

Practical News - Produce safety cost-share now open

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**November 20, 2023**

*Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.*



**Thanks for attending PFI field days this season!**

This year, member farmers hosted 42 field days, sharing their practices and building lasting connections that will extend beyond the growing season. We extend a big thank-you to all who attended, hosted and supported our field days this year.

From our initial field day with **James Hepp** and family near Rockwell City, Iowa, in June to **Earl and Jeff Hafner's** field day near Panora, Iowa, last weekend, over 2,000 people attended field days this season. Farmers hosted field days in 27 different Iowa counties, as well as in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois and Nebraska.

[Revisit the season with our 2023 field day season photo recap.](#)

## NEWS

### Apply now for our produce safety cost-share



We're once again offering a cost-share program for specialty crop farmers seeking to make on-farm food safety improvements.

"In most years prior, deer severely damaged our lettuce, spinach, beets, snap peas and chard crops," says 2023 participant **Molly Schintler**. "This year, because we had the proper fencing – purchased via these grant funds – we were able to exclude the deer and thus far have had a bumper crop."

[Learn more about eligible expenses and apply.](#)

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### New oat variety research results



Since 2015, PFI has helped organize oat variety trials at Iowa State University research and demonstration farms around the state.

This year, PFI member **Neil Peterson**, who farms near Fonda, Iowa, also joined the trial and tested four oat varieties on his farm.

[View the results in our latest report.](#)

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**Balancing profit and environmental stewardship on a 360-acre family farm**



**Ken Fawcett**, a farmer in Springdale, Iowa, is preserving his family's 360-acre farm by embracing precision conservation.

With help from federal programs, Fawcett uses technologies like GPS and remote sensing to identify low-yielding areas, converting them into conservation zones.

[Read the rest of his story from our Autumn 2023 magazine.](#)

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## Video: "Farmer-led Research: Comparing Cover Crops for Winter Squash"



Vegetable farmer **Kate Edwards** of Solon, Iowa, trialed how planting two different cover crop species, rye and vetch, ahead of winter squash affected yields.

[Watch the video](#) to learn about her methods for planting and termination, and how she compared the two quantitatively as part of PFI's Cooperators' Program.

**Looking for more?** Dig into the details of Kate's trial in this [2022 research report.](#)

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**Reduce your nitrogen application rates with us in 2024**





Discover the best nitrogen rates for your farm with our **N Rate Risk Protection Program!**

In this program, you'll reduce your nitrogen application rate by 20 pounds per acre or more. If you don't meet your benchmark yield, we'll back you up with a \$35-per-acre payment.

**Enroll now for the 2024 season.**

## MEMBERSHIP

### Thank you for your ongoing support



During this season of reflection and gratitude, we want to thank all who have supported PFI through your membership dues, sponsorships and donations.

Because of your financial support, PFI is living its values of building resilient farms and communities – now and for future generations.

**We could not accomplish our work without you!**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Registration is open for the PFI 2024 Annual Conference**



**Jan. 19-20, 2024 | Des Moines, IA**

**Registration is now open for our 2024 Annual Conference in Des Moines!**

This year's conference features a keynote from cover crop expert **Keith Berns**, 60-plus farmer-led sessions, three pre-conference short courses and more.

Register by Dec. 8 to be entered to win two free nights at the Hilton during the conference.

**Register today**

## **IN THE NEWS**

### **Members in the News**

*Showcasing member voices and their diverse, independent viewpoints.*

**Monika Owczarski and April Clark** of Des Moines, IA, **Jan Libbey** of Kanawha, IA, and **Jason Jones** of Maxwell, IA, were featured in [dsm Magazine: Spicing Up Systemic Change](#)

### **PFI in the News**

**Morgan Jennings**, PFI's field crops viability coordinator, was featured on the [Cover Crop Strategies Podcast: Cover Crop Cost Share Program & Grazing Cover Crops & Corn Residue in Spring](#)

PFI was mentioned in [World-Grain: ADM: Regenerative agriculture taking root](#)

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**Have you been featured in the media?** If you're a PFI member, tell us when and where to find a link to the article, and we'll feature you in a future issue of Practical News.

**Contact:** [elizabeth.wilhelm@practicalfarmers.org](mailto:elizabeth.wilhelm@practicalfarmers.org)

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