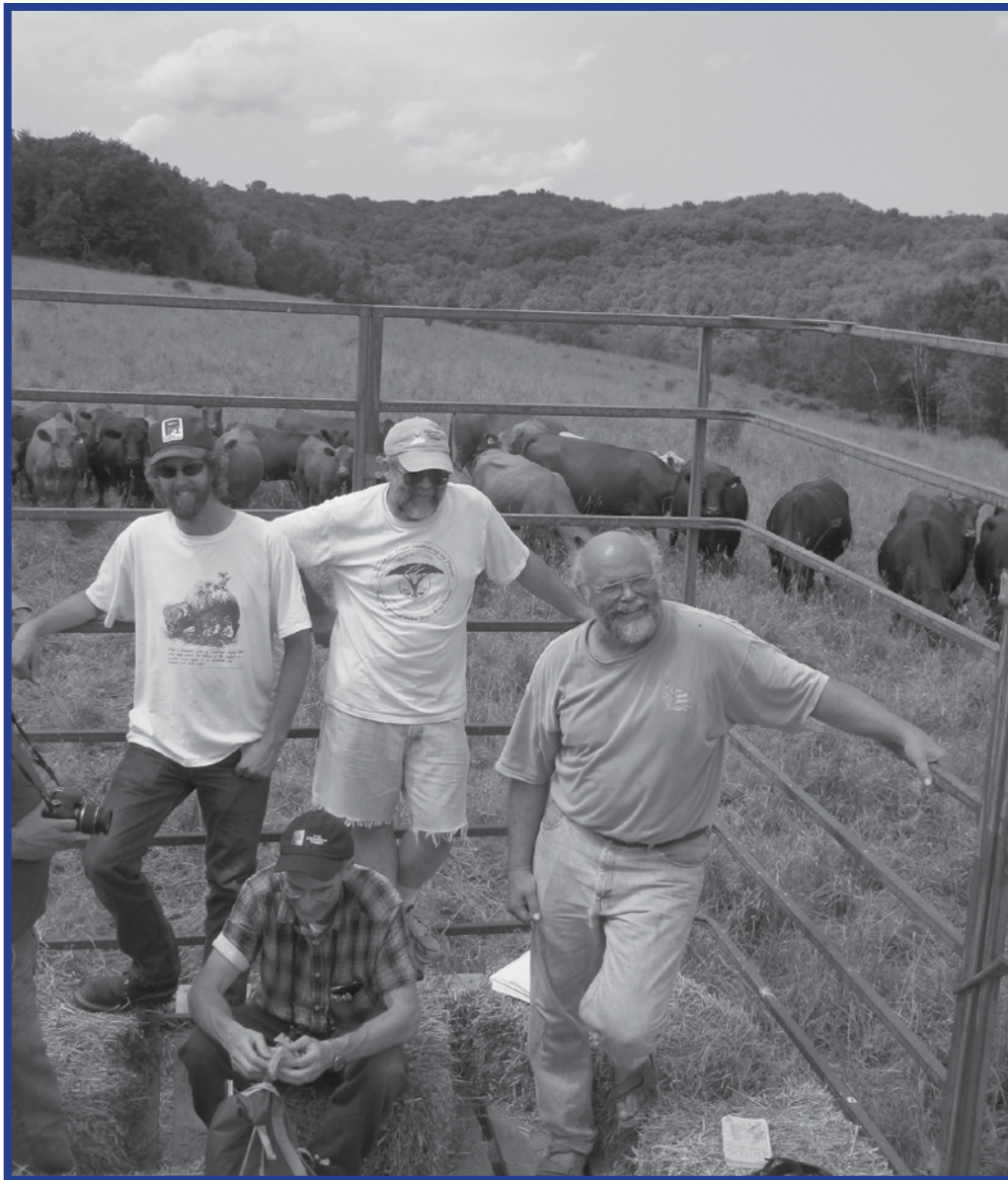


the
Practical Farmer

A Newsletter of Practical Farmers of Iowa • Vol. 25, #3 • Summer 2010



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Cover: Top left, clockwise: Mike Natvig, Jack Knight, Dan Specht, and Brian DeVore show people how to have a good time at a PFI field day. See field day summaries and more photos on pages 5-6.



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The Big Tent

There's no doubt about it: Practical Farmers of Iowa has a big tent. And a diverse group of people invited to the party.

25 years ago, Practical Farmers of Iowa was an organization solely for farmers with field crops and (usually) livestock enterprises. Later, pioneers like Angela Tedesco, Susan Jutz, and Gary Guthrie led an influx of fruit and vegetable producers. Soon, nonfarmers like current Board members Gail Hickenbottom and Joyce Lock accepted the PFI invitation as well.

Still today, field crop and livestock producers pound in the biggest stakes to hold up the PFI tent. PFI's offerings for them are many, including 15 field days this season that feature crop and livestock operations. The bulk of our on-farm research and demonstration is geared toward these producers, including trials this year on aphid resistance in soybean varieties, soil quality and water infiltration, corn breeding for sustainable agriculture—and a host of cover crop trials. Graziers are also participating in the water infiltration study and have a nice slate of grazing cluster meetings to choose from this summer.

The third big stake belongs to our fruit and vegetable producers. Make no mistake about it: *They are dead serious about farming.* If



Featured farm dog: The featured dog of the issue has to be Maggie. My family wasn't looking for a third dog, but then Craig and Kathy Giddings posted on the PFI listserv that they had a lab mix looking for a home. Craig is the local dog catcher as well as a lot of other things for Burt, Iowa, and the lab mix was his latest unclaimed find. Maggie had a gunshot wound and had, as Kathy wrote, "trust issues." By the time we visited Burt and drank coffee with the Giddings in their garden, they had nursed this sweet dog back to health. An hour later, Maggie walked into our car and our lives. (From left, Kathy Giddings, Paul Opheim, Maggie, Teresa Opheim, Craig Giddings).

Our challenge is to stay focused, to always make sure that tent's center support is our vision and the values that bring us all together in the first place.

you don't believe me, visit with Rick Hartmann or Laura Krouse at their field days this summer. Our goals are the same for our fruit and vegetable producers as they are for our crop and livestock producers: That **their enterprises be profitable**, as well as protect the environment and enhance local communities.

I didn't hesitate to join PFI years ago, even though my success in growing crops is limited to basil and tomatoes. There are many like me—a quarter of our members make up the last big PFI stake, our non-farmer members. Many of these members own farmland, and an increasing number are from out of state. *Farmers, these are the consumers who have committed most strongly to you.* They support you with their food dollars and with their policy work. Some are even proving to be sources of farmland and investments for your operations as well.

The PFI party is lively (and the food tasty, by the way!). *Our challenge is to stay focused, to always make sure that tent's center support is our vision (see the back page) and the values that bring us all together in the first place.*

25 years ago, founding member Ron Rosmann articulated those values well:

- ❖ Diversified crop and livestock operations,
- ❖ Lower or no fertilizer and pesticide inputs,
- ❖ Widespread ownership of land and resources,
- ❖ Farmers' control over their own operations,
- ❖ The value of hard work,
- ❖ Utilizing "appropriate sizes and types" of technology,
- ❖ Water and soil stewardship principles,
- ❖ Family- and community- centered lives,
- ❖ Reliance on self-ingenuity and experience for answers to farming problems,
- ❖ A closeness to spirituality and nature,
- ❖ A fair economic return for labor and production,
- ❖ A large plant and animal species gene pool.

Thank you for being part of PFI!

Teresa Opheim
Executive Director

Learning on the Farm in 2010

Field days are in full swing! Here are excerpts from summaries of early season field days. These are pulled from staff contributions to the PFI blog. Read full summaries of these and more recent field days at practicalfarmers.blogspot.com.

Konstantinov, June 12, Clarinda

On June 12th, over 50 people attended Liz and Andre Konstantinov's field day at Double K Farms. The topic focus was essential ingredients for success on an organic farm.

Andre Konstantinov visited with guests about aronia berries planted the previous fall. Liz Konstantinov took a few minutes to explain the history of the farm, the goals, and objectives of the business, where it markets its crops, and how their farm transitioned to certified organic.

Andre showed his all solar powered machine shed, saving a bundle of money without having to put in a new electrical connection.

Wesselius, June 5, Sioux Center

Amber from The Energy Group presented about the energy audit they performed on the farm's walk-in coolers, how the Energy Group figured out how much insulation to add to the coolers, and whether that investment would pay off in what period of time. She showed the attendees cooler leaks with her thermography camera. She discussed easy and inexpensive fixes that producers can do to increase their energy efficiency.

The Wesselius' showed tour-goers their chicken tractor popularized by Joel Salatin. The Wesselius' are growing vegetables in two high tunnels, and a third high tunnel will be constructed this season. Janna's number one suggestion for high tunnel culture was to make sure that crop rotation is used.

John prides himself in his earliness with potatoes to the market, and has about 1/2 an acre of different potato varieties! That is a lot of storable starch!

Greg Judy, April 21, Calmar

Despite beautiful weather outside, over 50 people came and sat inside all day to listen to Greg Judy talk about holistic high-density grazing.

Some highlights of what he covered:

Since implementing Holistic High Density Planned Grazing, he has doubled his stocking rate in four years with no purchased inputs and feeding hay an average of only nine days per winter.

Greg talked about grazing multiple species. He is currently grazing his sheep separately from his cows, mainly because he is

afraid of the predator losses he may have initially. He does sometimes run feeder pigs with his cow herd without separate fences. They stay with the cows to eat fly larvae from the cow pats.

Greg has many ponds on his farm, which he uses as a water source for his cows. He claims the cows also serve to keep the ponds and their banks clean and healthy.

Schaefer, April 22, Kalona

Some might call SE IA the "tropical zone" of Iowa. They have a much longer growing period in the fall following grain harvest and have warmer temperatures in the fall. Maybe that is why several innovative cover crop farmers keep emerging from these soils. Two of these farmers are Steve and George Schaefer.

George and Steve Schaefer showed how they are using cover crops in both no-till organic and no-till conventional farming systems as well as grazing cover crops. The Schaefer's use cover crops to control weeds in their organic soybean field and also improve soil quality in their conventional no-till systems. They are also planting winter rye into standing corn through aerial seeding. Finally, the Schaefer's use their cover crops for grazing 150 cow-calf pairs they manage on their land.

Dan Specht, June 26, McGregor

Pastures can be managed for bird habitat and for productivity and animal performance. Dan started the field day by talking about his grazing management practices, including grazing some pastures and hayfields early in the spring, causing them to reach maturity later.

Next, Greg Schmitt from the Iowa DNR talked about different programs the DNR is working on related to bird and wildlife habitat on private lands, and also touched on funding opportunities from the NRCS. Ron Windingstad, of the Audubon Society in Minnesota, talked about different things Audubon is working on, and specific bird species that need extra attention because of their rarity and lack of habitat. Bird expert Jon Stravers also talked about various birds and answered questions about bird habitat and life cycles.

Attendees went on a pasture walk and saw Dan's cows, watering tank, and a crowd gate made from a deconstructed grain bin.

Pokorny, June 2, Clutier

To help farmers discuss the challenges of adding cover crops to



their corn and soybean system the Pokorny's from east of Marshalltown held a Cover Crops 101 field day on June 2, 2010.

Topics that were discussed by ISU researchers and Mark included:

- ❖ Yield response of corn and soybeans following fall seeded rye and other cereal grains
- ❖ Fall seeding and spring-kill or grazing timing (aerial or drop-seeding cover crops into standing crops vs. post-harvest seeding)
- ❖ Planter set-up for planting into cover crop residue
- ❖ Soil quality improvements related to cover crop use
- ❖ Preliminary results of corn nitrogen rate trials following winter rye
- ❖ Use of tillage radish, mixed forages, or other cover crop mixes
- ❖ Jeremy Singer from the National Laboratory for Ag and the Environment discusses research results from several years of cover crop research at ISU.

Anderson, June 24, Cherokee

Here are some lessons learned:

1. Warm and Cool Season grasses can work together in the same pasture if cattle are removed from the paddock with at least 6 inches remaining.
2. Botany is a graziers friend; identification of grasses, forbs, sedges, and tree species is the key to good management
3. Roll out a bale of hay on trouble areas then let the cows work it to get organic matter incorporated into the soil
4. There is cost share available thru the NRCS to help pay for pasture reclamation projects, for brush removal, even seeding help. Contact your county office today.

See the rest of the lessons learned at www.practicalfarmers.blogspot.com.

Klinge/Tidwell, June 18, Farmersburg

The afternoon began at Big Spring Trout Hatchery in Elkader, where trout are raised in clean, cold water to be stocked in streams of Northeast Iowa. Jeff and Deb care a lot about water quality because the farm drains into Big Spring, which discharges at the hatchery.

After spending time at Big Spring Hatchery, we headed to the farm. Jeff Klinge gave a tour of the farm and told us all about the history of the farm and what it takes to keep it running.

Harriet Behar, MOSES, explained the workings of the organic certification process. This led to some great discussions amongst the group about water quality and how the general public may not realize that water quality is an issue, especially in many rural areas.

