

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



Thunder McDonald plants vegetables in one of the gardens on the farm of his grandmother, Diane McDonald, right, in Pembroke Township on May 22.
EILEEN T. MESLAR/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Farmers in food program still are waiting to be paid

Two months after launch, state slow to cover wages, expenses for participants

By Karina Atkins
Chicago Tribune

A long-delayed state program to get fresh food from local farms to vulnerable communities in Illinois was finally launched in March. But two months later, participants are still struggling to get money from the state to pay farmers and cover program expenses.

“We started with intentions of having money earlier than this and (the farmers) trusted us,” said Brenda Stewart, who runs Run-A-Way Buckers, a community orga-

nization distributing produce in eastern Illinois’ Pembroke Township. “I’m thankful they didn’t hold it against us.”

The \$30 million federally funded effort aims to rebuild the state’s local food system by connecting underrepresented farmers with communities in need. Even though farms make up 75% of Illinois’ land area, only 5% of the food grown in Illinois is purchased in-state.

When Gov. J.B. Pritzker first announced the nonprofit’s selected to distribute food in early March, many — including

Run-A-Way Buckers — jumped at the opportunity to get started. The announcement was overdue so Black, first-generation and veteran farmers had already ramped up production in anticipation, food was spoiling and families were waiting.

Diane McDonald organizes a network of fellow small-scale Black farmers that has been giving over 100 pounds of produce to Run-A-Way Buckers per week for the last two months. They haven’t been paid for any of it yet, but she isn’t giving up on the program.

“It’s been a crunch. It’s been a

lot of out-of-pocket money,” said McDonald. “But, we’re determined to continue until (the state) get(s) it together. It’s a worthy cause, and I appreciate the fact that small farmers are being acknowledged because we’re very important to the agricultural system.”

While farmers have been on the hook, the Illinois Equitable Access Towards Sustainable Systems (IL-EATS) program has been “the talk of the town” among recipients, Stewart said.

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Trump pushing beyond verdict

Ex-president casts himself as martyr as Biden slams rhetoric

By Michelle L. Price
and Jill Colvin
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Donald Trump sought to move past his historic criminal conviction Friday and build momentum for his bid to return to the White House with fierce attacks on the judge who oversaw the case, the prosecution’s star witness and the criminal justice system as a whole.

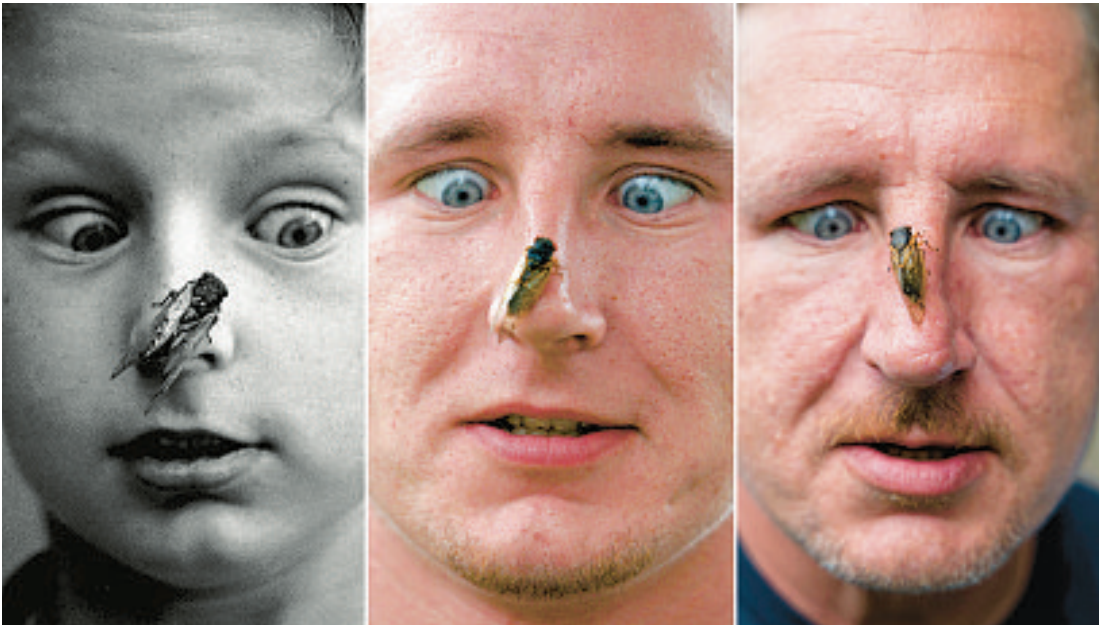
Speaking from his namesake tower in Manhattan in a symbolic return to the campaign trail, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee delivered a message aimed squarely at his most loyal supporters. Defiant as ever, he insisted without evidence that the verdict was “rigged” and driven by politics.

