



FARMERS TEACHING FARMERS

PRACTICAL FARMERS OF IOWA
2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



**JANUARY
22-23
2016**

**IOWA STATE
CONFERENCE CENTER**

SCHEMAN BUILDING, AMES

FEATURING:

Common Characteristics of Successful Farmers

A Keynote Address by John Kempf, Farmer and
Founder of Advancing Eco-Agriculture

Pre-conference short courses – January 21 – 22

40 conference sessions

North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education

(NCR-SARE) Farmers Forum, featuring farmers sharing information about their
sustainable agriculture research, demonstration and education projects

Exhibit Hall filled with experts providing information and farm business solutions

SCHEDULE

Thursday, January 21

Noon – 1 p.m. Short course registration
1 – 7 p.m. Short courses

Friday, January 22

8 – 11:30 a.m. Short courses continue
11 a.m. Conference registration opens
11 a.m. Exhibit Hall opens
12:30 p.m. Silent Auction opens

12:30 – 4:30 p.m.: Workshops

Includes 1-hour networking break
in Exhibit Hall from 2 – 3 p.m.
Support our sponsors!

4:45 p.m. Practical Farmers Update
5:15 p.m. Farmland Owner Award
presentation to the
Nimrod family
5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Keynote Address by
John Kempf
7 – 10 p.m. PFI Potluck
CPMI Event Center
2321 North Loop Dr., Ames
(PFI Sustainable Agriculture
Achievement award will be
presented)

Saturday, January 23

7:30 – 8:45 a.m. Registration and Regional
Breakfast Meetings
8:00 a.m. Exhibit Hall opens

9 – 11 a.m. Round I Workshops

11 – 11:30 a.m. Break in Exhibit Hall
Support our sponsors!

11:30 a.m. – Round II Workshops

12:30 p.m.

12:45 – Lunch (featuring foods
1:45 p.m. from PFI farmers)

1:45 – Round III Workshops

3:15 p.m.

3:30 p.m. Silent Auction closes

3:30 – Round IV: Ask an Expert

4:30 p.m.

Practical Farmers of Iowa Update

Join us at 4:45 p.m. Friday for our annual business meeting and get the inside scoop on Practical Farmers: programming, finances, staffing and board elections. **We will also present the Farmland Owner Award to the Nimrod family.** This award is granted annually by Practical Farmers to non-operator landowners who have shown a commitment to managing their land for long-term sustainability of farm businesses, environmental quality, soil productivity, rural communities and the next generation.

Practical Farmers of Iowa Potluck

A FREE festive event! Catch up with old friends and meet new. **Please bring food and beverages to share.** There are limited outlets for slow cookers. Practical Farmers will provide a main dish, water and tableware. Potluck Party Hosts: **Ty and Bobbie Gustafson** from Story City Locker. You may bring your food items to the potluck, or you may drop them off at Scheman when you arrive for the conference, and we will transport them for you. We will also present the PFI Sustainable Agriculture Achievement Award.

Regional Breakfast Meetings

Come enjoy a free hot breakfast and get to know more people in your part of the state. We will have gathering space for attendees who come from outside Iowa, too!

SPECIAL: SARE FARMERS FORUM

Practical Farmers is hosting the North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) program's Farmers Forum in 2016. This traveling annual event gives farmers, ranchers and others funded by NCR-SARE grants the chance to share information about their sustainable agriculture research, demonstration and education projects. The Farmers Forum will be offered as a special conference workshop track on Saturday. The projects highlighted in these presentations and the Farmers Forum are funded by grants from NCR-SARE, a USDA-funded program that supports and promotes sustainable farming and ranching by offering competitive grants and educational opportunities.



WANTED

Silent Auction Donations

Please donate baked goods, farm-raised products, hand-crafted items, books, farm supplies and more! Proceeds go to Practical Farmers' beginning farmer program.

Shared Memories

To celebrate 30 years of Practical Farmers, we invite you to share a meaningful photo of yourself or farm, and, **in 10 words or less**, a statement about what Practical Farmers means to you. Please email these to tamsyn@practicalfarmers.org by **December 18**.





FARMERS TEACHING FARMERS

Fifty farmers and friends attended the first Practical Farmers annual meeting on a cold day in December 1985, and came away with a plethora of practical information shared by farmers about research and farming experiences. Thirty years later, the crowd has grown significantly, but the vein of the gathering stays the same: farmers teaching farmers how to improve their farms and communities.

Even more than the learning that takes place, attendees prize connections they make at Practical Farmers conferences, from life-long friends and mentors to new business partners. "It's like attending a big family reunion," some members say.

Attend the Practical Farmers of Iowa 2016 Annual Conference to strengthen these important relationships while learning from farmers about building community; being stewards of our natural resources; and creating viable farms, farmers and food systems.



KEYNOTE ADDRESS

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL FARMERS

by John Kempf, Farmer and Founder of Advancing Eco-Agriculture

What is a successful farm? This answer varies depending on whom you ask. Farming success can be defined as profit, ecological diversity, supporting another generation on the farm, providing healthy food, wildlife habitat – the list is long, and most farmers define success through multiple objectives.