Faux, July 8-9, Tripoli

This field day was a special two day training build where participants constructed a moveable high tunnel, right there on Tammy and Rob Faux's farm. During the two days, around 30 different people showed up to help. Some were members, some were not, and many are now new members of PFI!

Adam Montri of Michigan State University's Organic farm flew in to lead the tunnel build.

The guys from Four Seasons provided the materials and tools for building the high tunnel, and got everything laid out in advance so that the group could start building right away.



Faux



Klinge/Tidwell



Anderson



Schaefer



Specht



Pokorny



Beginner Farmers Define their Land Needs

Luke Gran

Practical Farmers of Iowa surveyed our list of beginning farmers about their land needs this spring. 124 responses were collected from a list of over 320 beginning farmers participating in PFI programming.

“Agriculture desperately needs young farmers, but barriers to getting into farming (especially conventional) without inheriting land makes it hard to make farming a living, instead of a second job. Thank you PFI for paying attention to this [land] issue!”

Justin Staver, Murray, Iowa

Here is a summary of the results.

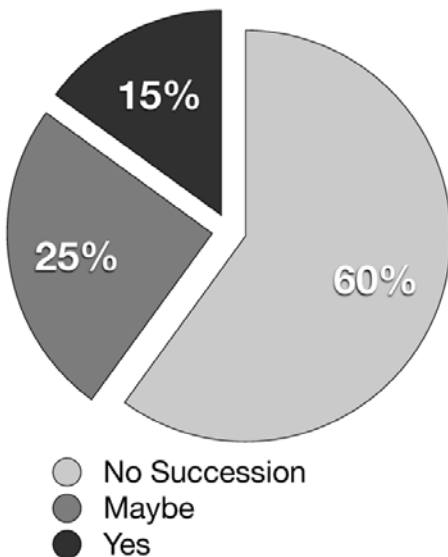
- ❖ 75% of respondents are farming currently
- ❖ 90% have a specific Iowa county or town in mind where they would like to farm
 - ♦ Only 10% would farm anywhere in Iowa
- ❖ 70% are looking for different land to rent or buy
- ❖ 40% own some land already
- ❖ 70% rent land (many own and rent)

How many acres do PFI beginners need to rent or buy?

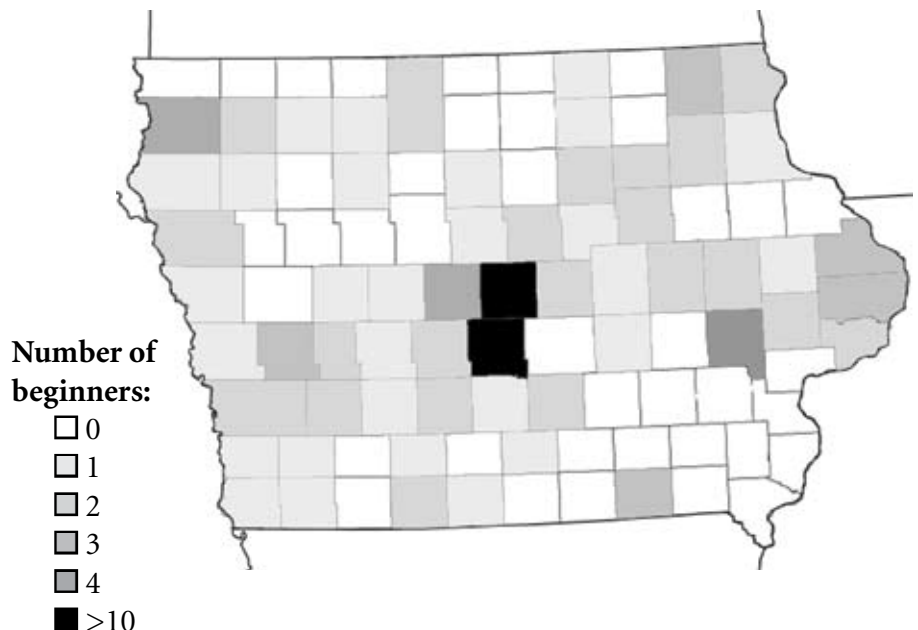


Are PFI beginners part of a succession plan with an existing farmer/landowner?

- ❖ **No:** They are separate from an existing enterprise or have no family land or others who want to sell
- ❖ **Maybe:** Family or non-relatives have talked about it but nothing is set in stone
- ❖ **Yes:** Family or non-relative is transitioning land to them



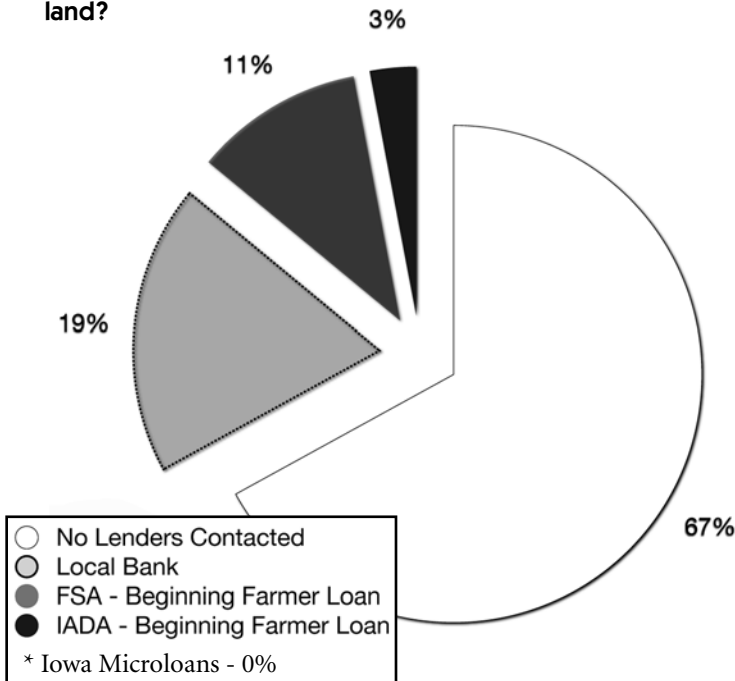
In which Iowa counties would PFI beginners like to Farm?



Would PFI Beginners take out a loan (take on debt) for land?

- More than half would take on debt for the purchase of land, 30% aren't sure, and 20% would definitely not.

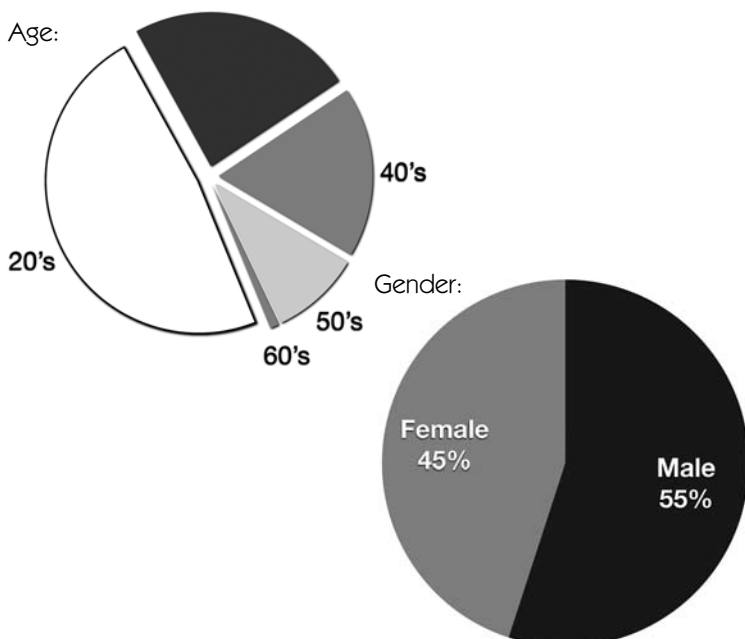
What lenders have PFI beginning farmers approached for land?



How well do beginners understand the financing assistance that exists?

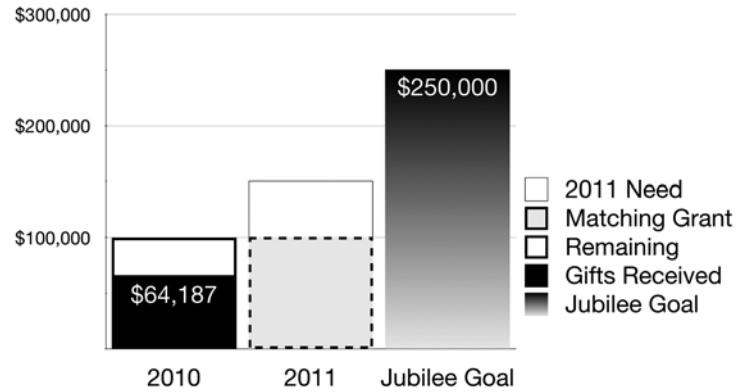
- 20% had not heard of Farm Services Agency (FSA) Beginning Farmer Loan Program
- 45% had not heard of Iowa Ag Development Authority (IADA) Beginning Farmer Loan Program
- 42% had not heard of IADA Beginning Farmer Tax Credit

What age and gender are PFI beginning farmers?



SIP Fundraising Update

SIP Fundraising Progress



Thank you to all who have given generously to grow beginning farmers in Iowa. Below are the donations received as of 20th July, 2010 (listed by order of gift date).

Legacy Leader (\$10,000 - and above)

Schnieders Family Foundation
David Hurd
Ag Ventures Alliance

Sustainer (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Fred and Charlotte Hubbell Foundation

Innovator (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Gene and Loraine Smith
Harvester (\$1,000 - \$2,499)
Teresa Opheim and Rich Schuler
Joyce and Fred Locke
Timothy Landgraf and Jan Libbey
Frontier Natural Products
Rosemary Partridge
Doug and DeAnn Opheim

Grower (\$500 - \$999)

Peter Lammers
Dan and Lorna Wilson
Diane Horn
Wesley Buchele
Murray McMurray Hatchery

Cultivator (\$250 - \$499)

Luke Gran
Tyler Franzenburg
Gary and Nancy Guthrie
Tom Loynachan
Steve and June Weis
Stephen and Janet Cornelius
Bruce and Connie Carney

Brad Robson/First State Bank, Belmond
Chris Eichhorn

Seeder (Up to \$249)

Ron Dunphy
Jonathan Taiber
Jerry and Gail Peckum
Liz Garst
Richard and Sharon Thompson
Susan Roberts
Buz Brenton
Ralph and Karen Lane
Sondra Feldstein
Ted and Donna Bauer
Mark and Melissa Miller
Jonathan Andelson
Jan and Cornelia Flora
Clyde and Debbie Cleveland
Lee Tesdell
Teresa Wiemerslage
Sharon Krause/Dalla Terra Ranch
The Spain Farm/JoAn Van Balen
Blue River Hybrids
Terry and Laurie Dahms
Charlotte Shivers and Robert Baker
John Pokladnik and Mary Sue Kislingbury
Montage of Cedar Falls
Ann and Lanny Fields
Patrick and Ann Bosold
Erik Sessions and Sara Peterson

We have had excellent feedback from donors on this program, Gene Smith, had this remark about why he gave: "I like SIP because beginners put their own money into it and therefore they have 'skin in the game' which will make them successful."

Join us to grow beginning farmers in Iowa. Give to the Savings Incentive Program.

Practical Farmers of...America?

Sally Worley

Practical Farmers of Iowa's District 6: Outside of Iowa is growing. How do non-Iowans hear about Practical Farmers of Iowa, and why do they join? Here are a few reasons:

Brandee Marckmann

Iowa native Brandee Marckmann is the sixth generation to have grown up on a farm near Greenfield. Her father's farm produces corn, soybeans, cattle, and custom hay. The freelance grant writer, who now lives in San Francisco, became familiar with Practical Farmers of Iowa in 2009 while visiting the Iowa State Fair.



Brandee Marckmann with husband Bill Mooney

Brandee's husband, Bill Mooney, is involved in farming, but not at all in the traditional sense. His role in the video gaming industry led him to virtual farming; he is the general manager of the Facebook application Farmville. Five or six years ago, Brandee's father suggested Bill make a video game about farming. Bill's response, "That will never work." He has since modified his viewpoint about the potential of a farming video game.

Besides sweeping the virtual farm waves, Bill was a volunteer for the Jesuit volunteer corps. He was placed with Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, and served as a community farm organizer.

Brandee joined PFI in order to prepare for the future. Brandee's family's farmland has been in the family since the 1860s. She, along with two brothers, may holster the responsibility for this land one day. "Neither of my brothers are farmers. If there is an opportunity for the farm to be passed on to us, I'd like to be able to rent or sell the land to someone who will farm it sustainably. I want to learn more about how to do that," she said. Brandee's family has not started conversations about the land transition, but she wants to be aware of her options when the time comes.

In addition to helping her prepare for the future, Practical

Farmers of Iowa keeps Brandee in tune with happenings on the Iowa landscape. "I enjoy getting your newsletter and hearing what you're doing. It's wonderful work that you are involved in."

