

Practical News - Pre-proposals due this Friday for Iowa RFSI infrastructure grants

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Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Gathering business insights at the Beginning Farmer Retreat

On Feb. 10, about 45 attendees gathered for the Beginning Farmer Retreat at Wilson's Orchard & Farm in Iowa City, Iowa. Beginning and aspiring farmers had the chance to consider business plans and structures with experienced farmers and professionals.

After several sessions, attendees split into small groups led by PFI members **Emma Barber, Alfred Matiyabo, Ross Kurash and Anna Hankins** to learn how their business plans grew and evolved as they established their farms.

Are you a beginning farmer? [Subscribe to Beginning Farmer News](#) to hear about events and opportunities each month.

NEWS

Pre-proposal deadlines approaching for Iowa RFSI grants



Please Note: In last week's issue of Practical News, we included the wrong dates for submitting grant pre-proposals to the [Iowa Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program](#). The correct grant pre-proposal deadlines are as follows:

- **Infrastructure grants** from \$100,000 to \$1 million (pre-proposal and consultation call **due by Feb. 23**)
- **Equipment-only grants** from \$10,000 to \$100,000 for new, used or refurbished equipment (pre-proposals **due March 8**)

The Iowa RFSI aims to build resilience into the food supply chain in Iowa. Farms and businesses selling and distributing wholesale food are encouraged to apply.

Exploring Kunekune pigs



Recently, we shared our 2023 winter magazine article ["Pig Portraits"](#) detailing four producers' favorite pig breeds.

[In a companion piece on the blog](#), we take a closer look at Kunekune pigs, which **Kevin and Kendra Martin** raise on their farm near Mount Ayr, Iowa.

They share what worked well for them about the breed as well as infrastructure decisions that caused them to lean into goat production.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Pre-register for the Midwest Covers and Grains Conference



Monday, March 4 | Mankato, MN

Our upcoming [Midwest Covers and Grains Conference](#) is your opportunity to get answers to your questions about implementing cover crops and small grains on your farm – directly from other farmers.

This conference is free for PFI members and \$50 for non-members and includes a locally sourced breakfast and lunch.

[Pre-register by Feb. 28.](#)

Shared learning call: "Frost-Seeding Clover Into Small Grains With Meadowlark Organics"



Friday, March 1 | Noon-1 p.m. | Online

Join us for our next shared learning call with **John and Halee Wepking**, who own and operate Meadowlark Farm and Mill in Ridgeway, Wisconsin.

They'll share how they seed red clover and tine-weed their small grains in one equipment pass.

[Register to attend this online event.](#)

More upcoming events

All events listed are in Central time.

Feb. 20: Webinar – [Allies and Adversaries: Balancing Pollinator Habitat and Wild Spaces](#)

Hosted by: Jill Beebout & Rob Faux
Noon-1 p.m. | [Online](#)

Feb. 21: Meet-Up – [Horticulture Farmer Meet-Up](#)

Hosted by: Molly Schintler
9-11 a.m. | West Branch, IA

Feb. 23: Meet-Up – [Horticulture Farmer Meet-Up](#)

Hosted by: Emily Paulsen
9-11 a.m. | Harlan, IA

Feb. 27: Webinar – [Revitalizing Soil for a Small-Scale Hemp Farm in Iowa](#)

Hosted by: Megan & Scott Booher
Noon-1 p.m. | [Online](#)

Feb. 28: Meet-Up – [Horticulture Farmer Meet-Up](#)

Hosted by: Mark Westbrook
9-11 a.m. | Waverly, IA

March 1: Meet-Up – [Horticulture Farmer Meet-Up](#)

Hosted by: Calvin & Krissy Thiessen
9-11 a.m. | Okoboji, IA

March 5: Webinar – [Developing a Meat CSA](#)

Hosted by: Peter Allen
Noon-1 p.m. | [Online](#)

March 12: Social – [Field Crops Farmer Social](#)

Hosted by: Will & Cassie Cannon
1-3 p.m. | Prairie City, IA

[View our events calendar](#)

IN THE NEWS

Members in the News

Showcasing member voices and their diverse, independent viewpoints.

Ruth McCabe of State Center, IA, was featured on the "[DonnaLonna Kitchen Show](#)" podcast: "[087: Talking about the elephant with Ruth McCabe](#)"

Ashley Wenke of Montezuma, IA, **Amanda Van Steenwyk** of Peru, IA, **Ethan Zierke** of Calmar, IA, and **Carly Zierke**, PFI's digital content coordinator, were featured on the [Iowa Farm Bureau webpage](#): [Poweshiek County farmer wins Iowa Farm Bureau's 'Grow Your Future' Award](#)

Wendy Johnson and Johnny Rafkin of Charles City, IA, were featured in [Modern Farmer](#): [On the Ground with the Midwest Farmers Going All-In On Agroforestry](#)

James Holz of Grand Junction, IA, and **Bill Frederick** of Jefferson, IA, were featured on [Iowa Agribusiness Radio Network](#): [Secretary Naig honors conservation leaders at Iowa agribusiness showcase](#)

Chad Ingels of Randalia, IA, was featured in [The Des Moines Register](#): [Bill brings soil health focus to watershed management work, but some say effort is flawed](#)

Rob Faux of Tripoli, IA, was featured in [Farm Progress](#): [Federal court revokes dicamba approval](#)

Jennifer Breon of Iowa City, IA, and **Aaron Lehman** of Polk City, IA, were featured in [Food & Water Watch: Iowa Legislators Introduce New Clean Water For Iowa Act](#)

Rob Faux of Tripoli, IA, was featured on "DonnaLonna Kitchen Show" podcast: [085: Pesticide Action Network, Rob Faux](#)

PFI in the News

Rachel Burke, PFI's beginning farmer engagement coordinator, was featured on [KCRG: Retreat connects new farmers with experienced farmers](#)

Valeria Cano Camacho, PFI's senior Latino engagement coordinator, was featured in [Public News Service: High demand prompts IA farm group to increase Spanish-speaking services](#)

PFI was mentioned on [KMCH Radio: Women & Soil Event Coming to Field of Dreams Site](#)

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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