HOLD THEIR 63RD ANNUAL BANQUET



Saturday March 28th 2026 at Lavender Crest Winery.

Social hour begins at 5pm and dinner at 6pm.

Tickets are \$30 each.

For more information contact Courtney Ericson at 309-507-2025.

MEMBERSHIP Corner



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Contact the Henry County Farm Bureau for more details on how you can save with your Farm Bureau membership.

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WOMEN
in AGRICULTURE
Conference

MARCH
27
2026
BALLY'S QUAD CITIES



WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE – MARCH 27 AT BALLY'S QUAD CITIES

Tara Barrett-Duzan, "The Farmer's Daughter" will be the keynote speaker for the annual Women in Agriculture Conference in Rock Island on Friday, March 27, 2026. Tara Barrett-Duzan is a former news anchor turned farmer, whose journey from the newsroom to the fields is a powerful testament of love, loss, and legacy. She shares her journey to encourage other women in agriculture to lead boldly, no matter how uncertain the path.

Our Mid-Day Panel consists of Dr. Josie Rudolphi and Adrienne DeSutter of "Sow Hope, Grow Hope" and their take on "Focus on the Female". "For women in agriculture, the work doesn't end in the field-it stretches across the kitchen table, the books, the barn, and the family."

To round out the day, closing speaker Emily Reuschel, is a passionate advocate for the leaders, dreamers, and changemakers

of rural communities and beyond. Known for her ability to challenge the status quo, Emily empowers women to break free from limiting beliefs, step into their authentic power, and create meaningful impact in their lives and communities. As the host of the "Wild & Waking" podcast and the facilitator of transformative retreats, workshops, and virtual communities.

The conference also features a wide range of dynamic breakout sessions, covering everything from strategic tax planning and legal considerations to building your business and expanding your vision. Whether you're focused on practical tools or big-picture growth, there's truly something for everyone.

More details can be found at womeninagricultureconference.com. This Conference is sponsored by the Farm Bureau Women in Agriculture Conference Committee.

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Ag in the Classroom



“A SLICE OF LEARNING”

Paula Janson, Ag in the Classroom Coordinator, is pictured with kindergarten students at Cambridge Elementary. Students learned about where the ingredients for pizza come from during their lesson.

“DISCOVERING WHAT MAKES A PIZZA”

Kindergarten students at Belle Alexander in Kewanee enjoyed a fun activity during their Ag in the Classroom lesson about the ingredients in pizza.

STATE OF THE FARM ECONOMY: 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW NOW AVAILABLE



Illinois Farm Bureau has released its State of the Farm Economy: 2025 Year in Review, a comprehensive look at several of the economic forces that shaped agriculture over the past year and what they could mean heading into 2026. The report provides members with insights into commodity markets, production expenses, farm income trends and broader economic factors influencing profitability.

While some ag sectors experienced strength, others faced mounting pressure. The report outlines “a tale of two farm economies,” with livestock producers benefiting from strong prices driven by tight supplies, while crop producers navigated declining prices amid record corn and soybean production.

Among the key takeaways, the report shows total livestock cash receipts were forecast to increase more than 11% in 2025, largely due to historically high cattle prices as national herd inventories continued to shrink. In contrast, crop cash receipts were projected to decline, marking one of the largest multi-year drops in recent history as supply outpaced demand for major commodities like corn and soybeans.

The report also examines rising production expenses, which continued to put pressure on margins across the farm sector. While some input prices have retreated from their 2022 peaks, fertilizer costs showed renewed volatility in 2025, with wide price swings depending on timing and location. These cost

pressures, combined with lower crop prices, are contributing to tighter margins and making break-even profitability increasingly difficult for many operations.

Beyond prices and expenses, the State of the Farm Economy highlights several issues to watch in the months ahead, including trade policy developments, inflation and interest rates, farmer aid packages, and concerns about future farm losses and consolidation. Together, these factors underscore the importance of staying informed in an economic environment that can shift quickly.

Illinois Farm Bureau members can access the full State of the Farm Economy: 2025 Year in Review by contacting their local county Farm Bureau office.



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IT'S NATIONAL AG MONTH

Hats Off to the Many Roles of Family Farmers

Our son has 39 hats hanging in his bedroom – bill facing down and caps evenly spaced in a single row on hooks positioned within inches of the ceiling.

Wait. Make that 42. Dad just returned from two farm shows.

