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For further information, contact Sarah Shanahan (573) 472-9800

Getting the word out about Historic Farms book a challenge, says IDOA

The publisher of an upcoming book honoring historic family-owned farms in Illinois says initial response to their publicity campaign has been overwhelming, despite the fact that a large number of farm owners still haven’t heard about the project.

The coffee-table book, *Illinois Historic Farms: Honoring the State’s Enduring Heritage of Family-Owned Farms*, will feature histories of family-owned farms that have been certified by the Illinois Department of Agriculture as Centennial or Sesquicentennial Farms, as well as photos and stories documenting the history of agriculture in the state.

Promotional brochures began to be mailed to eligible farms late in 2013, according to the publisher, Acclaim Press. Participation and enthusiasm for the project among farmers has been incredible, according to book editor Charles Francis of Acclaim Press.

“Submissions from those who want their farm histories included in the book have been pouring in,” Francis said. “We’re even getting calls from farms that haven’t been certified through the IDOA asking if they can be in the book.”

But a large number of the promotional mailings have been returned undelivered to the publisher, and they are hearing from local sources that many Centennial and Sesquicentennial Farm owners haven’t gotten a brochure. As a result, the publisher will be working with local historical societies and agricultural officials to update their mailing list and to make sure that every eligible farmer knows about the book.

“We don’t want any farm that wants to have their history included in the book to be left out because they didn’t learn about the project,” said IDOA Centennial and Sesquicentennial Farms Program Coordinator Delayne Reeves.

Any farm that hasn’t received a promotional mailing should call Acclaim Press at (877) 427-2665 to request a brochure or download it from their website, www.acclaimpress.com.

Reeves said there is still time for farms that meet the criteria to complete the IDOA’s certification process and be included in the book. Those interested should call her at (217) 524-9129 or go to the program’s website, www.agr.state.il.us/centennial-sesquicentennial-farms/ for details on the program.