Farmer finds organic certification opens doors

By Mary Maier-Abel

Change comes to us all. Sometimes slowly, purposefully, and gradually. Sometimes quickly, suddenly and unexpectedly. But one thing is certain, change comes. An event can be a precipice, and life afterwards takes on a different shape and meaning.

That is what is happening for us here at Blooming Hill Farm. What was the precipice event that started all this change? Organic certification. We became certified in September 2012. It has opened up opportunities that we never expected: access to better markets, requests to farm neighboring fields, and appreciative new customers who would not be our customers without it.

Many people in the sustainable farming community are at the same place we were a few years ago, farming using organic practices and marketing under sustainable, natural, or no-chemical labels. Like we did, they believe that organic certification is too cumbersome, expensive and of little benefit to their operation. They wonder, “Is there really that much to be gained for all the efforts needed for that piece of paper?”

My husband, Steve, and I had that same mindset. We were growing with organic practices, marketing our products as chemical-free and not seeing any need for the extra effort of certification. They wonder, “Is there really that much to be gained for all the efforts needed for that piece of paper?”

The push toward certification finally came in the fall of 2011. That season ended with an abundance of carrots for our farm. We had done something right, and we had lots of carrots—more than we had intended, more than we could sell. Our small local co-op bought as many as they could. We sold as much as we could at farmers’ markets, and we prepared storage for what we couldn’t sell right away. We still had too many carrots.

Prevention only ‘cure’ for deadly, new swine virus

By Tracy Harper

The first cases of a new swine disease, Porcine Endemic Diarrhea Virus (PEDV), were reported in the United States in May 2013. Deadly for over 90% of piglets infected in their first 10 days of life, it is estimated that up to 3 million pigs already have been lost to PEDV. Twenty-five states, including all in the Midwest, and over 4,100 farms have reported cases (National Animal Health Laboratory, March 2014). This very deadly and fast-moving disease is hitting conventional hog farms hard. Without a vaccine or other successful treatment, prevention currently is the only cure.

Smaller-scale organic farms have not reported significant losses to the disease, but there is no guarantee the disease won’t hit here, too.

Maintaining overall health in any animal is dependent on two factors: the strength of the animal’s immune system and the amount of pathogens in the animal’s environment. The goal of every producer should be to find ways to build and support the animal’s immune system, while reducing the level of harmful bacteria, viruses and fungi in the animal’s environment.

Thoughtful planning yields perennial crop of blue fruits

By Jim Riddle and Joyce Ford

Blue fruits (blueberries, black currants, elderberries, aronia, and honeyberries) are quite popular in Europe, and are gaining popularity in the U.S. These berries are great additions to the diversified market farm, and, with thoughtful planning, will produce for many years.

We grow many varieties of blue fruits on our farm near Winona, Minn. We chose these flavorful berries for their health benefits. They are all high in antioxidants, especially aronia berries, which have 4 to 10 times the antioxidants of blueberries. Elderberries have anti-viral properties, may help prevent cancer, and are loaded with quercetin, a flavonoid that’s critical for brain health. Black currants have four times the vitamin C of citrus. But the real advantage for us is that they are perennials.

Site Selection and Preparation

When planting perennial fruiting shrubs, it is critical that you choose a site that is well suited to the crops. Preparing the site prior to planting will help provide nutrients and weed control for years to come. These shrubs, if properly managed, will produce for 50 years or more. Time spent on the front end will pay off in the long run.

Choose a site with well-drained soils, preferably with medium to high organic matter content.

Choose a sunny location with good air flow. Soil pH should be around 5.5-5.8 for blueberries. The other fruits tolerate a wider pH range, from 5.5 to 6.8.

A high fence prevents deer from devouring the plants at Blue Fruit Farm in Winona, Minn.

Photo by Jim Riddle

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To Certification Opens Doors on page 19

To Swine Virus on page 10
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MOSES’ mission is to educate • inspire • empower farmers to thrive in a sustainable, organic system of agriculture.

Notes from the Executive Director’s Desk

Over 3,400 people prepared for the growing season by attending the 25th MOSES Organic Farming Conference this winter. We offer a recap on page 17. It was inspiring to see many younger people there who are excited about farming. I’m proud that the MOSES Conference, with its mix of education and inspiration, is helping change the way America farms.

