

Practical News - Call for on-farm research participants

Practical Farmers of Iowa <info@practicalfarmers.org>

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To:Carly Zierke <carly.zierke@practicalfarmers.org>



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Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Farmer researchers gather to share insights and plan future research

Last Thursday and Friday, about 90 current and would-be Cooperators' Program participants gathered in Ames, Iowa, to learn about farmer-led trials from 2023 and make plans for future research projects.

In the photo above, **Emily Fagan** of Humble Hands Harvest presents her farm's research on rye cover crop termination using silage tarps. Next season, she's

hoping to explore the profitability of growing tomatoes for seed contracts.

[Learn more about the Cooperators' Program, read past research and get involved.](#)

NEWS

Open calls for on-farm research cooperators



PFI's Cooperators' Program is seeking members to participate in two on-farm research trials.

Join farmers across the Midwest in answering these questions:

- "Can We Reduce N Rates to Corn and Improve ROI?"
- "Do Cover Crops Increase the Number of Days Suitable for Field Work?"

[View trial requirements and apply to participate in 2024.](#)

Preserving flavor and diversity with heirloom apple varieties



In a market focused on commercial attributes like uniformity, color and crunch, heirloom apple varieties face challenges, with many lost and only around 2,500 still grown in the U.S.

While newer varieties dominate, some growers are maintaining heirlooms for flavor and pest resistance.

[This article from the Autumn 2023 magazine](#) explores how some growers are preserving genetic diversity by planting heirloom apple varieties on their farms.

Video: "Moveable hoop house integrated with hairy vetch maintains soil health"



In the [latest video from our "Practical Cover Croppers"](#) series, **Carmen Black and Maja Black** explain how they use mobile high tunnels, also known as hoop houses, on their vegetable farm in Solon, Iowa.

They also share how these structures benefit their operation by letting them grow fresh salad greens from April through November, and by helping them restore soil fertility with a cover crop that includes a legume.

MEMBERSHIP

Support PFI with a year-end donation and receive a special thank-you gift



As we continue to expand our work, your donations are more important than ever. Your contribution fills gaps in funding so that we can respond quickly and directly to members' needs.

[**Please consider making a year-end donation to help PFI expand our work.**](#)

Bonus: When you donate \$100 or more, you'll receive a fleece-lined, PFI-branded stocking cap as a thank-you gift!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Shared Learning Call: "Integrating Hog Manure and Cover Crop Grazing With Extended Rotation"



Friday, Jan. 12 | Noon-1 p.m.

Kevin Prevo farms with his extended family near Bloomfield, Iowa. Together, they raise corn, soybeans, rye, straw and livestock on 1,400 acres. They have also planted cover crops and used 100% no-till practices since 2014.

Attend our [January small grains shared learning call](#) to hear how Kevin and his family use hogs to provide 95% of the fertilizer needs on the farm, and how they incorporate cow-calf grazing after rye harvest. [RSVP to attend.](#)

More upcoming events

Jan. 19-20: Conference – [PFI 2024 Annual Conference](#)

All Day | Des Moines, IA

[**View our events calendar**](#)

IN THE NEWS

Members in the News

Showcasing member voices and their diverse, independent viewpoints.

Mitchell Hora of Brighton, IA, was featured in [Brownfield Ag News: Consultant Says Farmers Need to Know Their Carbon Scores](#)

Mark Peterson of Stanton, IA, was featured in a [National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition blog: Inflation Reduction Act Conservation Dollars Are a Vital Bulwark Against Climate Change](#)

Mitchell Hora of Brighton, IA, was featured in [Farm Journal: How New Carbon Claims Shortchange Sustainable Agriculture and Why It Matters](#)

Levi Lyle of Keota, IA, was featured in [No-Till Farmer: No-Till Highlights: Dec. 7, 2023](#)

Wendy Johnson of Charles City, IA, was featured in [The Mid-West Farm Report: Put OGRAIN On The Calendar](#)

PFI in the News

PFI was mentioned in [Nutritional Outlook: Regenerative and Organic: How do both fit into farming's future?](#)

PFI was mentioned in [Environmental Business Review: Farmer Focused Conservation Sales](#)

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

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