Keynote speaker John Kempf has spent a decade working with innovative farmers across the country. John is known for helping farmers think differently to solve challenges they are experiencing on their farms. In this presentation, John will discuss the common characteristics in farming operations he views as extraordinarily successful. John will

discuss how you can incorporate these same principles into your decision-making and problem-solving.

John Kempf grew up farming, and continues to farm in his Amish community near Middlefield, Ohio. John is an internationally recognized lecturer who speaks widely on the topics of regenerative agriculture and inherent disease resistance mechanisms that plants can develop with proper nutritional management. A top expert in the field of biological and regenerative farming, John founded Advancing Eco-Agriculture in 2006 to help fellow farmers by providing education, tools and strategies that have a global effect on our food supply.



SHORT COURSES



GROWING GOOD SMALL GRAINS

Growing small grains allows farmers to reduce fertilizer and pesticide inputs; plant cover crops earlier to fix nitrogen, build soil organic matter and offer forage for livestock; and to spread the farm workload and cash flow more evenly throughout the year. This short course will take an in-depth look at how to grow good small grains. Attendees will learn:

- The state of small grains and oat production in Iowa from **David Weisberger**, agronomy graduate student at Iowa State University (ISU)
- Oat physiology and market opportunities from **Bruce Roskens**, director of crop sciences at Grain Millers, Inc.
- Basics of spring wheat and barley production in North Dakota from **Joel Ransom**, professor of agronomy at North Dakota State University
- Details about small grains in an Iowa cropping system from **Matt Liebman**, professor of agronomy at ISU
- Which oat and wheat varieties are adapted for the southern Midwest from **Fred Kolb**, professor of crop services at University of Illinois

Farmers **Darren Fehr**, from Mallard, and **Bill and Al Frederick**, from Jefferson, will talk about their practical experience raising oats, wheat and cereal rye in Iowa.

SUCCESSFUL ESTABLISHMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF ORCHARD TREES

A lot of people know how to plant a tree; very few of them know how to establish an orchard and keep it thriving into maturity. Tom Wahl will discuss his experience and best practices for orchard establishment and management, including orchard floor, pruning, protection, and pest and disease management. He will also provide feedback on several beginning orchard plans from other farmers.

Tom Wahl owns and operates Red Fern Farm with his wife, Kathy Dice. Red Fern Farm is an agroforestry farm and nursery specializing in nut and berry crops as well producing tree nursery stock and medicinal forest plants. The farm currently has around 75 tree and shrub species, and is the site of on-going research. Tom and Kathy were the 2015 recipients of PFI's Sustainable Agriculture Achievement Award.



Tom Wahl

GRAZERS: PRE-CONFERENCE PARTNER EVENT

IOWA FORAGE AND GRASSLAND COUNCIL CONFERENCE

JANUARY 21-22 IN AMES | ISU ALUMNI CENTER
HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH SHORT COURSES



This year PFI members have multiple opportunities to participate in grazing and forage discussions. IFGC will hold its annual conference immediately before the PFI conference, at the ISU Alumni Center – located right next to the Scheman Building. IFGC has partnered with Practical Farmers to plan an agenda of expert producer and industry speakers. The event will run from noon on January 21 to 11:30 a.m. on January 22.

Featured speakers include grazing consultant **Jim Elizondo** and forage specialist **Bruce Anderson**. Two producer panels

and other Iowa speakers will address topics including grazing cover crops, stockpiling forages, managing alfalfa, land use decisions, strategic supplementations and contract grazing. There will be a Thursday evening session with a dinner catered by Hickory Park, with discussions on current beef and grazing topics in Iowa.

For more details and to register, visit www.iowaforage.org or www.iowabeefcenter.org, or contact Joe Sellers: (641) 203-1270 or sellers@iastate.edu.

SESSIONS AT A GLANCE

FRIDAY	SATURDAY			
Friday Sessions	Round I Workshops	Round II Workshops	Round III Workshops	Round IV: Ask an Expert
	9 – 11 a.m.	11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	1:45 – 3:15 p.m.	3:30 – 4:30 p.m.
Living Plants as Solar Collectors	Interseeding Cover Crops	High Tunnel Vegetable Production	Rolling Cover Crops with Modified Equipment	<i>Robin and Kelly Griffeth</i>
Farming Smarter, Not Harder: Financial Literacy and Business Management	Managing Nutrition for Plant Health and Yield	Practical Farmers of Iowa in 2046	The 10-Year Journey	<i>Leslie Cooperband and Wes Jarrell</i> <i>Janet McNally</i> <i>Sarah Foltz Jordan</i>
Regenerative Grazing Management	Start to Finish: Producing and Marketing Grass-Fed Lambs	Modifying Cultivators for Better Weed Control	Poultry-Centered Regenerative Agriculture System	<i>Mark Gleason and Donald Lewis</i> <i>PFI Sustainable Agriculture Award Winner (TBD)</i> <i>Dave Baker</i>
Farmland Legacies: What Matters Most?	Nitrogen – Important Soil Nutrient or Water Quality Challenge?	Profitable and Practical Grass-Based Dairy Farming	Five Generations of Farm Transfer	<i>John Kempf</i> <i>Linda Naeve</i> <i>(SARE Farmers Forum)</i>
Establishing and Managing a Goat Dairy, Creamery and Farm Restaurant	Business Plan Vetting	Farm Energy Planning	Farm Mechanization Efficiencies	
Understanding Farm Rules and Regulations	Effective Farm Mentorships: Training the Trainer	We Learn More by Accident Than We Do on Purpose	Top 10 Cover Crop Species for Iowa – 2016 Edition	
Tackling Fruit and Vegetable Diseases, Weeds and Pests	On-Farm Solar Panel Installation and Financing	Practical Tips for On-Farm Pollinator Habitat	Introduction to Government Programs for Farmers	
	SARE Farmers Forum: Chickens and Trap Crops: An Integration of Sustainable Approaches to Insect Pest Control in Vegetable Production Management of the Spotted Wing Drosophila Using High Tunnels Developing Commercial Elderberry Production in Minnesota	SARE Farmers Forum: Evaluating the Roller-Crimper for Cover Crops in Corn and Soybean Terraced Ground Adapting Cover Crops to Northern Climate Conventional Cropping Systems	SARE Farmers Forum: Finishing Time and Weights of Grass-Fed Beef Animals Comparison of Annual Forages for Grazing Lambs on Previously Cropped Ground	