New farmers had the chance to tap into some of that knowledge at a mini-conference last month. Just over 150 people attended the New Farmer Summit. The summit was designed to be small and hands-on to give new farmers a chance to get their questions answered. We know how important it is for new farmers to make connections, find resources, and get information so they can break into farming and be successful at it. This summit offered all of that, and the response was an enthusiastic thumbs up from all who participated.

Now at MOSES, we're gearing up for a new season of field days. The tentative schedule is on page 11. I recall attending a great field day a couple of years ago at Jim Riddle and Joyce Ford’s “Blue Fruit Farm.” I learned so much in that short afternoon. I learned even more from reading their article on the front page. Thanks Jim and Joyce for sharing your insights on growing these healthful fruits.

Elsewhere in this information-packed publication, you’ll find stories to help you choose an irrigation system, manage your first farmers’ market, and protect your hogs from the PED virus—I was shocked to learn that the virus was found on every convenience store floor tested! And, I actually stood up with my hand over my heart when I finished reading Mary Maier-Abel’s piece on what organic certification has meant for her farm—now that’s inspiring.

I smiled when I heard on National Public Radio that FFA appeals to a broader base of students who are interested in organic and urban agriculture. Times are changing and the idea of what a farmer is has changed. Farms are different now than just 20 years ago, and they will continue to change like everything in our lives. Growing on a vacant city lot or rooftop, growing for CSAs and farmers’ markets, growing thousands of acres of grain—one is not better than another, only different. There needs to be room for all types of sustainable and organic farming for the future of healthy food to thrive. Our Organic Specialist Harriet Behar digs into this topic in her Inside Organics column on the next page.

No matter what size your operation is, you can rely on MOSES to help you succeed using organic and sustainable farming practices. When you have a question, call our Organic Answer Line (715-778-5775 or 888-551-4769) and talk to our specialists. They also answer questions submitted online at mosesorganic.org/ask. And, while you’re on our website, please browse around—you’ll see it’s packed with farming insights and resources to help you grow. That’s why MOSES is here—to help you thrive in sustainable, organic production.

Wishing you all productive planting season—

Faye Jones
MOSES Executive Director

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I also visited smaller family-sized operations that were just skimming the edge of meeting the organic regulations. The only commitment to organic was to gain that organic premium with a minimum of change to their conventional mindset or activities. Size or scale is not the issue—all types and sizes of operations should be held accountable to the foundational organic principles.

By and large, though, family-scale farms around the world are the heart of organic agriculture. These farmers have an emotional connection to the land and the animals they steward. They have turned to organic production or maintained an organic system because of this connection and their sense of responsibility to manage the resources entrusted to them in ways that respect rather than exploit them.

We want more organic production here in the U.S. We want the benefits organic provides, both to the environment and to farmers and consumers. With large retailers promising to stock shelves with organic products at prices that are 25 percent less than consumers are accustomed to paying, we need the economies of scale provided by bigger systems to compete with cheaper imported products.

The assumption that large organic farms or businesses will behave the same as conventional “Big Ag” is a false one. When I was a full-time organic inspector, I visited large, corporate-run farms and businesses that were stellar organic stewards, meeting both the letter and spirit of the organic law. Many times, the larger operations have the capital, infrastructure and labor to implement a smoothly functioning organic system. They have the extra incentive to “do things right” because they have made a significant investment upon entering the organic marketplace, and they do not want to fail.

I also visited smaller family-sized operations that were just skimming the edge of meeting the organic regulations. The only commitment to organic was to gain that organic premium with a minimum of change to their conventional mindset or activities. Size or scale is not the issue—all types and sizes of operations should be held accountable to the foundational organic principles.

As organic production in this country grows, we need to maintain the integrity of business interactions between all players. People working the land or raising the livestock need to be paid a fair price. Organic agriculture has helped smaller family-scale farms be economically sustainable, while many conventional family farms have succumbed to the pressures of Big Ag and the commodity-and-livestock-price roller coaster.

We all know the problems associated with Big Ag and its focus on cheap food and higher profits. Exploitation is inherent in that system. The organic premium has helped smaller family-scale farms be economically sustainable, while many conventional family farms have succumbed to the pressures of Big Ag and the commodity-and-livestock-price roller coaster.