Farmers own and wear many hats, a culture traced back to at least his great-grandpa's era in farming. Farmers love to wear hats. Ag retailers love to give them away as walking advertisements. And nowadays, many schools allow hats during the academic day, making them both a style statement and a part of today's youth identity.

Metaphorically, farmers wear many hats throughout the day, a juggling act worth recognizing in this season that honors National Ag Day on March 24, 2026. Being a full-time farmer means embracing a wide range of part-time roles: grower, mechanic, heavy equipment

operator, agronomist, meteorologist and veterinarian among them.

You could add scientist to the list: The liquid fertilizer jar tests in our shop fridge prove this one. Logistics manager is another: Necessary to direct trucks hauling grain 11 months of the year. Firefighter, too: This last dry and abnormally hot harvest required that. Add in accountant: We keep our own books. Then, our grain requires a marketer, our freezer beef a sales lead; our employees, a human resources manager; and the next generation, a mentor and teacher.

An impressive 96% of Illinois farms are owned by families, and on those farms family operators and their employees must assume many roles with enough skill to be mechanics at 8 a.m., marketers after the late-morning USDA report, agronomists before the kids get off the bus and accountants by dusk. We personally recognize the value of partnering

with outside professionals who improve our performance in those fields as we conduct this orchestra of crops, people, tools and nature.

Our son owns trucker-style farm hats for nice events, school and playing golf. He reserves a grungy one for farm work and another for outdoor FFA events. He also displays one that belonged to his great-grandpa, a nod to Gramps and his former hat collection. I still can picture those farm caps, more than 100 that fully covered Gramps' farmhouse office walls to the point Granny didn't realize termites had destroyed the studs behind them.

Outside of termite exterminator, farmers wear many hats in every sense of the phrase.

About the author: Joanie Stiers farms with her parents and brother in west-central Illinois, where they grow corn, soybeans and hay, raise beef cattle and operate side businesses related to the family operation.



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- 32' Bumper Pull 32' Gooseneck
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USDA NAMES APPOINTEES TO THE ILLINOIS FARM SERVICE AGENCY STATE COMMITTEE

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced the appointment of five leaders in agriculture to serve on the Illinois USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) state committee.

Members of the FSA state committee are appointed by Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins and, in support of the Trump Administration's Farmers First commitment, members of the FSA state committee are responsible for the oversight of farm programs and county committee operations, resolving program delivery appeals from the agriculture community, maintaining cooperative relations with industry stakeholders and keeping producers informed about current FSA programs.

Each FSA state committee is comprised of three to five members including a designated chairperson. The individuals appointed to serve on this committee for Illinois are:

- George W. Obernagel, III, Chair (Waterloo) - Obernagel owns and manages a large agricultural operation that includes acreage in Illinois, Nebraska, and Arkansas. The operation produces purebred Angus cattle and diverse row crops. He previously served as a member of the Illinois FSA

state committee during the first Trump Administration.

- Alan G. Lyman, Member (Cambridge) – Lyman is president and general manager of a multigenerational family farm producing corn, soybeans, and feeder cattle. He has held leadership roles in county, state, and national agricultural organizations, including the Illinois Beef Association and National Cattlemen's Beef Association
- Cindy J. Myer, Member (Lerna) – Myer manages a grain crop operation and works with tenant farmers across multiple counties. Myer previously served as a member of the Illinois FSA state committee from 2001 through 2008.
- Frederick W. Nessler, Member (Springfield) – Nessler manages land in Illinois and Texas used for hay, grazing, and row crops. He is the founder of Prairie Cross Christian Ministries and supports youth livestock education.
- Garry L. Niemeyer, Member (Auburn) – Niemeyer is a third-generation farmer in Sangamon County for over 50 years. Niemeyer is past president of Sangamon County Farm Bureau where he served on

the farm supply board. He is also a past President of the National Corn Growers Association.

"These individuals, selected by Secretary Rollins in partnership with key stakeholders in each state, are held in high regard in the agriculture industry and are entrusted to ensure FSA programs are delivered in a manner consistent with federal farm policy and in the best interest of all agricultural producers in their state," said FSA Administrator Bill Beam. "Their appointment to the FSA state committee is a testament to their standing in the industry and their dedication to the agriculture industry, rural America and President Trump's America First, Farmers First policies."

