

# TRIED & TRUE

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SUMMER 2023



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**FRATCO**

## Dear Tried & True Readers,

Another season is beginning here at Fratco and we are brimming with excitement over the investments being made in our products, processes and innovation. Progress is our word of the year. So many thrilling advancements and changes are going on behind the scenes, all so we can better serve you!

Every year and every season brings challenges and changes, but one thing we know for sure is we aren't going anywhere—and we certainly hope that is true for you as well. Our dedication to serving with the utmost integrity and respect all while delivering you the very best product possible remains steadfast.

We are always striving to make our products, processes, culture, distribution and customer experience better. We aren't investing just to get a return—dedication and perseverance run deep at Fratco.

I hope you enjoy reading about Stephen Cole, our St. Anne Plant Manager and how his dedication to Fratco has paid off more than he could fathom. Don't skip over our Pullins Drainage Contractor Spotlight, either! You'll want to know the story behind the pink trencher on this issue's cover. Make sure you are caught up on the status of the Farm Bill getting ready to pass this fall. Our partner in all things plastic, PPI gave us insider information on how they advocate for us. You won't want to miss a word of these stories!

Until next time,



**Chris Overmyer**  
President and CEO

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## Locations

- 1** **Francesville**  
4385 S. 1450 W.  
P.O. Box 368  
Francesville, IN 47946
- 2** **St. Anne**  
499 S. Oak St.  
St. Anne, IL 60964
- 3** **Mt. Pleasant**  
1600 W. Washington St.  
Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641
- 4** **Algona**  
2502 E. Poplar St.  
Algona, IA 50511
- 5** **Westfield (Stateline Tile)**  
23942 IA Hwy 12  
Westfield, IA 51062
- ★** **Corporate Office**  
105 W. Broadway St.  
P.O. Box 311  
Monticello, IN 47960



# PRECIPITATION OUTLOOK

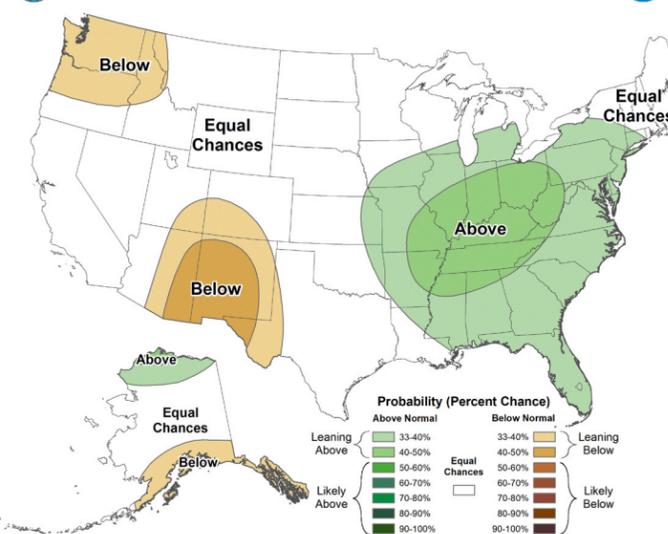
## FROM THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

2023

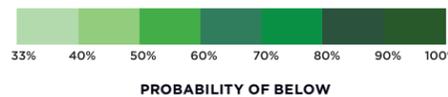
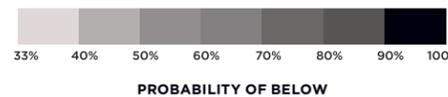
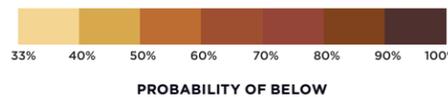
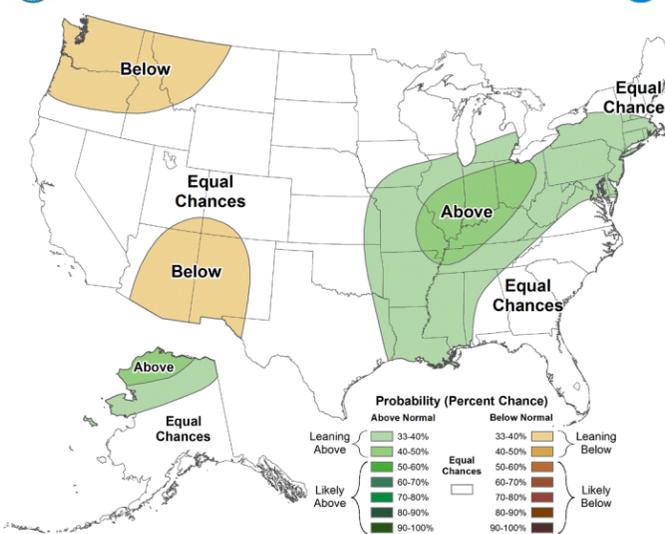
JUN-AUG