On the production side, the organic market community faces a number of challenges. We need to maintain the integrity of business interactions between all players, including producers, distributors, processors and retailers. People working the land or raising the livestock need to be paid a fair price. The organic premium has helped smaller family-scale farms be economically sustainable, while many conventional family farms have succumbed to the pressures of Big Ag and the commodity-and-livestock-price roller coaster.

A diverse production, marketing and distribution system is as important as a diverse crop rotation for long-term sustainability. That diverse system has room for direct-to-consumer market channels, aggregated systems that pool the production of smaller farms, and large corporations.

The real challenge we face in domestic organic agricultural production is not scale. Rather, it is maintaining the integrity of organic as we grow—integrity in the organic standards and in the relationships along the supply chain.

Harriet Behar is a MOSES Organic Specialist. She represents MOSES in the National Organic Coalition and the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition.
Books prepare farmers to grow, save diverse seeds

By Jody Padgham

“Seeds are a sacred thing. Everything we have now is built on farmers selecting seeds for millennia. All of that genetic diversity is a great gift. Seeds should not be owned, patented, or controlled,” explained David Podoll, organic seed breeder, as he and his family were recognized as the MOSES 2014 Organic Farmers of the Year.

With organic seed the backbone of organic production and diversity, the development, cultivation, preservation, and expansion of organic seed stock is critical to our future. Non-organic industrial ag has vastly limited germplasm diversity and reduced commonly used seedstock to a few controlled cultivars. Organic producers must counteract these strengthening trends by continuing to reclaim diversity and regional specialization within seedstocks.

One way to help in this effort is to consider producing organic seeds, either for commercial sales or your own (or your neighbor’s) use. If you’re interested in doing this, two books in the MOSES Store offer guidance. The Organic Seed Grower, A Farmer’s Guide to Vegetable Seed Production, by John Navazio, and The Complete Guide to Saving Seeds, by Robert Gough and Cheryl Moore-Gough, do a great job of outlining the motivations, principles, and practices of growing and saving seeds.

In The Organic Seed Grower, John Navazio shares wisdom gained from many years of experience as the senior scientist and plant breeder with the Organic Seed Alliance. This comprehensive guide is designed for those producing seed on a commercial scale, although it is certainly full of information useful to the small-scale grower. John wants to see more farmers producing and selling or sharing organic vegetable seeds adapted to their region (such as the Podolls do in North Dakota at Prairie Road Organic Farm and Seed). In his book, John goes into detail on issues important to the seed grower that might not even be noticed by the vegetable grower—such as temperature and relative humidity needs at the time of flowering, the presence of pollinators, and isolation distances.

The largest portion of the book is dedicated to crop-scale quantities will definitely want to pick up The Complete Guide to Saving Seeds. Those interested in growing vegetable seeds in crop-scale quantities will definitely want to pick up The Complete Guide to Saving Seeds. Those wishing to isolate, collect and plant seeds from their own garden or farmstead production will want to pick up a copy of The Complete Guide to Saving Seeds. With specific details on 322 vegetables, herbs, flowers, fruits, trees and shrubs, this is a good all-round reference that will give you just enough information about each variety to get a start on seed collection.

The authors begin with a comprehensive section on the basics of saving seeds. They cover everything from seed biology to pollination, from germination to cleaning and seed storage. A short chapter on plant breeding will help those interested in making their own crosses. Each explanation in this section is easy to understand and comprehensive with diagrams, photos and tips.

The largest portion of the book is dedicated to plant breeding, where John explains how to save seeds from your garden or farm. The book begins with a comprehensive section on the basics of saving seeds. They cover everything from seed biology to pollination, from germination to cleaning and storage. A short chapter on plant breeding will help those interested in making their own crosses. Each explanation in this section is easy to understand and comprehensive with diagrams, photos and tips.

In comparing the way the two books present information, I’ll compare one to a textbook (The Organic Seed Grower), and the other to an encyclopedia (The Complete Guide to Saving Seeds), though the comparison is not exact, as Seed Grower is very readable and engaging, and Saving Seeds certainly explains general seed saving concepts in full detail.