FSA helps America's farmers, ranchers and forest landowners invest in, improve, protect and expand their agricultural operations through the delivery of agricultural programs for all Americans. FSA implements agricultural policy, administers credit and loan programs, and manages conservation, commodity, disaster recovery and marketing programs through a national network of state and county offices and locally elected county committees. For more information, visit fsa.usda.gov.



LARGE ANIMAL RESCUE OPERATIONS

NO COST TRAINING

MARCH 28 | 8AM-5PM

BLACKHAWK COLLEGE EAST, KEWANEE
26230 Black Hawk Road

REGISTER ONLINE: FSI.ILLINOIS.EDU

This class is designed to bring operations level information to Illinois emergency first responders in the area of large animal rescue. Large animals will include but are not limited to horses, cows, pigs, sheep, lamas and alpacas; however the horse and cow will be used as the teaching model. The information and techniques learned are then applied to a full scale response scenario

The course will cover the following subjects:

- Classroom review of L.A.R.A. information
- Animal haltering drills
- Basic rescue drags drills
- Rescue glide drills
- Trailer safety inspections
- Simple vertical lifts drills
- Mud rescue drills



For more information, contact: Dave Newcomb | newcomb@illinois.edu

LARGE ANIMAL RESCUE OPERATIONS COURSE PLANNED

Join County Farm Bureaus on Saturday, March 28 at 9:00 a.m. at Black Hawk East in Galva for an 8-hour rescue course targeted at first responders in the area.

This class is being designed to bring operations level information to Illinois emergency first responders in the area of large animal rescue. Responders include but are not limited to members for fire, police, EMS, sheriff departments, DNR and Forest Preserve Officers. A course completion certificate will be given at the end of the event.

Large animals will include but are not limited to horses, cows, pigs, sheep, lamas and

alpacas; however, the horse and cow will be used as the teaching model.

The course will cover the following subjects: classroom review of L.A.R.A. information, Animal haltering drills, and basic rescue drag drills, rescue glide drills, trailer safety inspections, simple vertical lifts drills, and more.

Funding is currently being secured for the event in the effort to offer it free or at a very low cost for each department. For more information or to register contact the Henry County Farm Bureau at (309) 937-2411 or email manager@henrycofarmbureau.org.

LEARN MORE ABOUT ALL UPCOMING EVENTS, BENEFITS, AND MORE



HENRYCOFARBUREAU.ORG

TOGETHER WE GROW: CELEBRATING 250 YEARS OF PROGRESS IN AGRICULTURE

The Agriculture Council of America (ACA) announced March 24, 2026, will be National Agriculture Day with the theme of "Together We Grow." Ag Day 2026 also celebrates 250 years of progress in agriculture.

Activities planned for March 24 feature in-person events in Washington DC. A core leadership team of college students will participate in the DC events, along with representatives of national farm and commodity organizations, representatives of the food, fuel, and fiber communities.

Jenny Pickett, ACA President says students from AFA, 4-H, FFA and Tribal Agriculture Fellowship will participate in National Ag Day. "Students are interested in advocating on behalf of agriculture and their future roles in the industry. Their participation in National Ag Day activities provides a glimpse of the future of agriculture. It's exciting to learn from the students what they think agriculture will be like in the years ahead, and how their involvement will shape the industry and America as a whole."

"More and more, students and individuals are finding careers in agriculture. The industry needs scientists, biologists, food safety technicians, livestock nutrition specialists, arborists, conservationists – one doesn't have to be a farmer or have a direct on-farm job to be involved in the agriculture industry," Pickett says.

2026 National Ag Day marks the 53rd year of the nationwide effort to share real stories of American agriculture, and remind citizens that agriculture affects everyone. "From the food we eat and the fuel for our vehicles, to the fiber in the clothes we wear, and the oil used to make kids' crayons, agriculture touches everyone in some way," Pickett says.

The National Ag Day program encourages every American to:

- Understand how food, fiber, and fuel products are produced.
- Appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant, and affordable products.
- Value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy.
- Acknowledge and consider career opportunities in the agriculture, food and fiber industry.
- Visit www.agday.org for more information.

About Agriculture Council of America
Agriculture Council of America, a nonprofit organization composed of leaders in the agricultural, food and fiber community, organizes the annual activities which are part of a national effort to increase the public's awareness of agriculture's role in modern society.