JUL-SEP

Seasonal Precipitation Outlook



Seasonal Precipitation Outlook



Nothing about the future is set in stone, and weather predictions are no exception. But in an industry where thorough preparation is fundamental, having an idea of what lies ahead can be the difference between business as usual and battling rain delays. Always keep an eye on daily and weekly weather outlooks, but also set yourself up for success by planning ahead through seasonal forecasts.

For the latest weather information, visit the National Weather Service's website.

[www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)

## MEET

# STEPHEN COLE

PLANT MANAGER IN ST. ANNE ILLINOIS

Going on a dozen years of faithful service, Stephen Cole has learned an incredible amount and used that knowledge to pour right back into Fratco. June 2nd marks his 12th anniversary.

Starting out as a single guy working in the yard getting customers loaded, Stephen feels like Fratco has been there every step of his growth. He is married with two children and now carries the title of Plant Manager at the St. Anne, Illinois location. Stephen humbly accepted the position never thinking he would make it that far up in the company.

The most interesting part about working at Fratco for Stephen is sustainability. He thinks the entire production process is fascinating. He loves that Fratco can grind up defective pipe and reuse it in another product. This makes Fratco a zero waste facility. Stephen is really



excited about all the new channels and markets that Fratco is diving into as they continue to grow. In his role as Plant Manager, he has to keep an open mind and be ready for changes and adjustments as they come.

St. Anne, Illinois, Stephen's location, was one of the largest and oldest manufacturers for clay drainage tile in the United States. For Fratco to be there as a leader during the conversion from clay to plastic makes Stephen really proud. Right in his backyard there has been a large impact on this industry.

Beyond the progress and innovation, Stephen boasts about the excellent product quality and top-notch service. He explained that with a product that is backed by excellent customer service. Fratco is composed of real people. Mistakes may happen, problems may arise, but Fratco always does their best to make it right—they work collectively to resolve the issue, satisfy the customer and prevent it from happening again.

Working at Fratco means you have a family away from home. Stephen says that he has strong relationships with everyone Fratco employs, and he has built family-like relationships with local drivers and customers. It all begins with trust. Stephen explains that in order for anyone he works with to trust and respect him, he must build a foundation by showing them trust and respect, too. That trust is built over time and is solidified by showing up with compassion and quality.



Stephen's children, Camden and Emersyn, cheering on Fratco



# THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY

### Who is PPI?

The Plastics Pipe Institute (PPI) is a trade association that represents all the industries where plastic pipe is used. They are composed of many members that are involved in the drainage industry such as, plastic pipe manufacturers, companies that make the pipe manufacturing equipment, resin suppliers, gasket and fitting suppliers and research laboratories.

PPI has five divisions which are organized by market segments where plastic pipe is utilized.

- Building & Construction
- Power & Communications
- Drainage
- Energy Piping Systems
- Municipal & Industrial

### How does PPI benefit a company like Fratco?

With 25 years of industry experience, Dan Currence, the Director of Engineering for the Drainage Division lays it all out, "PPI's goal is to raise the water in the harbor so everyone's boats float higher. We go to bat for the industry and lobby for plastic pipe as the best choice." His simple

analogy explains how PPI works to benefit everyone in the plastic drainage industry.