Anyone interested in understanding how seeds work and the value of seed diversity and preservation will certainly enjoy both books. Those interested in growing vegetable seeds in crop-scale quantities will definitely want to pick up The Complete Guide to Saving Seeds. Those wishing to try a large diversity of seed saving, including developing their own cultivars, or with interest in flower, fruit, shrub or tree seed saving will want to read The Complete Guide to Saving Seeds.

I am glad that these authors took it upon themselves to delve into the details of the critical issue of seed production and saving. As David Podoll said, seeds are a sacred thing. The more of us out there working with these exciting packages of plant potential, the better the world will be.

Jody Padgham is the Financial Director for MOSES, and Associate Editor of the Organic Broadcaster.
Young farmers find place to grow through Land Link-Up

By Diana Witcher

MOSES provides Land Link-Up, a free online listing service, to connect people who need land to farm with those who have farmland to rent or sell. The story of Big Head Farm, a remarkably diverse operation in Benton Harbor, Mich., illustrates how the right match can make all the difference for both farmer and landholder.

Land that is suitable for organic farming can be difficult to find. A 2011 survey of 1,000 farmers by the National Young Farmer's Coalition listed access to land as the second most difficult challenge for new farmers, just behind adequate financial capital. Organic farmers have unique concerns when choosing land for their farms. They must look at not only topography and soil types, but also the history of chemical inputs and the availability of buffer zones.

Yet, the expanding organic marketplace is creating a ripe opportunity for farmers to go into organic farming. As the Wall Street Journal reported last summer, supply is not keeping up with the increasing consumer demand for organic products. Land Link-Up is one of the ways MOSES is encouraging the transition of more acres into organic production.

Big Head Farm Success Story
Karen Warner, who is originally from Detroit, began her transformation to farmer in the summer of 2008 when she and her husband, Jody, began an urban garden near their home in Chicago. They founded Big Head Farm the following December. During that time, Karen took a one-day introductory class called Farm Dreams, followed by the nine-month Farm Beginnings course offered through Angelic Organics Learning Center near Chicago.

The couple farmed at three locations in three years to keep pace with their farm's rapid growth. In April 2011, Karen posted an ad on the MOSES Land Link-Up asking for assistance to buy a farm she had found that was perfect for expansion, but at a price beyond the couple's means. She received an email from a landowner who offered her a different option: 50 acres in Michigan, including 17 acres of blueberries in transition to organic. But, the owner wanted to give the current tenants a chance to work things out. So it wasn't until December that year that the owner was ready to talk about leasing to the Warners.

Through a phone call, Karen and Jody learned about the landowner's goals for the property and shared their goals for Big Head Farm. Then they visited the farm, which seemed ideal. They researched organic blueberry production and evaluated the financial aspects of the deal, and several weeks later, they signed a lease for their new farm.

Karen and Jody hope that their current location will be a permanent one. In December 2012, they purchased a nearby 19-acre orchard that they visited the farm, which seemed ideal. They researched organic blueberry production and evaluated the financial aspects of the deal, and several weeks later, they signed a lease for their new farm.

Big Head Farm 70 acres include 17 acres of blueberries, 19 acres of apples, 13 acres of fresh market vegetables and the rest in managed woodlands. The site has very sandy and acidic soil, which is great for the blueberries, but a challenge for the vegetables. The farm is certified organic by the Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance program.

In 2013, Karen and Jody grew 32 different crops and 133 varieties, including 26 varieties of potatoes. Their markets include a CSA, two farmers' markets and two restaurants in the Chicago area. They use the social media sites Facebook and Twitter to promote the farm. They drive to businesses, leaving free bushels of apples wherever they go. They innovated a “pay as you can” farm stand, allowing people to pay what they can afford.

Plans for expansion include an on-farm market with a cider bar located at the apple orchard. An existing barn will house a cider press and processing equipment. Karen would like to start a project where farmers are hired to work on land that is provided. These “employee farmers” would have support, social media presence, business planning, marketing opportunities, and a website provided for them.

Big Head Farm is an inspiring example of what can happen when farmers find the land they need for organic production through the MOSES Land Link-Up.

