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Practical
NEWS

August 7, 2023

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Building knowledge and funds with the Savings Incentive Program

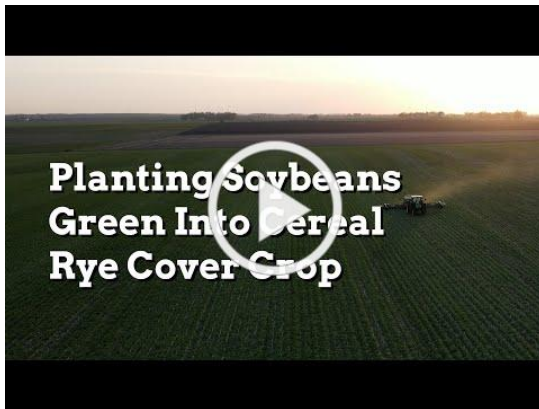
Beginning farmer **Ethan Zierke** (left) gets a lesson in how to use a Planet Jr. walk-behind tractor from **Jordan Clasen** (right) of Grade A Gardens in Earlham, Iowa, during a [Savings Incentive Program](#) farm visit last week.

Jordan, who graduated from SIP in 2013, restored the tractor last winter and has found many ways to use it this season. His only regret? Not adding it to his farm years ago!

This is one of several insights he and **Whitney Clasen**, his wife and business partner, shared with members of the current SIP class during the farm visit. In addition to discussing equipment, the group also got to see and ask questions about the vegetable plots, wash-pack area, garlic curing space and orchard.

Over the next two years, they will have the chance to visit multiple farms, including each others' operations – all while saving funds that PFI will match when they finish the program.

Introducing our new "Practical Cover Croppers" video series



We're excited to introduce our new "Practical Cover Croppers" video series, which features farmers from a range of enterprises, from field crops and livestock to horticultural crops.

In our first video, learn from members **Rachel Amundson, Nathan Anderson, Jon Bakehouse, Nick Smith and Will Cannon** as they discuss the process and benefits of planting soybeans into cereal rye and delaying termination of rye cover after planting.

Consult with an expert in our Landowner Coaching Program



Get the answers you need about leasing your land with PFI's Landowner Coaching Program. You'll start with a one-hour information-gathering session with **Mollie Aronowitz**, a professional farm manager and conservation agronomist.

Based on your discussion, she'll create a farm report with maps, farm analysis and achievable next steps. Your plan will help you start the conversation with farm operators, family members or neighbors. **Only 10 spots are available**, so **sign up today**.

Summer 2023 magazine: "In the Shade of Giants"



Oak savanna once covered Iowa and much of the Midwest but is now one of the rarest ecosystems in the world. Managed grazing can be part of the solution.

"You can get to your destination really fast, or over a long period of time," PFI member **Omar de Kok-Mercado** says. "They both need the same amount of work. One is just all at once and the other is spread out. It's a lot more pleasant to go slow and do it by hand, or with animals or fire, than it is to bulldoze the landscape."

[Continue reading.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Field days



Aug. 19: Field Day – [Community Farm Tour at Matthew 25](#)

Hosted by: Matthew Arndt

1-3 p.m. | Cedar Rapids, IA

Tour nonprofit organization Matthew 25's 2-acre urban farm, Cultivate Hope. They offer small farming and gardening plots to community members who provide produce for the Matthew 25 corner store and the neighboring Groundswell Café. This event will be followed by a beginning farmer social at the café from 3:30-5 p.m.



Aug. 20: Field Day – [Hands-On: Trying Out Tools](#)

Hosted by: Carmen Black, Maja Black, Helaina Thompson & Carlos Williams

9 a.m.-Noon | Solon, IA

Let this team of farmers share how mechanization has increased their efficiency as they scale up their enterprises. Limit 20 attendees for logistics and safety reasons. No walk-ins.



Aug. 20: Field Day – [Collaborating to Scale Up Local Food Production](#)

Hosted by: Carmen Black, Maja Black, Helaina Thompson & Carlos Williams
1-3 p.m. | Solon, IA

At Sundog Farm, collaboration is key to unlocking what is possible within a single operation. We will tour their vegetable production, including their new vegetable freeze-pack processing facility. The event will be followed by a land access meetup for land seekers and landowners from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

[View the full field day schedule](#)

More upcoming events

Aug. 7: Field Day – [Improving Water Quality and Soil Health With Cover Crops](#)

Hosted by: Mark & Jodi Peterson and Lane Peterson
10 a.m.-Noon | Craig, NE

Aug. 10: Field Day – [Grazing a Perennial Forage Chain](#)

Hosted by: Beth Hoffman & John Hogeland
10 a.m.-Noon | Lovilia, IA

Aug. 10: Field Day – [Creating a Legacy of Conservation in Traditional Row Cropping](#)

Hosted by: Joe Merten
10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. | Austin, MN

Aug. 18: Virtual Workshop – [When Pesticide Drift Happens to You](#)

1-4:30 p.m. | Online

[View our events calendar](#)

IN THE NEWS

Members in the News

Natasha, Nancy and Brian Wilson of West Chester, IA, were featured in [The News: Having a Field Day](#).

Beth Hoffman and John Hogeland of Lovilia, IA, were featured in [Ottumwa Courier: Lovilia farm to host forage event with Practical Farmers of Iowa](#)

Kim Andersen of Brighton, IA, **Dean Henry** of Nevada, IA, **Mark Gingerich** of Iowa City, IA, **Paul Rasch** of Solon, IA, and **Jenna Hammerich** of Oxford, IA, were featured in [The Gazette: You-pick farms across Iowa are suffering from drought conditions](#)

Hannah Bernhardt of Finlayson, MN, was featured in [Star-Tribune: Ranchers try to keep animals comfortable during heat wave](#)

Bill Frederick of Jefferson, IA, was mentioned in [Agri-Pulse: Crop insurance rules challenge airlines' ambitious biofuel plans](#)

Kellie and A.J. Blair of Dayton, IA, were featured on the [Iowa Farm Bureau webpage: Capturing, reusing water gaining renewed interest](#)

PFI in the News

Martha McFarland, PFI's farmland viability coordinator, and **Rachel Burke**, PFI's beginning farmer engagement coordinator, were featured in [Iowa Farmer Today: Relationships key for new farmers](#)

Grace Yi, PFI's habitat viability coordinator, was featured in [Successful Farming: Practical Farmers of Iowa launches conservation cost-share program](#)

PFI was featured on [Morning Ag Clips: PFI Launches Conservation Cost-Share for Farmers to Establish Wildlife Habitat, Build Soil Health](#)

PFI was mentioned in [Midwest Messenger: ADM expands regenerative ag program in Nebraska](#)

Have you been featured in the media? If you're a PFI member, tell us when and where to find a link to the article, and we'll feature you in a future issue of Practical News.

Contact: elizabeth.wilhelm@practicalfarmers.org

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