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PRACTICAL FARMERS
of Iowa

The Practical
**HORTI-
CULTURIST**
October 2022

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

Meet a Co-Hort: Dallas and Kara Jo Hendrickson

Dallas and Kara Jo Hendrickson and their young children own and operate Otter Creek Orchard near St. Ansgar, Iowa, where they raise a variety of seasonal specialty crops and run a robust agritourism operation. While apples are their primary enterprise, Otter Creek also features mums, pumpkins and ornamental corn.



Why you grow horticulture crops, in 5 or fewer words: Consumer demand in our area!



What is something you're excited about this year:

This year for the first time, we planted two acres of sunflowers, which has gone really well. We also planted two acres of strawberries and look forward to harvesting those next year. These both open up a whole new world of learning!

What you would change about your industry: There are so few specialty crop growers in our area. I just wish we had a few more to share with.

Favorite PFI memory: PFI's Commercial Apple Growers Workshop last year was a great chance to learn and to meet in person so many people who I love to follow and learn from online.

Favorite crop and why: Pumpkins!
There are so many kinds with so many colors and characteristics. We planted over 50 varieties this year!



PROGRAM UPDATES

Calling all apple growers! What are you curious about?



Planning is underway for 2023 Commercial Apple Growers Workshop. A date, location and speakers will be announced later this year.

In the meantime, please share your ideas! What do you want to know? What do you want to share? Who would you like to hear speak?

Email your input to Jacqueline at jacqueline.venner.senske@practicalfarmers.org

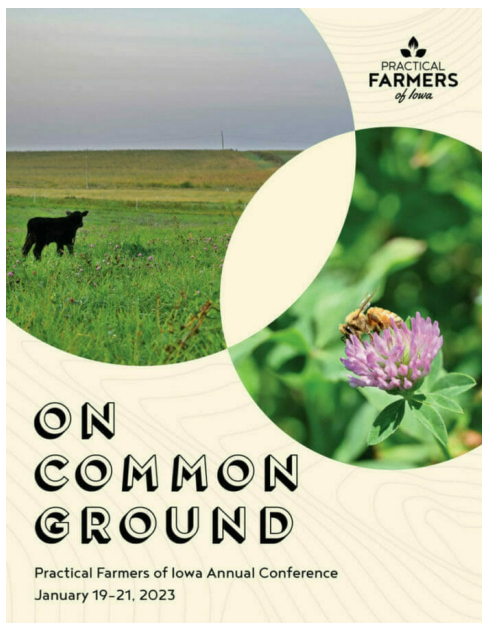
Meet-up with hort farmers in your area this winter



Every February and March, as plans for the season ahead are brewing in every horticulture farmer's mind, PFI teams up with members around the state to hold Horticulture Meet-ups. These are informal gatherings often over coffee, in a local cafe or at a farmer's home, to share ideas, enjoy a meal and strengthen networks.

Want to host a Horticulture Meet-up this winter in your town or on your farm? Email Jacqueline at jacqueline.venner.senske@practicalfarmers.org

Save the date for PFI's annual conference!



Mark your calendars for Jan. 19-21 for our 2023 annual conference!

This year's annual conference explores the ways we are all On Common Ground.

The conference invites attendees to think about where we can find this common ground, and the ways we can make space for it through connection, conversation and recognition of our shared impacts and interests.

[More details coming in November.](#)

IN THE FIELD

A promising perennial

Honeyberries – A Promisi...



What's a honeyberry? Similar to the blueberry, these woody-perennial shrubs are more farmer friendly, requiring little to no soil amending, have very few pests and are hearty enough to survive winter.

Learn more from farmer, **Jeff Sindelar** of Newhall, IA, a vocal champion for this little-known and hard-to-define berry.

Flower farmer bouquet workshop is a blooming success!



PFI teamed up with ISU Extension and hosts **Andrew and Naomi Friend** for a flower farmer bouquet workshop at Friends Flowers near Story City, Iowa, on Sept. 27. It was a great success, with 20 people attending, a dozen buckets of flowers for the bouquet potluck and an hour of innovative guidance from floral industry expert Dan Brabec.

Watch for details coming in November on PFI's Flower Farming Short Course on Jan. 19-20, 2023.

Tools for anticipating the big freeze



The Midwestern Regional Climate Center in collaboration with the USDA Midwest Climate Hub created the [Freeze Date Tool](#), a product created to provide information about the climatology of freezing temperature dates across the north-central and northeastern United States.

Growers curious about winter-kill temperatures for cold-hardy vegetables may also find [this Sustainable Market Farming blog post from 2019](#) useful.

(Photo by Kate Solko)

Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program

USDA's Farm Service Agency [Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program](#) provides support for specialty crop farms that incurred eligible on-farm food safety expenses related to getting/renewing a food safety certificate. FSCSC will cover a percentage of the specialty crop operation's cost of obtaining or renewing their certification, as well as a percentage of their related expenses.



[FSCSC applications are accepted through Jan. 31, 2023.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

All events listed in central daylight time

Upcoming PFI horticulture events:

[Explore Farming series](#)

Oct. 20 - Nov. 3 | Thurs. 6:30-8 p.m.

Getting started in farming can be hard, but with a solid understanding of your purpose and readiness you can create a plan to guide you into



farming. The Explore Farming workshop series will walk you through the process of understanding what your path looks like.

Looking Ahead: Save the Date!

Jan 19-20: Short Course - PFI Flower Farming Short Course
Full Day | Ames, IA

Jan. 20-21: Conference - PFI Annual Conference
Full Day | Ames, IA

Friends of PFI horticulture events:

Nov. 4-6: Gathering - Women in Sustainable Agriculture (WISA) Fall Gathering

Hosted by Women Food & Ag Network

Full day | Whalen, MN

Nov. 9: Short Course - ISU High Tunnel Short Course

Hosted by Iowa State University

Full day | Ames, IA

Looking Ahead: Save the Date!

Dec. 2-3: Virtual Event - Women in Food and Agriculture Virtual Gathering

Hosted by Women Food & Ag Network

Online

[View more upcoming events](#)

POLL

For many hort farmers, the season is winding down. How do you feel as hard frosts set in?

Great! I'm ready for a break. Bring on winter!

Select

Devastated. I hate to see the season end!

Select

Mixed! Sad to see things end but excited for next year.

Select

No change for me! Production keeps on rolling.

Select

Previous Poll Results:

What area are you planning to improve most for next year?

- **Labor & time management - 33.3%**
- Weed & pest management - 22.2%
- Marketing - 11.1%
- Infrastructure & equipment - 11.1%
- Recordkeeping - 11.1%
- Something else - 11.1%

Send us your poll ideas! We want to know what YOU want to know. Reply to this email with your ideas for the next poll.

STAY CONNECTED



CONTACT US

Jacqueline Venner Senske

Horticulture Education Coordinator

jacqueline.venner.senske@practicalfarmers.org

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