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The Practical
**HORTI-
CULTURIST**

March 2023

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

Meet a Co-Hort: Cathy Linker Lafrenz

Cathy Linker Lafrenz owns and operates Miss. Effie's Country Flowers and Stuff near Donahue, Iowa, where she started Iowa's first u-pick flower farm in 2002 and has adopted a range of other enterprises over time, including herbs, jams, dried flowers and cooking classes.



Why do you grow horticulture

crops: Because of serotonin, dopamine and oxytocin in the soil.



What is something you're excited about trying this year: We are creating a new wildflower bed and butterfly house for raising monarchs to help sustain our monarch population and educate the public.

What is one thing you would change: I would like to eliminate the "competition" attitude and build "community" attitude. If you are worried about the competition, you are not focusing enough on YOUR business. And the fellowship and friendship that comes from community is what makes you happy.

Favorite PFI memory: My favorite memory comes from the 2022 storytelling at PFI conference. I have ALWAYS wanted to do storytelling since I heard my first Moth Radio hour on NPR. Even though it was difficult, it was a personal goal I got to achieve.

Your favorite crop: Now you are asking me about which child is my favorite??? This is so hard but I have to say lisianthus. Field growing lizzies is not for the faint of heart as they are susceptible to every fungal disease known to man. (Not really but it seems like it!) But I love oohing and aaahing with my customers when they ask about that flower that looks like a rose. And then, they come back and they want more because the vase life was so good.

[See Cathy's 2022 Storytelling presentation here.](#)

PROGRAM UPDATES

2023 Annual Conference Materials are online



PFI's 2023 Annual Conference was a huge success! Whether you were one of the 1,000+ attendees or were just curious from afar, you can now check out many of the sessions by [viewing the presentations posted online or watching the recorded sessions](#). Relive - or catch up on - the magic today!

IN THE FIELD

Farminars continue

Tarping: Perspectives on a...



[PFI's farmer-led webinars \(farminars\)](#) continue through March 28, 2023, but you can look back at the entire season of presentations - including Feb. 14's "Magic Tarping Ride" and March 14's "Navigating Iowa's New Cottage Food Law" - on the PFI website.

[Catch all the 2023 farminars here.](#)

Farmer Crisis Hotline

Farming can be stressful, and it can be hard to know where to turn to help when circumstances are beyond a farmer's control. Help is available for farmers who need to talk to someone on short notice through a toll-free hotline for farmer advocacy through



RAFI-USA (Rural Advancement Foundation International).

To learn more, call the **Farmer Crisis Hotline** at (866) 586-6746 Monday - Friday between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Field day planning is underway!



Field days are the quintessential PFI event - on-farm, farmer-led and rain-or-shine. Field days typically take place June through November, but planning is happening now!

Have a field day idea? Is there something you would drive across the state to see? Are you interested in hosting?

If so, email **Jacqueline** at jacqueline.venner.senske@practicalfarmers.org to share. Don't delay!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Upcoming PFI horticulture events:

All events listed in Central Time

Register today for 2023's last Horticulture Meet-Up

The last **Horticulture Meet-up of 2023** is just for flower farmers!

Jennifer and Adam O'Neal will host a gathering at PepperHarrow Flower Farm in Winterset, IA on Friday, April 14, 2023 from 9 - 11 a.m.

Come prepared for a robust roundtable with other flower farmers



as the growing season gets going!

Please email jacqueline.venner.senske@practicalfarmers.org if you plan to attend!

POLL

Have you started any seeds yet this year?

Yes!

Select

Not yet

Select

Never stopped

Select

I only use plugs

Select

I only grow perennials

Select

Previous Poll Results:

What would you like to hear about at horticulture field days in 2023?

- **Weed management - 33.3%**
- **Equipment use and maintenance - 33.3%**
- **All of these - 33.3%**
- Marketing and sales - 0%
- Business management - 0%
- Hands-on demonstrations - 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.

STAY CONNECTED



CONTACT US

Jacqueline Venner Senske

Horticulture Education Coordinator

jacqueline.venner.senske@practicalfarmers.org

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