FRIDAY

IN-DEPTH WORK- SHOPS

Registration begins at 11 a.m. There is a one-hour break from 2 – 3 p.m.

Living Plants as Solar Collectors

Farmers were in the solar energy business long before solar energy was a hot thing. If you have not thought of your living plants as solar collectors, doing so offers a new and exciting way to look at agriculture. Learn how the Griffeths are harnessing solar energy to improve soils; increase yields; and reduce inputs through companion crops, cover crops and no-till on their farm in Jewell, Kansas.

*Father-son duo **Robin and Kelly Griffeth** have practiced no-till farming for 20 years. The Griffeths found no-till alone was not enough to conserve soil and water, and have expanded their farming practices with the goal of keeping living roots in the soil as close to 365 days a year as possible. Robin and Kelly raise corn, soybeans, wheat, grain sorghum and sunflowers on 3,700 acres in north-central Kansas.*

Farming Smarter, Not Harder: Financial Literacy and Business Management

Many farmers avoid learning about the business intricacies of farming. Consequently they work harder than they need to, or quit farming because of frustrating – and often avoidable – losses.

In the first half of this workshop, Richard Wiswall will focus on farming smarter, not harder, featuring planning and analysis tools to operate a profitable farm. In the second half of the workshop, Richard will focus on the language of business: being an effective manager and using financial tools (with some tips for success).

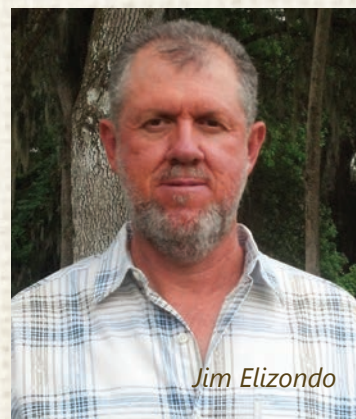
***Richard Wiswall** and his wife, Sally Colman, own and operate Cate Farm in East Montpelier, Vermont. Richard has been farming there for 35 years, growing and selling organic produce, seedlings and medicinal herbs. Richard likes to share his knowledge with other farmers, and wrote "The Organic Farmer's Business Handbook" to help farmers with the business end of farming.*



Richard Wiswall

Regenerative Grazing Management

Non-selective grazing, or high stock density grazing, is essential to improving desirable pasture species composition while increasing stocking rate and enhancing the nutrient cycle, energy flow, gas exchange and plant succession. Jim Elizondo will share his grazing management techniques and experience grazing Mashona cattle in Florida to achieve the highest regenerative stocking rate while improving the environment.



Jim Elizondo

***Jim Elizondo** grew up on beef and dairy cattle ranches in Mexico, and moved to Florida five years ago. Jim is an agronomy engineer who specializes in cattle nutrition and sustainable ranch management. In 2012, he started rehabilitating 550 acres that had once been a tree nursery with heavy chemical usage. Through intensively grazing 480 Mashona cattle, forage production has increased by 4 to 5 times.*

Farmland Legacies: What Matters Most?

With 30 percent of Iowa farmland owned by those over 75 years of age, Iowa will soon experience a monumental transfer of farmland. If you own farmland: What matters most about the legacy you leave behind? Come listen to three farmland owners who have done the soul searching needed to answer that question. Then participate in activities and discussion on the future of farmland ownership in Iowa.

***Angela Tedesco** is the owner of farmland in rapidly developing Granger.*

***Dale Nimrod**, the 2015 PFI Farmland Owner award winner, and his siblings sold their farmland in southwestern Iowa to a local farm family.*



Lisa & Jim French

***Lisa French and her husband, Jim**, farm on land they own near Partridge, Kansas.*

***Margaret Smith** and her family farm near Hampton. She also works for ISU Value-Added Agriculture-Extension and is a member of PFI's Farm Transitions Committee.*



Establishing and Managing a Goat Dairy, Creamery and Farm Restaurant

Wes Jarrell and Leslie Cooperband will talk about how they manage their goat dairy, on-farm creamery and orchard, as well as marketing of their products. Samples of farm products will be served!

