
Practical News - Sign up by tomorrow for the Commercial Apple Growers Workshop + On-farm research video

From Practical Farmers of Iowa <info@practicalfarmers.org>

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



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Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.



Farmer curiosity drives research trials: Sean Dengler explores nitrogen rate reduction on his farm

Field crop farmer **Sean Dengler** of Dysart, Iowa, wondered if he could reduce nitrogen on his farm without sacrificing yield. Sean decided to put his curiosity to the test as one of 19 participants in the 2024 PFI research trial investigating the impact of reducing applied nitrogen.

In [this video](#), Sean shares the nitrogen rates he tested in 2023 and 2024, discusses his experience as a PFI cooperator and encourages other farmers to conduct on-farm research to improve their farms.

Are you curious about reducing your own nitrogen rate during the 2025 growing season? Enroll in PFI's [N Rate Risk Protection Program](#) to lower your risk as you reduce nitrogen expenses. Participation is free.

NEWS

Join two PFI on-farm research projects



Do you share Sean's curiosity and want to engage in on-farm research? Have you worked for years to safeguard your soil, but aren't sure if long-term practices are paying off for your soil's health?

We are currently seeking participants for two on-farm research trials. Both trials are compensated.

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

Welcome Tylar VanPelt to PFI staff



Tylar VanPelt joined Practical Farmers of Iowa in November 2024 as the office assistant. Her role focuses on assisting the operations team to ensure that PFI's staff is well equipped to deliver effective programs to members.

Tylar grew up in a small rural town in central Iowa, where her love for farming began. She earned her bachelor's degree from Northwest Missouri State University in May 2024.

[Read Tylar's full bio.](#)

What to expect when livestock are expecting



As we approach late winter, lambing and kidding is starting for some. In this [PFI video](#), **Adam Ledvina** discusses signs that a doe is about to give birth and shares thoughts on interventions and keeping a healthy, low-maintenance herd.

For more enterprise-specific resources, [subscribe to our monthly email newsletters](#).

(This news item came from our livestock-focused newsletter, "The Monthly Feedstuff.")

UPCOMING EVENTS

TOMORROW is the final day to register for our Commercial Apple Growers Workshop



Tuesday, Jan. 28 | 8 a.m.-4 p.m. | Cumming, IA

Join regional experts and fellow growers at PFI's upcoming Commercial Apple Growers Workshop.

Hear from regional experts and fellow growers on apple production, connect with other growers and take part in a hands-on pruning workshop. Lunch featuring local foods will be provided, with time for networking.

[Register by Jan. 21.](#)

Winter field day: "Cover Crop 101: Basics of Management, Profitability and Practicality of Crop Use"



Wednesday, Jan. 22 | 4-6 p.m. | New Liberty, IA

Chad and Wendy Petersen farm corn, soybeans and have a cow-calf operation in northeastern Iowa. They recently started a new cover crop seeding business, Venture Ag, as well as a custom chemical business for local farmers. Come learn about their challenges and successes at this field day.

[Find out more and register here.](#)

Upcoming winter webinars



Jan. 21: Webinar – ["Using CRP To Foster Biodiversity on a 160-Acre Iowa Farm"](#)

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

Join **Bill Anderson**, a farmer in northwest Iowa, and **Clarissa Bruns** of Pheasants Forever, as they share their experiences with the Conservation Reserve Program. You'll learn about a CRP option called Gaining Ground for Wildlife, which is part of the CRP State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement initiative, and hear how this program can be tailored for your specific needs. [Register for this webinar.](#)



Jan. 28: Webinar – ["Farmers and Food Hubs: A How-To Guide for Getting Started"](#)

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

Food hubs can help local food farmers expand their markets. In this webinar, **Nicole Jonas** of Red Granite Farm will talk with a food hub manager and a farmer who sells to food hubs. Join the conversation to learn how to get started with food hubs, how food hub operations work and what successful farmer-food hub relationships look like. [Register for this webinar.](#)

[View the full webinar schedule](#)

More upcoming events

All events listed are in Central time.

Jan. 30: Meet-Up – Horticulture Farmer Meet-Up

Hosted by: Carly & Ethan Zierke

5-7 p.m. | Decorah, IA

[View our events calendar](#)

IN THE NEWS

Members in the News

Showcasing member voices and their diverse, independent viewpoints.

James Holz of Grand Junction, IA, was featured on [Brownfield Ag News: A good time to be a cattle producer](#)

Jill Beebout of Chariton, IA, was featured on [KBIA: Non-profit offers accessible, but lesser known, alternative to organic certification](#)

Jordan Scheibel of Grinnell, IA, was featured on [The No-Till Growers Podcast Network: From Full-Time to Part-Time Farming, Part-Time Food Hub w/ Jordan Scheibel of Middle Way Farm & Grinnell Farm to Table](#)

Loran Steinlage of West Union, IA, **James Hepp** of Rockwell City, IA, and **Monte Bottens** of Cambridge, IL, were featured in [No-Till Farmer: 2025 National No-Tillage Conference Delivers 'One of Best Programs Yet'](#)

Mark Peterson of Stanton, IA, was featured on [Brownfield Ag News: Farmer retains soil moisture with cover crops](#)

Michael Gutschenritter of Oconomowoc, WI, was featured on [TMJ4: Oconomowoc farm owner weighs in on limited egg availability, higher prices](#)

Nathan Anderson of Aurelia, IA, was featured on [Brownfield Ag News: Farmer looks back on challenging 2024 growing season](#)

PFI in the News

Liz Kolbe, PFI's farmer-led education director, was featured on [Iowa Agribusiness Radio Network: PFI sees promising growth at annual conference](#)

Margaret Chamas, PFI's livestock viability manager, was featured on [Brownfield Ag News: Midwest Meat Summit kicks off in Des Moines](#)

PFI was mentioned on [Brownfield Ag News: Examining the benefits of prairie strips for row crop farmers](#)

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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