Challenges of Dryland Farming

The lack of precipitation in semiarid regions presents unique challenges to farmers, particularly organic farmers. The first pioneers to settle the Great Plains in the late 1800s were met with an unusually wet period, which led to a complete misunderstanding of the ecology of the area. A popular phrase among real estate agents at the time was “rain follows the plow.” Decades of continuous wheat production and overgrazing, coupled with severe drought, led to the Dust Bowl of the 1930s.

As a result, the practice of fallowing was developed as a method of moisture retention. In a no-till system, the previous season’s crop residue is left and the next crop is drilled into the residue. The soil is covered at all times, which not only prevents erosion but also prevents evaporation of rainfall and increases water infiltration into the soil.

From No-Till to Organic

Tim considers himself an agroecologist—one who "views agricultural areas as ecosystems and is concerned with the ecological impact of agricultural practices.” He speaks with pride of his family’s long history of curiosity and innovation in farming, adding that he has always been intrigued by organic farming. A lack of understanding of national organic standards coupled with prohibitive financial hurdles have kept Tim from transitioning Raile Farms to organic—until now.

Organic production shortfall in U.S. encourages imports, creates risk

By Peter Golditz

The organic food sector is a bright star in U.S. food retailing with sales increasing by over 10 percent in 2015 to reach $84.3 billion, according to the Organic Trade Association. The world’s largest consumer packaged goods companies, such as General Mills, Kellogg’s, Danone, Coca-Cola, and Pepsi, are all players in the market through scores of acquired brands. You can find organic foods in every major U.S. retail chain, including Walmart and Costco, which according to industry analysts, offer support. Tim’s daughter, Jessica, and her husband, Geiler, have also been instrumental in developing the farm’s website and business plan.

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The Organic Broadcaster is a bimonthly newspaper published by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES), a nonprofit that provides education, resources and practical advice to farmers.

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The Washington Post reported on the two shiploads of grain from Turkey that were falsely labeled as organic. Given the rapid increase in volume of “organic” grain coming from Turkey in recent months, one is left wondering if there have been other suspect shipments which have gone undetected.

That is an outcome we do not want to see. It’s simply not enough to say to the world, “We need strong NOP standards.” We must meet the demand for the product we’ve created. MOSES will continue to do all we can to support an increase in domestic organic grain production, through education, outreach, and networking.

— John Mesko, MOSES Executive Director
Organic label means more than just farming with approved inputs

By Harriet Behar

Many of the most contentious issues in organic can be traced to how farmers, processors, regulators, and consumers view agricultural production and its impact. Viewing organic mostly by inputs used versus overall method of production results in two different definitions of organic integrity. Inputs might define what is allowed or not, but the system distinguishes organic from non-organic.

Focusing on materials might be easier for people to understand, but the activities that work in concert with our ecosystems are what make organic a resilient and regenerative practice. The integrity of the organic label is based upon farmers following specific standards and production methods—the organic regulation. It is important that the organic label maintains its full meaning in the marketplace to keep trust in our “brand.”

As organic continues to grow, there is a push to reduce the perception of organic to just the materials being used, and lessen the importance of the organic management system. Two areas in the organic community where this is happening currently are hydroponics and outdoor/pasture access for various species of livestock. As we discuss these topics, I think it’s important to look again at what our organic regulation states—the definition of organic production does not even mention inputs.

Organic production. A production system that is managed in accordance with the Act and regulations in this part to respond to site-specific conditions by integrating cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that foster cycling of resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity.

Organic certification of hydroponic operations is based solely on the substitution of non-approved liquid fertility inputs for ones that would be allowed under our law. The rest of the Organic System Plan is ignored. There is no crop rotation, and no maintenance or improvement of biodiversity or promotion of ecological balance. Where are the homes for migrating pollinators or birds on these greenhouse or warehouse operations? How are these operations improving the soil?

All of the management systems that distinguish organic from non-organic are absent from these intensively managed systems, most importantly stewardship of the soil. In addition, these systems rely heavily on petroleum-based plastics for their troughs, fertility lines, and other structures. Water pumps, lights and other environmental controls to replace sunlight and rain require electricity, creating a significant carbon footprint for these operations.

It is true that hydroponic water use is much lower than in a field operation. However, water is never really lost on our farms—it soaks into the ground or evaporates into the air where it contributes to the important cycling of water around our planet.

I understand there are aspects of hydroponic that can be useful in providing local food to inner cities, or providing aspiring farmers a fairly easy business model to jump into food production.

Inputs might define what is allowed or not, but the system distinguishes organic from non-organic.

However, does this truly meet the letter of the organic law? How about the expectations of consumers that organic improves the environment for now and into the future? To date, I have not been convinced the hydroponic systems I have seen embody ecosystem stewardship as expected or required by our rule and the marketplace.

Currently, the “animal welfare” final rule is in regulatory review. The many farmers, consumers, agricultural professionals and other who were the majority in wanting this to be part of organic regulation, hope to see this implemented with no changes. The National Organic Program did an excellent job of thoughtfully incorporating suggestions and meeting the vast majority of the concerns in the proposed rule.

Focusing on animals organic feed but keeping them confined is not an organic system. Outdoor access, pasture and more are what distinguishes organic from many non-organic operations. Farmers have learned that animal welfare is an important tool to disease prevention as well as lowering many types of problems. Consumers expect “happy” animals on organic farms—it should be very obvious when they drive by farms which ones are not organic.

I have seen numerous consumer surveys where they state by a great majority that the main reason they purchase organic products is to avoid toxic pesticides. This is a good reason, but typically these surveys do not ask anything about the environmental benefits of organic, and buyer expectations. To assume that consumers are focused solely on their own self-interest, health and safety is not the full story. There are many areas where consumers make environmentally focused choices such as purchasing recycled paper and plastic products, electric hybrid cars, buying into renewable energy options with their utility company, even concern over littering along our streets and highways.

A survey could ask consumers if they prefer food grown where the soil, water, wildlife and biodiversity were maintained, improved, or degraded. How do you think they would answer? If a survey asked if food buyers believe that organic farms protect these natural resources and actually offer a way to take a degraded ecosystem and bring it back to health, how would they answer? It is true that the use of materials that negatively affect our environment would be in their thoughts as they answer this question, but they would also have thoughts of livestock being outdoors, cows grazing in the sunshine on lush pastures and crops growing on fertile soils on biodiverse farms that provide pollinator habitat and more.

Non-organic farmers and others in agriculture also view organic versus non-organic mostly
“What should I know about taking soil samples and testing my soil?”

**Answer by Harriet Behar**

Taking soil samples and testing is a good idea every few years to track if your soil fertility program is moving in the right direction. These tests are one way to prove to your organic certifier that inputs, such as micronutrients, are necessary.

While numerous testing laboratories are available, give some thought to how you will use these tests and what your soil fertility program will require. If you are planning on using the test results to justify a government-approved Nutrient Management Plan, make sure you use a lab that is approved. Tests from an “unapproved” lab cannot be part of an NMP.

It is worth the extra dollars to go beyond testing only nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium (NPK). Get a full analysis, including Cation Exchange Capacity (CEC), which gives you an idea of the nutrient transfer capability of the soil to your plants. Organic matter (OM) helps you track if you are building soil structure and nutrient-holding capacity. All of the micronutrients plus pH are important to help you understand imbalances that can result in certain type of weed or pest problems, as well as depriving your crops of some nutrients.

To take soil samples, walk your fields in a zigzag or wide “W” pattern, taking 6-10 samples at a minimum, depending on the size of the field. You will then mix these together in a bag and take a smaller amount of this composite sample to send to the lab. Use a soil probe or a trowel to dig about 4-8 inches deep. Try to avoid putting vegetation into the bag. Send if off to the lab in a timely manner.

Depending on your field(s), you may need to take numerous samples. If the soil type changes in the field—more clay on one end, sandy on the other—send in two samples so you can understand what is going on in these different areas. Also, make sure you have composite field samples for each of the fields that are growing different crops, so you can plan for your yield goals based on the needs of the crop and what the soil currently offers. Soil testing can be a good tool in helping you plan your crop rotations for both building soil health as well as crop yields.

Lastly, start a file for your soil tests so you don’t lose this information and can track, over time, the effectiveness of the soil amendments you might purchase and apply. Do not take your soil samples right after applying minerals or manure—the test would not give you a true picture of your soil composition.
Certified organic farmer reacts to criticism of organic standards

Editor’s note: This letter was sent to the Organic Broadcaster by Tom Frantzen. He and his wife, Irene, were the 2009 MOSES Organic Farmers of the Year.

In the past few months I have read articles written by Joel Salatin where he condemns organic certification standards. I am a certified organic farmer and want to defend those standards in light of this harsh review by Mr. Salatin.

I have farmed for 43 years. Our 320-acre Iowa farm produces certified organic beef and pork as well as grains. Our entire certification cost is about $2,500 a year; we have done that process since 1995. We have been inspected annually, and remain in compliance with the USDA National Organic Program. Over the years, we have had some significant certification issues with our farm’s organic compliance, but those issues have always been resolved.

Is this a perfect USDA-supervised program? By all means no, but it is an example of democracy and, with that, carries all the faults of a bureaucratic response to helplessness. I have had limited involvement in organic certification. Salatin states, “Certification is simply a bureaucratic solution to helplessness.” The Organic Valley Co-op model of cooperative marketing under the USDA Organic label is anything but a bureaucratic solution to helplessness. The Organic Valley Cooperative has had some significant certification issues with our farm’s organic compliance, but those issues have always been resolved.