Leslie Cooperband and Wes Jarrell own and operate *Prairie Fruits Farm and Creamery* near Champaign, Illinois. They transformed land purchased in 2003 to perennial and livestock production, including fruit trees, berry plants, pasture, hay and restored prairie. The farm raises Nubian goats and is licensed as a Grade A goat dairy and farmstead creamery.



Understanding Farm Rules and Regulations

Part I: Business Entities and Insurance to Protect Your Farm

What business entity best suits your farm situation? What insurance do you need? Rachel Armstrong combines her farming background with her legal expertise to explain how to protect your farm business through business entities and the right insurance.

Rachel Armstrong is the founder of *Farm Commons*, a nonprofit organization based in Madison, Wisconsin, dedicated to providing the proactive legal services sustainable farmers need to become the stable, resilient foundation of a community-based food system.

Part II: Rules and Regs for Selling Meat and Eggs

Selling beef, pork, chicken or eggs and have questions about inspection and labeling requirements? Hear from farmers who sell through a mix of markets about how they navigate through inspection and labeling requirements.

Ron Bartelt has raised layers, broilers, ducks and turkeys under the state regulatory system for about 15 years. He farms near Grimes.

Ty Gustafson and his wife, Bobbie, own and operate *Story City Locker*. They provide custom processing as well as inspected processing with third-party labeling.

Shanen and Beau Ebersole raise livestock near Kellerton and sell grass-fed beef through a number of markets both in Iowa and out of state.

Tackling Fruit and Vegetable Diseases, Weeds and Pests

Part I: Disease and Pest Management in Organic Apple Production

An apple orchard is a long-term investment; decisions today will shape success in future years. Maury Wills will discuss his experience with organic disease and pest management in a certified organic apple orchard.

Maury Wills owns and operates *Wills Family Orchard* near Adel. He is also the bureau chief and organic program manager for the *Ag Diversification and Market Development Bureau* at the Iowa Department of Agriculture.



Part II: Weed Ecology and Reproduction in Vegetable Crops

Even for experienced growers, weeds present a perennial (and annual) challenge. Andrew Dunham and Matt Liebman join forces to discuss weed management practices and the development of more effective management strategies based on knowledge of weed ecology and life cycles.

Andrew Dunham runs *Grinnell Heritage Farm*, an 80-acre organic vegetable farm near Grinnell, with his wife, Melissa.

Matt Liebman's research at ISU focuses on diversified cropping systems, weed ecology and management, and native perennial species for soil and water conservation.

SATURDAY

**Saturday Regional Breakfast Clusters,
7:30-8:45 a.m.**

- Arrive early to enjoy a free hot breakfast sourced from PFI farmers!
- Get to know other PFI members in your region, and help plan regional activities for 2016.
- We will have an area for out-of-state members to network as well.



ROUND I 9 – 11 a.m.

Interseeding Cover Crops

Farmer Bryce Irlbeck of Manning, and University of Minnesota researcher Scott Wells, will share their experiences with interseeding various cover crops into corn earlier in the growing season than usual (June). In 2014, Wells initiated a study to investigate the suitability of five cover crop options (cereal rye, red clover, hairy vetch, field pennycress and a mixture of oat+pea+radish) planted into V7 corn.



Bryce Irlbeck

Bryce Irlbeck farms with his family in west-central Iowa, experimenting with different ways to improve soil health through cover crops, plant diversity and tight rotations.

Dr. M. Scott Wells' research evaluates technologies such as cover crop interseeding into crops, winter oilseed relay cropping, alfalfa production, and nitrogen in annual and perennial crops.

Managing Nutrition for Plant Health and Yield

John Kempf will discuss regenerative agriculture models and the farm management tools and systems necessary to enhance the soil-plant ecosystem's performance to produce crops highly resistant to diseases and insects that produce the highest yields.

John Kempf farms near Middleton, Ohio. He is the founder of Advancing Eco-Agriculture.

Start to Finish: Producing and Marketing Grass-Fed Lambs

This session will cover the six roadblocks that often prevent success in producing grass-finished lambs: parasite management, breeding and overwintering the ewe flock, lambing, weaning, finishing and marketing. Janet McNally will emphasize forage quality and optimizing the omega-3 content of the final product.

Janet McNally operates Tamarack Lamb & Wool in Hinckley, Minnesota. Janet has been raising sheep for 40 years and periodically writes for "Graze" magazine.



Janet McNally

Nitrogen – Important Soil Nutrient or Water Quality Challenge?

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH IOWA LEARNING FARMS

To help better understand the movement of nitrogen, Mike Castellano will discuss the soil nitrogen cycle. Matt Helmers will highlight ongoing agricultural drainage and nitrate loss studies. Rob Stout will share information about his use of cover crops and a bioreactor to manage nitrates on his farm.

Mike Castellano, associate professor in agronomy at ISU, focuses on nitrogen cycling and transport within the soil to maximize sustainable productivity of agricultural systems.

Matt Helmers, professor and extension specialist in agriculture and biosystems engineering at ISU, focuses on agriculture water resources and water quality management.

