

# Practical News - PFI staff help sample fish in a restored oxbow + Member day at the Iowa State Fair

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**August 5, 2024**

*Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.*



## **PFI staff team up with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to sample Topeka shiners in restored oxbows**

For two staff members of Practical Farmers' habitat team, spending the day chest-deep in a restored wetland sampling fish species is just another day on the job.

Working with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, **Grace Yi and Vanya North** spent a day wading through an oxbow, a U-shaped bend in a river that's been cut off from the main flow, searching for endangered **Topeka shiners**. Oxbows are integral parts of healthy river systems that serve as vital habitat for many species. As human activity has altered river dynamics, however, many oxbows have been lost, imperiling species like the Topeka shiner.

Carrying large nets, Grace and Vanya worked alongside USFWS staff and interns to collect and catalogue fish species, which were then released. Thanks to conservation efforts by farmers, staff and agency partners, the Topeka shiner is now recognized as an [Endangered Species Recovery Champion](#).

To hear more about this sampling experience and the positive impact of restoring oxbows for both land and water, [read the full blog post here](#).

### Interested in supporting more habitat on your farm?

- Enrollment is open in PFI's [habitat incentives program](#)
- Learn more about on-farm conservation efforts in our ["Bringing Back the Edges" video series](#)

## NEWS

### Celebrating seven years of roller-crimping on-farm research



This spring marked eight years since PFI members began formally experimenting with roller-crimping to terminate cereal rye cover crops.

In this [new blog post](#), **Emma Link**, PFI's senior research coordinator, summarizes results from 15 on-farm trials on roller-crimping.

Learn what farmers **Scott Shriver and Jon Bakehouse** have seen through their own on-farm trials.

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### Welcome Rick Hartman to PFI staff



**Rick Hartmann** is joining PFI staff as a field crops viability coordinator.

Rick brings a plethora of experience to the farm viability team. In addition to having a master's degree in plant breeding from Iowa State, Rick previously worked for PFI as a full-time staffer and contract employee, ran his own direct-market vegetable farm and served as an organic farm inspector.

**[Read more about Rick.](#)**

## Join our growing team



Our team is continuing to grow with the hiring of a **finance assistant**.

This position will be responsible for:

- reviewing and processing accounts payable transactions
- processing external financial transactions
- preparing 1099s
- preparing weekly cash flow reports for the finance team

Does this sound like a good fit for you or someone you know? **[Apply here.](#)**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### PFI Member Day at the Iowa State Fair





**Tuesday, Aug. 13 | 8 a.m.-Noon | Des Moines, IA**

Practical Farmers of Iowa is excited to host **"PFI Member Day at the Iowa State Fair."**

PFI staff will be outside the fairgrounds near Gate 8 and near Gate 2 handing out free PFI T-shirts to members.

Plan to explore the fair with other PFI members and staff, then **meet at noon for a group photo in front of the Agriculture Building.**

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## Featured field day



**Aug. 21: Field Day – Make Way for Pheasants: Assessing Habitat Potential on Marginal Acres**

*Hosts: Jerry and Nancy Ackermann*  
Lakefield, MN | 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Come see how **Jerry and Nancy Ackermann**, alongside Pheasants Forever, restored a 34-acre prairie habitat on their 1,200-acre corn, soybean and small-grain farm.

By interseeding cover crops to create shelter space for pheasants, Jerry and Nancy have continued using precision conservation to improve soil quality and create quality habitat from unproductive acres. **RSVP.**

[View the full field day schedule](#)

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## More upcoming events

*All events listed are in Central time.*

**Aug. 6: Workshop – Central Nebraska Cover Crop Workshop**

9 a.m.- 4 p.m. | Gothenburg, NE

**Aug. 7: Meet-Up – Farm Family Meet-Up**

*In partnership with ADM*  
5-7 p.m. | Lena, IL

**Aug. 8: Meet-Up – Farm Family Meet-Up**

**Aug. 9: Field Day – Boots on the Ground: Tips for Transitioning to**

*In partnership with ADM*  
11 a.m.-1 p.m. | Perry, MO

**No-Till**  
*Hosted by: Alex & Krissy Udermann,  
John Udermann and Jake  
Udermann*  
1-3:30 p.m. | Sartell, MN

**Aug. 10: Field Day – Honing  
Pasture Management With  
Rotational Grazing + Cover  
Crops**  
*Hosted by: David Rosmann*  
3-5 p.m. | Harlan, IA

**Aug. 13: Meet-Up – Farm Family  
Meet-Up**  
*In partnership with ADM*  
11 a.m.-1 p.m. | Rutledge, MO

View our events calendar

## IN THE NEWS

### Members in the News

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

**Kristine Lang** of Brookings, SD, was featured on [KXLG Radio: SDSU Extension, Southeast Research Farm to host Organic Field Day](#)

**Mark Schleisman** of Lake City, IA, was featured in [The Messenger: Schleisman participates in Prop 12 study trip](#)

**Rick and Damien Matt** of Castalia, IA, were featured on [KMCH Radio: Fayette County Farm to Share Crop/Livestock Integration Practices](#)

**Sandro Lopes** of David City, NE, and **Valeria Cano Camacho**, PFI's senior Latino engagement coordinator, were featured in [Nebraska Public Media: Immigrant farmers often can't get federal grants to start businesses. So these nonprofits are helping](#)

**Zack Smith** of Lake Mills, IA, was featured in [York News-Times: Graze Master holds 'Paths to Profitability' Field Day in Denton](#)

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### PFI in the News

**Margaret Chamas**, PFI's livestock viability manager, was featured in [Missouri Business Alert: Land piranhas': Grazing goats provide targeted lawn care](#)

PFI was mentioned on [Ottumwa Radio Group: Fruit and Vegetable Field Day, August 6](#)

**Sally Worley**, PFI's executive director, was featured in [Business Record: \*\*Faaborg family in Radcliffe transitions pig operation to mushroom business at 1100 Farm\*\*](#)

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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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