"YOUNG LEADERS TEACH ABOUT AG CAREERS"

Young Leaders kicked-off their annual presentations to 4th grade students in Henry County. Pictured is Justine Johnson, Chair of the Young Leaders, speaking to students at St. Malachy School in Geneseo.



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ILLINOIS'
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INDUSTRY



NATIONAL AG DAY
MARCH 24





“STRONG ENOUGH TO BEND”

Thank you to Adrienne DeSutter, Sow Hope Grow Hope, for sharing the powerful message of being “Strong Enough to Bend” with the ladies attending our January 29 program at Black Hawk College East Campus. The ladies attending went home with so many ways to deal with the stress and the struggles of our day to day, and to “Be Who You Want to See.” The program was sponsored by the County Farm Bureaus of Henry, Mercer, Rock Island, Stark, Bureau, Knox and Marshall-Putnam.



“YOUNG LEADERS ATTEND CONFERENCE”

Henry County Young Leaders attended the Illinois Farm Bureau Young Leader Conference held in East Peoria. Those attending from Henry County are (front l to r) Justine Johnson, Brett Johnson, Kate Huffman, (back l to r) Conner King, Makenna Walker, Johnna Fulcher, Emma Yerkey and Austin Anderson.



The Henry and Stark County Health Department & First Choice Healthcare Note March-Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month & Offer FREE FIT Tests!

The Henry and Stark County Health Departments and our First Choice Healthcare Clinics announce that March has been designated National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

Colorectal Cancer is the second leading cancer killer in the United States. And yet, this need not be the case. Studies show if everyone age 45 or older had regular screening tests, at least one-third of deaths from this cancer could be avoided. Therefore, the First Choice Healthcare Clinics are pleased to announce they have FREE Home FIT Tests available to local residents aged 45-75. The FREE FIT Tests are available at our clinics in Kewanee 309-852-5272; and Toulon 309-852-3115. Call for more information or stop by any location 8:00am-4:00 Monday through Friday for your FREE FIT Test. First Choice Healthcare also offers digital and clinical exams by our Family Nurse Practitioners.

To better inform the public about this deadly disease the staff of First Choice Healthcare offers the following facts on Colorectal Cancer. Colorectal cancer is cancer that occurs in the colon or rectum. Sometimes it is called colon cancer, for short.

Who gets Colorectal Cancer? Both men and women can get colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer is most often found in people 50 and older. Therefore, the risk of getting colorectal cancer increases with age.

Are you at High Risk? Your risk of colorectal cancer may be higher than average if: you or a close relative have had colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer; or you have inflammatory bowel disease. People at high risk for colorectal cancer may need earlier or more frequent tests than other people. Talk with your doctor about when you should begin screening and how often you should be tested.

If you're 50 or older, getting a screening test for colorectal cancer could save your life. Here's how:

- Colorectal cancer usually starts from polyps in the colon or rectum. A polyp is a growth that shouldn't be there.
- Over time, some polyps can turn into cancer.
- Screening tests can find polyps, so they can be removed before they turn into cancer.
- Screening tests can also find colorectal cancer early. When it is found early, the chance of being cured is good.

People who have polyps or colorectal cancer sometimes don't have symptoms, especially at first. This means that someone could have polyps or colorectal cancer and not know it. That is why having a screening test is so important.

Some people with colorectal polyps or cancer do have symptoms. They may include:

- Blood in or on your stool (bowel movement).
- Pain, aches, or cramps in your stomach that happen a lot and you don't know why.
- A change in bowel habits, such as having stools that are narrower than usual.
- Losing weight and you don't know why.

If you have any of these symptoms, talk with your doctor or healthcare provider. These symptoms may also be caused by something other than cancer. However, the only way to know what is causing them is to see your doctor.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call the First Choice Healthcare location nearest you: Kewanee (309) 852-5272; or Toulon (309) 852-3115 or find us on Facebook at Henry and Stark County Health Departments or First Choice Healthcare, or Follow Us on Twitter and Instagram.