Washington County farmer **Rob Stout** has been no-tilling since 1983, has planted cover crops since 2009, and recently installed a woodchip denitrification bioreactor.

Business Plan Vetting

Beginning farmer Kevin Dietzel will share his process for developing a business plan for a "cheesery" and lessons he's learned about starting up a business. A diverse review panel will share comments about Kevin's plan and offer advice about what makes a good business plan.



Kevin Dietzel is building a grass-based dairy and cheesery with his wife, Ranae, and children, near Jewell.

Jay Hansen, his wife Jeanne, and their four sons own Hansen's Farm Fresh Dairy in Hudson.

Tricia Janes is the associate state director for America's Small Business Development Centers Iowa.

Paul Quam is an ag finance consultant and owns Quam and Associates in Jefferson.

Effective Farm Mentorships: Training the Trainer

Many experienced farmers are happy to share their knowledge with other farmers. This session covers key issues to becoming a good farmer mentor. Topics include: the underlying and unspoken dynamics between farmer mentor and mentee, do's and don'ts of interactions, the structure of visits and the structure of the mentorship, and mentor office logistics.

Richard Wiswall and his wife, Sally Colman, own and operate Cate Farm in East Montpelier, Vermont. Richard is the author of "The Organic Farmer's Business Handbook."

On-Farm Solar Panel Installation and Financing

David Ausberger, row crop farmer near Jefferson, recently worked with Randy Skeie of EcoWise Power to install a 5.94 kW solar system on the roof of his shop. David and Randy will talk about the process, tax credits available and how to size a system for your farm.

David Ausberger is a no-till farmer who raises corn, soybeans, cover crops and rye for seed near Jefferson.

Randy Skeie is the owner of EcoWise Power, based in Des Moines.



David Ausberger

SARE Farmers Forum:



Chickens and Trap Crops: An Integration of Sustainable Approaches to Insect Pest Control in Vegetable Production

Gary Wenig explored using squash trap crops and chickens in movable pens to control insects – particularly squash bugs – in lieu of pesticides for organic and sustainable vegetable production. Jaime Pinero from Lincoln University (LU) in Missouri will provide background on trap cropping and discuss insect trapping experiments carried out at LU's certified organic Busby Farm.

Gary Wenig and his wife, Elizabeth, own and operate Rocky Creek Valley Farm, a 40-acre farm near Kansas City, Missouri, where they produce and sell a large variety of heirloom vegetables, free-range eggs and raw goat's milk.

Jaime Pinero is an assistant professor and state integrated pest management specialist (IPM) at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri.

Management of the Spotted Wing Drosophila Using High Tunnels

The spotted wing drosophila (SWD) is an invasive pest that lays its eggs in immature and ripe fruit; thus its larvae may be present in otherwise marketable fruit. This session will report on research by Erik Gundacker and collaborating high tunnel growers to manage and control infestation of SWD in high tunnels.

Erik Gundacker is the co-owner of Scenic Valley Farms located in Rosemount, Minnesota, and Readstown, Wisconsin. At Scenic Valley Farms, Erik helps manage 10 high tunnels that produce certified organic produce.

Developing Commercial Elderberry Production in Minnesota

Chris Patton will describe research for establishment of the Minnesota Elderberry Cooperative (MEC). Research determined the feasibility of wide-scale production of elderberries in the state and region, and for subsequent cooperative processing and marketing of value-added juices, wines and concentrates.

Chris Patton is the founding director and CEO of the MEC, and grows elderberries with Paul Otten at Natura Farms in Minnesota.



SATURDAY

(continued)

ROUND II

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

High Tunnel Vegetable Production

After 10 years of high tunnel production, Jill Beebout has made mistakes, celebrated successes and collected lots of data. Jill will share her experiences, the numbers, and her best and worst high tunnel ideas – or as she says, “the good, the bad and the ugly.”

Jill Beebout farms at Blue Gate Farm with her husband, Sean Skeehan. They steward 40 acres of family land near Chariton, where they raise Certified Naturally Grown produce, laying hens, honey bees, hay and alpacas; their marketing is done primarily through their CSA and farmers market.

Practical Farmers of Iowa in 2046

We want your input! As Practical Farmers celebrates 30 years, where should PFI be in the next 30 years? Explore upcoming challenges and opportunities for our organization and for agriculture in general. Write and speak your ideas about the Practical Farmers of the year 2046. Your participation will help the PFI board plan our next steps.

Tina Bakehouse is a communication studies instructor and facilitator at Creighton University, as well as a communication executive coach and corporate trainer. She farms with her husband, Jon, near Hastings.

Gail Hickenbottom is a Practical Farmers of Iowa board member.

Modifying Cultivators for Better Weed Control

Tom Frantzen will explain changes he made to his cultivators to improve weed control. Learn about and see pre-plant tillage equipment Tom changed for better control of perennial weeds. Hear how Tom modified his International Harvester cultivator using a Lilliston axel to provide a lighter-weight, easier-to-adjust cultivator.



Irene & Tom Frantzen

Tom Frantzen and his wife, Irene, raise diversified organic crops and livestock on a 300-acre farm near New Hampton.