Matthew Patterson

Matthew Patterson is another Iowa native. He was introduced to Practical Farmers of Iowa while in graduate school at Iowa State. He moved to Vermont in 1995, lost touch with Practical Farmers of Iowa, and rejoined after a high school friend asked him to speak with his nephew, Luke Gran. "I connected with Luke, talked farming, and then I got on some of the webinars PFI did this winter. I liked what I saw and decided to join the organization."

Matthew and his business partner started Clear Brook Farm 15 years ago. They operate a diversified organic vegetable farm, plus a nursery, greenhouse, and bedding plant business. "We are dual certified. All our vegetable and herb starts for sale are grown organically. We use non-certified soilless medium and a non-certified organic fertilizer for our bedding plants. We have the option of using non-certified pesticides in the bedding plant business but we usually don't."

The operation includes 11 greenhouses. They grow approximately 1000 varieties of flowers, perennials, and herbs from seed. One greenhouse is dedicated to raspberries, two to tomatoes, and two to field starts. Products are marketed through a farm stand housed in a 200-year-old converted barn. The farm stand also sells local products from surrounding farms, including Artisan cheeses, bread, roots, and fellow farms' produce. Last year they constructed a display greenhouse made out of rigid polycarbonate and equipped with roof vents and side venting.



Matthew Patterson, right, sits with business partner Andrew Knafel in front of their farm store

“It’s kind of like the flower business subsidizes the vegetables,” commented Matthew. In the farm’s beginnings, flowers were much more lucrative. However, Matthew has noted a shift in perspective: “When we first started out, we tried to start up farmer’s markets and couldn’t get the traction. Now in Vermont, the local food movement is big. There are probably ten markets within 30 miles.” Clear Brook Farm is a mainstay vendor at two of these markets. Farmers in the region are stepping up to meet demand. “Since we’ve been here I can think of five significant farms that have established themselves in a 30-mile radius of us. With these additional farms, we are able to bring a broader community effort to the local food front.”

Clear Brook employs 20 people at the peak of the season. They recently instigated a winter community supported agriculture program (CSA) to keep their seven core staff employed over the winter season. The winter CSA commences around October 15 when the farm stand closes, and runs through Christmas. “My partner and I don’t have much to do with the winter CSA. It is a way to give our staff income while granting us some down time,” said Matthew.

The flowers and food operation creates a long season for Clear Brook Farm. Flowers are started in the greenhouse in February. Vegetables are being planted in the field during peak flower sales, and vegetables and berries fill in as flower sales wane. The addition of the winter CSA creates a near year round operation.

Matthew misses the strong weather systems Iowa offers. He keeps up to date on Iowa happenings through his family, and appreciates seeing what is happening on the farm front through *the Practical Farmer*. “It impresses me to see all the diversity in Iowa agriculture. It wasn’t happening 20 years ago when I lived there.”

Les Miller



Les Miller

Les Miller of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, first became aware of Practical Farmers of Iowa at an ACRES USA conference in 1999 where Tom Frantzen presented his holistic triangle balancing quality of life, forms of production, and the landscape. “I always take notes at these sorts of events and I referred back

to that over the years.”

Les met James Frantzen, Tom German, and other PFI members in recent years, so decided to check out Practical Farmers of Iowa’s website. “I liked the education Practical Farmers of Iowa fosters, so decided to join,” said Les. “I like that their ideas are practical and centered in sustainability. That’s where I am headed and I am involved to learn.”

Les’ farm has been certified organic since 1993. “I am in the process of developing soil on a farm we took over that was killed by Atrazine,” Les said, “The gentleman prior used five pounds per acre versus the one pound per acre that was recommended in the 90s.”

Les used to be a farm real estate broker as well as farmer, but farms full-time now. He is also bringing his son into the business. “We’re a learning laboratory. I make lots of mistakes. That’s how we learn to walk, how we learn to talk, how we learn to farm. It’s painful sometimes.”

Les raises beef, Berkshire hogs, and poultry in a grass based system. “I grew up with hogs on a conventional farm near Parker, South Dakota. We’re learning the grazing game. I get as much education as I possibly can.”

Les recently added a couple of dairy cows. He learned from Terry Gompert to spray the milk back on the land to help build a healthy microbial population. “I learned about some interesting studies at a meeting in March. They found that whether you apply three pounds, five pounds, or twenty pounds of milk, you get the same response from the land. We’re experimenting with it, trying to get it to work on our farm.”

Les is interested in learning about other South Dakota PFI members. “I’d be interested in being able to connect with those people, for trips, for education, or just to call.”

John Rizzo

John Rizzo came to Practical Farmers of Iowa by way of the high tunnel listserv. “I received an email about a webinar with Adam Montri. I did some digging while I was listening to his presentation.” John liked what he saw: “I saw the information about vegetable crops on your website and decided to join.”

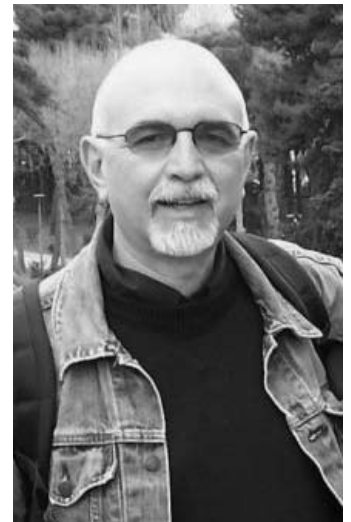
The webinar technology made it possible for John to interact with other participants: “Adam Montri’s was the greatest presentation. I was so pumped up after I saw that. That was a great program. The ability to ask questions, get questions answered right there in real time was just awesome.”

John was raised in the greenhouse business in central Pennsylvania. “We raised primarily bedding plants and seasonal holiday crops. We had about 18 greenhouses, everything sold retail.”

A Penn State graduate, John managed a large retail garden center/greenhouse operation near Philadelphia after leaving home. He then opened up his own flower and plant store, which won “Best of Philadelphia” in 1995. John sold his business to venture into technology.

“In the late 1990s, the internet was starting to come along. I felt there was a big hole in horticulture information online. I developed what was then the first commercial horticulture website.” He moved from web development to software development and worked for the California Cut Flower Commission for a few years.

A few years ago John moved on to vegetables. “I started research and thinking about plights of some of the farmers in the Northeast, namely weather related plights. That’s where I got into high tunnels, and started working with Penn State.” John now raises tomatoes and



John Rizzo

-continued on page 27-

The Magis, the More

Where faithfulness leads to fruitfulness

Gary T. Guthrie



Ignatius of Loyola in his principles of discernment talks about the Magis, the More. As we make decisions in our lives, he would have us look at using all of our senses, our feelings, our mind, our heart. What is going to give us more life? When do we feel most alive? It is a form of Holistic Farm Management, simplified.

I would like to propose that PFI follows the Principle of Magis or More. The following reflection illustrates how this Principle has played out on my own farm.

The French painter Paul Cezanne stated, “The day is coming when a single carrot, freshly observed, will set off a revolution.”

It took me awhile to freshly observe my carrots and to come

In the early years, I asked myself, “Why am I doing this?” I could get depressed when I thought about all the work, the relentless weeding for little financial gain.

to know what a stir they would create or that they would be part of the starting of a revolution! When I started Growing Harmony Farm in 1997, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) was new to Iowa. I had a vague notion that after helping farmers in Bolivia and El Salvador and then working for the Iowa Peace Network for six years, I wanted to get my hands back in the soil. When I heard about CSA I thought this might be the opportunity. I had almost no experience growing vegetables. I didn’t create a business plan and map out my garden in detail. For many reasons, I should have been a complete failure!



In the early years, I asked myself, “Why am I doing this?” I could get depressed when I thought about all the work, the relentless weeding for little financial gain. I also felt in those first years the sense that I was doing this all on my own. There were not a lot of mentors out there to call and ask for help!

But focusing on the relationships and the people I was serving sustained me. I tried to stay faithful to those relationships and to the long range vision of community. I did not really know what that meant at the time, but it was a gut feeling that what I was doing was right. Because of my work with agriculture in Bolivia and El Salvador, I knew the interconnections between justice, land and food and I knew that CSAs were an opportunity to integrate them into one. That is part of the vision that I was trying to be faithful to.

Just because one is faithful to a relationship or endeavor does not mean there will automatically be abundance. But what I think it does do and if we are open to the Spirit it can create the possibility of fertility. It creates an environment where the possibility for the seed to sprout and produce abundantly is there. I can look back now and see how Grace was working.



I don’t recommend that beginning farmers start growing large quantities of carrots! Carrots start out with a very fragile seed and need just the right conditions to emerge from the ground. Once emerged, their stand can diminish with hard rainfalls. Grace was with me when

I started with loamy soils. Grace was with me when I started with good quality varieties, Nelson and Bolero. I started small and as I developed my system I was slowly able to expand my production so that in 2001 when a restaurant came to me asking for produce I thought I could expand production. That is how I ended up with nearly a half acre of carrots each year. But when I first started, I was harvesting around 100 lbs per 100 foot bed.

Two summers ago I dug up an old bed of raspberries that were not producing very well. As it so happened that is where I was going to be planting carrots in my rotation. It was fascinating to observe the difference in quality and production between the raspberry carrots, whose grow was stunted and the skin quality was undulated and not translucent, in part due to less tith, more clay and less organic matter in the soil. One bed just a few feet from those carrots produced a record amount. More than 450 lbs from one bed! Imagine going

from 100 lbs to 450! Now that is fertile!

But I had to be faithful to a good crop rotation with cover crops, mulches and composted manure. I had to feed the soil life community and create a system that was truly full of life and sustainable in order to sustain such yields! Fertility just doesn't happen it has to be nurtured with love.

This past year with the extra rain my flaming for weed control in my carrot beds did not work as well as usual. My summer worker was gone, so I thought I had better weed the carrots before they get beyond help. It took me 12 hours to weed four 100-foot-long beds! And I am a fast weeder!

There are many people who think I am insane and there are very few who would consider spending that amount of time weeding over a weekend. But I didn't want to ask anyone else to weed and I didn't think I could afford it!



This is where being faithful to the Magis Principle is important. Yes, I could have given up and tilled the carrot beds in but I chose the More. Literally More weeding so that I could have More carrots for my members who love them so much. The final harvest brings More life to my members and to my farm.

When a six year old boy asks his mother, "Mom can I have another carrot?" That is the principle of Magis at work. Literally! That is the more.

When a daughter grabs the cucumber out of the box of vegetables and starts chomping away before they can get in the car. The mother smiles with joy knowing it is safe and satisfying. That is More!

When a mother has to tell her three children, "No more eating the peas!" That is more.



Gary Guthrie provides a little bit of The Magis, The More via farm-picked strawberries and homemade ice cream at his 2009 field day

When three children sit down to a piece of homemade strawberry-rhubarb pie and love it so much that they lick their plate (to the chagrin of their parents and absolute delight to the cook): That is Life! That is the More! It is not just the taste of the pie. It is also the fruit of the fellowship and laughing around the table!

One day I receive a phone call from my son, Eric, asking if I could bring some carrots into town. A friend, after having tasted my carrots during a horticulture presentation that I had given in the high school, wanted to share some with his friends at a tail-gate party before a soccer game. That same afternoon, as I was rounding a corner at the school with my son on the way to the game, a student asked me, "Do you have any carrots on you?" I exclaimed to Eric, "Wow that's incredible, two carrot requests in the same day from high school students!" Eric replied, "Ya in the hallways, the word is out, they call them kick-ass carrots!" Now that is life! That is the More!

When Susan Jutz decides to have a community potluck and dance, she wonders as the time approaches if anyone is going to show up. Then as if on cue like the film, *Field of Dreams*, cars start rolling down the gravel road and she wonders where is everyone going to park! That is More!

When county officials decided recently that she needed a permit for that gathering: That is the anti-More. Yet when countless members of her CSA and community spoke on her behalf and the county officials voted on Susan's behalf. That is the More Principle at Work

When Tom Frantzen and family plant trees along their fence rows and hog paddocks, this is not a decision to pad their bottom line. They chose More life for the wild life around them and their sense of beauty of place. They were choosing More quality of life.

The Magis Principle is the underlining principle that Sustainable Agriculture ultimately follows. All the decisions we make, if they are leading towards sustainability, will lead to more life because it is for our future generations that will benefit from our decisions today.



All the decisions we make, if they are leading towards sustainability, will lead to more life because it is for our future generations that will benefit from our decisions today.

Looking for High-yielding Non-transgenic Corn Hybrids?

Sarah Carlson

Have you been able to find high-yielding non-transgenic corn hybrids appropriate for your farm? For about three years now PFI has been hearing from its farmer members that these corn hybrid options from their local seed retailers have become scarce.

In addition, several farmers have expressed concern that:

- a) Only “traited” or “stacked” versions of their favorite hybrids are available.
- b) Similar non-traited or non-stacked corn hybrids were not yielding as high as their favorite hybrid.

