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PRACTICAL FARMERS
of Iowa

The
**MONTHLY
FEEDSTUFF**

April 2023

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Photo courtesy of Civil Eats

Interested in learning more about beekeeping?

As April flowers bloom, beekeepers are as busy as, well... bees! The colonies that survived the winter are shaking off their long sleep and buzzing around pollinating trees and flowers and soon crops in the field.

But, as we all know, honey bees are struggling. In its preliminary results, [**this study from Bee Informed found that Iowa apiaries had an almost 60%**](#)

[colony mortality rate](#) between 2020-2021.

In [this article from Civil Eats](#), **Caroline Yelle** of Pope Canyon Queens talks about some of the challenges facing the apiary industry and her work to breed bees that are resilient against pests, diseases and changes to the environment.

Interested in learning more about beekeeping? Reply to this email to let **Amos Johnson**, PFI's livestock education coordinator, know what you'd like to see in our programming.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Book a grazing consultation with PFI



Are you looking to start grazing, or upgrade your grazing management, but aren't sure where to begin?

Use our [easy online booking system](#) to schedule a free consultation with **Margaret Chamas**, PFI's livestock viability manager.

She'll advise you on how to meet your goals – from grazing for the first time to setting up an intensive system with multiple paddock shifts a day.

New research report: "Replacing Corn with Oats in Ration for Pasture-Raised Broiler Chickens"

Farmers **Anna Hankins**, **Shae Pesek**, **Carlos Williams** and **Maja Black** compared diversified rations against a typical ration of primarily corn and soy for their broiler chickens.

"As direct-to-consumer farmers, there's potential increased profitability that could come with feeding a more diverse ration due to customer desire," Anna noted.

How did they compare? [Check out the report](#) to learn more.



Podcast: 20 Questions About Pastured Hogs



In [this episode](#) of "Voices from the Field," **Mike Lewis** talks about raising farrow-to-finish heritage hogs on pasture and in the woods on his Kentucky farm.

Learn more about pastured pigs during the PFI field day on Sept. 9 at [Nettle Valley Farm](#) near Spring Grove, Minnesota.

[Follow us on Facebook](#) to ensure you don't miss our 2023 Field Day announcements coming soon!

Quick decision making during spring calving

Calving season can be a stressful time. Some birthing issues require immediate treatment while others should be left to heal on their own.

These two articles from the Iowa State Extension Beef Center offer insight on two methods that can help save cows and calves:

- [Retained placenta? What to do \(and not do\).](#)
- [Try the Madigan Squeeze](#)



PFI Events

All events below are listed in Central Time.

April 20: Webinar - [Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza update for small flock keepers](#)

Hosted by: University of Minnesota Extension
7 - 8:30 p.m. | Online

April 29: Field Day - [Hive Splits with Randall](#)

Hosted by: Julia McGuire
9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. | Ames, IA

May 16: Workshop - [Fencing and Grazing Clinic](#)

Hosted by: Iowa State University Extension
9 a.m. - 4 p.m. | Lewis, IA

May 17: Webinar - [Transitioning to Certified Organic Beef Cattle and Broilers](#)

Hosted by: Rodale Institute
3 - 4 p.m. | Online

**April 29: Workshop - On-farm
Cow/Calf Workshop**

Hosted by: University of Wisconsin

Extension

10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. | Mauston, WI

[View more upcoming events on our website](#)

POLL

How's the grazing season looking?

Answer the poll question below:

Everything's greening up nicely, but I'm not grazing yet.

Select

I'd like some more rain, but I'm not grazing yet.

Select

Everything's greening up nicely, I've already started grazing.

Select

I'd like some more rain, but I've already started grazing.

Select

I graze year round, so I never stopped!

Select

Previous poll results:

How involved are you in the birthing process?

- **I keep an eye on them and step in for emergencies - 60%**
- **I'm there for each one, cheering them on - 13.3%**
- **I'm hands-off, I want a herd that can do it without me - 13.3%**
- **I don't have any birthing on my farm - 13.3%**

Are you planning or hosting a livestock event? Do you want to host a livestock field day? Send the details to

amos.johnson@practicalfarmers.org

STAY CONNECTED



Looking for more? Contact us today!

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