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Beginning  
Farmer

NEWS

June 2020

*Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.*

## Field Day Season has Begun

Field days remain a foundation of PFI. Even in this time of precaution and social distancing, they provide an opportunity for us all to connect with one another: for farmers to learn from their peers; for non-farmers to deepen their connections to local food and farmers; and for us all to share in PFI's vision of an Iowa with healthy soil, healthy food, clean air, clean water, resilient farms and vibrant communities.

While our field days will look different this year, we are confident these events will help you stay connected as you learn from one another about production, business and conservation strategies.

We have planned our whole field day season as virtual events. **We encourage you to register for field days on our website** . By registering, you'll receive email reminders leading up to the event with instructions on how to join, and a link to participate, if applicable. **Check out the PDF version of the guide.**

**Missed a virtual field day that you wanted to attend?** There are a few ways to watch recordings:

- Check back on the [field day webpage](#) of the event you missed
- Watch in our video library [on our website](#) or on [Facebook](#)
- Subscribe to our [YouTube channel](#)



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## Virtual beginning farmer meet-up this Thursday



Take a quick break from farm work throughout the summer to virtually gather and socialize with other beginning and aspiring farmers. Build your farming network and learn from others who have similar (or different!) farm ventures than you.

**On Thursday, June 18th at 1 pm,** join Steve Strasheim of [Twisted River Farm](#) and Laura Tidrick of [Mossycup Farm](#). Both will share their story of beginning their farms from scratch and the lessons they have learned along the way.

[Register to Join](#)

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## On-farm jobs now available through Labor4Learning

**Are you looking to get paid, on-the-job training with experienced farmers in Iowa?** The Labor4Learning program is designed for beginning farmers seeking employment and additional training in farm management and production skills. Practical Farmers of Iowa "trainer" farmers will be hiring in the early part of the new year for the upcoming growing season. [Browse the list below for training opportunities near you.](#)

**Zach Knutson** of Greenbelt Farms in Meservey is one of several trainer farms in PFI's Labor4Learning program. Zach is eager to hire a farm manager trainee who is motivated to learn about renovating pastures, raising beef cows and starting a meat goat enterprise.

"Our farm is expanding this season and we are in need of additional help. We would like to find a person with drive and passion for the types of enterprises we want to grow."  
- Zach Knutson



**Emma and Marcus Johnson** of Buffalo Ridge Orchard in Central City are one of several trainer farms in our Labor4Learning program. Emma and Marcus are eager to hire a farm crew member who is motivated to learn about a diversified farm and apple orchard that uses both organic and integrated pest management practices.

"We would like the opportunity to provide training for running an orchard and vegetable farm mainly because the experience would have been extremely helpful to us in deciding to farm."  
- Emma and Marcus Johnson

## Vital conversations and actions toward equality

Practical Farmers of Iowa's mission is to equip farmers to build resilient farms and communities. **We cannot achieve our mission without justice and equality for all.**

Practical Farmers helps farmers by providing resources, education and a community of connections to help them succeed. To honor our value of welcoming everyone, **we are working to be a more inclusive organization** by reaching out to Black people, Indigenous people and other people of color.

We are working to create relationships with all Iowans who farm or aspire to farm, learning what challenges they face, what they need to be successful and welcoming them into PFI's support network. **Our network is resilient because of its diversity.**

But we know **there is more we must do to fight racism and inequality.** As a staff, we plan to build awareness through staff training, and then ongoing action, to increase our focus on diversity, equity and inclusion within our organization.

Many of our members have already requested we increase our focus in these areas. During this time where racism is so visibly exposed to all of us through

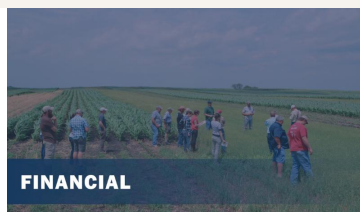
recent, but not isolated, racist acts, **our big-tent philosophy stresses that we can all learn how to do better in acting against racism.**

While they are tough conversations to have, conversations about our actions are vital on the path to equity in our communities and on our farms.