In response to these issues several independent seed retailers (see list below) along with corn breeders at public universities and from private businesses formed the member organization US Testing Network (USTN) in spring of 2009. The goal of USTN is to help bridge the gap between breeder and seed retailer to bring improved, high yielding, high-quality non-transgenic corn hybrids into the marketplace.

For those looking to sell into specialty markets that don't accept transgenic crops, or farmers who want to decrease their use of glyphosate, good yielding corn hybrids are a must. The USTN coordinates a rigorous testing program to evaluate public and private corn germplasm. The USTN is primarily concerned with the evaluation of germplasm being developed for the organic and non-transgenic grain industry. To reach that purpose the USTN's members provide corn to be tested and locations for testing and/or financial support.

In 2010, the USTN has grown! Members are testing corn at 37 locations (Table 1, page 13). Currently corn materials are grouped as elite (1-2 years to commercialization) or experimental (4-5 years to commercialization). All hybrids were tested on all conventional locations and a subset of those materials was tested on the organic locations.

The USTN is testing in 11 states:

North Dakota	Ohio
Minnesota	Pennsylvania
Iowa	New York
Wisconsin	North Carolina
Illinois	Texas
Indiana	

Our 29 member organizations represent:

- ❖ Five universities
- ❖ Ten seed retailers
- ❖ Two non-profits
- ❖ Seven private breeding programs
- ❖ USDA-ARS public breeding program
- ❖ Two sustainable agriculture industry leaders
- ❖ Two farmer cooperators

We are testing at 11 NEW locations

2010: 28 Conventional and 9 Organic

2009: 19 Conventional and 7 Organic

To become a member and learn about results generated from the USTN contact Sarah Carlson at sarah@practicalfarmers.org 515-232-5661 x305.



Breeder's Showcase, September 2009



USTN corn retailer Alix Paez



Table 1. 2010 USTN Locations

ZONE 1 Maturity Range 80-99			ZONE 3 Maturity Range 100-108			ZONE 5 Maturity Range 109-115		
Elite		Exp	Elite		Exp	Elite		Exp
Conventional	Organic		Conventional	Organic		Conventional	Organic	
Thompson, ND	Madison, MN	Fairmount, ND	Ames, IA	Wells, MN	Ames, IA	Charleston, IL	Greenfield, IA	Maroa, IL
Casselton, ND		Melrose, MN	Sheldahl, IA	Penn Yan, NY	Wooster, OH	Greenfield, IA	Salisbury, NC	Greenfield, IL
Prosper, ND		River Falls, WI	Morrison, IL	Wooster, OH		Howe, IN	Kinston, NC	
Fairmount, ND			Jersey Shore, PA	East Troy, WI		Greensburg, IN	Plymouth, NC	
Melrose, MN						Windfall, IN		
River Falls, WI						Arcanum, OH		
Madrid, NY						Jersey Shore, PA		
Sackets Harbor, NY						Dumas, TX		
Canton, PA								

Seed Retailers currently marketing non-GMO corn hybrids and also supporting the work of the USTN include:

Albert Lea Seedhouse

Mac Ehrhardt
Albert Lea, MN
(507)373-3161
mac@alseed.com,

American Organics

Art Scheele
Warren IL
(815)266-4010
art@american-organic.com

Becks Hybrids

Great Harvest Organics
Brent Minett
Atlanta IN
(800)YES-Beck
bminett@beckshybrids.com

Blue River Hybrids

Maury Johnson
Kelley IA
(800)370-7979
maury@blueriverorgseed.com

Brownseed Genetics

Charles Brown
Bay City WI
(715)594-3355
cbrown@brownseed.com

Doebblers Hybrids

Bill Camerer
Jersey Shore PA
(800)853-2676
wrcamerer@doebblers.com

Foundation Seed

Steve Mohr
Onalaska WI 54650
(608)780-5460
smohr5@charter.net

Genetic Enterprises, Int.

Alix V. Paez
Johnston IA
(515)278-1170
paezgei@mchsi.com

Green Prairie Specialties

John Hostetler
Tampico IL
(815)499-3477

Lords Seed

John Larimar
Howe IN
(260)562-2233
jlarimer@lordsseed.com

Masters Choice

Jeremy Lake
Anna IL
(217)370-2783
jeremy@seedcorn.com

Grazing Cover Crops (Oh My)

Kevin Dietzel

What is exciting about cover crops besides their ability to keep the soil covered between cash crops, increase soil organic matter, improve water quality, and reduce erosion during some of the most vulnerable times in the year? They can also be grazed to extend the grazing season and reduce the need for stored forages, or free up pastures to increase rest periods or make more hay. There are many different strategies of how farmers are doing this, and I will attempt to describe some of those strategies here.

Wade Dooley, Albion

Wade Dooley, who farms near Albion, Iowa, grazed winter wheat and winter rye last fall and spring. Twenty acres of winter rye were seeded following corn silage (mid-September), and 30 acres of winter wheat were broadcast seeded with a highboy into standing soybeans at leaf yellow (also mid-September). In November, 65 head of cow-calf pairs (1200-1500 lb. cows) and four bulls were put into the rye plus 70 additional acres of corn stalks. The calves were weaned and the bulls were removed after Thanksgiving. The rye and corn stalks were grazed a total of one month with corn silage but no additional feed provided. The cows were then moved into the winter wheat, and half a day later it snowed. The cows were fed hay and corn silage in this field the remainder

of the winter.

As soon as the snow melted, the wheat (which had been insulated under the snow), took off in growth and the cows started grazing it. The cows grazed the wheat until the rye was six inches tall. They were then moved to the rye and adjoining 70 acres of corn stalks with no cover crop, until the rye had been eaten down. Wade then moved the cows back to the winter wheat field to allow the rye to grow back again. He rotated the cows back and forth between the rye and the wheat three times a month for two months, after which the rye re-growth no longer seemed to be palatable to the cows. The winter rye field was planted into soybeans and the winter wheat field was planted into corn.

Here's the most exciting part: for the first time, Wade had extra hay this spring. This was because he fed no hay in the fall and reduced hay in the spring when the cows were grazing cover crops. During the spring grazing, he fed the cows the same as he normally would: corn silage and ad libitum hay. But he moved to every other day corn silage feeding earlier than he normally would have, as the cows did not seem as hungry. They also ate considerably less hay than usual. The only difference was that he added



George Schaefer

in the cover crop as a feed source.

This seems like a pretty good way to make a conservation practice that is good for water quality and soil health pay for itself (or even make money). It saves on feed costs, keeps the cows cleaner during mud season (with no bedding cost), and spreads out the manure nutrients with no labor or fuel needed.

Another observation Wade made, was that when he spread manure on those fields this spring, the fields with cover crops held up under the weight of the spreader, while there were huge ruts where the spreader sank into the wet soil in the fields with no cover crops. This could be a function of two things: the plants also were actively taking up water, leaving the soil drier, and the living plants and roots provided better soil structure to support weight. This could help dry out the soil for planting in wet springs, but it could also become a problem in areas and years when water is scarce.

George Schaefer, Kalona

George Schaefer, who farms with his brother Steve near Kalona, Iowa, also grazes winter rye. In the past, they have drilled the rye following corn harvest, but this past fall they had the rye aerial seeded into standing corn as part of a PFI research project comparing side by side treatments of winter rye cover crop and no cover crop. If the rye gets significant fall growth, they will graze



Wade Dooley

it in the fall along with corn stalks. In the spring they graze the rye when it gets about a foot tall (assuming the field is in a location that can be grazed). This spring, they grazed rye for about a month.

George gives the warning that if you are replacing spring pasture with rye grazing, some of the pastures should be hayed in order for the grass to not get overly mature by the time you get to grazing it in your rotation. This was especially a problem this spring with all the moisture their farm has gotten (18 inches in June), as the mature grass (that did not get mowed) got trampled on the ground, retarding re-growth. This is also an advantage, though, as it is an opportunity to either make more hay in the spring or give pastures more rest.

George also says that any cover crop fields that get grazed must be tilled before planting corn or soybeans, as the field will have hoof marks that make it difficult to get a

Cover crops such as rye can also be harvested as stored forage, if lack of fencing or the location makes the field not a possibility for grazing.

good no-till stand. On the Schaefer's organic fields this is especially true, as grazing the cover crops would delay the time until boot stage, when they would be able to shred it for organic no-till soybeans.

Cover crops such as rye can also be harvested as stored forage, if lack of fencing or the location makes the field not a

possibility for grazing. George and Steve Schaefer did this on some of their fields this year. Ideally it should be harvested in the flag leaf to flowering stage, but waiting for this stage could delay planting of the main cash crop. I heard one farmer propose planting a shorter season corn following harvest of the rye forage, but am not aware of this having actually been tried.

There are surely other ways to integrate cover crops as a grazing feed, but these are some ideas that have been tried. We would love to hear about any other ideas or successes people have had with grazing or harvesting cover crops! Of course, if we do this, we might have to start calling it a double crop instead of a cover crop. If you get the advantages of keeping the soil covered and living roots in the soil, what difference does it make what you call it?

Interested in conducting on-farm research about cover crops this fall?

Practical Farmers of Iowa has funding available to conduct several on-farm cover crop projects and money for supplies or seeding costs to help you test out new ways to try out cover crops in your system.

Please contact Sarah Carlson at (515)232-5661, sarah@practicalfarmers.org, if you are interested. Some project ideas could include:

- ❖ Aerial seeding
- ❖ Over-seeding with the Hagie highboy
- ❖ Using winter small grains (rye, wheat, triticale, barley)
- ❖ Using legumes (hairy vetch, fava beans, etc)
- ❖ Using brassicas (tillage radish, forage mustards)
- ❖ Drilling
- ❖ Broadcasting
- ❖ Slurry seeding
- ❖ Weed control
- ❖ Cover crops + no-till (conventional & organic)
- ❖ Corn silage, seed corn or beans
- ❖ Grazing cover crops
- ❖ Cover crops with late season corn/soybean varieties
- ❖ Cover crops for spring silage
- ❖ Horticulture crops + cover crops
- ❖ Manure + cover crops

Cover Crop Aerial Applicators in Iowa:

No	Business name	Town	Phone Number	E-mail	Contact
1	Agri-Tech Aviation, Inc.	Indianola	(515)961-4026	wesssharp@agritechaviation.com	Terry Sharp
2	Harksen Aerial Spraying, LLC.	Clinton	(563)522-2171	rharksen@iowatelecom.net	Reynold Harksen
3	Har-Mor Ag Air, Inc.	Red Oak	(402)374-2178		Allen Soll
4	Heartland Aerial Sprayers LLC	Missouri Valley	(712)304-1875		Larry Southard
5	Kennett Ag Services	Grinnell	(641)990-4480	mkfarms@hotmail.com	Mark Kennett
6	Klinkenborg Aerial Spraying Inc.	Parkersburg	(319)239-2304	klink99@q.com	Samuel Klinkenborg
7	L Organic LLP	Wells	(507)380-5745		Ray Yokiel
8	Meyer Agri Air	Wellsburg	(641)640-8723		Joel Meyer
9	Midwest Spray Service LLC	Allerton	(641)873-6875	midwestspray@yahoo.com	Brad Gage
10	Pettis R. E. Aerial Applicator	Atlantic	(712)243-4038		Robert Pettis
11	R & M Spraying Service, Ltd.	Sioux Center	(712)722-2293	bruce@siouxcenteraviation.com	Randy VanderWeide
12	Storm Spraying, Inc.	Webster City	(515)832-3723	sue@stormflyingsservice.com	Ralph Storm
13	Thompson Aero, Inc.	Amana	(319)622-3251	thompsonaero@gmail.com	John Thompson
14	Todd's Flying Service, Inc.	Ankeny	(515)964-0380		Gregg Todd

Storing Crops for Season Extension

Rick Hartmann, Small Potatoes Farm



From left to right: Rick and Stacy Hartmann lead Eric Armbrrecht, Marilyn Andersen, and other field day attendees on a tour of their farm this July

The demand for local food in central Iowa outstrips supply in many types of markets, even during peak harvest season. Unmet demand is particularly evident outside the regular growing season, the same time period when direct-market produce farms experience declines in sales and cash flow. Season extension of vegetable crops to meet unmet demand and moderate farm cash flow often requires capitalization, purchased energy and new skill sets such as construction and maintenance of hoop houses.

Small Potatoes Farm tends toward using ecological services or existing infrastructure to meet production, economic or other goals prior to purchase of new inputs, assets or infrastructure development. With that in mind, Small Potatoes undertook a season extension demonstration project during the 2009 season designed to help answer the following questions:

1. Can direct-market vegetable farmers increasingly meet demand and increase cash flow during the off-season by growing, storing and marketing more crops amenable to regular-season production and storage within existing facilities?
2. Can off-season marketing of storage crops be done without substantially extra labor, energy and infrastructure costs?

Can off-season marketing of storage crops

be done without substantially extra labor,

energy and infrastructure costs?

3. Are there sufficient varieties of crops with the traits necessary for simple, effective storage for future marketing?
4. Will the market embrace those crops that have the necessary storage characteristics?