Diana Witcher is a freelance writer and co-owner of Aquarian Gardens, a sustainable garden design business located in Menomonie, Wis.
Energy Self-Sufficiency:
How one farm uses ‘buckshot’ to meet energy needs
By Francis Thicke

There can be many innovative ways to move our farms towards greater energy self-sufficiency. As Bill McKibben has said, rather than looking for a single silver bullet, we should look for silver buckshot—a lot of smaller energy innovations that together can meet our energy needs.

On our farm we have adapted a number of energy improvements from increased efficiency to renewable energy-generation systems. Experts tell us that energy gains through conservation and efficiency are the cheapest and easiest to achieve. I agree, but since most people find alternative energy systems to be sexier than conservation, I will start by describing the energy systems we have been dabbling with on our farm.

Wind Turbine
This past year, we installed a 40 kW wind turbine on our farm. It is now producing energy as it should (finally), but if I had it to do over today, I would put my money into solar photovoltaics (PV) instead of a wind turbine for several reasons. First, solar PV prices have dropped by about 75% since five years ago when I applied for the grant that helped fund our wind turbine. Also, solar panels have no moving parts, so are more trouble-free and require less maintenance. Finally, solar systems are at ground level or on rooftops where they are easier to work on. If you or someone on your farm is not willing to climb the turbine tower (it can be more than a little intimidating to climb a 120-ft tower), the cost for hiring turbine maintenance could bust your budget. A wind turbine will have maintenance needs just like other pieces of farm machinery.

My adventure with the wind turbine took many twists and turns. First, complications with the USDA REAP grant resulted in having to rewrite the grant and jump through lots of hoops, causing long delays. However, the grant paid for 25% of the $160,000 turbine cost. The 30% federal tax credit for alternative energy systems also applied to this wind turbine. In addition, the turbine is eligible for depreciation tax credits. All of these reduced our costs substantially. As a result, the turbine should pay for itself in about 10 years.

What greatly complicated my wind turbine installation was that the installer (from another factory making the turbines) went bankrupt. If I had not paid the installer the full amount of the contract, so the cost overrun was not too great (not counting my many extra hours of work).

It seems that the wind turbine industry is pretty stable in the smaller turbine size range (20 kW and under) and in the ginormous size range (MW). But, in the 40 kW range, the industry has not been very stable, and there have been more than a few outright scam artists. A farmer friend of mine from Wisconsin paid $125,000 down on a 40 kW wind turbine and never got more than a concrete pad for his money before the company went bankrupt.

Now that I have my wind turbine working, I am happy with it. But, there were times when I wasn’t sure I was ever going to get it working. On an annual basis, this 40 kW turbine should produce about 70,000 kWh of electricity, which is about the amount of electricity we use on our farm annually. However, our power company does not allow net metering, so when the wind is blowing, and we have more electricity than we need, the power company buys it back at 3.8 cents per kWh. When the wind is not blowing, we pay 10 cents per kWh for electricity. A net metering arrangement would be much more favorable.

Solar and wind systems can complement each other—often when the sun isn’t shining the wind is blowing, and vice versa. However, I would suggest investing in solar first, and then if you are feeling more adventurous, invest in wind.

Silver Buckshot
We have a number of other renewable-energy systems on the farm. About 10 years ago we converted the water system for our grazing paddocks to solar power. We put a 4,000-gallon polypropylene tank on top of the highest hill on the farm, and at the bottom of the hill installed a solar panel on the edge of a pond to power a pump in the pond. The pump fills the 4,000-gallon tank, which gravity-feeds water to small watering tanks in the 60 paddocks spread across the farm. We also installed a 60-gallon tank for catch the breeze. Photo by Francis Thicke

Solar and wind systems can complement each other—often when the sun isn’t shining the wind is blowing, and vice versa. However, I would suggest investing in solar first, and then if you are feeling more adventurous, invest in wind.

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I am thinking about transitioning to organic dairy production. How does the market look these days?

By Joe Pedretti

Starting in 2012 and lasting through much of 2013, the organic dairy market experienced flattened sales. Some companies stopped recruiting new producers, and even considered quotas and other supply management strategies to reduce supply and to support organic dairy prices. Fortunately, the organic dairy market has rebounded. Sales are strong, and supply is not meeting demand. Many companies again are actively recruiting new organic dairy producers for 2014 and beyond.