## Check out these resources for beginning farmers

We have recently updated our collection of business, financial, production and technical assistance resources to help aspiring and beginning farmers further their business goals. **You can access them by clicking on the icons below.**

We will continue to build this list and add new resources as they are available. If you see any resources missing that you find helpful, please share them with us. You can send them to Greg Padget at [greg@practicalfarmers.org](mailto:greg@practicalfarmers.org).



### Farm Aid Relief Payments

PFI is partnering with Farm Aid and the Iowa Farmers Union to provide one-time \$500 emergency relief payment to farm families. Awards are intended as emergency relief for farmers and their families. Use of the funds is restricted to household expenses, such as groceries, home utilities, medical bills, counseling, or other household expenses not directly related to the commercial operation of the farm or ranch. Learn more and to apply [here](#).

### Online Courses Aid Fiber Producers with Marketing

The Livestock Conservancy is offering two free courses on Teachable that can help fiber producers connect with customers, [Marketing Your Fiber Products](#) and [From Farm to Fiber Folk](#). Both courses are part of the Shave 'Em to Save 'Em program that is working to make sheep breeds profitable for shepherds.

### [Going Solar on Your Farm or Rural Small Business with USDA Rural Energy for America Program](#)

*Wednesday, Jun 17, 2020 06:00 p.m.*

Learn how going solar can benefit your farm or rural small business. This webinar will discuss solar technology, economics, and financing, including grant funding opportunities through the USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). Find out more about going solar on your farm or small business from the comfort of home. This will be a live presentation, so bring your questions about solar and REAP, and our expert panelists will answer them!

### [Beginner Farmer Growing Collaborative](#)



Program series on regenerative farming continues every Thursday thru August 6 with a livestream at 4 p.m. Beginners to experts are welcome!

*June 18 - Introduction to Machinery and Equipment*

*June 25 - Pollinator Week Celebration: How to Harvest and Sell Pollinator Products*

*July 2 - Farm Planning*

*July 9 - Renewable Energy*

## Upcoming PFI Events

**June 17: Virtual Field Day - Botany Beginners Pt. 3**

6-7 p.m. | Online

**June 24: Virtual Field Day - No-Till Oats & Rye**

1:30-2:30 p.m. | Online

**June 17: Virtual Field Day - Termination Dates Rye**

7:30-8:30 p.m. | Online

**June 24: Virtual Field Day - Botany Beginners Pt. 4**

6-7 p.m. | Online

**June 18: Virtual Social - Beginning Farmer**

1-2 p.m. | Online

**June 25: Virtual Field Day - Garlic Production Pt. 2**

12:30-1:05 p.m. | Online

**June 18: Virtual Field Day - Prairie Strips & Conservation**

3-3:30 p.m. | Online

**June 25: Virtual Field Day - Organic Weed Control**

7:30-8:30 p.m. | Online

**June 24: Virtual Field Day - Fruits & Nuts - Honeyberry**

12:30-1:05 p.m. | Online

**June 26: Virtual Field Day - Interseeding Cover Crop for Grazing**

12:15-12:45 p.m. | Online

[View even more events on our calendar](#)

## #PracticalResilience

  
PRACTICAL FARMERS  
of Iowa

Share your stories of resilience!

use the hashtag

**#PracticalResilience**



We want to hear your farm's stories of resilience in the face of COVID-19. How are you adapting on your farm? What changes have you made? How has your community rallied to support your farm business?

**Use the hashtag #practicalresilience to share your stories of resilience and we'll showcase them on our social media channels and in future issues of "Practical News."**

## Labor4Learning

Labor4Learning helps beginning farmers get paid on-the-job training with experienced farmers, and pays experienced farmers for their time and effort.

[View open positions on our website](#)



## Savings Incentive Program

Savings Incentive Program is a 2-year program that pairs beginning and aspiring farmers with experienced farmer mentors; provides targeted learning and peer networking opportunities; offers business planning support and guidance. All this while you save money that we match dollar for dollar, up to \$2,400, to use toward the purchase of a farm asset.



[Check out more information](#)

## Find A Farmer

Find A Farmer allows for a comfortable place to start anonymous conversations with land-seekers or landowners. Search for users in a particular area that fit your specifications and begin the discussion.

Find A Farmer is FREE and available for anyone with internet access! No membership is required.



[Check out more and see land available](#)

STAY CONNECTED



**Looking for more?**

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