It's not efficient or practical for companies like Fratco to attend every meeting and event that could potentially impact the market for plastic pipe. Fratco's friends at PPI are able to advocate on their behalf along with other pipe manufacturers. One component of PPI's job is to collaborate with standards institutions to identify, develop and improve standards for corrugated plastic pipe. They start with ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) and AASHTO (American Association of Highway and Transportation Officials) by working with their engineers to update standards for culvert, storm drainage and agricultural applications.

That is where Dan comes in. Before taking a position at PPI, Dan worked for 15 years in the industry as a field engineer for a pipe manufacturer. Since joining PPI a decade ago, Dan's job has been to convince people from a technical standpoint that plastic pipe is the way to go. He makes sure the standards that are set up are advantageous, create positive publicity and awareness, facilitate educational opportunities and expand the market.

### Geographic Focus

One of PPI's largest challenges is conquering the public and commercial projects sector. The more developed an area is, the more drainage is needed. Though home to the bulk of drainage pipe used in agricultural applications, many areas of the Midwest lag behind in using corrugated plastic pipe in public drainage applications.

### Education

Much of Dan's job is spent in Washington D.C. educating our lawmakers, lobbying for opportunities for plastic pipes to compete in all types of drainage applications and advocating for open competition on Congressional transportation bills. When congress is more informed, it helps to raise the tide in the harbor that our industry is floating in.

PPI also contributes to the educational movement of plastic pipe by ensuring that the plastic pipe industry as whole is consistent and unified in their messaging. PPI hosts webinars and produces content for YouTube and other social media platforms. They focus on creating educational and awareness opportunities and have recently published a handbook—the first of its kind—entitled "21st Century Drainage Solutions," which can be purchased through their website.

### Sustainability

Plastic sometimes gets a bad reputation, but PPI is dedicated to changing that. The main reason why plastic pipe is an easy first choice for many projects is simply how sustainable the product is and how well the industry utilizes it. Dan says, "Nobody puts post-consumer plastics to better use than the plastic corrugated plastic pipe industry. Each year for the past five years, the plastic pipe industry has recycled 600 million pounds of plastic." No other industry in the world has come close to reaching that level of sustainability.

“  
**Nobody puts post-consumer plastics to better use than the plastic corrugated pipe industry. Every year for the past five years, the plastic pipe industry has recycled 600 million pounds of plastic.**  
”

### Resiliency

Although plastic pipe is commonly accepted in the agricultural community for drainage solutions, municipal and industrial projects haven't yet adopted the same level of acceptance. Plastic pipe can handle the majority of nature events, such as earthquakes, and years of day-to-day rainfall considerably better than other drainage materials like concrete and metal. While plastic might not be a perfect fit



**Dan Currence**  
Director of Engineering  
for the Drainage Division

for all projects (high pressure implementations, for example), its versatility, flexibility, durability and cost-effectiveness makes plastic great for a large majority of drainage projects.

The concrete pipe industry will frame its product as extremely resilient but doesn't like to mention earthquakes. We can all imagine what would happen to a concrete pipe underground during an event like that.

Corrugated metal is known for rusting and over shorter periods of time can thin out and degrade, causing leaks and soil erosion. Though metal has more give than concrete when it comes to seismic movement, plastic is a superior choice.

At the end of the day, no one industry is perfect. Framing the resiliency of plastic is high on PPI's "honey-do list" as they lead the way in advocating for plastic pipe as the superior choice in the drainage industry. Through collaboration and standards development, PPI ensures advantageous and up-to-date standards for plastic pipe. PPI actively educates lawmakers, promotes industry unity, and provides educational resources. With a strong focus on sustainability and resilient solutions, plastic pipe offers versatility, durability and cost-effectiveness for a wide range of drainage projects. Fratco is glad to have someone on our side looking out for the industry. If you'd like to learn more about PPI go to [www.plasticpipe.org](http://www.plasticpipe.org).



Learn how plastic pipe connects us to our future in this video from PPI



CONTRACTOR SPOTLIGHT

# PULLINS DRAINAGE AND EXCAVATING, LLC

## A Family Business

Over six decades ago, a 25 year old David Pullins took a chance and started Pullins Drainage and Excavation, LLC. The business succeeded and it wasn't long before David's son, Paul, got involved and eventually took over at the helm. Today, David's grandsons Sam and John play an integral role in the business David started way back in 1958. At 90 years old, David still finds a way to watch the boys and throw in his two cents. Celebrating their 65th

year of operation, Pullins Drainage and Excavation is proud to partner with Fratco.