Salatin’s editorial in the April 2017 issue of the Stockman Grass Farmer details his very limited involvement in organic certification. Salatin states, “Certification is simply a bureaucratic solution to helplessness.” The Organic Valley Co-op model of cooperative marketing under the USDA Organic label is anything but a bureaucratic solution to helplessness. I have had 22 years of experience with the Organic Standards and the National Organic Program, and I support that initiative.

Salatin’s comments appear to be limited to the issue of organic certification of slaughter livestock on any farm. What does he have to say about other people who may have little choice about other people who may have little choice about their certification programs have a place?

The Organic Valley Dairy program is a nationwide example of successful application of the existing organic program. Those standards have faced challenges, and have been revised to ensure the integrity of that label. There are over 2,000 dairy farmers in the Organic Valley program who depend on that USDA label to ensure the viability of their farms. How many of those farms could survive without a certified organic market?

Our organic farm, like the National Organic Program, is far from perfect. My job as a farmer is to care for the land while I make a living off of those acres. Recycling of nutrients is at the heart of any ecological system.

Salatin preaches ecology while he purchases chemically grown grains and proteins for feed for his stock, and then those nutrients from his livestock’s manure are deposited on his acres. To my awareness, he tills no soil and grows zone of the grains that he feeds. In my opinion, if he wants ecology, he can either collect that manure and haul it back to the land where the grain came from or stop feeding grains and proteins to his stock. He does not feed grains to his cattle but I would like to see what would happen to either his poultry or his pork operation with no grains or proteins fed.

On our farm, we keep our growing hogs in deep-bedded hoop sheds with a concrete outdoor area. I am opposed to pasturing my growing market hogs. On that pasture they will put their dung and urine where they want to and not where it really belongs. We feed out pigs year round and it is actually impossible to have those animals spread their own manure in a uniform fashion across the landscape. We try to retain all of the nutrients from the manure and apply them to the land where the crops came from. Is this practice perfect? No, but it is recycling. Our brood sow herd is pastured when that is possible.

Salatin is by far the most influential direct marketer I know of. He is behind a true and significant revolution in how farms can operate. However, that direct marketing concept does not apply universally to all farms.

In Iowa, we have 99 counties and only about 5 of those have a population that is growing. Our county has lost 20 percent of its population since 1960. This creates a difficult situation to try to make your living off of farm direct sales.

Another example of the effects of a declining population is in the number of market hogs sold in a monthly basis by the second largest health food grocery store in Iowa. This store has annual sales of about $5 million, and yet it sells only 5 market hogs a month in its specialty meat department. There are not enough people in this geographic area to support even one small niche pork farm!

I mentioned this dilemma to Salatin when he spoke at a farm gathering in Iowa in 2013. He replied, “I am sure glad that I do not live there.”

We do live in a low-density population area, and thus we do not have that heavily populated geographic area that drives the success of his farm. We do some direct marketing, but the vast majority of what we produce is sold through Organic Valley/Organic Prairie Co-ops program—we would not be farming without that cooperative.

Can you imagine direct marketing the dairy products from a 100-cow dairy herd in Howard County, Iowa with a population of 9,527 people? That county hosted a total population of 12,800 in 1960.

It is easy to look at a program and to focus your comments on the part you find unsuitable. But you need to ask yourself just what part of that deficiency is due to your lack of involvement. Then you can ask yourself how your operation would be affected if you were a part of that program. Could you meet those same standards that you are criticizing?

If you still choose not to be a part of something, that is your decision but then ask yourself about other people who may have little choice due to where they happen to farm. They are not helpless farmers looking for a bureaucratic solution. We need a certified organic program, and we need to remain involved in keeping the standards meaningful. Salatin would serve his readers better if he would address the geographic population problems that many niche farmers face.

In closing, I would like to add a piece of advice from a local retired farmer. “Keep your words soft and sweet for you will never know which ones you will have to eat!”

Tom Frantzen, Frantzen Farm
New Hampton, Iowa
Since joining his father on the farm in 1980, Tim had been growing a corn/winter wheat/fallow rotation in a conventional no-till system. Although no-till solves many of the problems brought about by conventional wheat farming leading up to the Dust Bowl, it is hugely dependent on chemical herbicides to kill the weeds before drilling in the next crop. Frustrated by the problems inherent in a no-till system, and finding the farm to be in a financial position to do so, Tim has begun the process of transitioning his land to certified organic production.

Reflecting on his decision to transition the farm to organic, Tim recalled a “perfect storm” of circumstances that tipped the scale. Seeking education on organic practices, he learned about NOP standards, realizing that there are more inputs available to organic farmers than he had previously thought. Herbicide-resistant weeds were becoming an increasing problem in his conventional no-till system.

Most importantly, his son’s young family joined the farming operation, causing Tim to seriously question the safety of the chemicals he was handling for his two grandsons, Cole and Brooks. “In 2015, it became apparent no-till farming was not a sustainable practice on our farm,” he said. “I was talking to my chemical rep more than my wife! It was time to become an agroecologist.”

Translating Nitty-Gritty

Because of the enormity of the task, Tim and Michael will be transitioning the farm to organic systematically over the next five to six years. This July they will harvest their first acres of certified organic wheat. A little over a third of their acreage now is certified transitional, which is not transitioning into the price premium Tim was hoping for.

“That has been the biggest disappointment about this process,” he said. He had been working with a broker at a large mill in Colorado to secur...
Sign up to attend field day to gain farming insights

MOSES Organic Field Days give you the chance to see firsthand how other farmers tackle issues on their farms. Register or see more details and driving directions at mosesorganic.org/organic-field-days.

Small Grains and Pork Production
June 29 | TBD | Free | Frankenstein, Iowa
Farmers Scott and Marie Diebele raise pastured Berkshire hogs and grass-fed beef. Together with agronomist Eric Anderson, they’ll talk about pasture renovation and soil improvement in an organic system. Learn from their experience how to manage a mix of perennial pasture and annual cover crops to meet the nutritional needs of pigs and cattle.

In Her Boots: Grass-Fed Beef & Dairy
July 12 | 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. | $50 | Brattsett Family Farm | Jefferson, Wis.
Farmer and grazing instructor Kirsten Jurcek offers a behind-the-scenes tour of her successful beef and dairy grazing operation. Learn about rotational grazing, and how to establish a conservation easement, CRP-funded prairie, and silviculture plantings of fruit and nut trees, plus beekeeping and warm-season pasture research. Bonus: Youth Day Camp for kids 6 & older.

Pasture for Grass-Fed Pork and Beef
July 17 | 4:30 p.m. | Free | Golden Bear Farm | Kiel, Wis.
Steve and Marie Diebele raise pastured Berkshire hogs and grass-fed beef. Together with agronomist Eric Anderson, they’ll talk about pasture renovation and soil improvement in an organic system. Learn from their experience how to manage a mix of perennial pasture and annual cover crops to meet the nutritional needs of pigs and cattle.

OGRAIN: Artisanal Grain Production
July 24 | 1 – 4:30 p.m. | Free | Hazzard Free Farm | Pecatonia, Ill.
Farmer Andrea Hazzard covers everything from seed selection and planting to harvesting, drying and cleaning of corn and small grains for specialty markets. Ellen King, co-owner and artisan baker of Hewn Bread in Chicago, shares insights from the buyer's perspective.

In Her Boots: Realize Your Farming Dream
August 4 | 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. | $50 | Circle M Market Farm | Blanchardville, Wis.
The Wisconsin Soil Sisters, an innovative network of local women who farm, share their seasoned perspectives to answer your questions and help you gather resources for your farm launch. This event is offered in conjunction with the annual Soil Sisters weekend of farm tours, workshops, and culinary events.

Movable and Fixed Fencing for Livestock
August 21 | 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. | Free | Pickford Organics and Meadowlark Farm | Ridgeway, Wis.
Farms Ben Doherty and Erin Johnson, and farmers Joyce Ford and her husband, Jim Riddle, raise a variety of “blue” berries and plums for wholesale and direct-from-the-farm markets. Learn what it takes to nurture these fruits from field to plate.

Meadowlark Farm | Ridgeway, Wis. 
Register on-site.

Shop with a number of experts, including university brought together by Jason Rabaey and other reps from General Mills, and oat plant breeder Mike McMullen, along with Tom university’s test plots with researcher Steve Zwinger and s position around a third to organic production.

Learn about imaginative crop rotations, managing a parallel operation (conventional/organic), strip tilling, navigating the organic transition process, farm transfer to the next generation, cultivation and fertility practices, and on-farm research.

Opportunities in Organic Farming
September 8 | 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. | Free | Pineland Farm | Atlanta, Ill.
The MOSES Organic Farmers of the Year, the Bishops, showcase their diverse livestock, crop, and vegetable operations, sharing their organic management practices and reasons for choosing them, and highlight the on-farm research they’re doing. Additional presentations focus on legislative initiatives relevant to farmers, plus opportunities with universities, lending institutions, and more to encourage farmers to transition to organic.

Organic Vegetable Production
September 16 | 9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. | Free | Open Hands Farm | Northfield, Minn.
Farmers Ben Doherty and Erin Johnson, and Annalisa Hubtberg, U of M Extension Food Safety Educator, discuss food safety in organic vegetable production in this field and packing shed. Also learn about weed management tools and growing/ Storing/marketing winter root crops.

Soil Fertility in Organic Grain Production
August 30 | 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. | Free | Oak Ridge Farms | Pendleton, Ind.
John Paul Franks has been gradually transitioning his 140-acre grain farm to organic production since 2010, certifying his first acreage in 2013. He shares the hows and whys of his farm’s transition, focusing on managing risk during the switch. He and John Martin, a longtime organic farmer from Williamsburg, also cover soil health and maximizing available organic nitrogen resources. Martin has been managing his soil fertility organically for over 30 years, and routinely grows 200-bushel organic corn.

