

2025 Iowa Master Farm Homemakers Guild Inductees

Kerri Bell - IMFH Class of 2025

Washington County

by JoAnn Alumbaugh

Kerri Bell of Keota, Iowa, has a deep commitment to agriculture, community involvement and educational leadership. With more than 31 years in the classroom, she understands how important it is that education and agriculture go hand in hand.

Just as her husband, Lance, plans for each season of crops, so does Kerri with her students.

“I have to prepare and plant my crop of students to grow, learn and be ready for harvest at the end of the school year,” she says. This symbiotic relationship makes Bell's life a seamless blend of service, stewardship and advocacy.

Bell makes every effort to incorporate agriculture in her teaching plans through programs like Ag in the Classroom, the Iowa Food and Family Project, and the Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation. She has received countless awards and recognition for her efforts. Her latest is as a 2025 Iowa Master Farm Homemaker.

Community outreach

This active farm woman is a driving force behind several community outreach efforts. In 2020, she joined CommonGround, a program supported by the Iowa Corn Growers Association and the Iowa Soybean Association. As a passionate volunteer, she participates in annual trainings and national conferences to educate consumers and help dispel myths about modern agriculture.

Each February, Bell helps to coordinate the Washington County “Field and Friends Party,” working alongside a friend with the county cattlemen's association. She also hosted the 2022 “Ladies Night Out” on their farm, an event that brought together about 50 women — many of whom were not from a farm — to have thoughtful conversations about agriculture.

“We do projects based on the needs of our community,” Bell explains. “And if we don't tell our story, who will?”

Bell was deeply involved in 4-H and FFA when she was younger, reaching the pinnacle of the American FFA Degree.

“4-H and FFA allowed me to share my passion for agriculture and gain more confidence in myself,” she says. “Those experiences helped make me who I am today.”

Her leadership continues on the local, county and state level, as she serves in numerous capacities with commodity groups, the West Chester Lions Club and within her church. She balances her time between school and farm responsibilities, helping Lance as much as possible with their corn, soybean and cover-crop operation and cow-calf herd.

Family-focused

Family remains at the core of everything Bell does. She and Lance raised twins, Ellie and Sophie, who followed in their dad's and grandfather's footsteps by attending Iowa State University. They both have full-time jobs in agriculture but are vested owners of the farm with their parents. Ellie is the marketing manager for Farmers Coop/Vision Ag, and Sophie is an insurance officer with Farm Credit Services of America.

They started farming their own ground in 2016 with help from their grandparents and continued to be involved while in college, gradually taking on more responsibility over

time. Ellie and Sophie also co-own the cow-calf herd with their parents. They finish out steers and sell them to local consumers.

Kerri and Lance are thrilled their daughters love the land as much as they do. “They’ve learned new practices, taken risks and are growing with changes in agriculture,” Kerri says. “The skills they’ve learned have elevated the family operation. We’re proud that they want to continue the legacy that began with our ancestors.”

Planting seeds

“Farming isn’t just a job — it’s our livelihood,” Kerri says. “We’re proud to be growing crops and raising livestock that provide the necessary food, fuel, feed and fiber to consumers. It is the best place to raise a family, and I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

This 2025 Iowa Master Farm Homemaker is a devoted steward of Iowa’s agricultural legacy and is a valued mentor to future generations through her work as a recognized leader and teacher.

Kerri and Lance Bell



Farming isn’t just a job for Kerri and Lance Bell — it’s their livelihood, Kerri says. They’ve also raised twin daughters on their farm, Ellie and Sophie.

Gladie Church - IMFH Class of 2025

Howard County

By JoAnn Alumbaugh

Whether stitching quilts, guiding youth, helping on the farm or participating in fundraisers, a strong thread of empathy and service runs through the life of Gladie Church. This active farm woman from Cresco, Iowa, richly deserves to be honored as a 2025 Iowa Master Farm Homemaker.

Church has made hundreds of quilts over the years and frequently donates them — both full size and mini — for hospital, school, community and church fundraisers. Her basement is a virtual sewing shop, with several sewing machines (including a longarm for quilting) readily at hand for use.

And while Church’s happy place is home on the farm, the eight years she worked at the local quilt shop gave her “the best part-time job I could have asked for,” she says.

Early start in 4-H

Church grew up on a dairy farm, but she told her mother, “I’m never going to marry a farmer.” She wasn’t counting on meeting Craig Church at the Howard County Fair as a youth in 4-H, however.

“I was washing Holsteins, and he was washing Guernseys,” she recalls with a smile. They went to dinner at one of the church stands that evening and discovered that they were born on the same day in the same year. She even made him pull out his wallet to prove it! It seemed like kismet, and the couple has been married for 54 years.

Besides meeting her husband through 4-H, Church owes much to the organization and readily offers her time and talents. A 15-year veteran 4-H leader and highly respected exhibit judge, Church is well-known for creating an environment where young members can develop essential life skills. She thrives on providing one-on-one guidance to 4-H members, offering encouragement before and during the judging process.