To help answer those questions, the following steps were taken:

1. Test traditional storage crops rutabagas, beets, and carrots for storage potential during the off-season.
2. Store crops in existing, under-utilized facilities.
3. Monitor quality and life of chosen storage crops.
4. Record popularity and ease of marketing of storage crops during off-season time periods at various market outlets.

In-field agronomic properties of storage crops during demonstration

We grew a mid-season planting of rutabagas, beets, and carrots during 2009. These root crops were selected due to reported or observed storage potential. These crops were harvested near the

Table 1. Storage crop varieties with target and actual planting dates.

Crop	Variety	Self-reported Days to Maturity	Target Planting Date	Actual Planting Date
Beet	'Red Ace' (red)	50	July 15th	July 6th
	'Touchstone Gold' (yellow)	55	July 15th	July 6th
Carrot	'Bolero' (orange)	75	June 15 th	July 2nd
	'Jaune du Doubs' (yellow)	78	June 15 th	July 2nd
Rutabaga	'Laurentian'	95	June 1 st	June 15th
	'Helenor'	90	June 1 st	June 15th

Table 2. Storage crop varieties with estimated planting population, stand count, vigor and canopy dates.

Crop	Variety	Est. Seeds Planted per Row Ft.	Plants per Ft. After App. One Month	Visual Vigor Rating *	Canopy Date (days)
Beet	Red Ace	22.0	2.4	Good	Aug. 10 (35 d)
	Touchstone Gold	39.7	1.1	Poor	Never
Carrot	Bolero	20.6	3.9	Moderate	Aug. 30 (59 d)
	Jaune du Doubs	20.6	13.2	Good	Aug. 9 (31 d)
Rutabaga	Laurentian	15.1	0.7	Good	July 11 (30 d)
	Helenor	10.2	0.9	Good	

*Vigor was rated as Good, Moderate or Poor.

end of the growing season for off-season storage and marketing.

We recorded planting date, seed spacing, plant spacing and row spacing, days to emergence, plant vigor and canopy dates.

Crops were scheduled to be planted so they would be ready for harvest during the month of September. (Table 1).

At harvest, crops were removed from the field, washed to remove excess soil, then sanitized in peroxyacetic acid (Tsunami 100, Ecolabs) before being bagged into 1.5 mil food grade polybags. All crops harvested were marketable and in good condition. Harvest of each crop occurred over time to obtain the 100 lbs needed for storage, except for carrots which were harvested en mass.

Store crops in existing, under-utilized facilities

Rutabagas, beets and carrots were stored in our walk-in cooler (Heatcraft compressor, Americooler 8' x 12' x 8' urethane construction). The cooler remained operational through February to record temperature and humidity. Temperatures consistently remained between 40 and 42 degrees Fahrenheit.

Monitor quality and life of chosen crops

Stored crops were monitored for marketability during the storage period. Storage problems leading to non-marketability were recorded. (Table 3).

Record popularity and ease of marketing of storage crops in off-season environment various market outlets

Beginning Nov. 10th and ending Dec. 7th, we offered the marketable storage crops into three of our traditional markets, a local grocery cooperative, a local food collaborative and a producer-consumer local food cooperative. We recorded sales at each market location by crop (and variety) and price. Table 4 summarizes average prices for main season and off season sales. There were no rutabaga sales apart from the storage experiment to compare.

Discussion

Small Potatoes generally finishes marketing and delivering of crops by the end of October or first week of November. Prior to 2009 we had not planted crops in any substantial amounts specifically to be stored post-season and sold during November or beyond. We felt doing this might be a strategic way to expand our marketing season. Benefits would increase by planting those crops at the proper time, selecting the right combination of crops and marketing the proper amount of those crops.

Harvesting, processing and storing of the root crops for winter marketing was incorporated into our regular season labor regime. No additional hired labor was needed to market and deliver the roots during November or December. We did not have infrastructure expansion associated with the expanded marketing season, such as underground storage, since we used our existing walk-in cooler. Through this demonstration, we concluded the cooler would maintain a near constant temperature and provide adequate storage to high humidity/low temperature storage

vegetables. Cost associated with keeping the cooler on amounted to approximately \$1 per day. Although not part of this project, it should be noted that cabbage kept very well in the cooler through January. Other crops reported to store well under this temperature/humidity regime are turnips, parsnips and kohlrabi.

In 2009, the fall and early winter were particularly mild, resulting in crop production and field harvesting much later than normal. We harvested and stored some additional crops long after we did the same for the crops in this demonstration. Not surprising, the latest harvested crops kept longest in the walk-in cooler, even allowing for deliver in January and early February. In this demonstration, carrots planted the first week of July matured at mid-October, an optimum time frame for storage. Beets and rutabagas would have benefited from a later planting and subsequent later harvest date. Rutabagas in particular matured much earlier than expected based on their published 'days to harvest'.

One strategy to maximize the quality and quantity of storage crops would be to continue to plant late into the growing season as if every year were to be unusually mild. Those years an extra storage crop can mature and be marketed will more than cover the cost of seed and planting in those years the last crops freeze prior to harvest. Interestingly, in 2009 at the farm, a bed of spinach and a bed of cilantro were planted on Sept. 5th. Although either failed to mature to harvest, both over wintered and were harvestable very early in the spring. This was in part due to the unusually long snow

-continued on page 19-

Table 3. Storage crop varieties and conditions during storage.

Crop	Variety	40d	50d	60d
Beet	'Red Ace' (red)	Good.	Some surface mold. Easily cleaned.	90% surface mold. 10% sprouting from tops.
	'Touchstone Gold' (yellow)	Good.	Some surface mold. Easily cleaned.	Some surface mold. Easily cleaned.
Carrot	'Bolero' (orange)	Good.	Good.	Good.
	'Jaune du Doubs' (yellow)	Small amt. surface mold on tips and small amt. sprouting. Easily cleaned.	Moderate amt. surface mold on tips and moderate amt. sprouting.	Moderate amt. surface mold on tips and moderate amt. sprouting. Rust colored spots on surface. Low marketability.
Rutabaga	'Laurentian'	Good.	Good.	Beginning to sprout.
	'Helenor'	Good.	Good.	Beginning to sprout.

Table 4. Storage crop prices.

Crop	Variety	Ave. Price/Lb July – Oct.	Ave. Price/Lb Nov. (Stored)	Ave. Price/Lb Dec. (Stored)
Beet	Red Ace (red)	1.44	1.30	Na
	Touchstone Gold (yellow)	1.76	1.36	Na
Carrot	Bolero (orange)	1.29	1.55	1.47
	Jaune du Doubs (yellow)	1.70	1.22	1.40
Rutabaga	Laurentian	Na	1.24	Na
	Helenor	Na	1.24	Na

Cooperators

Ron Rosmann

Project Timeline

One year

Web Link

practicalfarmers.org/resources

Contact

Sarah Carlson (515)232-5661,
sarah@practicalfarmers.org

Funding

Blue River Hybrids

Aphid Resistance in Organic Soybean Production

Abstract

Soybean aphids can negatively impact yields for farmers in conventional and organic farming systems. New soybean varieties have become available that might resist aphids. In this one-year trial, the non-resistant soybean variety yielded more compared to the resistant variety. However, fewer aphids were observed on the resistant variety. Future research is needed to test new soybean varieties under aphid pressure.

Background

Soybean aphids have become an economically important pest over the past decade in the Midwest. This is the case for both conventional and organic growers. According to organic seed literature, if aphids are present for extended periods of time, yields can be reduced by 50% or more. Conventional growers have insecticides at their disposal should an outbreak occur over the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) threshold levels. Organic soybean producers are limited to only a few commercial products that are cleared for organic use. They are Neem oil, mineral oil, insecticidal soap, and Pyrethrins. Their efficacy for controlling aphids in soybeans has been mixed at best.

This past year (2009) Blue River Hybrids introduced an aphid resistant soybean, 29AR9, which is a Group 2.9 soybean. It has been suggested that this soybean variety deters aphids because of glandular hairs on the leaves that discourage aphids from chewing. Blue River will have a number of new aphid resistant varieties available for 2010 that are of earlier maturity. This is especially significant for growers in the northern part of the state, where aphid pressure has generally been the greatest.

Method

This past year, Ron Rosmann

conducted a PFI field trial comparing aphid-resistant 29AR9 soybeans to a non-resistant variety, 2A71. Both varieties were from Blue River Hybrids. The soybean plots were planted on May 19, 2009, and were randomized and replicated six times across the entire length of the field. Field strips were eight rows wide and were planted in 38-inch rows. The entire plot was approximately 10 acres. Soybean aphid counts were done on August 15, 2009, and August 28, 2009. These counts were only rough observations and were not conducted in an experimentally acceptable way. Soybean yield of the treatments were harvested on October 20, 2009.

Farm Cooperators

Rosmann Family Farms has been pesticide free since 1983 and certified organic since the 1990's. The family grows and markets diverse crops including: corn, soybeans, barley, oats, popcorn and alfalfa. Integrated into the organic farming system are a 40-sow

deep-bedded farrow-to-finish operation and a 90-head cow-calf herd.

Results

The non-resistant soybean variety, 2A71, yielded statistically significantly higher than the resistant variety; however the difference was only one bushel. The average yield for the resistant variety (29AR9) was 64 bu/A as compared to the non-resistant variety (2A71) yielding 65 bu/A. Shelby county 10-year average soybean yield from Iowa State University Extension is 47 bu/A. 51 bu/A was the highest in 2005. Compared to these county averages, at the test site Blue River's varieties in this organic farming system outperformed county averages by 17 and 18 bu/A, respectively. On August 15, aphid counts in the field did show that aphid pressure increased from east to west in the plots. On the west end of the plots, the non-resistant beans had 10-15 aphids/leaf. The resistant beans had 2 aphids/leaf. On the east side of the plots, the non-resistant soybeans had 30-60 aphids/leaf, and the resistant soybeans had 6-12 aphids/leaf. With a threshold value of 250 aphids/plant, the non-resistant soybeans were at or far above the threshold for spraying an insecticide of some kind. No sprays were used. By the second observation on August 28, 2009, aphid counts had dropped down to 10-15 aphids/plant in the non-resistant variety and down to 0-2 aphids/plant on the resistant variety.

Conclusions

Tolerance to aphids and resulting yield of two soybean varieties from



Ron Rosmann at 2009 field day

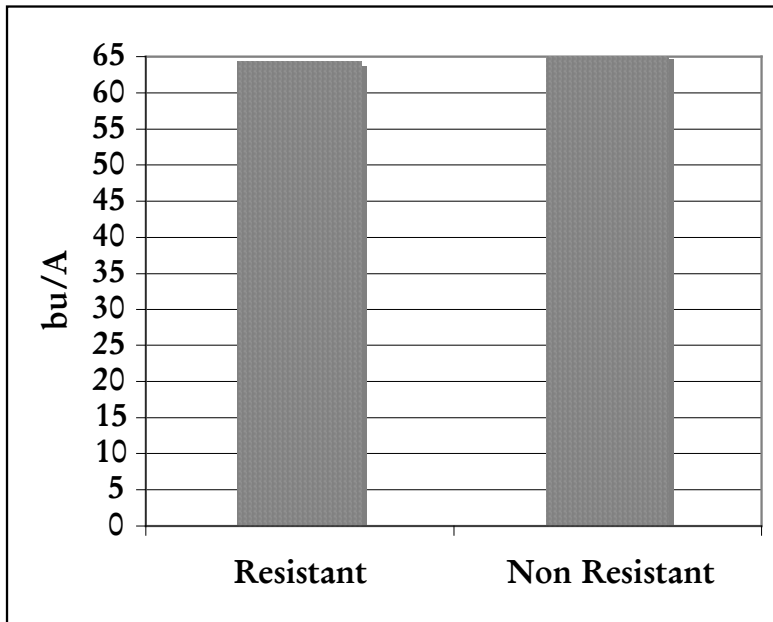


Figure 1. Soybean yield comparison of resistant and non resistant varieties from Blue River Hybrids.

Blue River Hybrids were compared in an organic farming system on the farm of Ron Rosmann. Although the non-resistant variety yielded statistically significantly higher than the resistant variety, it was only a one-bushel difference in actual yield. These yields were at or above the average yields for soybeans in Shelby County for 2009. Aphids counts taken mid-August showed that the resistant variety soybeans were at economic threshold for insecticide application. No insecticides were used in this study. Aphids counts taken at the end of August showed a drastic decrease in the amount of aphids present. Further research needs to be conducted to help

answer some of the following questions.

- Why did the non-resistant beans out yield the resistant variety, especially since they were not treated with an insecticide?
- Did beneficial predator insects decrease the aphid pressure in the non-resistant soybeans?
- Was there enough aphid pressure over the whole field to show a varietal difference?
- Did significant rainfall in August decrease aphid pressure?
- Is the 2A71 variety inherently a higher yielding soybean as compared to the 29AR9 soybean so that it made no difference if there was some aphid damage to it?