Visit numerous women-owned farms in the Monroe and Brodhead areas. Free.

Create Your Own Farm and Culinary Adventure
3 Days  •  5 Unique Components  •  20+ Farms
Tour of Farms Sunday, August 6: Visit numerous women-owned farms in the Monroe and Brodhead areas. Free.
Green Acres Workshops Friday, August 4 to Sunday, August 6: Make cheese, ferment the harvest, be a farmer for a day and much more! Ticketed events.
Taste of Place Friday, August 4: A local food and drink celebration at Cow & Quince in New Glarus. Ticketed event.
Farm to Table Dinner Saturday, August 5: Farm-to-table dinner at Dorothy’s Range in Blanchardville featuring heritage meals. Ticketed event.
Dine Fine at Restaurants Friday, August 4 to Sunday, August 6: Sample “tourism” specials throughout the weekend.

A Celebration of Wisconsin Family Farms & Rural Life
September 8 | Free | www.soilsisterswi.org

For more details and driving directions, see mosesorganic.org/organic-field-days.
Import Risks — from page 1

or more than twice the estimated 262,000 acres of organic soy and corn grown in the U.S. in 2015. If current consumption trends continue, the U.S. may need to import 17 million bushels of soybeans and 25 million bushels of corn in 2017, equivalent to nearly 750,000 acres of domestic production at current organic yields.

The primary driver for this demand has been double-digit growth in organic poultry production as well as a need for other organic livestock feed for dairy and beef cows. Over the past few years as consumers have become increasingly concerned about hormones and antibiotics used in large-scale animal production along with animal welfare, the largest poultry processors in the U.S. have made significant investments to expand the market for organic poultry products. With companies such as Perdue Farms, Tyson Foods and Pilgrim’s Pride committed to growing this market and meeting consumer demand, the need for organic soybeans and corn for feed will continue to grow sharply.

Issues with Imports

On the face of it, it is difficult to fault the organic poultry and livestock industry and these importing and processing the grain into feed for taking advantage of the imports’ lower prices as they source supplies—the supply just doesn’t exist in the U.S. However, if one looks more closely at the countries where this production is taking place and the potential for fraud in the supply chain, increasing reliance on foreign sources of soybeans and corn may be putting importers and processors, as well as the greater U.S. organic industry, at risk.

News articles are regularly published in the mainstream press that question the value and integrity of the National Organic Program (NOP) as well as USDA’s oversight of the program. During a meeting held at the MOSES Organic Farming Conference this past February, Miles McEvoy, head of the NOP, stated that ensuring the integrity of USDA organic products through animal welfare, the largest poultry processors in the U.S. have made significant investments to expand the market for organic poultry products. With companies such as Perdue Farms, Tyson Foods and Pilgrim’s Pride committed to growing this market and meeting consumer demand, the need for organic soybeans and corn for feed will continue to grow sharply.

also shared that there were concerns focused on imports of organic corn coming from Eastern Europe, and in particular Turkey, as the country’s exports appeared to exceed their reported production. Turkey was the leading exporter of organic soybeans and corn into the United States in 2016. NOP conducted an audit in Ukraine in 2016 and currently has an audit in progress in Turkey. One of the findings was that many different countries supply organic corn through Turkey, including Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Romania, and that multiple certifiers are involved in the process. In late 2015, NOP issued a Notice of Proposed Suspension to one of the certifiers involved, ETKO, and in mid-2016 reached a settlement agreement requiring ETKO to take it into full compliance with NOP regulations. The EU and Canada have suspended ETKO’s accreditation.

Price Pressure

Importers of soybeans and corn have been fortunate so far to find what appears to be an endless supply of raw materials, and at a price that puts pressure on U.S. producers. According to Kellee James, founder and CEO of Mercaris, even with this rapidly increasing need for organic feed, “foreign prices for corn have essentially put a cap on upward price movement for domestic corn.”

Missing Opportunity

The short-term benefit of lower imported grain prices may come at a greater cost to the industry later if widespread fraud is reported and imports are interrupted. This could result in a significant shortfall of supply to a growing market that has no domestic backup. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, buyers of imported grain are missing an opportunity to positively impact U.S. organic production and further build out a sustainable domestic supply chain on which they can depend for future growth.

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You don’t have time for clogged sprayers and plugged drip lines, so we developed a new fertilizer to give you the nutrients you need, without the hassle. Plus every batch is pathogen tested with a third party certificate for your records.

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Easy to use with your current spray and drip equipment

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• No setback restrictions for food crops

The New Standard in Organic Fertilizer

And the first derived from chicken manure.
Research compares fatty acids, meat of dairy steers grazing two cover crop systems

By Hannah Phillips and Brad Heins

Editor’s note: This research poster took first place at the recent Organic Research Forum at the MOSES Organic Farming Conference.

It is well established that winter cover crops, when used in rotation with other crops, improve soil health. Cover crops are commonly used as a “green manure” or harvested for grain and straw; however, they could potentially be grazed with livestock in the early spring and summer. In addition, grazing is a low-input method to feed livestock, which could improve soil health by adding fresh manure to the field or pastures. Farmers who want to improve soil health and utilize a low-input grazing system may benefit from integrating crops and livestock in their system.

Consumers of organic products identify the health benefit of food as one of their selection criteria. There has been substantial research in the past several years involving omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids (FAs) in human health and disease prevention. Although omega-6 FAs are important for health, they act as a pro-inflammatory in the body, and chronic inflammation in the body can lead to a range of diseases. On the other hand, omega-3 FAs act as an anti-inflammatory. This is why it is important to have a balanced omega-6/3 FA ratio in a human diet. The average American diet is a ratio of 15 - 16:1, but the ideal goal is to be close to 1:1 as possible.

In this project, we explored the feasibility of grazing crossbred dairy steers on two types of cover crops as a method of utilizing a low-input system. In addition, we wanted to evaluate if beef from crossbred dairy steers would add value to the organic beef market by improving taste and health benefits.

The University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center grazed crossbred dairy steers on winter wheat and winter rye because they are two common cover crops in the Upper Midwest. Thirty bull calves were born at the Minnesota West Central Research & Outreach Center in May 2015 and placed on perennial pasture based on forage availability. Steers were slaughtered in 2 groups, 9 weeks apart at an average age and weight of 16 months and 1,036 lbs.

Results

For cover crop differences, beef from steers grazing WW had higher flavor, texture, juiciness, and overall liking, and lower toughness and off-flavor compared to beef from steers grazing WR. For breeds, the NJV steaks had a higher texture and overall liking, and lower toughness and off-flavor compared to steaks from both MVH and HOL. Furthermore, NJV and MVH steaks had higher juiciness than HOL steaks (P < 0.05). The NJV steaks had a higher overall flavor and liking than HOL steaks.

Table 1: Fatty Acid Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FA</th>
<th>WW</th>
<th>HOL</th>
<th>NJV</th>
<th>MVH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omega-3</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omega-6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omega-6/3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight Gain</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The omega-6/3 ratio was higher in HOL back fat compared to NJV and MVH back fat. Although these steers were finished on a forage diet, they received grain during the pre- and post-weaning stages. This may have influenced the higher omega-6/3 ratio in this study than steers fed a no-grain diet throughout their lifetime.

Conclusion

In summary, the NJV steaks were preferred to HOL steaks, with MVH steaks falling in between. To complement this, the steaks from steers grazing WW were preferred to steaks from steers grazing WR. A lower and healthier omega-6/3 ratio was found in HOL back fat compared to NJV and MVH back fat. This may have influenced the higher omega-6/3 ratio in this study than steers fed a no-grain diet throughout their lifetime.

Both cover crop and breed influenced sensory attributes, but omega-6 and omega-3 FAs were only influenced by breed. Fat in the diet is broken down into free FAs in the rumen by microbes and then broken up into long chain fatty acids for deposition in adipose tissue. Differences in omega-6 and omega-3 FAs in back fat for breeds could be due to a number of factors, including differences in rumen microbial ecology and rumen pH.

In this study, the wheat and rye cover crops were ready to graze three weeks earlier than other perennial pastures on the farm. This study not only applies to grazing steers, but to grazing dairy cows as well. By grazing cover crops, we were able to start grazing three weeks earlier in the grazing season and graze the system three times through with about 16 days of rest between grazing periods. Grazing winter wheat and winter rye are both feasible to graze in the early spring and summer.

Hannah Phillips is a graduate student at the University of Minnesota pursuing a master’s degree focused on organic dairy systems. Brad Heins is an associate professor in the Department of Animal Science.
Faced with fewer members, CSAs offer options for shares, deliveries
By Jody Padgham

In the mid-1980s a new idea for making a connection between consumers and local farms came to the United States from Germany, Switzerland and Japan. The Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model created new bonds between eaters and farmers, forming formal partnerships in which the consumers pledged financial support ahead of a season in return for a share of a farm’s production bounty.

The model slowly took hold, and by 1990 there were about 50 CSAs throughout the U.S. Acceptance of the model escalated, and as of 2017 there are estimated to be over 7,300 CSA farms in the country.

In the early years, the task of a farmer was to educate potential consumer members about the model and benefits of CSA. Farms that succeeded capitalized on the desire for eaters to connect to a farm, to understand how their food was grown, to enjoy a diversity of farm products distributed in season, and to commit financially supporting the farm’s success.