Over the years Pullins has worked with many suppliers, but since 2017 has been a loyal customer. It's Fratco's top-notch products and exceptional customer service that keeps the relationship strong, and Pullins has never looked back. Pullins discovered Fratco at a Land Improvement Contractors Association

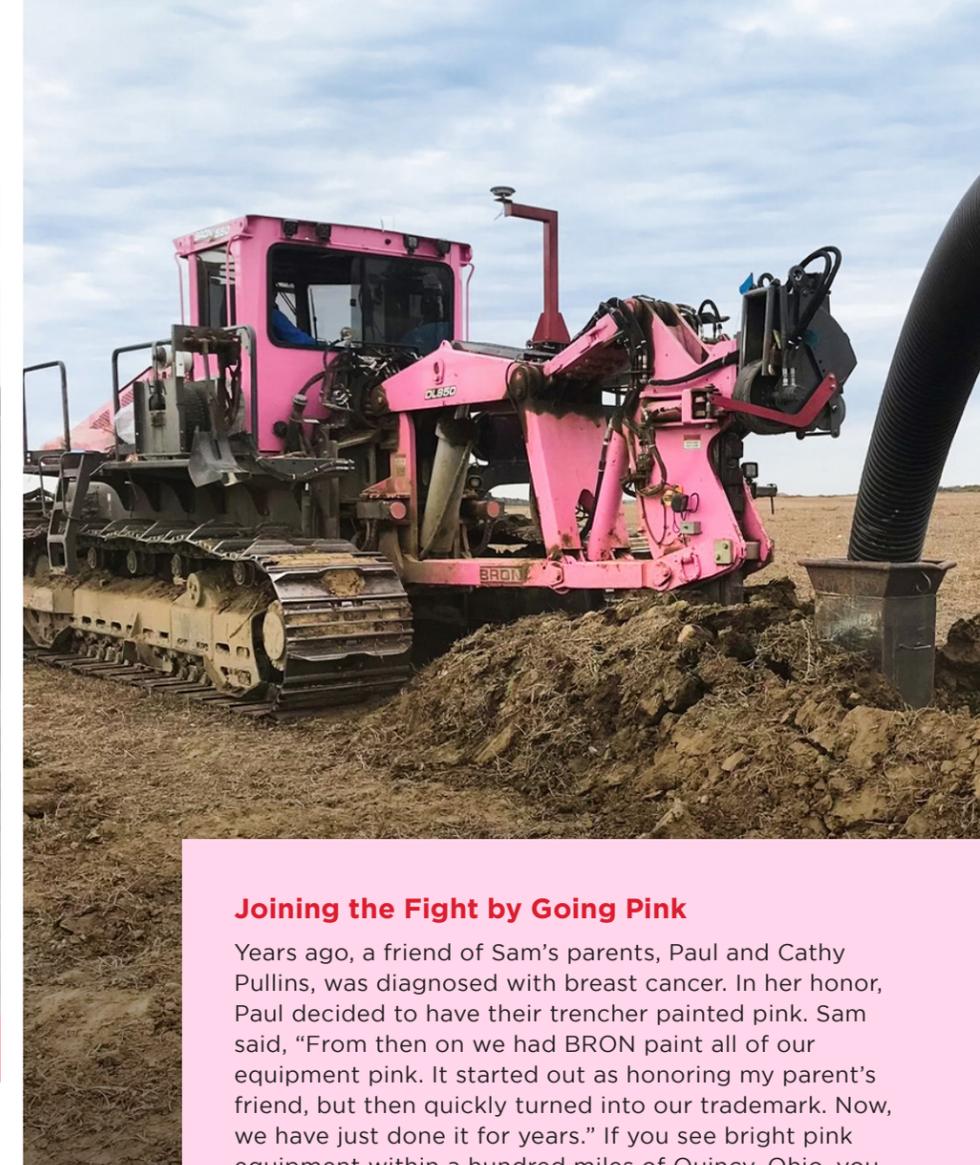
(LICA) convention. After years of customer service and quality issues, Pullins was desperate to find a new manufacturer that could offer better quality tile and better customer service, Fratco was the obvious choice. He met with his then Sales Representative, Chris Calisco, and the partnership blossomed.

