



IFMA17 Pre-Congress Tour

July 12 - 18, 2009

This week of activities will start in St. Louis, MO area and guests should arrive to be in place for an opening reception on Sunday, July 12. The sites to be seen during the next few days will show the diversified agriculture of southern Illinois as well as a glimpse of the infrastructure that makes up the Mississippi River as a courier for millions of tons of goods every year. The tour will wind south and east from St. Louis, then back up to the middle of Illinois and culminate in Bloomington/Normal just prior to the start of the Congress.

1. Sunday, July 12 -- Arrive St. Louis, MO

Lodging at Four Points by Sheraton, Fairview Heights -- This will be our 'base' for two days, so make yourself at home and get comfortable. Check out the Web site at www.fourpoints.com/fairviewheights. Details for transportation from the St. Louis airport to Fairview Heights will be provided to those registering for the Pre-Congress tour. Join your fellow tour-goers at the Four Points for a **Sunday evening welcome reception**.



2. Monday, July 13

St. Louis Arch -- One of the true Wonders of the World, the Arch is the tallest national monument in the United States at 630 feet; it is the city's best known landmark and a popular tourist attraction. Construction began February 12, 1963 and the last section of the Arch was put into place on October 28, 1965. Each year, approximately a million visitors ride the trams to the top of the Arch. The trams have been in operation for over 30 years, traveling a total of 250,000 miles and carrying over 25 million passengers. www.stlouisarch.com



Monsanto Headquarters -- Monsanto Company is a leading global provider of technology-based solutions and agricultural products that improve farm productivity and food quality. We will be their guests for lunch today at the company's world-wide headquarters. www.monsanto.com

Anheuser Busch Brewery Tour -- The afternoon will be capped by a walking tour through the brewery operations of Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company, parent of the self-proclaimed "King of Beers." You will learn about the rich brewing heritage of Anheuser-Busch and how fresh beer is brewed and packaged today. The tour provides an opportunity to see state-of-the-art facilities, including brew houses, beechwood aging cellars and packaging facilities. And, of course, a sampling of some of the product at tour's end. www.budweiser.com



3. Tuesday, July 14

Keller Farms -- Collinsville, Illinois, and the surrounding area, is part of what is known as the American Bottomlands, a Mississippi River basin adjacent to St. Louis, carved out of the glaciers from the ice age, the soil is so rich in potash, a chemical nutrient on which horseradish thrives. Approximately 85% of the world's supply of horseradish is produced in this fertile setting. Cold winters provide the required root dormancy. The long summers yield excellent growing conditions for the root to grow. www.kellerfarmsinc.com

Melvin Price Lock and Dam -- This is the first replacement structure on the Upper Mississippi River nine-foot navigation project. Construction of the Locks and dam began in 1978 and was completed in 1994, but the structure became partially operational in 1990. The structure consists of a dam – 1,160 feet long with 9 tainter gates, each 110 feet wide by 42 feet high. There are two lock chambers at Melvin Price. The main chamber is 1,200 feet long by 110 feet wide while the auxiliary chamber is 600 feet long by 110 feet wide. In 1990, the first year of operation, 80 million tons of cargo passed through the locks and dam. www.greatriverroad.com/Cities/EAlton/MelvinPrice.htm



The Maschoff's -- The Maschhoffs, headquartered in Carlyle, Ill., is one of the largest family-owned pork production networks in North America. The company is owned by 5th generation family farmers Dave & Karen Maschhoff and Ken & Julie Maschhoff and partners with a network of 300 family farmers across the Midwest. These family farmers, known as our Production Partners, work with us to collectively produce over two million pigs per year. We will have lunch here today. www.themaschhoffs.com



4. Wednesday, July 15 -- Carbondale, IL area

Echo Valley Orchard -- This 500-acre apple and peach orchard is operated by a group of Amish growers who transplanted themselves here from Pennsylvania in 2007. Weather wreaked havoc their first year, but they have recovered well. Peach harvest will be in full swing when we visit, so be prepared to taste some of the freshest and juiciest peaches you've ever encountered.

Rosemont Farms -- With corporate headquarters in Boca Raton, FL, Rosemont Farms is a major distributor of wholesale vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds and citrus. Today we will visit their facility at Cobden, IL. www.rosemontfarms.com

Bison Bluff Farms -- Where does a 2,500-pound bison bull scratch his backside? **ANYWHERE HE WANTS TO!!** Bison Bluff Farms is owned and operated by Clifton and Kim Howell, and consists of over 350 bison roaming on more than 1,000 acres. The bison are grass fed, supplemented with some grain and minerals and no chemicals or hormones are added. www.bisonbluff.com



Blue Sky Winery -- All that bison dust will have made everyone a little thirsty, so what better way to whet the whistle than a stop at a winery? Anchoring the eastern end of the Shawnee Hills Wine Trail, this winery offers you a taste of Tuscany in the hills of Southern Illinois. Enjoy the tour and then sit back and have some munchies and sample some award-winning Blue Sky Wine. (You can purchase as well, if you wish!!) www.blueskyvineyard.com



5. Thursday, July 16 -- Effingham, IL area

Siemer Milling -- Siemer Milling Company is a family- and employee-owned company. It's primary product is wheat flour milled to different specifications for the making of such foods as cookies, crackers, cakes, pretzels, batters and breadings, bread and biscuits. The company has a close, long-term relationships with some of the largest and most trusted names in consumer packaged foods and food service. www.siemermilling.com



Mix and Mingle -- Sit back and enjoy rural hospitality at its best as members of the Faith Lutheran Church congregation invite us in as special guests for a good, old-fashioned, all-American potluck dinner. We will be joined by others from the community who will enjoy sitting with and getting to know you. **A Special Program -- Education in Rural America** -- Following lunch we will be joined by Dr. Steve Lanuc, who is superintendent of Unit 20 Beecher School District. He will talk about how education is funded in the United States and some of the unique challenges faced by smaller, rural school districts.

A Dusty-Boots Farm Visit -- We will spend the rest of the afternoon at Wachtel Farms. This operation is run by three generations of the Wachtel family who will tell us about their 5,700-acre operation which focuses on raising corn, wheat, and double-cropped soybeans. You will also have the opportunity to check out corn and soybean test plots.

6. Friday, July 17 -- Arcola, IL area

A Visit to an Amish Community -- In total contrast to what you have seen at the Wachtel family farm, we will step back in time to spend the day visiting the Amish community near Arcola, IL. Here we will visit Amish farms, homes, shopping and have another very special luncheon. www.AmishcountryofcentralIL.com



7. Saturday, July 18 -- Springfield, IL area

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum -- Many historians consider him the greatest American who ever lived. Today you will have the opportunity to visit the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. You are encouraged to visit the web site to get an overview of all that will be available to you. www.alplm.org/home.html



8. On to the Congress.....

Following the visit in Springfield, the Pre-Congress tour will end with guests being dropped off at their hotels in the Bloomington/Normal area as they prepare for the next day's opening program of IFMA17!!

Lodging for the Pre-Congress Tour

Sunday, July 12 and Monday, July 13 -- Four Points by Sheraton, Fairview Heights, IL
www.fourpoints.com/fairviewheights

Tuesday, July 14 and Wednesday, July 15 -- Holiday Inn, Carbondale, IL
www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/hi/1/en/hotel/mdhci

Thursday, July 16 -- Holiday Inn Express, Effingham, IL
www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/ex/1/en/hotel/effig?cm_mmc=mdpr_-_googlemaps_-_ex_-_effig

Friday, July 17 -- Northfield Inn, Suites and Conference Center, Springfield, IL
www.northfieldinn.com

The Route