While most CSAs saw annual member turnover, throughout the first 25 years long waiting lists and outreach to a willing community allowed farms to keep membership numbers stable or growing. As the CSA model ages, however, and the food climate changes, many long-standing CSAs are struggling to fill annual member quotas. Since 2010 CSA farm numbers have dropped.

A diversity of factors appear to be leading this change. Many cities, rich with educated and food-conscious consumers, are now being served by an abundance of CSAs, both long-established and new, which compete for members. Other non-farm food delivery companies, offering “meal in a box” or custom order delivery, have capitalized on the climate CSAs have created to establish their businesses. Grocery stores, including large national chains, now offer organic food, and may even promote that they support local farms.

Consumers continue to desire ready-to-eat and easy-to-prepare foods. Eaters have other options for fresh food, and may choose to not be “inconvenienced” by the traditional CSA, requiring pre-pay, a weekly box pickup, and bounty of items they may not like or know how to use.

New and even well-established CSAs have noticed these trends and are leading kitchen-table and community conversations about the future of individual CSAs as well as the CSA model. A workshop at the 2017 MOSES Organic Farming Conference, “The Resilient CSA” led by Dan Guenther, Common Harvest Farm in Oscoda, Wis., and Claire Struder, FairShare and University of Wisconsin Extension-Dane County, discussed the trends and solutions being considered by CSA farmers around the Midwest. An open discussion including audience members expanded the diversity of ideas shared.

Innovations on Basic Model

While the first CSAs in the Eastern U.S. started differently, in the Midwest the “traditional CSA” is based on one standard share size, a packed box that provides enough vegetables for 4 people for one week, delivered over an 18- to 22-week season. This appeals to those reluctant to commit to longer periods, or to the sharing of the share to specific members. Each of Wisconsin Extension-Dane County, and Claire Struder, FairShare and University of Wisconsin Extension-Dane County, discussed the trends and solutions being considered by CSA farmers around the Midwest. An open discussion including audience members expanded the diversity of ideas shared.

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Meet and getting to know members, interact makes our CSAs most unique” Dan continued. “We are here to create member connections is something that CSAs offer that can’t be replaced by a food delivery service or big-box grocery. “It is the relationship that we can uniquely offer,” commented Dan Guenthner during his presentation.

Dela Ends, a 23-year CSA farmer. “We had a great discussion about the Charter because it’s about how we think about the CSA movement are encouraging all CSA farmers to make public commitments to the Charter, and uphold the principles and practices it defines. Supporters point out that the Charter provides transparency for members in their relationships with CSA farms. “The Charter reminds CSA growers what CSA is about,” said Dela Ends, a 23-year CSA farmer. Ends led a MOSES Conference roundtable discussion about the Charter which about 25 newer and more experienced CSA farmers attended. “We had a great discussion,” she said. “The newer growers were especially excited to see this set of values all laid out.”

The two points of the Charter allow for a diversity of models for CSA, but focuses on the offering of farm-grown, high-quality products; the fostering of biodiversity and ecological, soil-based systems; a good-faith commitment of members and farmers as co-producers to share financial risks and rewards; member respect and land and farming practices; food safety; fair prices; cooperation; local seeds and breeds; and social inclusiveness.

Farmers are encouraged to publicly endorse the Charter and make copies available from farm websites etc. To view the full Charter, go to http://casaday.infosva-charter.

“The CSA model is unique,” Dan concluded. “We all have the ability to recognize the core principles, but have a lot of freedom to put our own innovations on top, this is one of the rich pieces of the CSA model.”

“Our heart is our strength,” he added. “Many people are looking for these kinds of connections. If we can stay true to the core principles, and communicate from our hearts, we will stay strong.”

Jody Podgahn is the finance director for MOSES and co-author of Fearless Farm Finances, now available in an updated edition at mosesorganic.net.

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**CSA Options — from previous page**

**Delivery Style**

- Workplace CSA. With this very popular option, workers pick up their share boxes as they leave their job. Be sure to set a minimum number of boxes delivered to make it worthwhile. A high-convenience model, it can be hard to maintain loyalty.

- Member-packed. The farmer sets out storage boxes of items, and lists what goes into a share. Members packs their own boxes, overseen by the farmer or a dedicated member. May be modified to allow some member choice, such as “pick two squash” or “choose two bunches of root vegetables” with several varieties to choose from. Items can be skipped if the member doesn’t want something.

- Home delivery. Customers love this, but it adds a lot of time or expense for the farmer.

- Credit-purchase. Members “purchase” a credit with the farm, generally with a 10 percent additional value (i.e., $100 purchase gets $110 worth of product) and “shop” at a farm or market stand. As they choose product, their card value is deducted. It is recommended you set “use-by” dates so members don’t all show up and clean out the stand on your last market day.

- Custom-ordered boxes. Often facilitated by Facebook, members custom order what they want off of a posted availability list. Highly desired by consumers, very intensive management effort, and labor for farmers.

**Member Connections**

As CSA farmers identify what they have that makes their business unique, the importance of member connections rises to the top. The community connection is something that CSAs offer that can’t be replaced by a food delivery service or big-box grocery. “It is the relationship that we can uniquely offer,” comment Dan Guenthner during his MOSES Conference workshop. “This is what distinguishes us from other markets.” He hears a lot of talk about making CSAs more consumer-friendly, but noted that this is a potentially endless pursuit. “If you choose convenience, you will always be competing with the big guys, and most always have very deep pockets.”

“Mutual respect and member trust is what makes our CSAs most unique” Dan continued. “Meeting and getting to know members, interacting and engaging really makes a difference. He added that to succeed, CSA farmers must think of their members as partners. “We are here to create community in the long-term, not to fill up member slots each year.”

Participants in the workshop added a lot of personal experiences to Dan’s comments. Many emphasized how much their members value knowing them as farmers, and connecting to their family. Meeting members in person at drop-offs or farm events is ideal, but a weekly newsletter is also critical to forming often lasting bonds. “Talk about your farm...about what you are thinking or feeling...share 2-3 pictures each time,” suggested various participants. Keep the newsletter short—one to two pages. Many recommended also using social media, such as Facebook or Twitter, or a blog. “My members appreciate a short touch from me two or three times a week,” one claimed.

“Members want to fall in love with you and your farm family,” one farmer explained. “They want that heart connection, to know you and feel like they are a part of the farm.” In each newsletter she shares a quote from “the youngest farm-hand,” something cute one of her two young twins said or did that week. Others recommended regular pictures of the family dog, other farm animals or grandkids. “Telling your story is the key thing keeping you different from the big boxes,” another shared.

Claire Strader said that the bond she creates by being at the pick-up for her “member-pack” delivery sites is invaluable. “We can talk about why there are so few tomatoes,” she said. “Members really want to know, and really care.”

While it can be time-consuming and a challenge to get members out to the farm, all agree that it has great value. Suggestions include pumpkin or raspberry picking, or a pesto party. “Doing community events for 7 years, where kids can hold chicks and (now) pet baby bunnies and lambs, we get 300 people from 300 member families,” one farmer said. “They love the pictures they get.”

“Invest a little so you can give something away, maybe get a keg of local beer or some ice cream,” another recommended. “Lower your expectations,” another conceded. “Invite them all, and if only five come, consider it a success and make it a great day for them.”

Dela and Tony Ends of Scotch Hill Farm have gone to the opposite extreme; they will go to member-invitation events, such as church events or community meals. They’ve had one core group of members from a church over an hour-and-a-half away for many years. “They call us and ask when they can come out to help,” Dela laughs. “A connection to our farm is really important to them.”

Another farmer, living outside a community of only 8,000, spends a lot of time creating awareness of her farm throughout the community, speaking at service groups, making library presentations, donating food for events. “I consider everyone in my community a member, even if they’re not a shareholder,” she said. She recommends you ask yourself, “Who is your community, and how do I bring them in?”

**CSA Charter**

On Feb. 24, 2017—CSA Sign-up Day—a national CSA Partner Charter was inaugurated. Initiated by a group of 40 CSA farmers led by CSA pioneer and author Elizabeth Henderson, the CSA Charter is a set of 12 core principles that provide a clear definition of what Community Supported Agriculture farms are. Elizabeth and others in the CSA movement are encouraging all CSA farmers to make public commitments to the Charter, and uphold the principles and practices it defines. Supporters point out that the Charter provides transparency for members in their relationships with CSA farms.

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Bookstore Roundup

By Eric Hatling, Bookstore Coordinator

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By Vance Corum, Marcie Rosenzweig & Eric Gibbon
2015 | New World Publishing
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Fortier and his wife, Maxide-Helene Desroches, own Les Jardins de la Grelinette, a 1.5-acre, internationally recognized micro-farm in Southern Quebec, Canada. Their success is due to the low-tech, biologically intensive practices they use on their farm, as well as their high degree of organization and ability to prioritize. Their farm is profitable, and their workload manageable—they also manage to balance the responsibilities of farming with their roles as parents of young children.

Several useful appendices offer the reader additional resources for purchasing tools, choosing crops and planning a garden layout. It’s a succinct book, well organized like its author, full of practical ideas and information. It’s a great starting place for new market farmers, especially those with access to only a limited amount of land.

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Inside Organics — from page 3

through the lens of what can be used on the land and livestock and what cannot. I recently attended a training for veterinarians who wanted to learn more about working with organic livestock. Dr. Guy Jodarski and Dr. Hue Karremen not only shared possible natural treatments that can be used in place of synthetics, but described the foundation of organic agriculture—prevention of problems by understanding and working with natural systems. Providing healthy rations, high quality living conditions, exercise, allowing for natural behavior and lessening stress for livestock was taught as the first area where livestock health should be addressed.

