

Hedgehog Creature Feature

RAINA GENAW
NEWS CHRONICLE

OTTER CREEK — Have you met Tama County Conservation's (new!) educational hedgehog Olive? Be sure to say 'hello' to her at the nature center during your next trip to Otter Creek Lake & Park!

Olive is an African pygmy hedgehog which is a species native to Africa and is not an Iowa native. In Iowa, pet hedgehogs are captive-bred. Olive was adopted from the Animal Rescue League of Iowa in late 2023.

In the wild, hedgehogs eat a variety of insects, worms, snails, small animals, and carrion (road-kill). In captivity, hedgehogs like Olive are fed a special pelleted diet supplemented with cat food and are occasionally given worms, unseasoned meat, and fruit or vegetables as

a treat. Olive has a keen sense of smell that she uses to find food. When she is exploring a new area, you can often hear her loudly sniffing and grunting like a pig to take in all of the new smells.

African hedgehogs are nocturnal, meaning they are mostly active at night. They prefer to live alone, without any other hedgehogs nearby. Olive spends most days burrowed underneath her log, sleeping peacefully. At night, she eats, drinks, and plays with her toys. Wild hedgehogs can run up to six miles in one night, and Olive imitates this behavior by running on her wheel for several hours each night.

When threatened, hedgehogs hiss and curl up into a ball, exposing their spiky backs to any potential enemies. Their spikes act like armor, protecting them from at-



PHOTO COURTESY OF RAINA GENAW

Tama County Conservation's educational hedgehog Olive pictured recently.

tackers. While porcupines also use spikes for defense, they are not closely related to hedgehogs. Close relatives of hedgehogs include moles, shrews, and moonrats.

Olive is currently on display at the Otter Creek Lake & Park Nature Center at 2283 Park Road in rural Toledo. Stop in during business hours to say hello!

Vilsack announces millions in federal funds for solar, fertilizer projects

By KYLE DUNPHEY

IOWA CAPITAL DISPATCH

U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced millions in funding on Monday for renewable energy and domestic fertilizer projects.

Vilsack spoke during the American Farm Bureau Federation's annual convention and trade show, which was in downtown Salt Lake City this year. He touted the Inflation Reduction Act while sounding the alarm over the loss of small operations and wealth consolidation in the agricultural industry.

Since 1981, Vilsack said the country has lost 437,300 farms and over 141 million acres of farmland.

"Those are farm families that are no longer in the farming business, which means that in all likelihood their families are no longer in those small communities," Vilsack said. "The question I ask all of you today is whether we're OK with that?"

And despite what Vilsack called the best three years in net farm cash income ever in the U.S., small and midsize operations are not seeing the success of their large, industrialized counterparts.

About 7.5% of American farms received 89% of the income last year; which means the remaining farms, which Vilsack estimated at about 2 million, had to share 11% of income generated by agriculture.

"What we're doing here

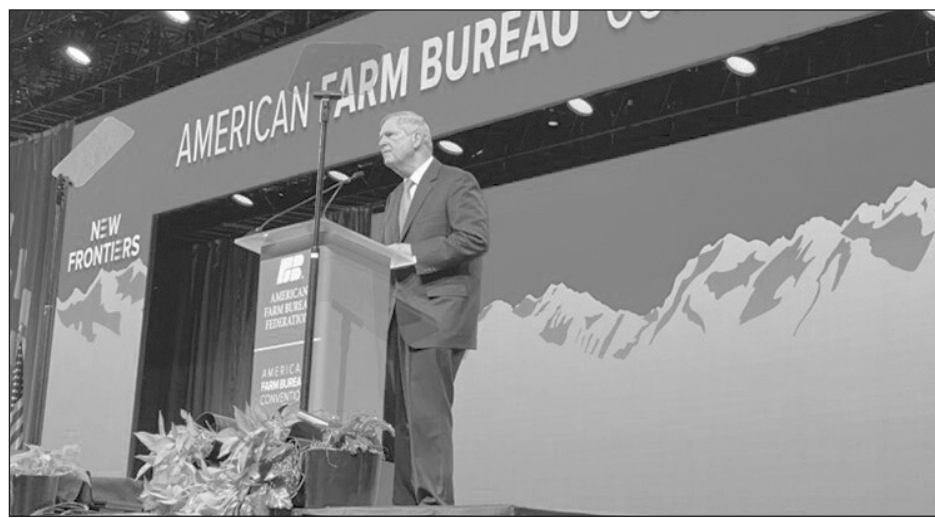


PHOTO BY KYLE DUNPHEY/UTAH NEWS DISPATCH

U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack addresses the American Farm Bureau Federation's annual convention and trade show in Salt Lake City on Jan. 22.

is creating opportunities for that 92% of farmers to be able to have multiple revenue streams," Vilsack said as he announced the new round of funding.

The federal dollars are coming through the Rural Energy for America and the Fertilizer Production Expansion programs, which direct about \$207 million to projects in 42 states, according to the department. Roughly \$94 million of that comes from the Inflation Reduction Act.

The funds announced Monday will support 682 projects, most of them aimed at reducing emissions and renewable energy.