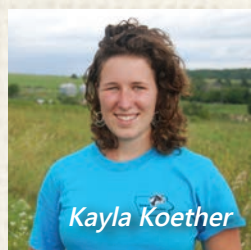
Profitable and Practical Grass-Based Dairy Farming

This session will provide an overview of low-cost dairy grazing systems for the Midwest. Vance Haugen will discuss how to assess if grass-based dairying is right for you. He'll share tips and techniques on starting a grass-based dairy, and will talk about low-cost new or retrofit milking parlors.

Vance J. Haugen is a University of Wisconsin agriculture extension agent and operates a 230-acre, grass-based dairy with his family.

Farm Energy Planning

Is it overwhelming to think about assessing energy use on your farm? In this session, learn where to start when thinking about conserving energy on the farm, why efficiency should be a precursor to renewable energy, and what incentives and programs exist to help farmers consider both efficiency and renewable technologies.



Kayla Koether

Kayla Koether is the agricultural energy program coordinator at the Winneshiek Energy District. She grew up on a rotational grazing operation near McGregor.



We Learn More by Accident Than We Do on Purpose

Farmers sometimes make mistakes and do not always achieve the outcomes they anticipated. Robin and Kelly Griffeth have accepted the fact that Mother Nature is always in charge, and will share how unplanned experiments have been learning opportunities, helping them improve their profit and soil conservation methods.

Robin Griffeth and his son, Kelly, raise corn, soybeans, wheat, grain sorghum and sunflowers in a continuous no-till system on 3,700 acres near Jewell, Kansas.



Kelly Griffeth

Practical Tips for On-Farm Pollinator Habitat



Sarah Foltz Jordan

You've read the instructions online for establishing pollinator habitat ... but what are the tricks no one tells you? Sarah Foltz Jordan will present a variety of habitat restoration options for farmers, including practical tips, common pitfalls, case studies and cues for assessing progress of on-farm pollinator habitat plantings.

Sarah Foltz Jordan works as the Xerces Society pollinator conservation specialist for the Great Lakes Region. Based in Minnesota, Sarah also farms organic fruits and vegetables.

SARE Farmers Forum:

Evaluating the Roller-Crimper for Cover Crops in Corn and Soybean Terraced Ground

While research has been done using the Rodale Institute cover crop roller-crimper design, little research has been done on its effectiveness in hilly or terraced ground like the area Michael Willis farms in northwest Missouri. He tested the operation of a roller-crimper on his farm to help growers evaluate if they could integrate a roller-crimper into their operation.

Michael Willis is a beginning farmer in northwest Missouri. He owns and farms 64 acres of cropland and rents additional acres, including 240 acres of mixed crop and pasture ground that he splits with his father.

Adapting Cover Crops to Northern Climate Conventional Cropping Systems

Cover crops offer a potential way to reduce feed costs by increasing forage production and extending the grazing season into the fall. They can also help diversify crop rotations and add ground cover for soil and water quality benefits. This session will describe a demonstration project in 2014 – 2015 involving three cow-calf operations in northeastern Minnesota grazing fall cover crops.



Troy Salzer farms 900 acres of cropland and pastureland where he grows forage, soybeans, corn and vegetables, and raises approximately 190 beef cow-calf pairs.

Abe Mach operates Mach Angus, a cow-calf operation with 110 cow-calf pairs, in Sturgeon Lake, Minnesota. He manages 1,800 acres of soybeans, corn, forage and pasture.

ROUND III

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Rolling Cover Crops with Modified Equipment

In this panel session, farmers Dave Schmidt, Francis Thicke and Doug Alert will share their experiences from the 2015 growing season with terminating cover crops using the rolling method that involves no tillage or herbicides.

Doug Alert, his wife Margaret Smith, and sons Robert and William, raise corn, soybeans, oats, rye, hay, cattle, pigs and sheep on their organic farm near Hampton.



Doug Alert



Dave Schmidt

Dave Schmidt and his wife, Meg, founded Troublesome Creek Cattle Co. in 2012 near Exira. They produce and direct-market grass-fed meat while attempting to avoid both tillage and herbicides.

Francis Thicke is a soil scientist and organic, grass-based dairy farmer from Fairfield.

The 10-Year Journey

John Wesselius, owner of The Cornucopia in Sioux Center, will share the lessons he has learned over the past 10 years of farming. During the past decade, John and his wife, Janna, have increased their CSA from 8 to 80 members, and gross sales from \$1,000 to \$100,000-plus. They also direct-market chickens and pork. John makes his full-time living on the farm.

John Wesselius' farming philosophy for his produce and livestock farm near Sioux Center includes healthy eating and farming in tune with the biological workings of the world.

SATURDAY

(continued)

Poultry-Centered Regenerative Agriculture System

Come learn how your poultry operation can be stacked with other enterprises to complement one another. In this session, learn how people at Main Street Project developed a scalable, integrated whole-farm system centered around poultry. Learn how project concepts can be scaled to your farm and interests. Main Street Project's mission is to increase access to resources, share knowledge and build power in order to create a socially, economically and ecologically resilient food system.



Regi Haslett-Marroquin

Regi Haslett-Marroquin is an engineer who works on food and agriculture systems, and lives in Northfield, Minnesota, with his wife, Amy, and their children.