"There is a tile company right down the road from us, but we would rather use Fratco," said Sam Pullins,

President of Pullins Drainage and Excavating, LLC. Sam explained that between quality issues and constantly being overlooked as "too small" of a customer, the choice to switch was easy. "Our local manufacturer just seemed to only care about the really big customers that wanted to order from them," he explained.

[Continue Reading](#)

Three generations of Pullins  
From the left, Sam, David, John & Paul



### Joining the Fight by Going Pink

Years ago, a friend of Sam's parents, Paul and Cathy Pullins, was diagnosed with breast cancer. In her honor, Paul decided to have their trencher painted pink. Sam said, "From then on we had BRON paint all of our equipment pink. It started out as honoring my parent's friend, but then quickly turned into our trademark. Now, we have just done it for years." If you see bright pink equipment within a hundred miles of Quincy, Ohio, you know it belongs to Pullins Drainage.

### Technology For the Win

The biggest benefit according to Sam is Fratco's eye for innovation and how they leverage technology where it can best benefit the customer. Such as their newer product, FlexCorr, a dual-wall tile that can be plowed right in. It installs faster and easier you save time and money in the field—a huge deal for a family-owned business like Pullins.

Sam knows first-hand how advanced technology can make a world of difference in efficiency and quality. In 2000, Pullins Drainage was the third company in the US to purchase GPS surveying equipment which enabled them to double their productivity. Which ultimately meant they could have more clients without sacrificing quality or service, something Fratco strives for everyday.

Sam revealed that it is a natural relationship between Pullins Drainage and Excavating and Fratco because they both uphold the same principles. Sam shares Fratco's attitude towards striving for meaningful progress by making investments in the future. Innovation and adaptability are key characteristics to the long-standing success of business in this industry. They stand behind their word and always put their customers first.

Sam explains, "One time there was a quality issue with some pipe that Fratco delivered to us. Fratco didn't hesitate to make it right. They replaced the pipe, no questions asked." Sam continues to praise Fratco's quality of service, "They sent a pickup truck out with the replacement materials on it that we needed. You would never know how far away we are from them, because

of how excellent their service is. Competitors don't even come close."

### One Check, Please!

Sam has fond memories of their visits with their first salesman at Fratco, Chris. He would insist on taking Sam's whole family out to eat. Sam chuckled as he recalled, "What Chris didn't know is that I have a HUGE family." He explained that with his children, siblings, parents, nieces and nephews all combined they would need a reservation for about 25! It was a long-time running joke between them. Chris always said he loved it because he came from a big family, too.

### Tomorrow Belongs to Those Who Build It

Pullins Drainage and Excavating stands as a testament to the power of family legacy and strong

partnerships in the business world. With over six decades of operation, their unwavering commitment to quality, service, and innovation has propelled them forward. The alliance forged with Fratco, based on top-notch products and exceptional customer service, has played a pivotal role in their ongoing success. From embracing technological advancements to providing personalized support, Fratco has proven to be a reliable and valued partner for Pullins Drainage. As they celebrate their 65th year in business, Pullins Drainage and Excavating proudly continues to pave the way in the industry, fueled by their shared values and a dedication to meeting customer needs with integrity and excellence. ■



# WORK ANNIVERSARIES

JAN-JUL 2023

Scott Elston	34 years
Todd Denton	32 years
Chad Watts	29 years
Timothy Ballard	26 years
Charles Houchell	26 years
Roger Cavness	18 years
Raymond Carter	18 years
David Diaz	12 years
William Champion	12 years
Craig Douglass	12 years
Stephen Cole	12 years
John Schultz	11 years
Joel Kruger	11 years
Brandon Herron	10 years
Ken Craft	9 years
Kenneth Cocherell	9 years
Katrina Pelsey	9 years
Matt Deweese	8 years
Howard Geyer	8 years
Martin Thompson	8 years
Jaqueline Sanchez	7 years
Paul Liggett	6 years
Bernard Pollmeier	6 years
Mark Richardson	5 years
Felicia Wendt	5 years
Trenton Watts	5 years
Jose Requena	5 years
Skylur Moseley	5 years
Jesus Hernandez	5 years
Brendan Noggle	5 years
Terry Sifrit	5 years
Charles Yohnka	4 years
Trevor Williams	4 years

