

## Beginning Farmer News - Now accepting Savings Incentive Program applications

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*Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.*



### Meet Hannah Breckbill, a Farmland Access Navigator

In 2017, **Hannah Breckbill** (left) started a worker-owned cooperative farm, Humble Hands Harvest, in Decorah, Iowa, which she co-owns with **Emily Fagan** (right). She works with beginning farmers on land access with a lot of interest in group and community ownership models. Hannah was recognized in 2021 as a Changemaker by [Marbleseed](#).

Hannah is a [Farmland Access Navigator for Renewing the Countryside](#).

In her role, she helps beginning farmers better prepare to search for and acquire farmland tenure.

We asked Hannah: What is one benefit and one challenge to farming in group or community ownership models?

**Hannah:** “The main benefit is that you get to pool your resources and, with more people, there is more resilience to financial and physical challenges. A challenge is making sure that everyone is on the same page, understanding each other's feelings and needs, and having the same set of visions and values.”

**If you need help attaining land access, undergoing lease negotiations or establishing your farm, reach out to a navigator near you.**

## PROGRAM UPDATES

### Now open: Apply to the Savings Incentive Program



PFI's Savings Incentive Program (SIP) is a two-year program that supports beginning and aspiring farmers in creating successful farm businesses. SIP offers:

- Targeted learning and networking opportunities, with guidance from experienced farmer mentors.
- Support setting goals and creating a business plan
- Matching funds up to \$2,400 saved by participants during the program

**[Learn more and apply by Nov. 20.](#)**

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### Make plans to improve on-farm food safety this winter



The Iowa Valley RC&D is once again offering its Clean Start Food Safety Program.

During the free five-month course, you'll learn about Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) regulations and the USDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification, and create your own food safety plan.

When you complete the course, you'll receive a \$2,000 stipend you can use toward food safety equipment and supplies.

**Applications are due Oct. 31.**

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## Organic Farming as a Business: A Comprehensive 12-Month Vocational Training



Are you ready to build skills to start or expand your organic farm? Join **Pam Benike** of Prairie Hollow Farm and **Jacquelyn Zita** of Women's Environmental Institute for this 12-month organic farming vocational training.

This course combines classroom learning with hands-on farming experience to provide the knowledge and skills you need to successfully provide produce for your community, while also producing sustainable income to support yourself.

**Learn more.**

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## Marbleseed's Farmer-to-Farmer mentorship program is now open



The **Farmer to Farmer Mentorship Program** empowers organic farmers through one-on-one guidance as they grow their business, seek organic certification, add farm enterprises, hone production skills, balance farm and family, and more.

Applications for the 2024 mentorship program are due Dec. 1. The program runs from January 2024 to February 2025.

**[Apply online.](#)**

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## Register for the 2023 Sustainable Urban Food Production Short Course



The University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension is offering the Sustainable Urban Food Production Course, now in its fourth season.

During six online classes, you will gain a better understanding of the social and environmental benefits of urban agriculture and learn management practices to start or expand your local food operations in urban settings.

This short course will run Oct. 16 to Nov. 20.  
**[Register today.](#)**

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## Additional resources

- **[Johnson County Food and Farm Grant Program \(Applications close Oct 27\)](#)**
- **[Choose Iowa Grant \(grant portal opens Oct. 16\)](#)**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

## Upcoming PFI events

*All events listed in Central Time.*

**Oct. 28: Field Day – A Year in the Life of Poultry Farmer: Preparing for Winter**

*Hosted by: Carlos Williams*

10 a.m.-Noon | Solon, IA

**Oct. 31: Spanish Social – Spanish Community Social at House of Compassion**

*Hosted by: House of Compassion*

10 a.m.-Noon | Solon, IA

[View our events calendar](#)

## Contact our team

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