



**For Release:** February 14, 2014

## **Learn about conservation, wildlife benefits of cover crops at a FREE informational meeting – March 4, near Hazleton – RSVPs required**

**HAZLETON, Iowa** — Cover crops offer many benefits to farmers and the landscape, from building soil health and boosting yields to reducing pests and improving overall farm resiliency. But there's another significant benefit to cover crops that's not often discussed: creating seasonal wildlife habitat.

Practical Farmers of Iowa, Buchanan County Conservation Board, B & B Farm Store and Buchanan County ISU Extension and Outreach will host a dinner and informational meeting on this topic on **Tuesday, March 4, from 5:30-8 p.m., near Hazleton**, at the Fontana Park Nature Center located at 1883 125<sup>th</sup> St., 1 mile south of Hazleton. To reach the center, take state Highway 150 north out of Independence about 10 miles.

The meeting will cover the benefits of cover crops, how to integrate them with current farm operations and how to use cover crops for wildlife. The event is free and open to the public. Seating is limited, so pre-registration is required by no later than March 3 – but if possible by Feb. 28 for meal planning purposes. To register, contact Angie Auel at (319) 636-2617 or [naturalist@iowatelecom.net](mailto:naturalist@iowatelecom.net). After the meal, speakers will include:

- 5:50-6 p.m. – **Angie Auel**, a naturalist with Buchanan County Conservation, who will open the meeting.
- 6-7 p.m. – **Ray Wright**, research specialist with University of Missouri, who will speak and answer questions about "Increasing Seasonal Wildlife Habitat by Cover Crops."
- 7-7:40 p.m. – **Tim Recker**, who farms near Arlington, who will speak about "Bundling Cover Crops with Additional Conservation on My Farm."
- 7:40-8 p.m. – A representative with **Klinkenberg Aerial Spraying and Seeding**, who will speak on "Working with Aerial Applicators for Cover Crop Success."

Nathan Anderson raises corn and soybeans and grazes a cow-calf operation at Bobolink Prairie Farm, near Cherokee. He uses cover crops for the farm and landscape benefits they offer, but says he was surprised to discover the wildlife benefit. "As a farmer, I know cover crops benefit my farming operation and that's why we're continuing to use them. We didn't anticipate the covers providing habitat for wildlife, but enjoy the added benefit. Finding teal ducks nesting in the rye cover early in the spring was great to see."

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Founded in 1985, Practical Farmers of Iowa is an open, supportive and diverse organization of farmers and friends of farmers, advancing profitable, ecologically sound and community-enhancing approaches to agriculture through farmer-to-farmer networking, farmer-led investigation and information sharing. Farmers in our network produce corn, soybeans, beef cattle, hay, fruits and vegetables, and more. For additional information, call (515) 232-5661 or visit [www.practicalfarmers.org](http://www.practicalfarmers.org).

### **Contact:**

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