Julie Ristau is the co-director of On the Commons and is co-chair of Homegrown Minneapolis.

Five Generations of Farm Transfer

How do you continue to transfer the farm business generation after generation? Bob and Linda Lynch will talk about how they took over the farm, and their plans to transfer the farm business to their son. Experts John Baker and Doug Follman will offer feedback.

Bob and Linda Lynch are the fourth generation, and their son Jay is the fifth generation, to farm at Lynch Farms near Gilmore City.

John Baker is the staff attorney for ISU's Beginning Farmer Center.

Doug Follmann has been the manager of Town & Country Insurance for over 30 years. He is currently assisting in the transition of his parents' family farm to him and his siblings.

Farm Mechanization Efficiencies

Learn about tools you can use for greater farming efficiency, including cultivation tools to maximize weed control, harvest tools to speed harvesting, and packhouse tools for quicker and easier processing. Cost-benefit analysis will show how long it takes for a new tool to pay for itself. Greenhouse innovations are highlighted as well.



Richard Wiswall, and his wife, Sally Colman, own and operate Cate Farm in East Montpelier, Vermont. Richard is the author of "The Organic Farmer's Business Handbook."

Top 10 Cover Crop Species for Iowa – 2016 Edition

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH IOWA LEARNING FARMS

There are many factors that go into cover crop species selection, and many species to choose from. A panel of Iowa farmers and researchers will discuss their top 10 for Iowa, and share why they recommend those, as well as their experiences with species they would avoid.

Paul Ackley raises cattle and no-till wheat, corn, soybeans and cover crops near Bedford.

Meaghan Anderson is a field agronomist with ISU Extension and Outreach.

Laura Krouse manages 72 acres of land where she grows vegetables, oats, hay and cover crops, and also operates Abbe Hills Farm CSA near Mount Vernon.

Ajay Nair is vegetable production specialist with ISU Extension and Outreach.



Laura Krouse

Introduction to Government Programs for Farmers

Government programs are available to assist in many ways, from transitioning to organic, to expanding operations to implementing conservation practices. Hear a farmer's experiences with a variety of programs, as well as advice from experts from NRCS and FSA.

Matt Russell owns and operates Coyote Run Farm, a 110-acre farm in rural Lacona, and markets fresh produce, eggs and beef with his husband, Patrick Standley. Matt also works as resilient agriculture coordinator at Drake University Agricultural Law Center.

John Whitaker serves as the Iowa state executive director of the USDA Farm Service Agency.

Larry Beeler serves as assistant state conservationist for Iowa NRCS.

SARE Farmers Forum

Finishing Time and Weights of Grass-Fed Beef Animals

Northern Minnesota grass-fed beef producers believed they could finish their beef in less time than the 24 months cited in studies. Jane Jewett worked with these producers to document steer finish weights and timing. Their work showed that it is possible to achieve a grass-fed finishing efficiency comparable to feedlot beef production.

Jane Jewett operates WillowSedge Farm, a small, diversified crop and livestock farm in northern Minnesota, and works for the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture at the University of Minnesota.

Comparison of Annual Forages for Grazing Lambs on Previously Cropped Ground

Michael Seipel looked at the economics of grazing lambs on spring, summer and winter annual forage crops as compared to average returns from corn and soybean production. He will discuss the suitability of summer annual forages for grazing lambs, and what happens when the weather doesn't cooperate.

Michael Seipel, his wife and three children raise livestock on pasture in northeast Missouri. Michael also teaches agricultural business and sustainable agriculture courses at Truman State University.



REGISTRATION FORM

Pre-register for the conference and save!

Everyone is welcome to attend the conference, but PFI members receive discounted rates. To pre-register as a member, go to **A**. Not a member? To join PFI or renew your membership in order to receive the discounted rates, go to **B1** (then you may pre-register as a member!). To register for the conference as a non-member, go to **B2**. All students, regardless of membership, receive student rates. To register as a student, go to **B3**.

A PFI Member Pre-Registration

One registration covers all members of a farm/household membership, two members per organizational membership, or one individual membership. Refreshments at breaks included.

Short Courses Courses run simultaneously. Priced per person. Iowa Forage and Grassland Council conference runs concurrently with Short Courses. Information on how to register is on page 4.

- ☐ Growing Good Small Grains _____ x \$55
- ☐ Successful Establishment and Management of Orchard Trees _____ x \$55
- ☐ Short Course Lunch for Friday, Jan. 22
Optional lunch available only for short course attendees; we will provide a list of other restaurants in the area at the short course.

Sandwich: _____ x \$15
Salad: _____ x \$15

I/we have special dietary issues.
(please specify in the space below):

Conference Sessions Don't overpay! One registration covers all members of a farm/household memberships, two members per organizational membership, or one individual membership.

- ☐ Friday Sessions _____ x \$35
☐ Saturday Sessions _____ x \$55

Subtotal A \$ _____

B1 Join PFI or Renew Your Membership

I wish to renew or become a member.

- ☐ Student \$20
☐ Individual \$50
☐ Farm/household . . . \$60
☐ Organization. \$110
☐ Lifetime \$1,000

Subtotal B1 \$ _____

B2 Non-Member Pre-Registration

Priced per person. Refreshments at breaks included.

