Local farmer gets scholarship to learn about growing organic produce in hoop houses

LA CROSSE, WI – Farmer Lindsey Baris of Rising Sun Farm and Orchard near River Falls has received a scholarship to attend an “Organic University” class at the MOSES Organic Farming Conference next month in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The conference, organized by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES), is the country’s largest educational event focused on organic farming.

Baris will participate in the class “Manage Your High Tunnels for Long-Term Success,” taught by researchers from the University of Minnesota and the University of Kansas plus an experienced organic grower from Minnesota. High tunnels are large, unheated, plastic hoop houses. The class is designed to help experienced high tunnel growers, like Baris, learn organic management strategies for improved soil health, nutrient management, and pest control.

“We currently have two large unheated hoop houses where we grow the majority of our tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and kale,” Baris said. “We are grateful for this opportunity to learn and continue our education as farmers.”

Rising Sun Farm is a certified organic, diversified family farm located between River Falls and Hudson that grows organic vegetables for restaurants and grocery stores in the area. The 40-acre farm was started in 1974 by Roger Browne and is run now by his son, Ryan Browne, and Baris, who is Ryan’s wife. In addition to organic vegetables, the farm produces pastured pork, lamb, chicken, maple syrup, and a variety of value-added products. The farm’s organic apple orchard is open for families to pick their own apples in September and October. The website, www.risingsunfarmandorchard.com, shows what’s available throughout the year on the farm.

The MOSES Organic Farming Conference features 60 workshops on organic farming topics, 10 full-day classes, a two-floor trade show, organic meals, and more opportunities for farmers to learn and network. More than 2,800 people are expected at the conference. See mosesorganic.org/conference for registration information, workshop descriptions, and more details.

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