In my experience as an organic inspector visiting many organic livestock farms, I consistently received the same answer when I asked farmers about the difference on their farms after their second year of certification. That answer was, “I hardly ever see the vet, especially compared to before I went organic.” This is not the result of substituting approved inputs for those not approved for land and animals. It is a reflection of an integrated system of production focused on building healthy soil biological life, healthy nutritious crops, and a health-promoting environment for their animals.

For those transitioning their crops to organic herbicides and fertilizers—the inputs—must be replaced by more than just approved organic inputs. Instead, farmers tweak their crop rotation, use cover crops, and pay attention to correcting soil nutrient imbalances. It is the foundation of a functioning and elegant organic system that brings long-term success. Understanding the life cycles of weeds, pests and plant diseases gives the producer powerful tools to develop site-specific management plans.

It can be stimulating and fun to learn about and partner with nature on our farms, rather than trying to fight the existing ecosystem with toxic materials that throw everything out of balance and cause many negative consequences. Organic must stay focused on promoting a healthy and integrated management of the farm, rather than replacing organic certification solely to a review of the materials used.

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Vermont herb growers form cooperative to develop reliable markets

By Kristen McPhee

Business is blooming for the herb industry, but growers can find it challenging to access markets. One alternative that is gaining ground is forming a cooperative to source herbs from local, small-scale organic farms and aggregate orders to larger buyers. The Vermont Herb Growers Cooperative (VHGC), which had its first collective harvest last year, can serve as a model for the development of other herb grower cooperatives around the country.

VHGC supports its farmers by developing reliable markets at a scale individual farmers would not be able to serve; providing technical assistance on all aspects of growing, from quality control to cultivar specifications to post-harvest processing techniques; supporting innovation and adoption of tools and technology; and supporting research and development through grants and loans. The VHGC practices and standards ensure that herbs meet a high quality, pharmaceutical grade standard as defined by the FDA. In addition to meeting top quality standards, VHGC’s herbs are grown and processed in accordance with monographs provided by each buyer. Prices are based on cost of production, with the goal of supporting a living-wage to smaller-scale diversified farms.

The cooperative’s roots formed in March 2014 when Pamela Hathaway, general manager of the VHGC, first met Jeff and Melanie Carpenter, owners of Zack Woods Herb Farm and authors of The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer. They immediately recognized they had a common vision for creating an herb growers cooperative. Over the course of nine months, this leadership team recruited advisors in agricultural economics, business, and cooperative development and secured a $19,000 USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant through the Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets. Once the grant was awarded, the team selected key established farmers and convened their first steering committee meeting where they discussed cooperatives as a business model and reviewed the grant timeline goals.

One of the first goals of the grant was to conduct a market and feasibility study. The research considered five aspects: (1) profitability of growing herbs in Vermont, (2) identification of potential markets, (4) capacity of Vermont farmers for herb growing along with the capacity to provide training and technical assistance to farmers and, (5) determining operating costs for the cooperative. The study concluded that farmers in Vermont could profitably grow medicinal herbs with the support of the cooperative’s marketing and technical assistance.

Following the approval of the steering committee, the leadership team moved into the next phase. This phase began with official incorporation as a cooperative in the state of Vermont. Cooperatives are for-profit businesses that rely on members’ one-time equity payment to leverage working capital in the start-up phase of the business. Once the business is generating revenue, the profits are distributed back to its members as a dividend based on the quantity that each farm grows. The equity payment is refunded to members when they leave the cooperative.

The VHGC structure consists of a board, with a president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, and at-large member. The current staff consists of a salaried general manager, and contracted employees for bookkeeping, accounting, website and communications, and warehouse and shipping. Most work occurs from home offices, except for quality assurance and shipping, which took place in the first year at Zack Woods Herb Farm.

A business plan guides the operations of the cooperative, and provides a structure for assessing financial and operating goals and objectives. The acting manager posted an announcement with the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association to gauge farmer interest in growing medicinal herbs for the VHGC, the initial announcement generated many responses, bringing the total of interested farmers to 85. The leadership team developed selection criteria, which included assessing the capacity and readiness of prospective farmers. After a round of emails and surveys, the number was reduced to about a dozen farmers, and then down to the total of eight that are currently the VHGC grower members.

Membership criteria included organic certification, three years of experience marketing and selling certified organic products, capacity to produce greater than $10,000 of marketable material for the cooperative in 2016, having appropriate agricultural equipment, having capital to invest in their own drying structure or convert a pre-existing structure, and having appropriate storage space for dried herbs.

In addition, members are required to pay a one-time equity payment that solidifies their commitment and covers some of the initial start-up costs of the VHGC. The members decide what herbs and quantities they want to grow through a collaborative process after being informed of the buyers’ specifications by the VHGC staff. Members also serve on the board of directors and board committees, including quality assurance, by-law, and finance.

The VHGC’s first harvest and sales occurred during the 2016 growing season. The commission rate was based on the cooperative’s projected annual operating costs and the farmer’s total sales, ensuring that the rate covered the operating expenses of the cooperative. With increased sales, the commission rate for the cooperative will decline, allowing more revenue to go to the farmers. Farmers are also not required to pay a commission rate for the sales to the markets that they share with the cooperative.

This year, members are exploring shared milling facilities. They also are developing a lot tracking system. They will look at the capacity of founding members to meet developed market demand over time to decide when and how to invite new members. Members are actively involved in determining whether to invite more farmers, to contract with non-member growers, or to expand existing contracts—the best response to market demand is decided by discussions with all involved.

Kristen McPhee is a nutritionist and clinical herbalist practitioner in Michigan whose background includes working on and managing sustainable farms.

### Forming Herb Growers Cooperative

These are the stages Vermont growers set to establish their cooperative.

**Stage 1: Define the feasibility, market share/scope, and guiding principles and practices for the cooperative in collaboration with prospective leaders and advisors.** This stage focuses on gathering and analyzing the information needed to establish parameters of the cooperative, and would convene and facilitate a highly experienced group of people to provide knowledge and expertise to inform the establishment and operation of the cooperative.

**Stage 2: Establish governance and technical support structures for the cooperative.** This stage would establish principles for decision making, participation and membership, distribution of benefits—and other elements of the cooperative governance structure, resulting in a new business entity. Additionally, this stage would define the needs and capacity for technical support for cooperative members.

**Stage 3: Launch cooperative and begin doing business.** This stage would establish the institutional support necessary for cooperative operations. Upon completion of this stage, the cooperative would be supporting farmer members in producing and selling medicinal herbs.

**Stage 4: Complete evaluation/documentation of project to glean lessons for cooperative members and to create a model for use by other cooperatives.**
Lawyer explains lessons learned from Hawaii’s GMO controversy

By Sarah E. Korte

Hawaii—that dream vacation destination—has been a battleground in the debate over the role of genetically engineered (GE) plants and pesticides in agriculture. The state’s favorable climate and year-round growing season have made it a go-to site for the testing and development of GE plants. Hawaii’s struggle to legally control GE crops is a good lesson for those working at a local level to control GE crops and related pesticides.

Hawaii’s Situation

Under Hawaii law, the state, the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, and the Hawaii Board of Agriculture work closely with the USDA to regulate GE plants and pesticides. However, Hawaiians felt this system was not doing enough to protect them or the native plant life. They had become concerned about the possible effects of the pesticides used on these GE crops. They had noticed an increase in birth defects on the islands. They were also concerned about possible genetic contamination of the natural flora in a delicate ecosystem the USDA has described as containing “more threatened and endangered species per square mile than any other place on earth.” 1,2

In 2013 and 2014, Hawaiians took matters into their own hands, and passed county ordinances banning and regulating GE plants and pesticides. Hawaii only consists of five counties; three counties passed ordinances: Kauai, Hawaii, and Maui.

After years of litigation, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled last November in three separate decisions that the three ordinances were invalid under federal and state law because of the legal doctrine of “preemption.”

Preemption Doctrine

Other Americans frustrated with the current regulatory system for GE plants and pesticides have also passed county ordinances to try to regulate them locally. Three counties in Oregon have also passed county ordinances to try to regulate plant pests, were expressly preempted by the Plant Protection Act.

Preemption occurs in one of two ways: (1) express preemption, or (2) implied preemption (aka field preemption). Because of express preemption, if a state law conflicts with a federal law, the federal law wins and the state law is invalid. The same goes for state laws versus county ordinances—state law prevails over a conflicting ordinance. For example, if a state has a law such as, “You must drive on the right side of the road,” a county cannot have a law that says, “You must drive on the left side of the road.” Obviously, the county law conflicts with the state law. Under express preemption, the county ordinance loses and is invalid.

Hawaii’s Struggle to legally control GE crops is an example of implied preemption, a state law is preempted if “federal law so thoroughly occupies a legislative field that it is unreasonably to infer that Congress intended for supplemental state or local regulation.” To simplify, when federal laws create a regulatory structure for an area that leaves no role for state laws, any state law that tries to legislate in that area is impliedly preempted.

The same basic framework for implied preemption applies to the preemption of county ordinances by state laws. Obviously, the details can vary from state to state. Under Hawaii’s implied preemption rule, a county ordinance is impliedly preempted by state law if (1) it addresses the same subject as state law, (2) subject is covered by a comprehensive and uniform state statutory scheme, and (3) the state legislature intended for the state’s scheme to be uniform and exclusive.

Challenged Ordinances

On Nov. 16, 2013, Kauai County passed Ordinance 960 into law. Ordinance 960 imposed pre- and post-patent application notification requirements, annual public disclosure of the growing of GMOs, pesticide buffer zones, and required Kauai County to complete a study to address any environmental and public health concerns posed by large-scale users of pesticides and GE crops.