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR FARM BUREAU POLICY



119. TRESPASS, VANDALISM, AND PRIVATE LAND ACCESS

We support:

- Encouraging courts to punish vandals by requiring them to clean up and repair their own vandalism at their own expense or perform some other constructive work. We urge judges, when setting sentences, to require reimbursement of Crime Stoppers or similar reward programs, as a part of the sentence.
- Legislation to protect landowners and tenants from property seizures, claims, and costs caused by unauthorized activities of trespassers and licensees entering upon and using the landowners' property.
- Efforts, including legislation and working with law enforcement agencies and prosecutors, to increase the enforcement of criminal trespass laws.
- Legislation specifying that, in criminal damage to property cases where the damage was caused by the unauthorized operation of a vehicle on private property, the threshold of felony status be elevated to a level suited to the crime and one that would help to remove the law enforcement community's hesitancy to prosecute those violators. In such cases, a minimum fine should be established with required restitution to the victim for property damages caused and the violator's driver's license should be suspended for six months.
- Legislation linking criminal violations of the Illinois Vehicle Code and acts of criminal trespass or criminal damage to property to the driver's license record of anyone convicted of these crimes for the unauthorized operation of a motor vehicle on private property.
- Legislation creating an owner responsibility provision in law that obligates the owner of a vehicle to compensate for damages caused to private property by the use of the vehicle on that property without the landowner's authorization unless the vehicle was stolen or the vehicle's owner took reasonable precautions against misuse of the vehicle.
- Efforts to educate law enforcement officials and the general public - especially youth - about the property damage caused by the unauthorized operation of vehicles on private property and the liability and penalties for any resulting property damage.
- The development and dissemination of programs and materials on private property rights and the associated portions of trespass and criminal law. We encourage county Farm Bureaus to pursue similar efforts on the local level.
- Efforts to educate farmland owners and farmland operators about their legal rights and responsibilities relating to trespass; also, efforts to educate them about insurance coverage relating to liability and property damage caused through trespass. We encourage county Farm Bureaus to pursue similar efforts on the local level.
- Efforts to establish riding areas for ATVs and other off-highway vehicles and efforts to generate revenues for that purpose from those who use the vehicles for recreation.
- Efforts to make it clear that persons going to or from rivers, streams, and bike trails over another's land or hunting on another's land without the owner's or rightful occupant's specific permission, without regard to the presence of any posted notices, are trespassers for the purposes of determining liability of a landowner for any injury which might occur to the trespasser.
- Legislation that will require owners of recreational trails and their facilities to compensate owners of land adjacent to the trail or facility for any property damage, theft, littering, and/or vandalism caused by users of the trail or facility except where the actual perpetrator can be identified and make restitution.
- Efforts to educate farm owners and operators about their legal rights as they pertain to utilities and governmental or private surveying companies. We would encourage all surveyors to notify affected landowners and use public property whenever possible.
- Efforts to educate farm owners and farmers about their legal rights as landlords or managers of residential properties.
- Landowners being an additional named insured for all government and public utility project work that is being done on private property.
- Efforts to enforce regulations on hot air balloons regarding their potential trespass on private property and their potential for endangering livestock.
- A program to reward informants who provide information leading to the arrest and conviction of persons who commit theft, arson, or vandalism to the property or premises of Illinois Agricultural Association (IAA) members.
- Requiring sky diving companies to install tracking devices on the parachutes and other components that can become unattached during flight; notification to landowners and/or tenants of a lost parachute or parts of a parachute, or damage to crops or property caused by a skydive; skydive companies compensating the farmer for damages caused by skydivers landing on their property, ruining crops, or damage to farm equipment caused by parachutes and their parts.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

LIGHT AND EASY 5-MINUTE FRUIT MOUSSE

Source: www.serious eats.com

Ingredients:

- 8 1/2 ounces (about 2 1/4 cups) frozen berries or other fruit
- 2 tablespoons sugar (or use sugar, honey, maple syrup, or stevia extract to taste)
- 1 large egg white
- Fresh berries and whipped cream for serving (optional)

Directions

- Add fruit to the bowl of a food processor. Process to a rough puree, about 1 minute. Add the sugar or another sweetener and pulse briefly to combine. If you're using a different sweetener, add a small amount at a time to taste.
- Add the egg white and process until smooth and fluffy and the mixture has lightened in color and doubled or tripled in volume, 2 to 3 minutes.
- If the mixture clings to the sides of the food processor's bowl too much (this may happen if the blade doesn't extend all the way to the sides of the bowl), transfer the mixture to a normal medium-sized bowl and beat with a mixer fitted with the whisk attachment until fluffy.
- Spoon the mousse into glasses and top or layer with fresh berries and/or whipped cream (optional). Serve immediately or store in the refrigerator for up to 2 hours (because this mousse has very little sugar in it, it's not very stable and it won't hold for longer than that).