Church was an early adopter of technology when they bought a computer in 1987 to keep their farm records and herd health checks online. Record-keeping is especially important since they have a herd of registered Guernseys.

This forward-thinking attitude didn’t go unnoticed. Both Gladie and Craig have served as president of the Iowa Guernsey Breeders Association and have assisted with many state and national conventions. They also attended an international show in Europe, where they saw daughters of one of their bulls being exhibited on the Isle of Guernsey in 2013.

Family first

Gladie quickly points out that her most important accomplishment has been raising their four children. She and Craig instilled the values of leadership, service and hard work, and it’s evident those lessons were absorbed, as each of their children received degrees in higher education.

Their daughter, Amy, works for the American Dairy Science Association. She is married to Huub te Plate. Nathan and his wife, Naomi, manage the farm and will ultimately take over the operation. Gabe, who is married to Kimberly, is a nuclear energy training specialist, and Seth, married to Shannon, is a construction site superintendent.

“Best of all, our kids have blessed us with 14 grandchildren ranging in age from 6 to 24,” Gladie says.

Life has had its challenges, however. Craig’s three-year “cancer vacation,” as they call it, was an unexpected wake-up call, but they hope it’s in the past.

“Through it all, life is a constant transition,” Gladie says. “From early marriage to parenthood to subsequent grandparenthood, from farm partners with parents to sole proprietors, and then to farm partners with children and retirement — all the while, we are learning to adjust to each transition in life.”

Gladie’s life is stitched together with family, community service and agriculture. She has left — and will continue to leave — a lasting impression.

Craig and Gladie Church



BIRTHDAY TWINS: On their first date, Craig and Gladie Church discovered that they were born on the same day in the same year. The Cresco, Iowa, couple has been married 54 years.

Ericka Breuer - IMFH Class of 2025
Des Moines County
by JoAnn Alumbaugh

Ericka Breuer's life has always centered on service: to her family, her friends and her students. As a former educator for 25 years in the Burlington, Iowa, school district, she primarily served as a reading interventionist teacher.

From preschool to eighth grade, she built close and lasting relationships with countless students. That dedication and resiliency applies to every aspect of this busy farm woman's life. For this, she has been honored as a 2025 Iowa Master Farm Homemaker.

Although Breuer battles rheumatoid arthritis — diagnosed in 2006 — one would never know. Her spirit of camaraderie and fun is readily evident, which may explain her wide network of friends. Her love for teaching is carried through to members of a sewing club in which she participates and friends whom she's taught to quilt and sew.

Her own foray into quilting came at age 9 from her great-grandmother, and later from a dear neighbor when she was expecting her son, William. She was a 4-H member, college 4-H volunteer and leader for many years, and still serves in numerous capacities at the county level.

Farmer in training

During the years that Breuer was working full time, she served as errand-runner, hay-hauler and "chore girl" on the farm.

"Now I get to learn and do many new things — sometimes more than I want," she says with a wry chuckle. She's an "auger cart driver in training," as well as a go-fer, hay-hauler and lawncare specialist. Breuer is happy to help and — for the most part — enjoys being a more active participant in the farm.

Donald, Ericka's husband of 32 years, appreciates her pitching in to help. When asked what he values most about his wife, his answer is, "Everything."

Donald and Ericka work together with his twin brother, Ron, and Ron's wife, Anne. They grow corn and beans, and produce a half-acre of sweet corn that they share with family and friends. They also have a cow-calf operation with about 100 commercial cows.

Family is pivotal in Ericka's life. She spends a great deal of time helping her mother and other family members, and holiday get-togethers are especially fun. Donald grew up with nine older sisters and his twin brother, so organizing that group is no small feat.

Their son, William, helps on the farm and runs Breuer Earthworks. Daughter Sophia was married last year to Trevor and is a business analyst for JBS live pork operations. Their youngest daughter, Grace, is a recreational therapist who works at ChildServe in Johnston, Iowa. William and Sophia are Iowa State University graduates, while Grace is continuing her education at Arizona State University, pursuing a degree in family and human development.

Cultivating creativity

Ericka thrives in a creative environment. She loves quilting, often using her longarm machine to quilt for others. Although she gives away many of her own quilts, each one is lovingly crafted, whether for family members or friends. Ericka Breuer learned how to quilt from her great-grandmother. Her quilting expertise was later fostered by a talented neighbor.

Baking and flower gardening also are happy pursuits. However, since one adds calories and the other burns them, she says she leans toward outside activities since she retired from teaching.

In every role Ericka plays in her busy life — whether teacher, homemaker, volunteer or mother — this 2025 Iowa Master Farm Homemaker brings an upbeat attitude and quiet determination. Her warmth, wisdom and a legacy of care reflect the very best of Iowa's farm families.

Ericka and Donald Breuer



MVP: Donald Breuer, who has been married to Ericka Breuer for 32 years, is short and sweet when he describes what he values most about her: "Everything," he says.