More than 80 Iowa projects have been awarded nearly \$18 million. Among them:

- Red Lion Knoxville Waterworks Solar LLC, an electric generation company, was awarded \$800,000 to install solar arrays at six locations in Knoxville. The project is expected to generate enough electricity to power 123 homes, amounting to \$81,499 per year.
- Southwest Iowa Renewable Energy LLC was awarded \$1 million to help install a slurry heating and reduced backset system at its dry-mill ethanol production facility in rural Pottawattamie County.
- Red Lion Creston Schools Solar LLC was awarded \$1 million to help install solar arrays in Creston expected to generate enough electricity to power 216 homes, amounting to \$151,822 per year.

The program provides

grants and loans to farmers and rural small businesses to expand the use of wind, solar and other clean energy sources, which according to the USDA helps them "increase their income, grow their businesses, address climate change and lower energy costs."

Vilsack called it "a voluntary, incentive-based market-driven system" that has become popular among farmers.

"I know that farmers and ranchers and producers are taking advantage of this because the programs are over-subscribed. The demand is great," he said. "Farmers are now going to be paid, encouraged, incented, rewarded, for taking those steps to become more sustainable."

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122 W 4th Street Vinton, IA - This is your chance to own an exceptional commercial property in the heart of Vinton, strategically positioned on the corner of a vibrant shopping/dining district. This prime 4,560 square feet commercial space offers versatility making it an ideal choice for retail, professional services, offices, or an apartment. The interior of this building provides a flexible layout. **\$149,000**

418 2nd Street Gladbrook, IA - This commercial building contains 2 offices, a barber shop, and restrooms on the main floor. The 2nd floor contains 3 apartments. There is coin-op laundry. Some updates have been made to the building and apartments. There is parking in the back and a deck area. **\$84,950**

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New Listing!!
504 Jefferson St. Dysart

This is a nice traditional 2 story, Four Square home with beautiful original woodwork. Hardwood floors. Updated with a new furnace 2017, newer roof 2011, windows 8-10 years ago and vinyl siding. Also a new front door, remodeled main floor bath, newer kitchen & entryway flooring. Duct-work cleaned with-in last 5 years. New garage door and 220 volt power in garage. Partially fenced in back yard. **\$159,500!!**

1211 Leer St Dysart

Exceptionally nice 3 bed, 2 1/2 bath split level partially brick home. Located on a beautiful country view. Fresh interior, master bath & walk-in closet, 2 very large decks & a family room. Close to schools. Absolutely move-in condition!! **Only \$239,500!!**

113 Main St Keystone

1-1/2 story, 2 bed, 1.5 bath home. Several recent updates & upgrades. Hardwood floors, formal dining room, new metal roof by closing. Ready for new paint of your color choice. Full basement with potential to finish. Newer furnace & AC. **Only \$135,000!!**

New Acreage Listing!
2757 220th St. Clutier

5.5 Acres Beautiful 2 story, 5 bedroom, 2 bath home. 2,272 sq. ft. Original woodwork! Oversized 2 stall attached garage. Many updates including a newer metal roof, gutters, soffit & vinyl siding. Newer furnace, water heater & breaker box. Also, solar panels!! New septic Fall 2023. Heated shop! Beautiful windbreak and many trees of all varieties. **Plus 17.3 A m/l per FSA farmland available or can be bought separately. Price \$995,000 Price Reduced to \$329,500!!**

New Listing!
903 Wilson St Dysart

Very nice, country style 4-5 bedroom, 2+ bath home. Recently remodeled & updated in 2023 including new kitchen & counter-top, all new flooring, light fixtures, switches & plug-ins, sinks & toilets, all freshly painted, plus much more. All new appliances, stove, frig, microwave, dishwasher, disposal, washer & dryer. Absolutely move-in condition!!! **Only \$189,500**

New Acreage Listing!!
2975 275th St. Clutier

Beautiful Country Setting! 10.68 Acres Acres! 1.5 Story, 4 bedroom home. Very nice original woodwork, hardwood floors & pocket door. New metal roof 2020, vinyl siding, new foundation spray foam 2023. Front porch with ramp. Large deck, some newer windows. Garden/storage shed. 7.1 acres of farmland. **ONLY \$358,000!! Reduced to \$325,000!!**

New Storefront Listing!!
306 Main St. Dysart

1,680 sq ft commercial building. New membrane roof with-in last 2 years. New furnace & AC. Open floor plan. Great opportunity to start your own business or expand a current business!! **Only \$44,000!!**

Benton County Farmland
82.86 M/I Acres, 65.81 Acres in CRP with the balance in Timber. CSR-2 67 on cropland. Includes Cedar River access & River frontage. 3.2% gross return on list price. Located on the North edge of Vinton. Lots of wildlife! **Price Reduced \$528,000 \$498,000**

SOLD - Benton Co Farmland - SOLD
171.8 A m/l, Kane Township, CSR-2 83.9, 154 A tillable, Available for 2021. Mostly Kenyon, Tama, Dinsdale, Colo/Ely Soils

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