



Outlook

The Practical Horticulturist - Flower farmer meet-up Oct. 20 + New videos on cover crops in vegetable production

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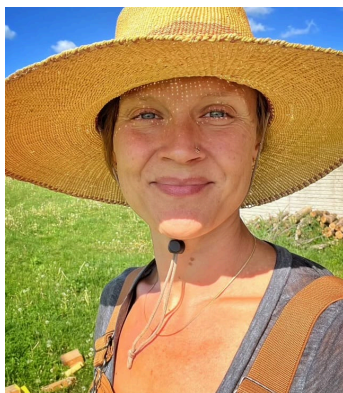
To Anna Pesek <anna.pesek@practicalfarmers.org>



October 2024

Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

Meet a CoHort: Sara Davis



Sara Davis farms alongside her cousin, **Shannon Knaack**, at Sunset Harvest Farms near Guttenberg, Iowa. They grow horticulture crops with the goal of providing local, sustainable, pesticide and herbicide-free fresh produce to their community.

Why do you grow hort crops, in five or fewer words: It benefits our community!

What is something you're excited about this year: This year, we're especially excited about a grant we received through the NRCS office to build a high tunnel, which will help extend our growing season.

What is one thing you would change about your industry: We would love to see the industry find a way for horticultural farmers to make a sustainable living while providing fresh, healthy food to our communities.

Favorite PFI memory: Receiving the produce safety cost-share. It allowed us to build a beautiful, efficient pack shed that has improved safety and operations on the farm.

Your favorite crop and why: It has to be kale! It's underrated but so versatile, healthy and delicious.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Two new cover crop videos for vegetable farmers



Do you use cover crops in your operation? PFI's video series "[Practical Cover Croppers](#)" offers insight on the role of cover crops for a range of farmers, including horticulture farmer **Jordan Clasen** of Earlham, IA.

- "[Cover Crops for Vegetable Growers](#)" gives an overview of how and why to integrate cover crops in vegetable production.
- "[Increasing Organic Matter With Summer Cover Crops](#)" focuses on practice integration during the production season.

Apply for PFI's Savings Incentive Program



Calling all farmers with less than seven years of experience! Applications are now open for PFI's Savings Incentive Program.

The [Savings Incentive Program](#) focuses on business planning, network-building and capital investing. Participation in SIP results in a 1:1 financial match for up to \$2,400 or a 1:2 financial match for farmers of color.

[Apply by Nov. 4.](#)

Receive support to scale your business from PFI's new program



PFI's **Sustainable Agriculture Business Incubator** is a new program in partnership with Grey Swan, an investment firm focused on regenerative agriculture.

All businesses accepted into the program will receive high-level coaching to help address barriers and bottlenecks to success.

Learn more or apply by Nov. 4.

How could your on-farm food safety improve?



The next round of PFI's produce safety cost-share program is coming soon! Now is the time to plan investments, small or large, that could improve food safety on your farm.

Review eligibility guidelines, project examples and farmer testimonials to consider if this opportunity is a fit for your farm and watch for the application period to open in mid-November.

IN THE FIELD

Cooperators' report on tarping for weed suppression



Tarping is an increasingly common practice on vegetable farms for bed preparation and weed or cover crop termination, especially in no-till or minimal-till systems.

Horticulture farmers **Hannah Breckbill and Emily Fagan**, along with **Marlon Mormann**, did an on-farm research project to answer questions relevant to their operations, including what duration of tarping is most effective for killing rye and if clear tarps can effectively get rid of perennial weeds. [Read the full research report.](#)

Iowa Valley RC&D offers new Fresh Connect Business Coaching Program



Iowa Valley RC&D's Fresh Connect Business Coaching Program is for small- to mid-scale crop and livestock farmers.

Farmers must have been in business for between one and six years with a stable farm location and plan to continue farming. Applicants who will benefit are those looking to diversify or scale-up direct and wholesale markets or update their farm business strategies. Participants will receive a farm photoshoot and branding guide, plus a \$2,000 marketing stipend.

[Applications are due Nov. 3.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Register today for the fall flower farmer meet-up at Englebrecht Farm



Sunday, Oct. 20 | 1:30-4:30 p.m. | Waverly, IA

Do you currently grow and sell flowers on your farm? Then this meet-up is for you! Join host, Tricia Englebrecht, and other flower farmers from across Iowa to network, compare notes from the season and do some hands-on crafting. Bring fresh or dried flowers to share for a hands-on design project. Light refreshments will be provided.

Limited to 35 people. Pre-registration required.

Upcoming PFI events

All events listed in Central Time.

Oct. 26: Field Day – Establishing Prairie: Selecting Seeds to Restore and Optimize Native Habitat

Hosted by: Cait Caughey
1-4 p.m. | Woodbine, IA

Nov. 9: Field Day – Balancing Your Farm Dream With Your Family's Needs

Hosted by: Kendra & Kevin Martin
9 a.m.-Noon | Mount Ayr, IA

Friends of PFI events

Oct. 30: Webinar – Investigating the Benefits of Integrating Cover Crops into Organic Vegetable Systems

Hosted by: Rodale Institute
12:30-2:30 p.m. | Online

Nov. 1-2: Conference – Emerging Farmers Conference

Hosted by: Big River Farms
All day | Minneapolis, MN

Nov. 8: Conference – Southwest Iowa Local Foods Summit

Hosted by: Center for Rural Affairs
9 a.m.-4 p.m. | Malvern, IA

Nov. 14: Meeting – Regional Food System Working Group + Iowa Food System Coalition Quarterly Meeting

Hosted by: RFSWG/IFSC
9 a.m.-4 p.m. | Online

Nov 13: Short Course – ISU High Tunnel Short Course

Hosted by: ISU Extension &
Outreach
8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. | Madrid, IA

[View our events calendar](#)

Contact our team

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