Katie-Anne Kira David	4 years
Isaac Harmon	3 years
Brooks Schoon	3 years
Erick Lozano	3 years
Matthew Rightman	3 years
Shawn Klemm	2 years
Matt Metzen	2 years
Karen Ramirez	2 years
Kenneth Walker	2 years
Ryan Mordick	2 years
Brice Watts	2 years
Kevin Pawlowski	2 years
Felix Jonathan	2 years
Hayley Mulligan	2 years
Robert Lewark JR	2 years
Gavin Conley	2 years
Rosa Pacheco Lopez	2 years
Cody Witten	2 years
Sierra Wood	1 year
Kaden Perrenoud	1 year
Mason Doyle	1 year
Nicholas Symonds	1 year
Derek Overmyer	1 year
Juan Salinas	1 year
Deyanira Gonzalez	1 year
Matthew Barker	1 year
Darrell Luepnitz	1 year
Gage Garpow	1 year

# WELCOMING NEW HIRES

## JANUARY

Daniel Ambriz  
Daniel Maciel  
Shawn Puffinbarger  
Gulder Reyes Cardona

## FEBRUARY

Dean Boever  
David De Leon  
Colby Housh  
Ashley Lanus  
Montelle Lomax  
Mathew Quick  
James Schwartz  
Michael Toby

## MARCH

Lisa Bruellman  
Cody Carlson  
Francisco Hernandez  
Oscar Montes Franco  
Glenda Navarro  
Isbelia Perez Carazo

## APRIL

Samantha Deck  
Michael Dillman  
Robert Boyd  
Durika Gutierrez  
Felix Gutierrez  
William Leek  
Brian Miranda Ortiz  
Tyler Ricardez  
Mayson Roberts  
Antonio Sanchez  
Jenna Seferovic

## MAY

Garrett Grieger  
Robert Hanlin  
Michelle Mills  
Dominick Peterson  
Devon Pocius  
Raemond Strohl  
Ines Tapanes Izquierdo

# STAY CONNECTED



Want to read stories from past issues of *Tried & True*? You can download digital versions of each *Tried & True* magazine and catch up on everything you missed at [FRATCO.COM/TRIED-TRUE](https://FRATCO.COM/TRIED-TRUE)



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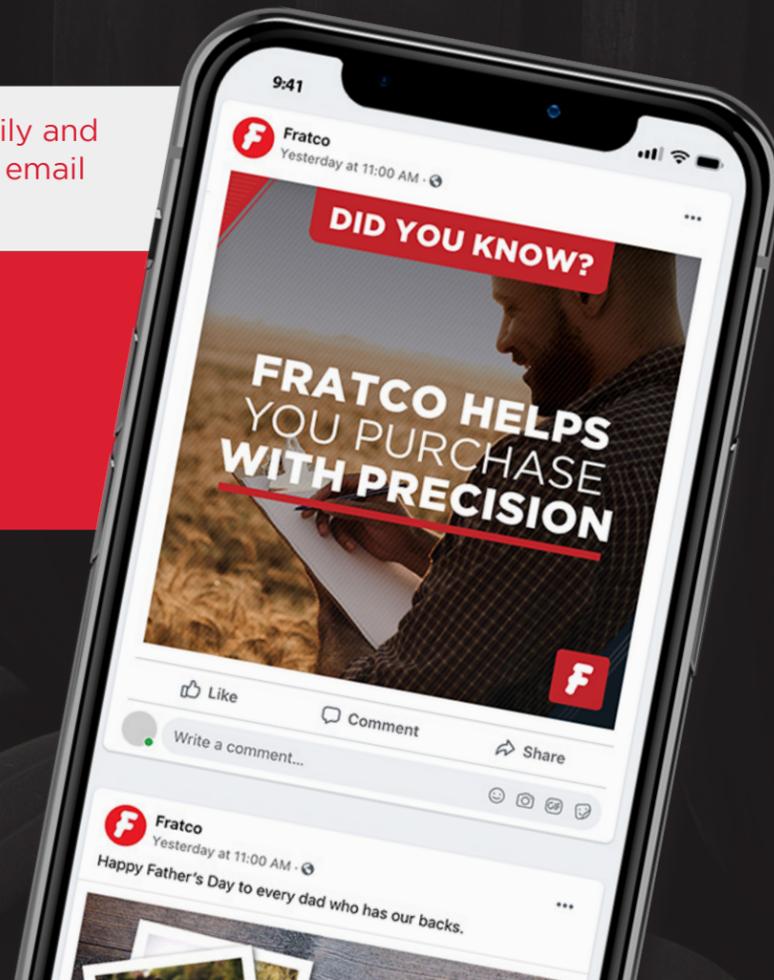
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# THE FARM BILL