It has been suggested by Dr. Walter Fehr, soybean breeder at Iowa State University, that a sprayed aphid-free 2A71 replicate needed to be included in this trial so that a true comparison could have been made for aphid damage. This is not allowed for organic certification for organic farmers. For the sake of research this may be unfortunate but this same study could be replicated on a conventionally managed farm. Spraying for aphids was more the norm than the exception over much of Iowa. The results of this trial indicate that more inquiry is needed into these questions.

Future research could include:

- Improve aphid count data collection
- Collect, identify, and count beneficial insects
- Replicate study at northern Iowa farms where aphid pressure is greater
- Calculate the cost/benefit of aphid resistant versus other soybeans

Report prepared February 2010

-Storing Crops for Season Extension, continued from page 17-

cover, but over wintering crops may be another tool to extend the marketing season.

Cool season crops planted in the summer for fall storage may have establishment difficulties. Average rainfall during this time period will be less than if these crops were spring planted. In this demonstration there was high variability in emergence and stand. High July temperatures and insufficient moisture at planting may have been a significant factor for this. For all these reasons, it may be beneficial to provide supplemental water for germination and emergence if necessary.

Marketing storage crops off-season allows for expanded cash-flow and better utilization of labor resources only if the storage crops are demanded by the marketplace. If demand is furthered by scarcity of local produce during off-season, price premium may also be possible. It was found that popular seasonal crops were also the popular off-season crops. Carrots were more demanded than beets. Beets were more demanded than rutabagas. Focusing education on the benefits of winter seasonal eating should help demand of all crops that can be easily stored for winter consumption. The

standard orange carrots variety, 'Bolero', had superior agronomic characteristics and was a better competitor in the marketplace than its yellow counterpart, 'Doubs'. This was also true for the standard red beet, 'Red Ace', when compared to 'Touchstone Gold'.

Contrary to our expectations, farm prices generally softened for the same crops into November and December (Table 5). The exception was orange carrots, which saw an increase in farm prices. As mentioned previously, it was an exceptionally mild fall and there was relatively more local produce available for sale during 'off-season' months. Another possibility is we may have saturated our markets. Our markets primarily consist of finite numbers of individuals and families. It is certainly true we began selling more bulk storage crops in November and December. Bulk sales are discounted and did bring down average farm prices received. Even though we did not receive premium prices for storage crops in the off-season, we did receive fair prices and captured new revenue we previously did not have.

This report was cut for the newsletter. Find the full report plus other on-farm research reports at www.practicalfarmers.org.

What If? Glimpses of the Future

Liz Konstantinov muses on Back to the Basics

We have so much thinking and work to do to realize a positive future! Fifty came together at the 2010 PFI annual conference to begin thinking about the PFI of 2035. Together they discussed what they liked and didn't like about three scenarios provided to them at that meeting. We vowed to continue the discussion beyond the conference. In the last issue of *the Practical Farmer*, Heather Holcomb provided comments on the first scenario, one that had a focus on technological improvements.

This issue, Liz Konstantinov comments on the second scenario, Back to the Basics. Stay tuned to more discussion in future issues!

First the scenario:

Back to the Basics

Laura took a seat at the 2035 Eldora seed swap, eager to sip her hot tea. The room was cold, despite the hundred people present. She was pretty pleased, because she had snared some melon seeds she was eager to plant the next spring.

In 2010, Laura was just starting a career as a computer programmer in Des Moines. "Peak oil" was a phrase she skimmed over in the newspapers. She didn't pay much attention when gas prices rose to \$3 a gallon, but \$4 a gallon stretched her budget thin. The prices continued to increase in jagged spurts and stops—and never went down. Despite massive influxes of government stimulus money, the nation stayed in recession for years. Laura's pay stagnated, then, in 2015, she lost her job. And that's when she discovered how completely and totally the U.S. economy was tied to oil.

It was then that Laura moved home to Eldora. Her parents lost their jobs a few years later.

In 2020, it became clear that Laura's family would have no other choice: They had to become largely self-sufficient. They tilled up the bluegrass that had been the backyard, to expand the family's garden plot. They turned the garage into a chicken coop. On 40 acres of farmland they owned outside of town, Laura and her father seeded down their fields and grew prairie grasses to heat the family home. The family used to have three cars, and now they have one, and that one doesn't work well.

Laura's mother is finished with her seed swapping, and she joins Laura at the table with her find: some Cherokee purple tomato seed. She's eager to plant the tomato seed, but wonders if she's foolish. With the rains and the pests they've been getting, will the plants make it? Back in 2010, Laura's mother grew and canned some tomatoes as a hobby. Today, the family grows and cans all of their vegetables, and Laura's mother is often sought out for her growing expertise. They trade vegetables and chickens for sweet corn, wheat, barley and other food grown on neighbors' plots.

Through the years, more and more people have left the cities and moved back home to Eldora; all of the town's homes are now filled. Few are living comfortably, none are saving money, and most are worried about their future. Laura has learned how to darn socks and refurbish garden equipment. Laura's father trades his carpentry services for food and other items—purchasing new items is a rarity.

An old butcher reopened for business a few years back, but people are eating less meat than they once did. Laura and her parents have each lost about 20 pounds. They struggle to keep warm in the winter. In the summer, air conditioning is an unthinkable luxury, as are the winter vacations where they used to sun on the beach and stuff themselves with seafood from Cancun.

Laura and her mother grab their coats and say goodbye to friends. As they head home, Laura thinks about how she misses the restaurants of Des Moines and activities she used to do there. She doesn't feel like she has much in common with her urban peers anymore, though, and she's lost touch with them. She falls into bed tired each night and kind of hungry, but also deeply satisfied with what she's accomplished with her own hands. Funny, she thought to herself, how much I enjoy the simple pleasures with in this life of hard times.

Reaction from Liz Konstantinov:

If you break your neck, if you have nothing to eat, if your house is



on fire, then you got a problem. Everything else is inconvenience.
~Robert Fulghum

Given our dependence on oil, *Back to the Basics* is probably an accurate portrayal of things to come for our society. However bad things may seem to Laura and her family, all is relative. By the standards of the rest of the world, these folks are pretty lucky. Yes, they may be hungry now and then, but they are not going to starve on the rich Iowa land they own. They have the expertise to grow, can, and store their harvests. They grow their own fuel for the winter. They have neighbors with whom to trade goods. They don't have to worry about water.

- ❖ Haiti
- ❖ Darfur
- ❖ AIDS in southern Africa
- ❖ The war-torn Middle East
- ❖ Child prostitution in Southeast Asia
- ❖ World War Three?

There are worse things than being self-sufficient on one's own humble farm.

Sure, the young of 2010 will have a hard time in 2035 being inconvenienced by a world in which the luxuries they grew up with don't exist. But they will be guided by their elders who have known hardship in the not-too-distant past. They will learn the true meanings of, and the difference between, *want* and *need*.

My own mother, now 72, remembers plucking chickens for market as a child of five every Friday evening in her family's garage with her dad and brother. I myself recall stomping on my clothes in the soapy water of the bathtub and hanging them on the line to dry as a poor university student in Madrid because there was no washing machine or dryer. I have tried to instill in my children the idea that they can make do, overcome, hang in there, and survive on their own skills. I'm confident that they will be prepared when things take a turn for the worse.

Prosperity is a great teacher; adversity is a greater. ~William Hazlitt



Liz Konstantinov
Double K Farms
Clarinda, Iowa

The young of 2010 will have a hard time in 2035 being inconvenienced by a world in which the luxuries they grew up with don't exist. But they will be guided by their elders who have known hardship in the not-too-distant past. They will learn the true meanings of, and the difference between, *want* and *need*.



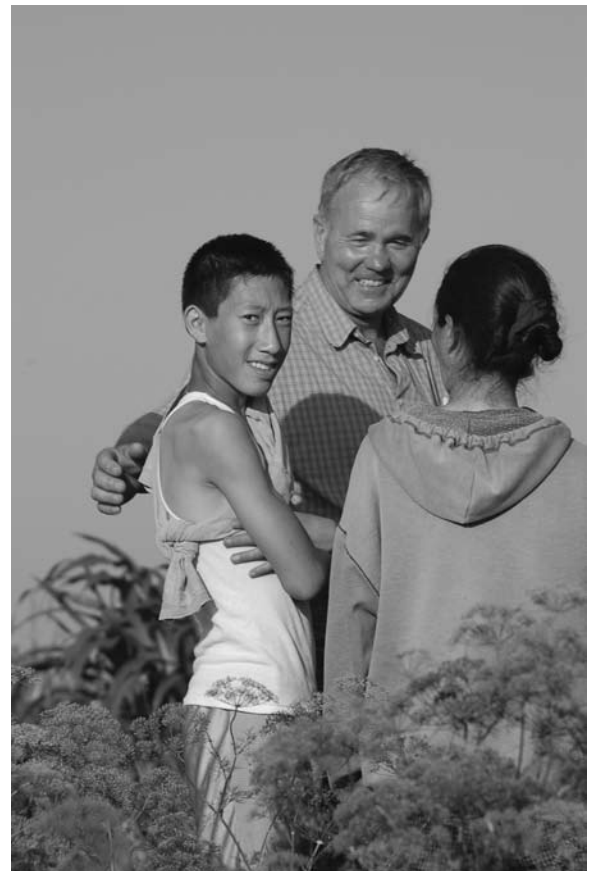
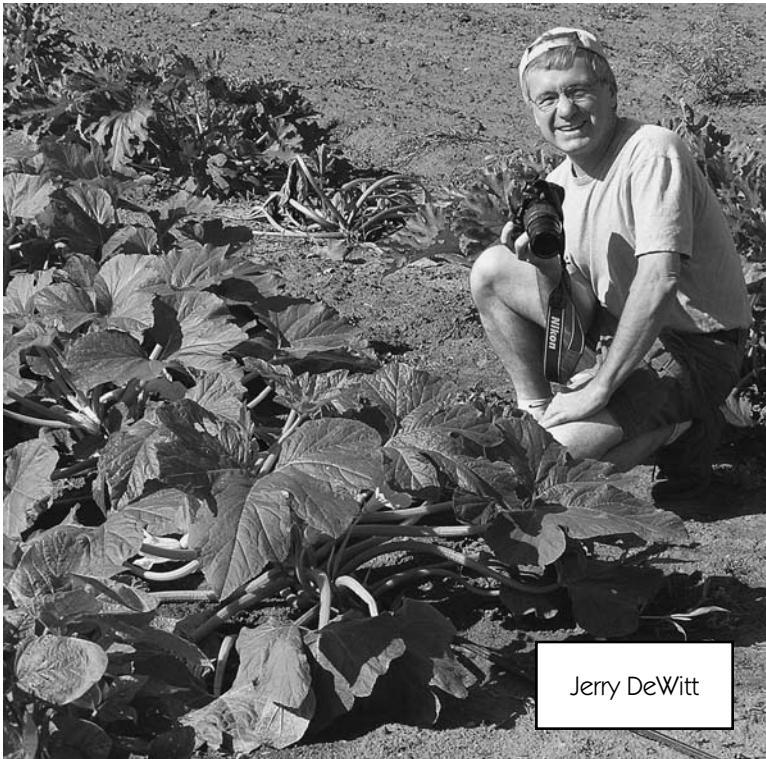
Do you want to read and comment on the three scenarios discussed at the 2010 annual conference? Visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/practicalfarmers. Find the scenarios under the discussion tab. You can comment there, or send your thoughts to Teresa at teresa@practicalfarmers.org.

Jerry DeWitt Captures Iowa Farms through a Lens

Through the years, Jerry DeWitt has been Practical Farmers of Iowa's best friend at Iowa State University. As of July 1st, he is now retired but promises to stay active with PFI. At his retirement dinner, he ended his remarks with a tribute to PFI farmers, including Dick and Sharon Thompson, Ron and Maria Rosmann, and Tom and Irene Frantzen, who all came to the dinner to bid him farewell.

Not only was Jerry our chief partner at Iowa State, he also has been a chief documentarian of PFI over the years through his wonderful photos from visits to your farms. Examples of those photos grace these pages.

Another PFI member and long-time colleague of Jerry DeWitt, John Pesek, had this to say about him: "Jerry has been deeply committed to the concept of sustainable agriculture and has written very thoughtful and inspired columns about its dimensions, and even more dedicated to farming and the farmers in Iowa. He is personally familiar with hundreds of farmers, and he has made it a point to make contacts with as many as possible. He has served agriculture in Iowa diligently and thoughtfully yet with a flourish. He has been eminently approachable by all who sought his counsel or who worked with him."





Young Member Spotlight

Christina Klinge

PFI members Spencer and Gavin Cory are only ages 14 and 12, but their responsible personalities and entrepreneurial ideas make them seem like they're at least 18 years old.

Spencer and Gavin are the oldest of five children in the Cory family. Every morning they milk goats, collect eggs, and take care of many other jobs around the farm. On Saturdays, the whole family goes to the Des Moines farmer's market. Spencer and Gavin wake up at 4:30 AM to get chores done before heading out. Not only do they sell farm products; Spencer and Gavin sell a variety of creative inventions that attract lots of business to their stand. The most popular invention is the "marshmallow shooter," made from piping. They demonstrate the shooter at the farmer's market, attracting attention and driving sales. Other products include balloon yo-yos, Styrofoam swords, and a soft bow and arrow set.

