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Beginning
Farmer
NEWS
November 2020

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

New Virtual Beginning Farmer Retreat and Business Training Series Begins in December

Virtual Retreat: December 11–12, 2020

You will not want to miss the annual Beginning Farmer Retreat this year. No need to leave home for this retreat. Following the retreat you are invited to continue your farm planning progress with one of these training series.



Explore Farming Series

Aspiring farmers should look to the Explore Farming training to take their ideas and vision into reality. This series will feature three virtual workshops followed by opportunities to connect with landowners seeking new farmers for their farmland.

Virtual Workshops held second Thursday of the month Jan. - Mar.

- **Place:** Understand your land access needs and resources
- **Product:** Determine what you plan to produce and how to sell it
- **People:** Build your network and increase your connections

Establish Farming Series

Beginning farmers who have started to farm and are working to build their business plan should attend the Establish Farming series. Three virtual workshops will lead you through the process of using decision-making to build a farm plan. Between workshops, you will have activities to complete and opportunities to connect with mentors to further your understanding of your farm direction.

Virtual Workshops held first Tuesday of the month Jan. - Mar.

- **Planning Your Enterprises:** Take a deep dive into what enterprises you currently raise and ones you anticipate adding
- **Looking at the Whole Picture:** Look at all the pieces of your plan together to make decisions towards your farm plan
- **Crafting Your Farm Plan:** Take all you have evaluated and put it into an action plan for the following year

Registration is open until Dec. 4

PFI social with Luna Valley Farm



Nov. 19 | 7-8 p.m.

Former Savings Incentive Program graduate, Maren and her partner Tom Beard of Luna Valley Farm in northeast Iowa are hosting a virtual social for people to gather informally and catch up as the wild growing season of 2020 wraps up.

Hear from them about how their pizza farm adapted throughout the year, and [chat with others about their experience and their plans going forward.](#)

Annual Conference Registration Now Open

For three days of the deep winter, be safe and easy in your home while we gather on PFI's virtual conference platform to engage with old friends and new, invited speakers and exhibitors. We will bring familiar elements you expect of the conference – like practical, farmer-led sessions, roundtables and moderated panels on the issues that matter to you and your farms.

2021 Annual Conference Teaser T



We'll also have some new offerings, including youth sessions, lightning talks, farmer-to-farmer conversations, a night of storytelling and PFI's first feature-length film, "Livestock on the Land." There's even a virtual potluck.

The annual conference, "Coming Home," features three days of farmer-led sessions, roundtables, and evening features delivered live Jan. 21-23.

Speaker, sessions, keynote and more are now available on our website and registration is OPEN.

Register Today!

New website aims to connect livestock farmers with landowners in six states

Expanding integrated crop-livestock systems can offer a range of benefits for farmers, the environment and rural communities. But accessing land to graze, or finding livestock farmers to partner with, can be a barrier.

The **Midwest Grazing Exchange** is a free matchmaking service that aims to connect graziers seeking land to graze with landowners in six Midwestern

states. It was created to help farmers in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin find livestock or land to graze.



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.



Sinsinawa Mound Collaborative Farm is Seeking Beginning Farmers

Sinsinawa Mound Collaborative Farm, is an incubator-style farm for beginning growers that offers land, infrastructure, equipment, and education for beginning farmers. Over the past several years farmers have primarily focused on vegetable production, but there are also opportunities for grazing, bee-keeping and specialty crop production. Applications are now open for the 2021 season, apply [here](#).

Iowa Forage and Grassland Council Winter Conference

November 24 | 8-noon

Session 1 – Grazing Down Corn residue

Session 2 – Managing Drought Damaged Pastures

Session 3 – Emergency Forage There is no cost to attend this event, but registration is required.

Humane Farming Mentorship Program

Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) is offering a mentorship program for beginning livestock and poultry farmers seeking personalized guidance from an experienced farmer on business strategies and management practices. The program requires a one-year commitment and runs from the end of February 2021 to February 2022. The cost to be mentored is \$200. Register for the **Mentorship Info Session** on December 9 to learn more!

Virtual Coffeehouse

Join the Veterans Business Outreach Center and business professionals each week, through a weekly virtual coffeehouse. Held every Monday from 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. until December 28, 2020. These chats will cover a variety of topics including Marketing Your Business, Finance, and more! You can register and learn more here! Did you miss one? No worries, they are archived so you will never really miss one.

Integrated Livestock and Vegetable Crops Q&A Session

Tuesday, November 17 | 6:00-7:30 p.m. MST

National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) will be hosting a question-and-answer session that is a follow-up to a **webinar** NCAT hosted about integrated crop-livestock systems. Such systems may provide sustainable alternatives to terminate cover crops, reduce fertilizer, and improve the water cycle. Featured in this session are Montana specialty crop farmer Leon Stangl, Montana State University (MSU) research associate Devon Ragen and MSU graduate student Trestin Benson. Leon will share his story of success in integrating livestock on his farm and Devon and Trestin will discuss their ground-breaking research concerning integrating sheep on dryland cropping systems and vegetable specialty crops. Registration is required.

Know to Grow - Small Farms Marketing Seminar

University of Minnesota Extension is hosting a webinar series that was developed to help you grow your small farm in a variety of ways. From marketing to adapting to customer needs this series has it all. Each session will be from 9-10 a.m. Registration can be found **here**.

November 17: Facebook Live

November 20: Getting into a Farmer's Market

November 24: Grant and Partnership Opportunities

December 1: Knowing and Adapting to your Customer's Needs

December 4: Agritourism and Farm Processes.

Tuition-Free Sustainable Agriculture Program

The Wendell Berry Farming Program of Sterling College is now accepting applications for Fall 2021. The tuition-free two-year residential education program based in Henry County, Kentucky is designed to serve students from generational farm families or those with a strong desire to farm. Students who are residents of Kentucky are particularly encouraged to apply. The program is intended for students in their third and fourth years of college. Graduates earn a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems from Sterling College. Admission to this program is highly competitive. Applicants must demonstrate a desire to farm and a commitment to working to strengthen rural communities.

Upcoming PFI Events

Nov. 19: Virtual Social - [Luna Valley Farm](#)

7-8 p.m. | Online

Dec. 3-4: Workshop - [Cover Crop Bootcamp](#)

9 a.m. | Online

Dec. 8: Virtual Social - [Riediger Farms](#)

7-8 p.m. | Online

Dec. 11-12: [Virtual Beginning Farmer Retreat](#) | Online

Dec. 11: Shared Learning Call - [Small Grains](#)

1 p.m.

Dec. 15: Virtual Field Day: [Raising Sheep for Wool](#)

2-3 p.m. | Online

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

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](#)

Labor4Learning

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

[Check out more information](#)



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](#)



Looking for more?

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