## WHAT IS IT AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

With agriculture making up a large portion of plastic drainage pipe business, it is no surprise that the Farm Bill is hot news right now in the plastic pipe industry, but according to the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), 71% of American adults have never even heard of it despite the

impact it has on their lives, from the grocery bill to tax hikes, the Farm bill has the ability to affect the budgets of every household.

[Continue Reading](#)



**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE FARM BILL FROM THE AMERICAN FARM BUREAU**

### What is the Farm Bill?

The Farm Bill (a.k.a. The Food and Farm Bill) is a five year legislation that authorizes discretionary and mandatory spending to provide assistance to Americans concerning food and farming. It covers an array of related fields including farm program payments, conservation initiatives, rural development, research, trade, nutrition assistance, credit, energy, forestry, horticulture, crop insurance, and more. It is primarily executed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). This bill was first created in the 1930s to aid struggling farmers and since is used as a resource to continue helping the industry grow.

The Farm Bill holds significant statutory power and provides funding for programs that affect all social demographics and regions. It plays a significant role in protecting our nation's food supply, supporting hunger relief efforts, advancing conservation and promoting agricultural innovation. In addition, it supports rural communities and promotes environmental stewardship.

### Why is it important to Fratco?

For the drainage industry, the Farm Bill's impact can be seen through its provisions on conservation and rural development. The conservation title, for example, provides voluntary programs for farmers and ranchers to improve productivity and address

natural resource concerns, including drainage management and water quality. As a leading producer of plastic drainage pipe for the agricultural industry, we believe it's crucial for us and our customers who serve farmers to stay informed about these key legislative developments.

### Hot Topics for This Year's Farm Bill

The Farm Bill is a product of bipartisan efforts, with various stakeholders coming together to advocate for their interests. Over time, it has expanded its scope to accommodate the diverse needs of agriculture and society. As discussions for September's Farm Bill unfold, it is important for stakeholders

in the drainage industry to participate and contribute to the conversation. Evaluating the effectiveness of current programs and considering future economic conditions will help shape policies that support the industry's growth and sustainability.

Though nothing has been finalized, 80% of the proposed \$1.5 trillion dollar budget is projected to be allocated to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). A large portion of that would in turn go towards education for participants of SNAP, in order to give them the tools to thrive in our economy. This proposition would reach approximately 290,000 families in Indiana alone.

### We Stand United

With the current farm bill expiring on September 30 of this year, the plastic pipe industry's main players have expanded and joined forces in order to make a larger impact when going up against legislation. Renewal is crucial, as its expiration without a replacement or without an extension of its programs would result in a fallback to the 1949 version. For example, in Indiana, the Indiana Farm Bureau, along with associations like Indiana Corn Growers Association and Indiana Soybean Alliance, is taking active steps to address this issue. They are hosting listening sessions to hear the concerns and suggestions of farmers and agricultural professionals, influencing the future shape of the legislation.