Shortly afterward, five different companies that supply GE seeds and grow a variety of GE plants on Kauai County sued the county in Hawaii federal district court. On Aug. 25, 2014, the district court ruled that Ordinance 960 was preempted by Hawaii state law. Kauai County and its supporters appealed the decision to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Lawyers explained lessons learned from Hawaii’s GMO controversy

Hawaii has faced multiple lawsuits over its attempt to ban GE crops. In 2014, Monsanto Company, sued Maui County in Hawaii federal district court (the Robert Ito Farm lawsuit). The Hawaii federal district court eventually ruled that the Maui GMO Ordinance was invalid and unenforceable because it was preempted by federal law and exceeded the county’s authority. This decision was also appealed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Ruling Explanations

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the district court’s decision in each case, affirming that the three county ordinances were invalid. Because the Maui Ordinance made it unlawful for people to knowingly cultivate or test GE plants within the county, the court held that it was expressly preempted in part by the federal Plant Protection Act. Under the Plant Protection Act, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), a USDA agency, is in charge of regulating plant pests. Most GE plants are regulated by APHIS as plant pests “because nearly all GE plants are created using Agrobacterium, which is a listed plant pest.” This means that under the preemption doctrine, states and local governments cannot regulate GE plants that APHIS is regulating as plant pests. In sum, the court held that the provisions of the Maui GMO Ordinance that banned GE plants that APHIS was regulating as plant pests, were expressly preempted by the Plant Protection Act.

The court went on to decide that the Maui GMO Ordinance was not preempted by the Plant Protection Act to the extent that it regulated any GE plants that APHIS had deregulated and was no longer regulating. In fact, the court stated that engaging in the “open air cultivation, propagation, development, or testing of genetically engineered crops or plants.” This broad ban was narrowed by some exemptions, including for those growing GE papaya and those growing GE plants prior to the enactment of the ordinance.

On June 9, 2014, several entities and individuals sued Hawaii County in Hawaii federal district court. The court ruled for the plaintiffs, finding that Ordinance 13-121 was fully preempted by Hawaii state law and partially preempted by a federal law, the Plant Protection Act. The defendants appealed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. About a year after Kauai and Hawaii counties passed their ordinances, the people of Maui County passed the Maui GMO ordinance. Eight days later, plaintiffs who supported the ordinance filed a lawsuit (the Atay lawsuit) in Hawaii state court asking the court to determine the legality of the ordinance. The next day, plaintiffs who opposed the ordinance, including Robert Ito Farm, Inc., the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, and the Monsanto Company, sued Maui County in Hawaii federal district court (the Robert Ito Farm lawsuit).

The Hawaii federal district court eventually ruled that the Maui GMO Ordinance was invalid and unenforceable because it was preempted by federal law and exceeded the county’s authority. This decision was also appealed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.
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Import Risks — from page 8

“It’s the single biggest risk to credibility in the organic marketplace,” said Ken Dallmier, president and CEO of Clarkson Grain Co. “The system is designed on the basis of credibility, and in the U.S. you have traceability back to an individual producer. Outside of the U.S. we need better traceability.”

Clarkson Grain, based in Cerro Gordo, Ill., is a leading supplier of organic soybeans and corn and has been actively involved in supporting the movement to create a certified transitional label to support farmers’ transition to organic by offering incentives for transition applications. “Increasing incentives for U.S. production and transition into organic drastically reduces the risks to the marketplace,” Dallmier added.

Needs of Farmers

According to the recently published report Breaking New Ground: Farmer Perspectives on Organic Transition, conducted by Oregon State University and Oregon Tilth, incentives to help producers transition from conventional to organic farming could take on a number of different shapes and forms, from education on best organic production practices and help with required paperwork, to premiums paid for transitional products, long-term contracts, and guaranteed pricing. While these practical supports can certainly lighten the farmer’s load and reduce risk during transition, understanding the motivations of organic farmers speaks to the real issue at heart.

The report asked transitioning farmers what initially moved them to consider organic farming and provided survey recipients with a list of reasons including “market/profit” and “values-based” motivations, such as family values, concerns about the environment or human health, and farm sustainability. Interestingly enough, farmers ranked these values-based responses much higher (over 90 percent) than market/profit motivations (70.8 percent to just 34.9 percent depending on the reason), suggesting that, while increased profit and viability of the farm contributed to their motivation to transition, the key drivers for transition were values-based.

U.S. food processors who have become reliant on imported products that could be produced domestically may inadvertently be putting not only their own company’s future at risk, but potentially the entire U.S. organic product marketplace.

A concerted effort needs to be made by buyers of imported organic products, particularly those purchasing soybeans and corn for feed, to develop programs to identify and support farmers who are motivated to transition to organic production. The end result would not only be a more reliable supply of organic grain and other row crops, but also one that works in the beginning of a much larger transformation of chemical-based agricultural practices to those that are environmentally sustainable, profitable and match the values of American family farmers.

Peter Golbiz has been active in the soybean, oilseed and organic products industry for more than 30 years and is CEO and President of Agromax, a consulting firm that advises companies and organizations looking to build sustainable and strategic supply chains in specialty ingredient, food and agricultural markets.

Long-Term Care Plan — from page 15

Also, ponder this: The last asset to be sold, mortgage and regulated acreage, is the farming heir’s property because it is so prized. If the on-farm heir gets the farmland and the non-farm heirs get bank and investment accounts, it could be that the non-farming heir gets disinherited or gets very little if the long-term costs are high. If your very top goal is to provide some inheritance to all of your heirs, then your strategy should implement that goal, even if it means some of the farmland will have to be sold. You might not be able to meet all of your goals for the future of your farm.

It’s always important to communicate early and often about your goals and plans—it’s doubly important if the heirs are not getting financially equal shares. If you have not communicated your top goal to provide farmland for your farming heir to farm, for example, you are leaving that farming heir to justify your decisions when you are gone.

Careful and early planning will make it more likely that you can keep the farm in the family, pay for end-of-life care, and provide an inheritance to non-farming heirs. Unfortunately, something despite the best planning, a long nursing home stay or a prolonged illness may mean selling some of the farm.

My parents own Iowa farmland, but there are no longer relatives working that farm. In my mind, the best use of the farmland would be to pay for their care, if need be. As important as the farmland is for my family legacy, they are much more important.

Working through how you will pay for end-of-life care is very complicated, and that’s why you shouldn’t try to do it alone. Get professional help—it will help you avoid financial and emotional costs later on.

Teresa Ophel is a Senior Fellow at Renewing the Countryside and the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture. This article is dedicated to Connie’s sister, Marlys Berck, who died April 12, 2017.

GMO Controversy — from page 14

states and local governments could regulate any GE plants that were deregulated by APHIS without running afoul of the Plant Protection Act.

However, this did not mean that the Ninth Circuit sawed portions of the Maui GMO Ordinance. The court held that those parts of the ordinance that were not expressly preempted by the Plant Protection Act were impliedly preempted by Hawaii state law.

Hawaii has a very thorough and comprehensive regime for regulating “restricted” or “noxious” plants that can impact “the agricultural, horticultural, aquacultural, or livestock industry of the State … .” The court determined that Hawaii’s legislature had intended the state’s regulation of potentially harmful plant pests to be free of supplemental regulatory rules from Hawaii’s counties. The Maui GMO Ordinance tried to regulate GE plants as potentially harmful and noninvasive plant pests, thus butting directly into the territory of the Hawaii state regulatory system. Therefore, the Maui GMO Ordinance was impliedly preempted.

Kauai County’s Ordinance 960 regulated pests by requiring pesticide application notifications and buffer zones, which the Ninth Circuit ruled was preempted by the Hawaii Pesticides Law. This law gives the Hawaii State Board of Agriculture the power to regulate pesticides and gives the Hawaii Department of Agriculture the power to enact rules to carry out the Hawaii Pesticides Law. To put it simply, the court determined that the pesticide regulation “field of law” was already comprehensively occupied by the laws of the state of Hawaii, and that the county ordinance was preempted and invalid.

Future Ordinances

If a county ordinance attempts to regulate or ban GE crops or pesticides in any way that is already controlled by a state law or a federal statute, the ordinance is likely to be declared invalid by a court. People must either pass county ordinances that fill some gap in state law or federal statutes regulating GE crops and pesticides, or they must change the state and federal statutes.

Preemption serves a very important and necessary role. It prevents our country from developing a hodgepodge of different laws across counties or across states. Just imagine how difficult it would be for farmers to comply with different county ordinances banning and regulating different field applications and different crops.

These county ordinances were not struck down because “Big Ag” brought “Big Money” to the table to buy a legal victory; they were struck down because of a traditional and valuable structure of law. Preemption is a powerful and common-sense way to organize our laws. Understanding the preemption doctrine provides a context for why these Hawaii ordinances were defeated that goes deeper than the debate over GMOs and pesticides.

A former dairy farmer, Sarah E. Korte practices civil litigation in Minneapolis at Foley & Mansfield, PLLP. You may contact her at skorte@foleymansfield.com.

Additional Resources

Join the new Farm Transitions Discussion Group: www.renewingthecountryside.org/farm_transitions or contact eli@rtcinfo.org

Free book on farmland legacy planning: peoplescompany.com/company/farm-succession-planning

Info on a variety of topics: farmttransitions.org

Estate planning factsheets, including end of life care: www.extension.umn.edu/education/business/farm-transfer-estate-planning

Talking for government on long-term care, Medicare and Medicaid: ongtermcare.acl.gov

To reach Attorney Rachel Dahl: Hellmuth & Johnson, rdahl@hjlawfirm.com or 952-746-2155.
Farmer of Year Nominations

The nomination period is open for the 2018 MOSES Organic Farmer of the Year. The award recognizes a Midwest certified organic farmer or farm family for practicing outstanding land stewardship, innovation and outreach. It will be presented at the 2018 MOSES Organic Farming Conference Feb. 22-24 in La Crosse, Wis. The nomination form is online at mosesorganic.org/organic-farmer-of-the-year. Deadline for nominations is Sept. 15, 2017.