Organic feed prices also have moderated in the Midwest and East (but not in the West, due to the California drought). These factors, combined with strong conventional prices, make this is an ideal time to transition to organic dairy—but, you do need to do some homework first.

Before beginning your transition, you should make sure there is a market for your milk. Start by contacting one or all of the organic milk buyers in your area. (Search the online Organic Resource Directory for “milk” to find a buyer near you.) Most of these companies manage their supply closely and commit to transitioning farmers far in advance of the date they can start shipping organic milk. This commitment is key, as it makes no sense to undergo the expense of certification, or of buying organic feed, until you know when and if you can start selling organic milk.

Most companies like to bring on new producers in the fall or winter rather than the spring and summer when their milk supply is naturally at the highest peak. The milk buyers will determine if they need your milk (supply), if you are on or near one of their milk truck routes (location), and determine when you can be ready to ship organic milk (timing).

If they need your milk, and the logistics and timing works out, they will put you in their herd plan and, as you approach your one-year herd transition, make a commitment to pick up your milk once your organic certification has been completed. This commitment is very helpful if you need to secure bank loans during the transition. The timing also will determine how you manage your transition—specifically, when you begin your one-year herd transition.

To transition a dairy, the land needs to be managed without prohibited inputs already, you may only need to complete the one-year herd transition. Contact MOSES or a certification agency to determine your transition timetable. MOSES also can assist with finding an organic milk buyer in your area.

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Research looks to cover crops to alleviate soil compaction, suppress weeds

By Rachel Welch, John Masiunas, Dan Anderson, and María Villamil

Rotary hoeing and in-row cultivation during the grain growing season help suppress weed populations. But, tillage is weather-dependent, and can be economically and physically detrimental. Extensive tillage encourages organic matter decomposition, breaks down soil aggregates, weakens soil structure and can eventually lead to compaction. Not only are compacted soils physically difficult and costly to reverse, compaction has a multitude of negative consequences to soil quality and crop productivity. Compaction interferes with water infiltration, nutrient cycling, root development, and aeration which in turn can negatively affect crop growth and yield. Compacted soils in organic grain production present a serious issue to the efficiency and success of the system.

Cover crops might be a solution to soil compaction and weed suppression. Research in other states has suggested that incorporating deep-rooted cover crops minimizes compaction and improves soil quality (Chen and Weil, 2009). Introducing deep-rooted cover crops, such as forage radish, into organic grain production systems has the potential to alleviate compaction, improve soil quality, and suppress weed populations. Though the potential benefits from deep-rooted cover crops are multiple, the results are highly dependent upon factors such as agronomic management, length of the growing season, plant species, subsequent cash crop, soil type, and weather conditions.

The Agro-Ecology team at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, led by Dr. Maria Villamil, conducted collaborative research with three farmers who own certified organic farms located in Malta, Cerro Gordo, and Pana (two locations), Illinois. The objective of this research was to identify the best cover cropping practices to alleviate soil compaction, improve nutrient cycling, and suppress weeds, while partnering with organic farmers to develop a deeper knowledge on how to effectively use these multifunctional cover crops.

When forming the study, the farmers specifically expressed compaction as a concern. They identified two areas of their farms as compacted and two areas as non-compacted. These areas were planted in four variations of cover crops: forage radish (FR), forage radish/buckwheat (FRbw), forage radish/hairy vetch/rye (FRhvr), and a control area that was left fallow.

The study started in fall 2011 and concluded this past fall 2013. Cover crops were planted in early fall and tilled under at least two weeks before the spring grain crop planting at all sites. Soybeans were planted the first spring, and corn the following spring. Soil sampling was conducted four times at each site down to 50 cm of depth, before each respective cover crop or grain crop planting to observe trends in soil physical and chemical properties. Two physical properties are reported here that provide complementary information: soil bulk density, which is the ratio of voids to solids in a given volume of soil, directly affecting aeration and water movement; and penetration resistance, which provides a proxy for the effort that a root tip has to exert to penetrate the soil layers. Additionally, weed and cover crop counts and biomass, and grain crop yields were recorded.

