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PRACTICAL FARMERS
of Iowa

The Practical
**HORTI-
CULTURIST**
August 2022

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

Meet a Co-Hort: Jerry Fottral

Jerry Fottral owns and operates [Plum Creek Orchard and Swisher Apples](#), where he grows blueberries and apples for direct sale via farmers market. He also produces apples for juicing, working with **Michael Malik** at the nearby Long Lane Orchard to juice them.



Why you grow horticulture crops, in 5 or fewer words:
To provide nutritional and interesting food.



Something you're excited about trying this year: Arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi inoculation of all apple trees as we move the trees from nurseries to orchard.

What you would change about your industry: I would reduce regulations surrounding the making and selling of apple juice and especially, hard cider. If we

could sell our excellent cider by the paper cupful at Farmers Markets, they would be much more enjoyable, even festive occasions.

Favorite PFI memory: The apple workshop in Marshalltown 3 or 4 years ago. So much innocence, so much hope - it was really fun!

Favorite crop and why: Blueberries for the health of the community, and apples because they are so useful for so many purposes and truly delicious, if properly selected cultivars are grown well.



PROGRAM UPDATES

What are you curious about?



What do you want to learn? Who do you want to hear from? **PFI is farmer-led, and your needs, priorities and ideas inform our work.**

Do you have a great idea for a conference session, presenter, field day host or farminar topic? What do you want to learn about?

Please [share your thoughts in this form](#) to feed them into PFI's "Idea Bank." Thank you!

Fabulous flower field day by first-time hosts

On August 9, farmers **Adam and Jenna Cook** of [Clovergold Flowers](#) near Newell, Iowa, hosted a PFI field day for the first time. With their 5 young children (including a two-week-old baby) in tow, the Cooks were gracious, engaging and informative hosts to a crowd of 35 that included current and aspiring flower farmers from as far as 4 hours away.



The event represented the best aspects of PFI as a diverse group discussed production, processing, soil testing and more.

Thanks to the Cooks for hosting a great event!

Which PFI Field Days are you attending?



PFI's model of farmer-to-farmer knowledge sharing is special, and it works. Our farmers are the experts on their specific farming systems, and visiting their farms to learn first-hand is the best way to build understanding - and meet some new folks!

Check out our 2022 field days, and plan to join one this summer! **All PFI field days are FREE and open to everyone.**

IN THE FIELD

The legal side of on-farm events



Are you considering hosting seasonal festivals, U-pick visitors, farm dinners or other events on your farm?

This [webinar on Legal Considerations for Agritainment and Agritourism](#) from [Pennsylvania Sustainable Agriculture \(Pasa\)](#) presents some important information about responsibilities, risks and liability to consider as you get started.

From the PFI research archives: Heirloom and Hybrid Tomato Variety Trial in High Tunnel



It's high tomato season! This time of harvesting and marketing tomatoes may also be perfect for thinking about improvements or different approaches for future production.

Take a look back at this [research trial from 2019](#) by Cooperators **Rob Faux**, **Lee Matteson** and **Rose Schick** that compared hybrid varieties to heirloom varieties for high tunnel production.

UPCOMING EVENTS

All events listed in CDT

Field day: Risk Management and Disaster Recover at Pheasant Run Farm

Sept. 18 | 2-4 p.m. | Van Horn, IA

When the August 2020 derecho swept across Iowa, **Eric and Ann Franzenburg** lost every crop and building on the farm, including greenhouses, high tunnels, the packhouse and outbuildings.

Remarkably, the Franzenburgs had insurance coverage for not only their farm structures, but also for their crops. Hear from the Franzenburgs about [how they worked with their insurance agent and were able to get rebuilt and growing again.](#)



Stay for a BBQ dinner and PFI fellowship after the field day!

Upcoming PFI horticulture events:

Sept. 6: Field Day - [Growing and Marketing Salad and Microgreens at Cherry Lane Farm](#)

Hosted by Krissy & Calvin Thiessen | Practical Farmers of Iowa
11 a.m.-1 p.m. | Spirit Lake, IA

Sept. 11: Field Day - [Book Publication Celebration and Member Social, Featuring Angela Tedesco](#)

Hosted by Nan Bonfils | Practical Farmers of Iowa
1:30-3 p.m. | Madrid, IA

Sept. 25: Field Day - [Growing Cultural Vegetables on Small Urban Plots With Cover Crops](#)

Hosted by Marie Andre & Tika Bhandari | Practical Farmers of Iowa
4-6 p.m. | West Des Moines, IA

Friends of PFI horticulture events:

Looking Ahead: Save the Date!

Aug. 31: Bus Trip - Central Iowa Agritourism Bus Tour

Hosted by Iowa State University
8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. | Ames, IA

Aug. 31: Field Day - Organic Workshop & Farm Tour - Tools for Organic Transition and Production

Hosted by Iowa Organic Association
9 a.m.-4 p.m. | Cherokee, IA

Sept 14: Field Day - 2022 Midwest Mechanical Weed Control Field Day

Hosted by The Land Connection
Full Day | Benton Harbor, MI

Sept. 15: Short Course - ISU Greenhouse Short Course

Hosted by Iowa State University
Full day | Ames, IA

Sept. 25: Tour - Madison County Farm Crawl

9 a.m. | Madison County, Iowa

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

Hosted by Women Food & Ag Network
Full day | Whalen, MN

Nov. 7: Short Course - ISU High Tunnel Short Course (link unavailable at this time)

Hosted by Iowa State University
Full day | Ames, IA

[View more upcoming events](#)

POLL

What has been your biggest challenge this year?

Much stronger than usual

Select

A bit stronger than usual

Select

Right on pace with the usual

Select

A bit slow

Select

Very slow

Select

I'm not keeping track

Select

Previous poll results:

How are your farmers market sales so far this year?

- **Much stronger than usual - 100%**
- A bit stronger than usual - 0%
- Right on pace with the usual - 0%
- A bit slow - 0%
- Very slow -0%
- I'm not keeping track - 0%

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.

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CONTACT US

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