Short Courses Courses run simultaneously. Priced per person. Iowa Forage and Grassland Council's conference runs concurrently with Short Courses. Information on how to register is on page 4.

- ☐ Growing Good Small Grains _____ x \$70
☐ Successful Establishment and Management of Orchard Trees _____ x \$70

- ☐ **Short Course Lunch for Friday, Jan. 22**
Optional lunch available only for short course attendees; we will provide a list of other restaurants in the area at the short course.

Sandwich: _____ x \$15
Salad: _____ x \$15

I/we have special dietary issues.
(please specify in the space below):

Conference Sessions Priced per person

- ☐ Friday Sessions _____ x \$50
☐ Saturday Sessions _____ x \$70

Subtotal B3 \$ _____

B3 Student Pre-Registration

Discounted registration for students. Includes both days; walk-ins welcome (student ID required at registration).

- ☐ Friday and Saturday Sessions _____ x \$30

Subtotal B3 \$ _____

Continued on opposite side >

SATURDAY

(continued)

ROUND IV

3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Ask an Expert

Many knowledgeable individuals congregate at every Practical Farmers annual conference. During this round, several experts will be ready to share valuable information during a Q&A roundtable. Bring your questions and your own expertise to contribute to the conversation!

Robin and Kelly Griffeth will answer questions about no-till, companion crops, cover crops and other soil conservation practices they employ on their Kansas farm.



Leslie Cooperband and Wes Jarrell from Prairie Fruits Farm and Creamery will answer questions about goat dairying, on-farm creameries, value-added products, marketing and farm dinners.

Janet McNally has been raising sheep for 40 years in central Minnesota. Janet will answer questions about grazing and lambing management, grass finishing and marketing lambs.

REGISTRATION FORM (cont.)

Please postmark registrations no later than Thursday, January 14. After that date, attendees must register as “walk-ins” at the conference.

C Saturday Noon All-Iowa lunch (optional)

Availability not guaranteed after Jan. 14.

No reservations without payment. Child meals are for ages 12 and under.

- ☐ Adult: _____ x \$15
☐ Child: _____ x \$7
☐ Vegetarian meal option

Subtotal **C** \$ _____

D Childcare

Snack Friday, and snack and lunch Saturday included. **Must pre-register for childcare, no drop-ins.**

- ☐ Friday Noon-4:30 p.m. _____ x \$20
☐ Saturday 8:15 am-4:30 p.m. _____ x \$40

Subtotal **D** \$ _____

E Special Options

- ☐ I am interested in having a display in the exhibit hall and/or being a co-sponsor.
☐ I plan to bring an item for the silent auction.

Item: _____
☐ I am a beginning farmer and would like to schedule a FREE 1:1 consultation with a financial expert.

Attendee Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Phone (_____) _____

Cell (_____) _____

Email _____

Total of A, B, C & D: \$ _____

Make checks payable to “Practical Farmers of Iowa,” or pay by credit card online at www.practicalfarmers.org.

Questions about membership or registration?

Contact Erica Andorf at (515) 232-5661 or erica@practicalfarmers.org.

No refund requests honored after January 14. A \$5 administrative fee will be deducted from refunds requested in writing before that date.



with attendees about the facets of his or her work that led to being selected for this award.

Dave Baker is a farm transition specialist with the Beginning Farmer Center at ISU. Ask him questions about passing on your farm operation to the next generation of farmers.

Sarah Foltz Jordan, pollinator conservation specialist with the Xerces Society, will answer questions related to on-farm pollinator habitat implementation and management.

Mark Gleason, professor of plant pathology at ISU, and **Donald Lewis**, professor of entomology at ISU, will answer questions related to horticultural plant diseases and insect pest management.

Sustainable Agriculture Achievement Award Winner: As of brochure printing time we do not know who this will be. But, we are hopeful he or she will be available to talk more

John Kempf, this year's conference keynoter, farmer and Advancing Ego-Agriculture founder, will be available to answer questions raised during his keynote address.

Linda Naeve, Iowa's state coordinator for SARE, will provide information and answer questions about how to apply for a SARE Farmer-Rancher grant. Past grant recipients will also be in attendance to provide lessons they learned during the grant process.

Location

Iowa State Center
Scheman Building
Ames, IA 50111

Directions

Near the junction of Interstate 35 and U.S. 30, the Iowa State Center is located at the corner of Lincoln Way and University Boulevard, Ames, Iowa. From Lincoln Way, turn south on University Avenue and west onto Center Drive.

Lodging

Practical Farmers has reserved a block of hotel rooms 2 miles south of the conference site at the Best Western Plus University Park Inn and Suites, 2500 University Blvd. (just south of U.S. 30). **Please call (515) 296-2500 by January 1** to guarantee a room. Prices range from \$94-\$99/night. Mention PFI to get discounted rate. If you prefer to stay at a locally owned establishment, call Onion Creek Farm Guesthouse at (515) 292-0117.

For additional lodging options, contact Erica at erica@practicalfarmers.org or (515) 232-5661.

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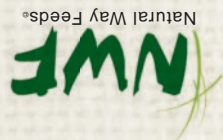
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