“We’re going to fight,” he said from the atrium of Trump Tower, where he descended a golden escalator to announce his 2016 campaign nearly nine years ago. The machinations during the final, dramatic weeks of that campaign ultimately led to the charges that made Trump the first former president and presumptive presidential nominee of a major party to be convicted of a crime, exposing him to potential prison time.

While the guilty verdict has energized Trump’s base, fueling millions of dollars in new campaign contributions, it’s unclear how the conviction and his rambling response will resonate with the kinds of voters who are likely to decide what is expected to be an extremely close November election. They include suburban women, independents, and voters turned off by both candidates.

Trump cast himself as a martyr, suggesting that if this could happen

Turn to Trump, Page 2



Tim Wangler at age 8 with a 17-year cicada on his nose in 1990 in Elmhurst. He helped re-create the moment during the 2007 and 2024 emergencies. JAMES MAYO, ANTONIO PEREZ, VINCENT ALBAN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

What cicada invasion? Some city dwellers are seeing ci-nada

After buildup, various neighborhoods have not had any sightings

By Rebecca Johnson
and Kate Armanini
Chicago Tribune

Kris Rey was anticipating a cicada invasion. News story after news story seemed to promise a summer teeming with the insect.

But weeks in, Rey hasn’t seen a single cicada in Lincoln Square. She jokingly called the phenomenon, “the Great Cicada Scandal of

2024.” Or, she mused, “Y2Cicada.”

“It’s a lot of hype for a disastrous event that never happened at all,” Rey said with a laugh. “Y2K was the biggest example of that in my memory.”

And Rey isn’t alone. Sightings of periodical cicadas are few and far between in much of the city. But it’s a much different story for those in Far Southwest Side neighborhoods such as Beverly, as well as the suburbs where the insects’ sound is inescapable.

This year marks a rare double emergence, with the cycles of the 17-year and 13-year cicadas align-

ing for the first time in 221 years. The last overlap of Brood XIX, four species that appear every 13 years in the Southeast, and Brood XIII, three species that appear every 17 years in northern Illinois, was in 1803.

In Lisle, cicadas blanketed Tim Wangler’s front yard. His walkway was littered with shells, and nearly every leaf was crawling with the insect. He didn’t mind.

“It doesn’t bother me at all,” Wangler said. “It gives me that nostalgic feeling of summer. It

Turn to Cicadas, Page 3

Inaction on Bears lifts Arlington Heights’ hopes

Lawmakers don’t address proposed lakefront stadium

By Robert McCoppin
Chicago Tribune

After a legislative session with no action on a new Chicago Bears lakefront stadium — and a conservation group coming out against the proposal — Arlington Heights officials are hopeful that the team may eventually turn its attention back to the suburbs.

Lawmakers adjourned Wednesday without even publicly considering the team’s proposal for a publicly owned stadium downtown.

Also Wednesday, Openlands, a regional conservation group, issued a statement opposing the plan, saying that the stadium would have “dire implications” for migratory birds and “breaks this promise” of a lakefront kept clear for public use.

Michelle Obama’s mother dies at 86

Marian Shields Robinson, the mother of Michelle Obama who moved with the first family to the White House when son-in-law Barack Obama was elected president, has died.
Chicagoland, Page 6

Cubs suffer another painful defeat

Seiya Suzuki doubled in the ninth inning with the potential tying run on base against the Reds on Friday, but Nick Madrigal was easily thrown out at home for the second out as the Cubs fall 5-4 to the Reds. **Chicago Sports**