Parents Tom and Mary Cory are very proud of all their children. They are especially impressed with leadership and integrity of Spencer and Gavin. "Because of all that they're doing, sometimes we forget they're only 12 and 14," said Tom Cory.

"We're happy to be able to give them a positive farming experience that allows them to try out new ideas. We want all our children to know that this is a safe place to try new things and not worry about failing," said Mary Cory.

When asked what they think is the best part of farming, Spencer said, "It's sometimes hard getting up and going, but once I get out there, I really like to work." Spencer enjoys seeing the results of his work, including the chicken house that he helped construct.

Gavin also enjoys working hard. "It is good exercise, and we



Spencer (left) and Gavin Cory

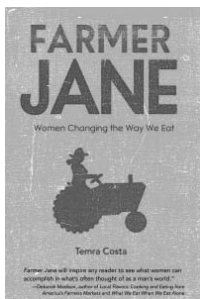
learn quite a bit, too, from taking care of animals." Spencer and Gavin have had to learn the importance of "patience." They explained how animals aren't in as big of a hurry as the rest of us, so sometimes they have to wait a while for an animal to cooperate.

The Cory boys plan on farming for the rest of their lives. They aren't sure where exactly, but they hope to each live in the same state. "It's a good feeling knowing that you're giving the customers a quality product. It took hard work, and you produced it with quality and high standards," said Spencer.

Member Book Review

Reviewed by Beth Larabee, Ames, IA

Farmer Jane Women Changing the Way We Eat, by Temra Costa



I gladly accepted when asked to write a book review for the PFI newsletter, because it was something a non-farming member could contribute. This book is penned by a woman and is about women but the guys can read it, too. Temra Costa gives us a pep talk in book form by allowing us to begin relationships with farming women, teaching women, activist women and organizing women, all working toward a regional, transparent, sustainable food system.

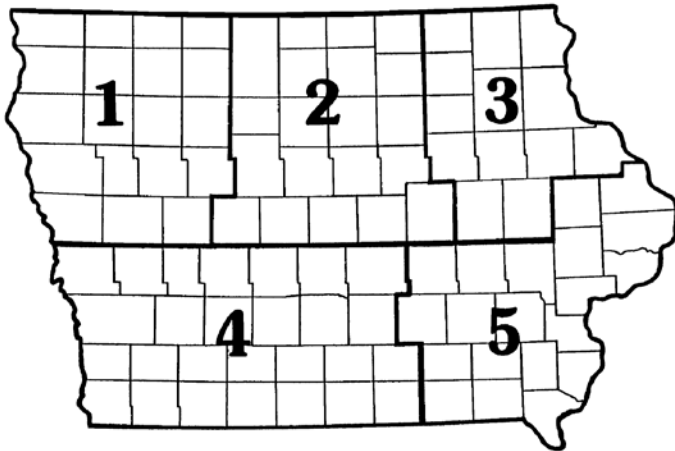
She takes us on a tour across America visiting farming women, both urban and rural, and the web of relationships around each one. These women are on the front line, growing food that sustains healthy people, healthy communities and a healthy environment. Ms. Costa then introduces us to women advocating for social change. They are lawyers, authors, film makers, and even state and federal agency staff. We are then presented with women promoting local and seasonal food; writers, chefs and restaurateurs who also are contributing to changes in our food system. The author also acquaints us to networks created by and for women working in the

area of sustainable food systems. Iowa is ably represented by our own Denise O'Brien of Rolling Acres Farm near Atlantic who founded The Women, Food and Agriculture Network. The book ends with the need to foster the next generation of sustainable food producers. I found the "recipes for actions" particularly interesting as they consist of actions that the public can take to accelerate the changes needed in our food system.

Temra reminds that we vote for the food system we want by how we spend our food dollars. But, most of all, this is a motivational book. It motivates farmers, both men and women, to roll out of bed, pull on their boots and get back to work. It encourages the rest of us; activists, chefs, researchers and organizers, to log into our blogs, put on our smocks, ask one more research question and facilitate one more event in support of those intrepid souls who endeavor to feed us in a healthful, sustainable way. Most of all, it inspires us to begin one more relationship between eaters, their food and the people who are able and willing to healthfully feed us and steward the land.

To share the story of a woman who inspires you, go to <http://farmerjanes.blogspot.com>.

New PFI Members—Welcome!



District 1

Nathan Anderson, *Cherokee*
 Ryan and Miyla Dittman, *Hospers*
 Tolif Hunt, *Coon Rapids*

District 2

William and Jean Andrews, *Melbourne*
 Heather Bass, *Ames*
 Sarah Buck, *Forest City*
 Nick McCann, *Ames*
 Joe Monahan, *Boone*
 Lyndsay Nissen, *Ames*
 Mae Petrehn, *Ames*
 Emily Rose Pfaltzgraff, *Hampton*
 Julia Slocum, *Ames*

Nathan Butler, *Ames*

District 3

Chad Backes, *Decorah*
 John Gibbs, *New Albin*
 Alan Glenn, *Elkader*
 Maynard Johnson, *Lansing*
 Lyle Luzum, *Calmar*
 Natural Resources Conservation Service,
 Teresa Steffens, *West Union*
 Grant Schultz, *Cedar Falls*
 Stephen James, *Zbornik, Fort Atkinson*

District 4

Mark Davis, *Bagley*

Jackie Dollen, *Shelby*
 Lynn and Ed Fallon, *Des Moines*
 Will and Jennifer Hensley, *Winterset*
 Iowa Council for International Understanding, Ashlee Stoddard, *Des Moines*
 Tai Johnson-Spratt, *Elkhart*
 La Quercia, LLC, Katherine Eckhouse, *Norwalk*
 Kent and Kathy Morris, *Atlantic*
 Fidencio and Susan Pena, *Glenwood*
 Shane Reiser, *Des Moines*
 Duane Sand, *Norwalk*
 Siobhan Spain, *Cumming*
 Kelly and Irene Tobin, *New Market*

District 5

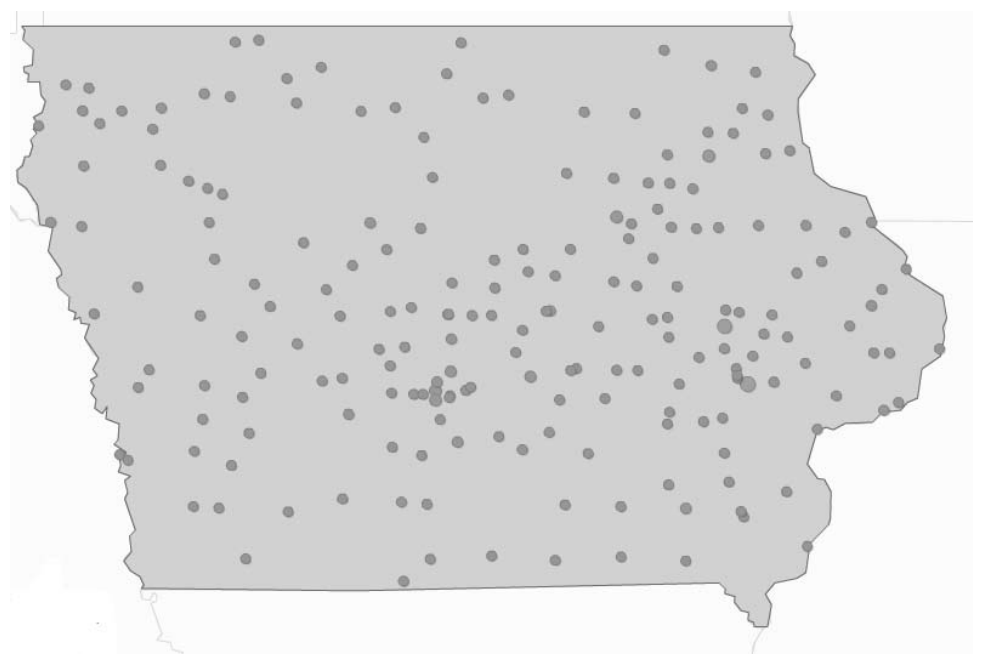
Brandi Janssen, *Iowa City*
 Virgil Knobloch, *Bloomfield*
 Trent Lyle, *Keota*
 Jeff McKusker, *Ladora*
 Ed Raber, *Washington*
 Susan Yario, *Anamosa*
 Lloyd Yoder, *Riverside*

District 6 (Outside of Iowa)

Maria Bilenky, *Elkins Park, PA*
 Tim Kohnke, *Eagan, MN*
 Dennis Myhre, *Eitzen, MN*

Well Balanced

Practical Farmers of Iowa’s website received visits last month from 29 countries and all 50 states. This map of Iowa visits to the site from last month illustrates that virtual visitors hailed from all over the great state of Iowa!



Sustain the PFI Legacy

Remember Practical Farmers of Iowa in your will.



Practical Farmers of Iowa has flourished since its initial leaders came together in 1985. With your help, PFI will be around for generations to come.

A planned gift (such as a bequest or gift of stocks, bonds, cash, life insurance, or IRA) will:

- Direct your dollars to sustainable farmers, not taxes
- Simplify your estate plans
- Perhaps even increase your income.

Call Teresa Opheim at (515)232-5661 for more information.

PFI Welcomes New Office Support Staff...



My name is Megan Dollen, and I am the new office support staff member for Practical Farmers of Iowa. I was born and raised on a small farm in Persia, Iowa. I graduated from Tri-Center High School in 2009, and I am currently a sophomore at Iowa State University. I am studying Kinesiology and Health and plan to study medicine in the future in hopes of becoming a physical therapist. I am very excited to be working for Practical Farmers of Iowa. I really like my position, and I am learning something new every day. I have always loved the farming environment and I am excited that I still get to contribute to

the agriculture society through PFI.

And Sends Renee off with Best Wishes!



A sincere thank you for everything you have provided me in the past 7 months! From the Annual Conference to the day-to-day in the office, I have thoroughly enjoyed my time spent with the Practical Farmers of Iowa staff. I have never met such a passionate, outgoing, goal oriented, food lovin' group of people in all of my life! It has truly been wonderful to be associated with this organization, and I am honored to have had this great opportunity.

While I am sad to leave, I know that my time spent here will be beneficial to me in the next years as the West Branch Agricultural Education teacher and FFA advisor. Do not be surprised by a phone call or two requesting your presence in the classroom!

Yours Truly,
Renee Thompson

Provide Leadership on the PFI Board

The PFI Board will have openings in District 2 (Central Iowa) and District 4 (Southwest to Central Iowa). If interested, contact Teresa Opheim (teresa@practicalfarmers.org), Tim Landgraf (libland@peconet.net), or Jeff Klinge (jeffkling@neitel.net).

Do you want to know how to operate a successful CSA?

Practical Farmers of Iowa will host a two day CSA mini school December 2-3. For details, contact Sally Worley at sally@practicalfarmers.org.

-Practical Farmers of...America?, continued from page 9-

specialty greens in high tunnels. He sells to restaurants and specialty food stores. His high tunnels are located on his family's greenhouse operation in central Pennsylvania. He has been looking for land around Philadelphia for three years with no success. "Pennsylvania is losing farm land rapidly. If land becomes available, it is either being developed or going to open space." Philadelphia has invested in plans to preserve open space, improve parks, and implement conservation.



John Scanlan, with Farmall Super MTA he found in the weeds of Madison County, Mississippi in 2007 and restored

John shares kindred values with Practical Farmers of Iowa: "I get drawn to organizations that are forward thinking, looking to do things differently than we've done them in the past. Even things that were successful in the past, you still need to revisit what you're doing, how you're doing it, and try different things. This is an organization I need to be involved with."

John Scanlan

John Scanlan of Canton, Mississippi was an Iowan until 1969 when he relocated down south. During high school, John's plan was to farm, but his dad urged him not to because of the direction farming was headed. John agreed with his dad. "Back in 1968 I used to get in arguments with ag business majors at Iowa State."

John is a renewed PFI member; he originally joined the organization in the 1990s. "I stumbled upon PFI one day and talked with one of the staff about farming trends. The reason the organization was started was because there were others concerned about the direction it was heading, and they wanted to explore alternatives to being slaves to the machinery makes and chemical companies."

John: "I have a contrarian attitude on farming. Over time I got out of touch with PFI, but in the last year read Michael Pollan's "Omnivore's Dilemma," Joel Salatin's "Salad Bar Beef," and a couple of things by Allan Nations. These readings brought back memories

of what my dad did with cattle. His purpose was to avoid bloating on straight alfalfa. He figured out that new growth came in every two weeks, so we'd rotate the cows off the pasture. His motivation may have been different but the principal is the same."

John does not farm, but owns Iowa farmland and always fancied farming with draft horses. "Last year I attended the Midwest draft horse sale in Waverly, and I talked to quite a few guys about seed oats and pasture mixes. I got these connections through PFI."

John planned on attending Practical Farmers of Iowa's annual conference last winter, but the weather intervened. Hopefully he will be able to network with fellow members at the 2011 conference.