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Our results indicate that the compacted areas had higher bulk density (Figure 1) and penetration-resistance values than the non-compacted areas. These difference were still present in the following spring—this trend was witnessed down to 40 cm of depth, and is attributed to the densification of the soil. Compacted areas had significantly higher pH values, and were also richer in nutrients in comparison with the non-compacted counterparts, yet there were important seasonal differences. Total mass of phosphorus and nitrates (Mg/ha) were higher in compacted areas in the fall season, but not in the spring—this effect that could be attributed to the cover crops improving the nutrient cycling and the efficiency of these systems. During springtime, we observed a higher concentration of nitrates in the surface soil of rotations that included the mixture of forage radish, hairy vetch, and rye, which helps support the previous statement.

Our spring weed biomass data shows that, in both compacted and non-compacted areas, the rotation including the mixture of forage radish, hairy vetch, and rye significantly reduces weed pressure (Figure 2). Yet this same mixture resulted in a reduction of soybean yield in non-compacted areas, though yield of soybean from compacted areas did not show any effect of cover crop (Figure 3).

Our corn yield in 2013 ranged from 151 to 167 bu/acre, and did not show any effects from compaction or cover crop treatment. Soybean yields were collected in 2012, an especially dry year, and the observed trend could be due to the cover crops drawing valuable water resources away from the cash crop.

These preliminary findings support the ability of overwintering cover crops to suppress weed populations and retain nutrients in their biomass. We continue to collect data from this study, and hope to elucidate the long-term effect of these crops on soil properties and yield.

This project was funded by the Ceres Trust Organic Research Initiative. The authors are from the Department of Crop Sciences at the University of Illinois.

References
Cereal rye and oilseed radish have been appearing in a growing number of fields around the country in the past few years. A standard practice for successful organic farmers, the use of cover crops now is being explored by many non-organic producers, especially as the NRCS has ramps up encouragement of this soil-enhancing practice.

Two meetings recently advanced the practice of cover crop use. In mid-February, the National Conference on Cover Crops and Soil Health convened in Omaha, Neb. Organized by Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE), the conference brought together over 300 representatives of agricultural industry, the farm community, academia, government, commodity and conservation organizations to discuss how to make American agriculture more sustainable by improving soil health. On-site participants were joined by 6,000 others meeting in local NRCS and Extension offices to engage in conversations on cover crops and soil health.

In mid-March, the Wisconsin Cover Crops Conference included over 100 attendees interested in the economic and soil health benefits of cover crops. This state conference was hosted by Michael Fields Ag Institute, NRCS, and UW-Extension, and sponsored by North Central SARE.

Dave Campbell of Lily Lake Organic Farm in northern Illinois attended the national conference where he saw many large-scale conventional farmers who were enthusiastic and engaged during the entire two-day event.

“In organisms we’ve known about the benefits of cover crops for a long time—I’ve been using cover crops for the past 26 years,” Dave said. “I wish they would have joined us 20 years ago; although nonetheless, it’s rewarding to see how much emphasis NRCS is now putting into this. It includes barley and crimson clover. ‘These are the main source of fertility on our farm, but they have many, many other benefits,’ Christine explained. Standard Process is a unique farm raising a diversity of vegetables that are processed into whole food supplements. ‘When we harvest a red beet, or any other vegetables we grow, we are taking those nutrients away from the soil. Cover crops are essential on our farm to replace the fertility we are removing.’

After many years of using cover crops on his 224-acre organic grain and hay farm, Dave knows what works well for soil fertility as well as weed control. A year ago last April he seeded red clover in with winter wheat. Shortly after the wheat was harvested, he clipped the cover crop cover crop during late-July in order to encourage more growth which increases biomass content. The clover grew back again and will remain untouched until around the first week of May when it will then be moldboard plowed. Corn, hopefully, will then be planted later in May. Dave also likes to rotate his tillage practices, and, at times, will substitute spring moldboard plowing for late fall chisel plowing of cover fields prior to planting corn.