No Chemical Spray Signs

MOSES has new No Chemical Spray signs that are 18” wide by 23” high. Two signs come with one order. They are attached at the top to be folded over and used as one two-sided sign mounted on a T-post, or cut apart and used as two separate signs. They have pre-drilled holes in the middle top and bottom for mounting. The cost is $15/pair. Signs can be ordered through the MOSES online bookstore at mosesorganic.net, or by calling the MOSES office at 715-778-5775.

Beginning Farmer Training

MOSES and Reawakening the Country-side host two weekend trainings for beginning farmers in Iowa, Nov. 10-12 and Illinois, Dec. 8-10. The trainings will cover farm business planning, land access and funding sources; effective market- ing and farm resiliency; and organic growing practices, soil health, food safety, and much more. A one-day “Fearless Farm Finances” workshop, which is open to the public, takes place the Friday before each event. Scholarships will be available. Registration opens in September. For details, see www.newfarmerum.org.

Farm Production Recordkeeping Workbook

MOSES has created a workbook with record-keeping forms both for crop insurance and organic certification. For crop insurance, these forms can help you prove your production activities were sufficient to produce a crop in order to receive a payment due to losses caused by weather or market issues. You may also use the forms to verify compliance with the organic rules for your organic inspection. The forms are posted online individually or included in the workbook, which is available free to download at mosesorganic.org/farm-finances/crop-insurance. You may call the MOSES office at 715-778-5775 to request a printed copy.

MOSES Staff Changes

Eric Hatling, the Bookstore and Advertising Coordinator for MOSES, retires at the end of this month. He has been with MOSES for almost 10 years, and has filled the office with good humor and little-known facts. He plans to fill his retirement with music, hiking, gardening, painting and other creative pursuits.

Carly Stephenson recently left MOSES to work full time on her Western Wisconsin farm raising pastured pigs and chickens, which she sells at local farmers markets and online at www.willothewindsfarm.com.

Bailey Webster has joined our staff as the Events Coordinator, and will be responsible for our summer field day schedule and workshops at the MOSES Conference, which she has attended yearly since 2012.

Dave Engel Memorial Scholarship

Dave Engel, a Wisconsin organic farmer and titan in the organic world, passed away March 14. His family and MOSES have established a scholars-ship fund in Dave’s name to send farmers to the annual MOSES Organic Farming Conference, which Dave helped establish. Contributions to the fund can be made online at mosesorganic.org/donate or mailed to MOSES, PO Box 339, Spring Valley, WI 54767. Please note that you are donat- ing to the David Engel Memorial Scholarship.

Organic & Non-GMO Forum

The Organic & Non-GMO Forum: Oilseeds & Grains at the Crossroads takes place Nov. 6-7, 2017 in St. Louis. This event brings together producers, handlers, buyers and processors to address the challenges of meeting the growing demand for organic and non-GMO products, plus emerging opportunities for specialty production. Sessions cover the latest information regarding opportunities for producers while addressing processors’ production needs. Tickets are $799, but farmers in the MOSES community may use the following discounts: producers with more than 5,000 acres under organic or transitional produc- tion use the code MOSES to reduce registration to $650; those with fewer than 5,000 acres use code ORGFARMER to reduce registration to $499.

Certified Transitional Program Revision

Earlier this year, the Organic Trade Association and USDA announced a new National Certified Transitional Program to guide farmers through the transition to certified organic production. While there are other transitional certifications, such as Kush’s, this new government-sanctioned program was designed to provide uniform certification standards as well provide funding under the national organic certification cost share program. The initial program did not include a proposal for a retail label.

The Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA) challenged this new program on the basis that there was no authority within the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 for trans-itional certification and labeling. WODPA cited concerns about the economic impacts on certified organic producers and the demand for organic products.

In response, the USDA has suspended this new transitional certification program and the related cost-share program, pending review. Learn more at www.wodpa.com.

Certification Cost Share Program

Farmers in Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin can access Organic Certification Cost Share either through their state departments of ag or their county FSA office. Farmers in other Midwest states will find cost share program assistance only through FSA offices. The application period for farmers and handlers to apply for certification reimbursements began March 20, 2017; interested applicants can apply until October 31, 2017 – though the applica- tion period will end earlier if funds are no longer available.

Free Admission to MOSES Conference

You could win a free pass to the 2018 MOSES Organic Farming Conference if you enter and win the program cover photo contest—even if you don’t win the coveted spot on the program, you’ll still get recognition for your amazing farm when we show your photo before the keynote. You also give MOSES authentic farm photos to use to promote organic farming. Farms must be certified or transitioning to organic. See mosesorganic.org/conference/photo-contest.

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Animal Welfare Rule
The Trump administration has added a 6-month delay to the finalized animal welfare rule and is asking again for public comment to decide whether to 1. implement in November; 2. suspend indefinitely; 3. delay further; 4. withdraw altogether. The last issue of the Organic Broadcaster included an article about the value of the updated rule (see March/April page 7 or https://moosesorganic.org/animal-welfare-rule. Comment at www.regulations.gov/document/D=AMS-NOP-17-0031-0002.

MOSES 2017 Drawing Winner
The winner of the $50 Visa gift card in the drawing from the MOSES Conference evaluations is Sam Knapp of Root Cellar Farm in Toivola, Mich. Knapp, who is currently an AmeriCorps VISTA on the Menominee reservation near Shawano, Wis., was selected at random from the pool of people who completed conference evaluations through the online system. Congratulations Sam, and best wishes with your farm projects!

Teaching Abroad Opportunities for Farmers
Twin Cities-based Land O'Lakes sponsors the US Agency for International Development's Farmer to Farmer (F2F) Program to encourage sustainable farming in the developing world. Currently, Land O'Lakes has volunteer opportunities in Egypt and Lebanon—both are two week assignments. The assignment in Egypt focuses on organic forages in farming in the developing world. In Egypt, the assignment in Lebanon focuses on mycorrhizal technology in fruit tree nurseries. Volunteers are needed for both assignments as soon as possible. Travel expenses and arrangements are taken care of by Land O'Lakes. For information, see bit.ly/F2Ffarmer.

NSAC Oral History
The University of Minnesota’s Enrolled Chair in Agricultural Systems, Ron Kroeze, is creating an oral history project documenting the formation and evolution of what today is known as the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC). The interviewees also talk about the federal policy reforms NSAC members and allies have achieved over the last three decades. To date, the archive includes 21 video interviews, with written transcripts. They are available online at www.missu.umn.edu/publications/sustainableagoralhistoryarchive.

Industrial Hemp Pilot Programs
North Dakota and Minnesota departments of agriculture both have pilot programs for farms to grow industrial hemp. North Dakota recently announced that 35 proposals have been approved for a total of 3,064 acres in 17 counties. These acres will be used for research into seed conditioning, variety trials, planting dates, grain and fiber production and processing, soil compaction and improvement, organic growth, fiber for animal bedding, pollinators, and marketing. Minnesota has 42 pilot applications with 2,200 acres. In 2016, there were 6 pilot participants in the MDHA’s pilot program. Approximately 40 acres of hemp were harvested last year in Minnesota for the first time since the 1950s.

Oregon Processor Acquisition
The Andersons, Inc., a diversified agribusiness, recently acquired Purity Foods Inc., a Michigan-based processor of organic and conventional ancient grains. The acquisition is part of The Andersons’ strategy to expand its business beyond food grain oats, corn, soybeans, and wheat into more specialized food ingredients.

Minnesota Food Association
Minnesota Food Association is now a program of The Food Group, a Minnesota-based hunger relief nonprofit. Minnesota Food Association operates a certified organic farm and the Big River Farms food hub to provide education and support for immigrant and minority farmers starting independent small farm businesses.

CSA Webinar
Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) hosts a webinar June 9 at 2 p.m. on innovative CSA business strategies. Presenters are Debra Tropp from the USDA, and Timothy Woods from the University of Kentucky. To register, see www.fundafarmer.org/webinar.

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119-acre farm for sale in Marion, WI. Buildings include house, barn, machine shop, shop and corn crib. 80 acres tillable; 39 acres pasture/timber. 55 acres certified organic, the rest is in transition. Good soils and excellent deer hunting. If interested, please leave a message: 319-471-9918.

FORAGE

For Sale: Organic oats, corn, hay and straw, big bales, can deliver. SW Wis. 608-574-2160.

Certified Organic Dry Hay For Sale: 3x3x8 medium squares, 3rd cutting 2016 Alfalfa. No rain, good quality, tarped, negotiable price. 188RFP can send test results. Casstelton, ND. Contact Kyle, 701-730-1730.

For Sale: Certified organic dairy alfalfa – excellent quality baleage, 5’ x 5.5’ round bales, test available. Robert Kees, Durand, Wis, 715-495-9387.

MAKE AN OFFER: Certified Organic tested large squares/large rounds. Some wrapped and some dry. We can help load and deliver, Bill Larson, 608-314-6062 or lars1253@me.com.

GRIANS

For Sale - Organic Non-GMO Yellow Corn. 2016 Crop, Blue River Hybrids PureMaize Variety (Hybrids GMO Pollen), 3400 Bu., $12.50/BU. Phone: 605-760-3890; Email: mathagman@hotmail.com; NOP Certified W/Canadian Equivalency by OCIA.

