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PRACTICAL FARMERS
of Iowa

Practical
NEWS

September 25, 2023

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Grazing cover crops on a vegetable farm

In our [most recent episode of "Practical Cover Croppers,"](#) we explore how **Carmen Black, Maja Black, Helaina Thompson and Carlos Williams** at Sundog Farm, a vegetable-focused farm in Solon, Iowa, are integrating cover crops and livestock.

To make it work, they've introduced portable electric fencing to graze cover crops, which provide extra forage for their sheep, goats and pastured poultry.

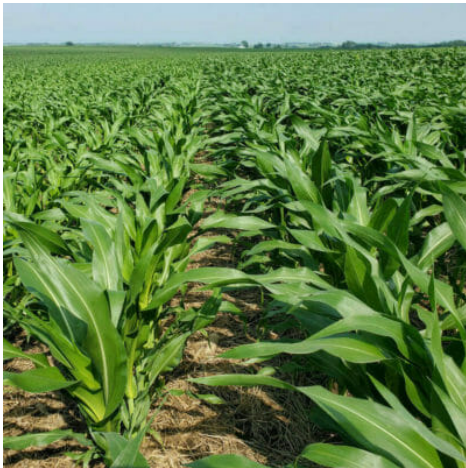
They have also experimented with the best timing to seed and graze cover crops before planting a vegetable crop.

"It's actually really challenging to do in Iowa because the growing season is not endless," Carmen says.

Learn how they've fine-tuned their systems to ensure both compliance with food safety regulations and timely planting of their valuable vegetable crops.

NEWS

Reduce your input costs with our N Rate Risk Protection Program



Are rising input costs affecting your farm's profits? Our N Rate Risk Protection Program can help you cut nitrogen applications to corn, saving you money and enhancing farm resilience.

You'll work with PFI agronomists to reduce nitrogen by at least 20 pounds per acre. **If your yield drops, our program will help make up the difference at \$35 per acre.**

[Learn more and apply today.](#)

Last chance to sign up for grazing infrastructure cost-share!



Apply for up to **\$5,000 to fund your regenerative grazing infrastructure project by Oct. 1.**

Eligible purchases include portable, temporary fencing supplies; water transport and distribution supplies; portable housing for grazing livestock and more. We will prioritize beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers.

[Submit your application.](#)

Seeking farmers with soil health history for an N rate on-farm research project



Put your soil's health to the test with a nitrogen rate trial.

PFI is seeking corn farmers with at least a five-year history of soil health practices to participate in a trial comparing nitrogen fertilizer rates.

[Learn about the program in this flyer](#) and email PFI's senior research manager, **Stefan Gailans**, at stefan.gailans@practicalfarmers.org to enroll.

Discover your next steps with the Landowner Coaching Program



Unlock the potential of your land! Through our [Landowner Coaching Program](#), non-operating landowners can gain insights into farm productivity, soil health and water quality to inform their next steps.

To qualify, you must own 80 acres or more in Iowa, and your farm must be engaged in crop production.

[Sign up for a one-hour Zoom consultation with a professional farm manager to get started.](#)

MEMBERSHIP

Help us reach our goal of 113 members in September

It's our fall member drive! [Join as a new member or renew your membership](#) to help us reach our goal of 113 memberships. **So far, we've welcomed almost 50 new and returning members!**

As a member, you'll enjoy:

- Significant discounts to PFI events
- Eligibility for PFI's farm-building programs
- Access to members-only email discussion groups
- A subscription to our quarterly magazine and other publications
- And much more!



There's no better time to join our network. Membership starts at just \$25!

Join or renew your membership

UPCOMING EVENTS

Field days



Oct. 6: Field Day – [Mushroom Cultivation, Marketing and Tasting](#)

Hosts: Kevin Novak

1-4 p.m. | Honey Creek, IA

At Flavor Country Farms, **Kevin Novak** produces 800 pounds of mushrooms each week and markets them to chefs in Omaha. Visit his lab and production facility to learn from a chef-turned-farmer about his unique operation and marketing approach. [RSVP](#)

View the full field day schedule

More upcoming events

Sept. 30: Spanish Workshop – [Year in the Life of a Poultry Producer: Egg Production](#)

Hosts: Carlos Williams & Carmen Black

10 a.m.-Noon | Solon, IA

Nov. 18: Field Day – [Milling and Marketing Small Grains Through Multiple Channels](#)

Hosts: Jeff Hafner & Earl Hafner

2-4 p.m. | Panora, IA

View our events calendar

IN THE NEWS

Members in the News

Mitchell Hora of Brighton, IA, **Ray Gaesser** of Corning, IA, and **Shannon and Chris Gaesser** of Lenox, IA, were featured in the [Des Moines Register: Iowa's legendary soil, the bedrock of its economy, is losing its richness, new research shows](#)

Jim Fitkin of Cedar Falls, IA, was featured in [Ambrook Research: For Monarchs, Milkweed Matters More than Pesticides](#)

Omar de Kok-Mercado and Meghan Filbert of Spring Green, WI, were featured in [The Cap Times: Mad Agriculture's Omar de Kok-Mercado sees revolution on the prairie](#)

Paul Rasch of Solon, IA, was featured on [KCAU-TV: Popular Iowa orchard opening a new location](#)

Kristine Lang of Brookings, SD, was featured in [Morning Ag Clips: SDSU Extension to Feature Beadle Conservation District at High Tunnel Field Day](#)

Martin Larsen of Byron, MN, and **Tom Pyfferoen** of Pine Island, MN, were featured in [Agweek: County program lights spark in soil health movement in southeast Minnesota](#)

PFI in the News

PFI was featured on [Unilever's webpage: Impact results from Unilever's first set of regenerative agriculture projects](#)

PFI was mentioned in [The Berkshire Edge: NATURE'S TURN: Harvest sunlight to feed, sustain soil life: plant cover crops now](#)

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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Practical Farmers of Iowa | 1615 Golden Aspen Drive, Suite 101, Ames, IA 50010

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