

The Practical Horticulturist - Support pollinators on your farm

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Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Meet a Co-Hort: Tate Carlson

Tate Carlson raises produce and small grains with his dad, **Bryan Carlson**, on Hayes Farm, his family farm near Storm Lake, Iowa. Tate sells the produce through wholesale markets and the small grains are milled into flour that he sells directly.

Why do you grow hort crops, in five words or less?: Provide my community with delicious meals.

What is something you're excited about this year?: I'm excited to jump into root crops on a little larger scale and with more mechanization.

What is one thing you would change about your industry?: I wish more farmers could take risks more easily and try things a little more out of the box – like things that are out of the norm compared to their neighbors or that they have seen done - without risking losing the farm. I don't want farmers to be socially ostracized or financially burdened by trying something new!

Favorite PFI memory: The PFI conference in the winter is hard to beat! It's great to connect with other farmers and get excited about the season when it seems so far away – and to see friends I don't often get to see!

Your favorite crop and why: I like growing carrots! It's challenging enough but nothing is more rewarding than having a nice field of clean carrots, knowing there are so many possibilities for how it could have gone wrong before you get to that point.

PROGRAM UPDATES

We're planning for field days and would love your input!



We are excited for another season of farmer-led learning on farms around the state.

Planning is happening right now. Is there a field day you would be excited to attend? Or perhaps one you'd like to host?

Reply to this email to let **Jacqueline** know or to ask about getting on the schedule for 2024.

Annual conference highlights now available



See [photo highlights](#) from our 2024 Annual Conference as well as [slides from sessions](#) on our website. The PFI Annual Conference has been a keystone event for sharing knowledge since our founding in 1985.

Thanks again to all those who attended. We can't wait to see you next year!

IN THE FIELD

Upcoming Produce Safety Alliance grower training sessions



The Produce Safety Alliance's grower training can prepare you for FSMA compliance and GAP certification. In addition, you'll need to complete PSA grower training to be eligible for future rounds of PFI's [Produce Safety Cost Share](#).

There are two upcoming trainings in April: an online training on April 3 (sign-up deadline March 27) and an in-person training on April 16 (sign-up deadline April 9). [View the schedule and save your spot today.](#)

Iowa LFPA program impact report now available



Since its inception, the Iowa Local Foods Procurement Assistance program has helped create new market streams benefitting many growers and eaters.

Read about the powerful connections forged through Iowa LFPA in [this impact report from Iowa Valley RC&D](#). The report celebrates early successes, shares measurable impacts and offers recommendations to sustain and expand this crucial work.

Help protect your farm from drift damage



[DriftWatch](#) is a voluntary communication tool administered by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship that helps raise the visibility of specialty crops and beehives so pesticide applicators can take appropriate caution.

As we head into the planting season in Iowa, all horticulture growers and beekeepers are encouraged to [register on this site](#).

Explore how hort farmers support pollinators on their farms



Explore these resources to gather insights from PFI member farmers who have improved their production by strengthening support for pollinators and natural predator species.

- Winter webinar: [“Balancing Pollinator Habitat and Wild Spaces With a Diversified Small-Scale Farm”](#) with **Rob Faux** and **Jill Beebout**
- 2022 research report: [“Annual Flowers as Pollinator Resource for Cucurbits”](#) with **Rob Faux** and **Mark Quee**
- 2016 research report: [“Annual Flowering Herbs for Pollinators”](#) with **Alice McGary** and **Rick Hartman**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Upcoming PFI events

All events listed in Central time.

March 26: Webinar – Trees and Bees: How Agroforestry Benefits Insects and Farmers

Hosted by: Speakers: Ann Novak and Sally McCoy (Bouska sisters) & Zach Burhenn

Noon-1 p.m. | [Online](#)

[View our events calendar](#)

Contact our team

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