Brenda Foster

Brenda Foster of Mequon, Wisconsin heard about Practical Farmers of Iowa during the fall farminars. "I found out about one that was happening online. After participating in the first one, I listened to all the fall and winter farminars, and then joined the organization."

Brenda is an aspiring farmer. "I'm working towards it. The informational series has been very helpful to me." Brenda plans to start with vegetable farming, an enterprise in which she has experience. "My long term plan is to have a teaching farm and wellness center. I envision a place where I can do community outreach with kids and adults, teaching people about where food comes from."

Brenda wants to incubate new farmers as well: "I want to be able to help farmers who are in the stage I am now, who have experience and would like to take on some major projects without having to invest in land and equipment up front. I'd like to be able to help them get a foothold in farming."

Brenda's future includes relocating to Arkansas; her husband just got a teaching position at the University of Arkansas. "My vision for a teaching farm is a long term goal. I am still in the learning stages myself. After I move I plan to get my farm up and running and then move toward fulfilling my goal."

Brenda appreciates the services Practical Farmers of Iowa offers. "I was impressed by the field day guide. It was fantastic to read all the event descriptions and be able to see the locations plotted out on the map. If I lived in Iowa I would be going to all of those events."



Brenda Foster

August

August 4: Organic Field Day, Merlin Gesing's Farm, 835 McCabe Dr., Waukon, IA. Discussion: Organic dairy, layers, six year rye grass, Alice white cover. Renovate or overseed? For more information, (563) 568-6031

August 7, Count Your Chickens, 9 a.m. to noon, Caledonia, IL. Curious about starting a small flock of chickens? This workshop will address all you need to know before you get your birds. Cost \$50 For more information visit <http://www.learnrowconnect.org/node/2442>.

August 7, Farm Dreams: Assessing Risks & Resources to Start a Small Farm or Market Garden, 1-5 pm. Caledonia, IL Cost \$60. For more information visit <http://www.learnrowconnect.org/node/2443>.

August 8, Post-harvest Handling of Vegetables, Arkansaw, WI. Join Land Stewardship Project at Hogsback Farm for this field day. For more information contact Parker Forsell, (507)523-3366.

August 8, Get Your Goat, 9 a.m. to noon, Caledonia, IL. Goat husbandry workshop. Cost \$50. For more information visit <http://www.learnrowconnect.org/node/2444>.

August 9-20, Permaculture Design Certificate Course, Saukville, WI. Intensive, 72-hour course in the design and use of sustainable-living systems. For more information visit <http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/gem/PermacultureCourse/PermacultureHome.htm>.

August 9, Extending the Season High Tunnel Workshop, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Delavan, WI. Learn more information at <http://www.mosesorganic.org/attachments/events/8.9hightunnelworkshop.pdf>.

August 10: Iowa Pollinator Conservation Short Course, 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Reiman Gardens, Ames, IA. Learn about the latest science-based approaches to increasing crop security and reversing the trend of pollinator decline. Free to the first 30 registrants. Additional seats are available for \$25. For registrations, contact Ashley Minnerath at 503-232-6639, ashley@xerces.org.

August 12-13, Midwestern Veterinary Conference for Sustainable Agriculture, Urbana-Champaign, IL. The conference will provide information to those serving clients interested in the production and marketing of organic, antibiotic-free, and other non-conventional food animals. For more information visit <http://www.mvc-sa.com/>.

August 16-17, Midwest Rural Assembly, South Sioux City, NE. Share effective community solutions and inform supportive public policies. Take action to move your rural development priorities forward. Learn more and register at <http://midwestruralassembly.org/>.

August 17, Midwestern Bio-Ag Annual Field Day, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Lone Rock, WI. Presentations on biological and organic farming, speakers including Dr. Hue Karreman, booths, Farm Walk with Gary Zimmer, and more. More info at www.midwesternbioag.com. Time: 9am - 4pm

August 20, High Tunnels for the Great Northern Plains, Rapid City, SD. For additional information contact the NPSAS office at (701) 883-4304 or visit www.npsas.org.

August 22: Mechanization on Vegetable Farms, 2 p.m.-5 p.m., Fruit and Vegetable Working Group field day, located at Andy and Melissa Dunham's Grinnell Heritage Farm, Grinnell, IA. Contact: Malcolm Robertson, (515) 294-1166, malcolmr@iastate.edu.

August 23, Making Conservation Programs Friendlier to Organic, Ponca, NE. Learn how organic farming practices can be more fully recognized through federal conservation programs administered by NRCS. Contact Traci Bruckner at the Center for Rural Affairs at (402) 687-2100 or email her at tracib@cfra.org for more information.

August 23-24: Second Annual Iowa Grazing Conference, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Iowa Farm Bureau headquarters in West Des Moines, IA. A pasture walk and barbeque at the Ken Henrichsen farm near Winterset will be held on the evening of the Aug. 23. For more information contact Joe Sellers at 641-203-1270, sellers@iastate.edu.

August 24, Exploring Late Season Cover Crops and Rotations, 6-9 p.m., Delano,

MN. Join LSP for this Riverbend Farm Field Day. For more info contact: Nick Olson, 320-269-2105.

August 25: Neely-Kinyon Research and Demonstration Farm, ISU field day, 4 p.m., near Greenfield, IA. Topics include long-term organic crop rotation study, corn disease and soybean aphid management. For more ISU field day information call (515)294-5045.

August 26: Northeast Research and Demonstration Farm, ISU field day, 1:30 p.m., near Nashua, IA. Topics include crop production. For more ISU field day information call (515)294-5045.

August 31-September 2, The Farm Progress Show, Boone, IA. See the latest equipment, seed, crop chemicals, field demonstrations, livestock handling and equine events, Ride 'n Drive, rural life programs and entertainment, arts and crafts, and more. For more information visit <http://www.farmprogressshow.com/>.

September

September 1: Northwest Research and Demonstration Farm, ISU field day, 5:30 p.m., near Sioux Center, IA on Dordt College northern farm. The topics of discussion include strip tillage and on-farm research. For more ISU field day information call (515) 294-5045.

September 4: Heirloom Tomato Tasting and Seed Saving Workshops, Decorah, IA. For more information: (563) 382-6511, www.seedsavers.org

September 8-9: Conservation Districts of Iowa Annual Conference, West Des Moines, IA. For more information: Carol Brown, (515)294-8912 cbrown1@iastate.edu

September 9: Northern Research and Demonstration Farm, ISU field day, 9:30 a.m., Kanawha, IA. The topics of discussion will include crop production. For more ISU field day information call (515) 294-5045.

September 10, Organic Field Crops: Corn, Beans, Small Grains & Alfalfa/Grass Hay, 1-4 p.m., Maple Park, IL. Learn how to successfully produce crops organically,

PFI Field Days

There are many more opportunities to network on fellow members' farms. For details on these field days, visit our website. Call the office if you would like an additional copy of our field day guide.

- ❖ **August 8**—Come Celebrate: 15th Anniversary Party! - Kanawha
- ❖ **August 17**—Tales from a Beginning Pasture-Based Livestock Farm - Knoxville
- ❖ **August 28**—Biodiesel: Basics and Beyond - Kalona
- ❖ **August 28**—Organic Row-Crop in Northwest Iowa - Sutherland
- ❖ **September 1**—Wildlife and Grazing Tour – Ringgold County
- ❖ **September 1**—Bioenergy: Educating for Sustainability – Sioux Center
- ❖ **September 10**—Fall Field Day Conference (rain date September 17) - Ellsworth
- ❖ **September 11**—Model of a Successful Mid-Sized Farm - Harlan
- ❖ **September 12**—Berry Patch Field Day and Garlic Fest – Nevada and Ames
- ❖ **September 18**—Agroforestry Permaculture for Iowa - Wapello
- ❖ **September 23**—Corn Breeders and Seed Retailers Showcase - Boone
- ❖ **October 3**—Farm Crawl 2010 – Marion and Lucas Counties
- ❖ **October 9**—Annual Harvest Potluck & Barn Dance - Solon
- ❖ **October 16**—Root Cellar Workshop - Kalona

Mark your calendars! Practical Farmers of Iowa's 2011 Annual Conference will take place January 7-8 at Marshalltown Community College.

focusing on soil fertility management, weed management and pest control. To register, contact MOSES at (715)778-5775 or angie@mosesorganic.org.

September 10-12, Growing Power's Urban & Small Farm Conference, Milwaukee, WI. This international conference will teach the participant how to plan, develop and grow small farms in urban and rural areas. For more information visit <http://www.growingpowerfarmconference.org/>.

September 14: Greenhorn Grazing Workshop #4, 1:30–7 p.m., McNay Research Farm, 45249 170 Ave., Chariton, IA. Contact: Joe Sellers, (641) 203-1270, sellers@iastate.edu.

September 14, Animal Health & Pasture Tour with Jerry Brunetti at Sylvan Meadows Farm, Viroqua, WI. Pasture walk with Jerry Brunetti, founder of Agridynamics. Jerry will present an overview of the strategies and tools available for successful holistic herd health management in pasture systems. Event includes farm dinner and evening lecture hosted by Herry. For more information contact Kelly Jacobs, (608) 637-5480 or [kjacob@vernoncounty.org](mailto:kjacobs@vernoncounty.org).

September 15: Southeast Research and Demonstration Farm, ISU field day, 1 p.m., near Crawfordsville, IA. The topics of discussion will include manure injection.

For more ISU field day information call (515) 294-5045.

September 20, Organic No-Till Soybeans Demonstration, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Sparta, WI. Review how the various methods of seeding worked this season in a soybean field of rolled rye mulch, otherwise known as an organic no-till system. To register, please contact: Kelly Jacobs (608) 637-5480 or [kjacob@vernoncounty.org](mailto:kjacobs@vernoncounty.org).

September 20, Permaculture Field Day, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Mineral Point, WI. Tour 10-acre permaculture orchard, Kings Hill Farm with host farmers Jai and Joel Kellum. Bring your own lunch. Field day is free and open to the public. RSVP to Bill at (608) 226-0300 or Bill@macsac.org.

September 26, 2010, Healthy Livestock the Organic Way, 1-4 p.m., Caledonia, IL. The workshop will cover common health challenges at different ages in the animals' lives, how to recognize and prevent disease, and how to treat using both organic and alternative veterinary medicine. Cost \$50. For more information visit <http://www.learnrowconnect.org/node/2457>.

IA. For more information: (563) 382-6511, www.seedsavers.org

October 15: Iowa Environmental Council 2010 Annual Conference, 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m., Scottish Rite Consistory in Des Moines, IA. Discussion on Barriers and Solutions to Implementing a Sustainable Future for the Corn Belt. Questions call Lynn Laws at (515) 244-1194 extension 210, or email at lynnlaws@iaenvironment.org.

October 15, Draft Horse Farming, 1-5 p.m., Osceola, WI. Join MOSES and Dan Guenther, owner of Common Harvest Farm, for this field day showcasing draft horse equipment for small scale vegetable production. Witness the hitching, adjusting and use of various horse-drawn implements, including a plow, disk, manure spreader, mower, tine weeder, various harrows, various cultivators, and many others. To register, please contact MOSES at (715)778-5775 or angie@mosesorganic.org.

October 26: Greenhorn Grazing Workshop #5, 1:30–7 p.m., McNay research Farm, 45249 170 Ave., Chariton, IA. Contact: Joe Sellers, (641) 203-1270, sellers@iastate.edu.

October

For a complete list of events visit www.practicalfarmers.org.

October 2: Harvest Festival, Decorah,

PFI Merchandise

Be a proud PFI member!

Casual Cap—\$12

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Summer style farmer cap with light denim cotton front and mesh back.

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PFI logo on front with tagline on back

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Scenic landscape with Practical Farmers of Iowa caption on front of shirt

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Learn about the fate of corn—and our food system

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This annual membership is a:

- new membership
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I am joining at the level of:

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- Individual—\$35
- Farm or Household—\$45
- Organization (including businesses, agencies, not-for-profit groups)—\$75

My interest in joining PFI is primarily as a:

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Each membership includes one vote and one subscription to *The Practical Farmer*.

Sustain PFI

For the sake of the long term health and vitality of PFI, we ask you to consider making a donation above and beyond your membership fee.

I would like to make a tax deductible donation to PFI in the amount of:

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- \$500
- \$250
- \$100
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YES! I would like to give _____ per month to PFI, to be automatically charged to my credit card the first of the month. (\$10 per month minimum)

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Our Vision for Iowa



Food that is celebrated
for its freshness
and flavor
and connection
to local farmers
to seasons
to hard work
and good stewardship



Farms that are prized
for their diversity
of crops and livestock
their wildlife and healthy soils
their innovations, beauty and productivity
their connection to a rich past
and a fulfilling present
where individuals and families
are earning a good living



Communities that are alive
with diverse connections
between farmers and non-farmers;
places where commerce, cooperation, creativity
and spirituality are thriving;
places where the working landscape, the fresh air
and the clear water remind us of all that is good about Iowa

Healthy Food, Diverse Farms, Vibrant Communities