For Sale: Organic oats, corn, hay and straw, big bales, can deliver. SW Wis. 608-574-2160.

Organic High Moisture Corn for sale in the fall. Delivery possible. 20,000 bu available. Looking for commitments. Osceola Wis, 715-294-3104, email: crystalbalffarms@yahoo.com.


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Cold-hardy fruit trees for sale, spring and fall. 80+ varieties of apples, pears, plums, quince, elderberry, gooseberries, currants, mulberry and more. Ships from Fredonia, Wisconsin. Elderflowerorchards.com or call Adrian 414-779-0661.

Organic FISH FERTILIZER 15-1-1, 100% dry water soluble, 5-7 times more nutritious than liquid fish. Will not clog drip irrigation. One lb, 5 lb or 55 lb. packaging, can be shipped UPS. Frommelt Ag Service, Greeley, IA, 563-930-3674.

For Sale: Tempered, insulated, double-pane glass. Large panels for sunrooms, solar homes, ag buildings, greenhouses or ???. One hundred fifty thousand sold since 1979: “30” x “74” x “1” double-pane only $59.00. Arctic Glass, www.kissourglass.com. 715-639-3762 or joseph429@gmail.com.


CW Farm Tax and Accounting. We specialize in bookkeeping, payroll, tax planning and preparation, annual and quarterly financial reports, and business planning. Bloomer, WI 715-568-9880.

OPPORTUNITIES


Now Hiring: One well-rounded, creative individual to join our team as our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Coordinator. If you have experience with customer service, interest in organic vegetables and are detail oriented, we may be a match. Position includes customer service, data entry, social media, promotions and more! Visit the “Opportunities” page on our website: www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com.

New ads posted daily online:
- Equipment
- Farms/Land
- Grain
- Livestock
- More

mosesorganic.org/farming/organic-classifieds

LILLSTON

Effective Weed Controller. Mulcher, Aerator, Inoculator ALL IN ONE MACHINE. Reduce Your Weed Pressure In Your Crops With The Lillston Rolling Cultivator

S & D Sales
24185 45th Avenue
Cedy, WI 54727

715-289-4866
Caravan Field Day: Grazing Cover Crops
May 30 | Noon-3 p.m. | free | Sioux Center, Iowa
Caravan to each stop and learn more about spring grazing and a range of cover crop issues. Practical Farmers of Iowa: 515-322-5649

Comprehensive Elderberry Workshop & Field Tour
May 31-June 2 | Jefferson City, Mo.
The Midwest Elderberry Cooperative presents a two-day workshop on all aspects of elderberry production. Chris Patton: 612-418-4626

Webinar: Using Fire and Grazing to Maintain Productive and Ecologically Resilient Grasslands
June 1 | 1 - 2 p.m. EDT | free | Online
Learn about the effects of grazing and fire on grassland wildlife and opportunities to manage grazing lands to accomplish production and wildlife goals. Find details at mosesorganic.org/community.

Webinar: Aphids, Scales, and White Flies
June 2 | 1 - 2 p.m. CDT | free | Online
Learn to identify and properly apply IPM techniques using practical, cultural practices to reduce the pressure from these insect pests. Find details at mosesorganic.org/community.

Farm Dreams
June 5 | 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. | $20 | Online
An annual workshop series for aspiring farmers to see what it would take to start your own farm business. The Land Connection: 217-840-2128

Webinar: Results of a National Transition to Organic Survey
June 6 | 2 p.m. | free | Online
Join this webinar to learn about the motivations, needs, and challenges of transitioning to organic. Find details at mosesorganic.org/community.

Webinar: Business Strategies to Enhance your Farm’s CSA Program
June 9 | 2 p.m. | free | Online
Learn innovative approaches that can make your CSA program a better experience for your customers and more profitable for you. Find details at mosesorganic.org/community.

Midwest Women’s Herbal Conference
June 9-11 | $55 | Almond, Wis.
Along with the herbal education and personal growth workshops women enjoy dance and body movement opportunities, singing, and nature walks. Midwest Women’s Herbalfestival: 920-452-4372

Webinar: Improving Soil Health on Urban Farms
June 13 | 1 p.m. | free | Online
See how the principles of a Soil Health Management System are implemented on a 3.5 acre urban farm growing mixed vegetables, and it will emphasize practical lessons that enhance the microbial life in the soil. Find details at mosesorganic.org/community.

Midwest Farm Energy Conference
June 13-14 | $30-580 | Morris, Minn.
This conference will highlight energy efficient systems for Midwest dairies and swine production systems. Michael Reese: 320-589-1711

Manage Your Grazed Woodlands
June 16-17 | $40-550 | Fort Ripley and Brainerd, Minn.
The U of MN Extension, Happy Dancing Turtle, and Crow Wing River Forage Council are sponsoring this silvopasture workshop, walk, and tour. Diommy Zamora: 612-626-9272

Renewable Energy Fair
June 16-18 | $5 | Cutter, Wis.
Vendors and talks on clean energy and sustainability. Midwest Renewable Energy Association: 715-592-6595

Herb Field Day
June 24 | 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. | Hutchinson, Minn.
The SFA Herb Project presents Connie Kastens on growing and marketing herbs in Minnesota. Sustainable Farming Association: 844-922-5573

Beekeeping: Assessing Honey in the Hive
June 25 | 1-4 p.m. | $35 | North Branch, Minn.
View a monthly hive inspection, assess honey stores, and learn about how bees turn nectar into honey. WEI: 651-583-0705

Agroforestry Conference
June 27-29 | $325 | Blacksburg, Va.
For agroforestry producers, researchers, educators and those involved with related work in the fields of permaculture and agroecology. Virginia Tech: 540-231-0790

Webinar: Can I use this Picture: Media Law
June 28 | Noon - 1 p.m. | free | Online
Review the legal use of image copyright and provide sources where you can find free or low cost images. Find details at mosesorganic.org/community.

Small Grains & Pork Production
June 29 | TBD | free | New Hampton, Iowa
MOSES-sponsored field day with Practical Farmers of Iowa – see page 7.

International Bison Conference
July 8-14 | $325-500 | Big Sky, Mont.
National Bison Association: 303-292-2833

Composting with Purpose Field Day
July 8 | 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. | $70-580 | West Bend, Wis.
See how to use a fast, hot fermentation, biodynamic compost method with animal manures. Michael Fields Agricultural Institute: 262-642-3303

Permaculture Design Certificate Course
July 8-16 | $55 | Fountain City, Wis.
Wayne Weiseman, long-time Permaculture designer, teacher and co-author of Integrated Forest Gardening. Kinston: 608-687-3332

The Art of the Entrepreneur Workshop
July 11 | 5:30 - 8 p.m. | Little Falls, Minn.
Artists and growers as small business entrepreneurs are invited to attend free educational workshops to build their business profi tability and capacity. Sprout Growers and Makers Marketplace: 218-851-6691

Cottage Food Producer Advanced Food Safety
July 12 | 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. | $35 | Minneapolis, Minn.
Learn how to safely produce, package and label food. Suzanne: 320-203-6057

In Her Boots: Grass-Fed Beef & Dairy in a Diversified System
July 12 | 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. | free | Jefferson, Wis.
MOSES field day – See page 7.

Webinar: Email Newsletters - Tips and Tools
July 12 | 1-2 p.m. | free | Online
Learn the nuts and bolts of developing a newsletter. Find details at mosesorganic.org/community.

Slow Foods Nation Conference
July 14-16 | $ | Denver, Colo.
Workshops, seminars, dinners, tours, informal eating and drinking, and a taste marketplace. Slow Food USA: 718-260-8000

Solar/Wind Field Day
July 15 | 1-5 p.m. | Kerkhoven, Minn.
Pastures A Plenty Company and the Boike family host this solar/wind field day. Contact the Van Der Pols at 320-367-2061 or Boikes at 320-367-2767.

Can Pigs be Part of Regenerative Agriculture Equation?
July 15 | 2-5 p.m. | La Plata, Mo.
Learn how to expand annual forages and grass consumption in swine.

John Arluckke: singingprairie@gmail.com; 660-988-8551

Pasture for Grass-Fed Pork and Beef
July 17 | 1-4:30 p.m. | free | Kiel, Wis.
MOSES field day – See page 7.

Give Peas a Chance
July 18 | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. | free | NDSU Carrington Research Extension Center | Carrington, ND
MOSES field day – See page 7.

Diversified Organic Rotations
July 21 | 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. | free | Ridgeway, Wis.
MOSES field day – See page 7.

Beekeeping: Mite Control
July 23 | $35 | 1 - 4 p.m. | North Branch, Minn.
Methods of testing and treating for mites will be demonstrated in this course.

Women’s Environmental Institute: 651-583-0705

Farm Dreams Workshop
July 23 | 520-540 | 1 - 5 p.m. | Minneapolis
Clarity what motivates you to farm, get your vision on paper, inventory strengths and training needs and get perspective from an experienced farmer. Dori Eder: 612-578-4497

Artisanal Grain Production
July 24 | 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. | Pecatonica, Ill.
MOSES field day – See page 7.

FEATURED KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Dr. Christine Jones
Ground cover and soil ecologist, founder, Amazing Carbon

Dr. Arden Andersen
Physician, agriculture consultant, author

Professor Don Huber
Researcher, soil minerals/plant disease specialist

OTHER EXPERT SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Mark Shepard
John Kempf
Reginald Hassell-Marcom
Michael Phillips
And many more Eco-Ag thought leaders

Learn more at www.acresusa.com/events