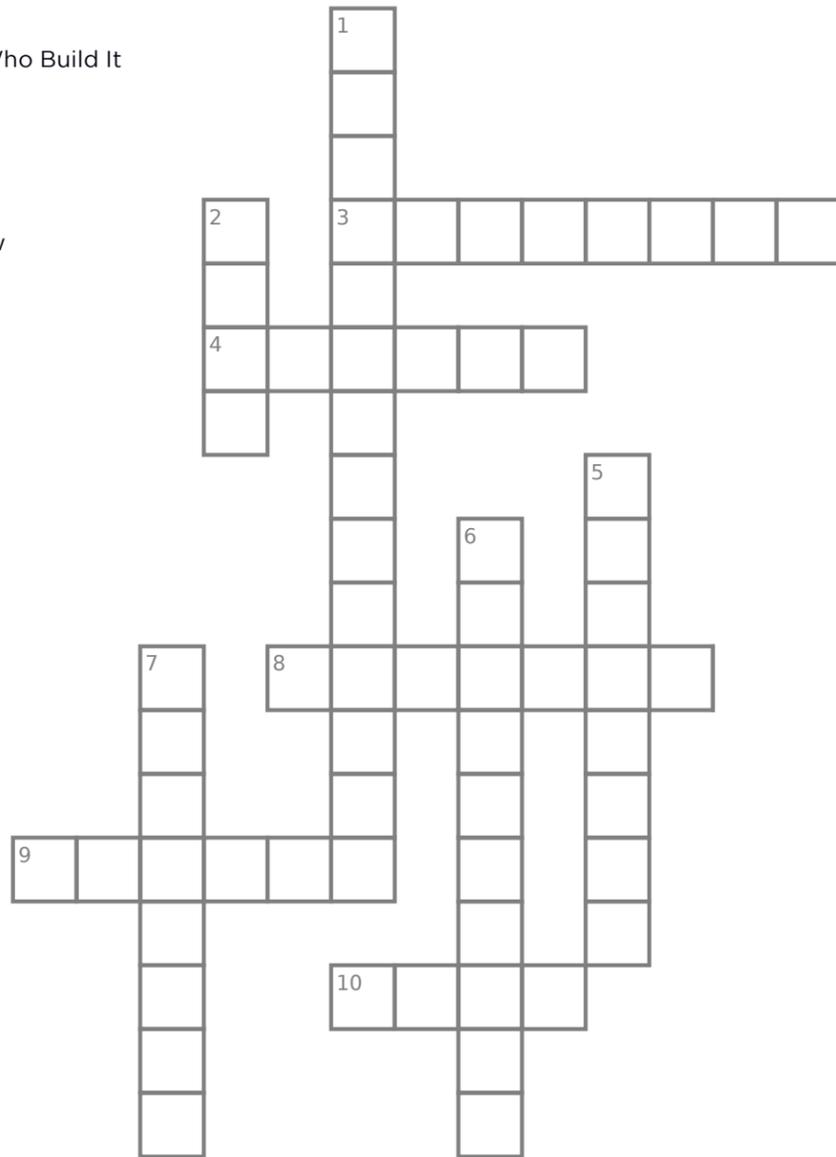
We stand alongside the agriculture industry during this important legislative period. It is through our collective efforts that we can ensure a comprehensive bill that serves the interests of our agricultural community and continues to strengthen our nation's food supply. Its provisions on conservation and rural development play a vital role in supporting the drainage industry. Participating in the discussions surrounding this bill allows stakeholders to shape policies that address their specific needs and contribute to the overall success of agriculture in the United States. Contact your congressman today to get involved. ■

# CROSSWORD

Fill in the blanks by looking through this issue's articles

## ACROSS

- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Belongs to those Who Build It
- 4. We Stand \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. PPI: \_\_\_\_\_ Pipe Institute
- 9. A \_\_\_\_\_ business
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_ is the New... Yellow



## DOWN

- 1. Plastic pipe is an easy first choice simply for it's \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Tried & \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Pullins \_\_\_\_\_ and Excavating, LLC
- 6. Framing the \_\_\_\_\_ of plastic is high on PPI's honey-do list
- 7. Hot Topics for This Year's \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWER KEY  
 1. SUSTAINABILITY 2. TRUE 3. TOMORROW 4. UNITED 5. DRAINAGE  
 6. RESILIENCY 7. FARM BILL 8. PLASTICS 9. FAMILY 10. PINK





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