Although Dave knows what works, he still likes to experiment and refine some practices he has tried in the past. This year he is excited about some test plots on his farm where a mix of oilseed radish, buckwheat and oats were planted during mid-August of last year. All of these cover crops will winterkill, and so the ground will need only light tillage before corn is planted. This is especially helpful in years with cool and wet spring weather, which happens more often than not where he farms. Dave plans to compare corn yields between this three-crop mix versus the clover he traditionally uses. He will also be observing differences in weed pressure between these two systems.

“What I like about this mix,” he stated, “is that each cover crop provides a different function—the radish root provides deep rooting which reduces in all rooting soil compaction at deeper levels such as the plow pan layer. Buckwheat provides some allelopathic weed suppressing effect on annual weeds that will compete with the corn crop, and oats will provide plenty of cover for winter and early spring erosion control. Oats are also great at scavenging excess nutrients such as nitrogen.”

Christine, too, is fond of what she calls “cocktail mixes.”

“You can make up your own mix,” she said. “Planting crops you can combine yourself is cost effective and makes mixes more affordable.” Her farm’s cover crop plantings on low lying soils change with the seasons. In spring, barley, oats and chickling vetch are planted. In summer, the mix includes barley, buckwheat and berseem clover. In fall, the mix typically includes barley and crimson clover. “These are all annuals, and so we won’t need much tillage,” she added. Spring- and summer-seeded cover crops will be rototated while still green. Fall-seeded cover crops will die in the winter and require shallow incorporation the following spring.

“Why not grow your nitrogen instead of buying it?” Christine concluded. “Cover crops make our farm sustainable.”

Organic farmers can benefit from the increased interest, discussions and resources about the benefits and effective use of cover crops. All of the presentations from the National Conference on Cover Crops and Soil Health, including 10 videos of farmers successfully using cover crops, are available at www.sare.org/Events/National-Conference-on-Cover-Crops-and-Soil-Health. Dave also recommends the resources and activities provided by the Midwest Cover Crops Council at www.mccc.msu.edu.

Jody Padgham is the Financial Director for MOSES, and Associate Editor of the Organic Broadcaster.
fight to determine social status, cliques and dominance. This causes social stress, as well as stress over the availability of resources. This is especially true with young pigs—avoid mixing recently weaned pigs with pigs from other farms or even other pens on your farm. Minimizing the environmental stresses of extreme heat and cold are also important to maintaining a healthy animal. All age groups require shelter with bedding. Heat lamps are needed to keep young pigs warm in the winter. Damp buildings with little ventilation will keep your pigs cold regardless of how much heat you add. A cold and dry pig will be less affected by temperatures than a warm and wet pig. Damp air will allow viruses and bacteria to more easily be shared among animals. In the heat of the summer, it is important to provide wallows of mud the pigs can use to keep cool, and well ventilated shelters or shade trees and shrubs to hide under. Keeping pigs comfortable year round will help to reduce your animals’ stress, and thus their vulnerability to disease.

Nutritional support also is essential for animal health. Pigs, by design, are omnivores. They will seek out and consume both roughages (hay, pasture) and concentrated sources of energy and protein such as berries, grubs, roots, grains and nuts. An adult sow can meet 50% to 70% of her needs for energy and protein from forages (SA Edwards, etal, Pro Nutri Soc, May 2003). However, pigs still will need an additional source of concentrated energy to maintain their body weight. This is especially true for lactating sows, whose energy needs will nearly double. This need for highly digestible energy sources is met most often by feeding grains. A balanced diet for pigs includes both energy and protein, a vitamin-mineral source, free roughages in their diet. However, due to pounds or more—also can utilize pasture access to salt, and water (SA Edwards, etal. Pro Nutri Soc, May 2003). A balanced diet for pigs includes both energy and protein, a vitamin-mineral source, free roughages in their diet. However, due to pounds or more—also can utilize pasture access to salt, and water (SA Edwards, etal. Pro Nutri Soc, May 2003).

The addition of probiotics, prebiotics and manno-oligosaccharides has been shown to improve the immune system response. Mann-o-oligosaccharides (MOS), found in yeast bacteria, can be made using organically certified methods. Current research indicates that MOS are capable of interfering with harmful bacteria that cause digestive illness (Wenner, etal. J Anim Sci, Oct 2013). MOS are additives in several organically certified probiotic and prebiotic products currently on the market.

**A good biosecurity plan will help to keep this virus and other potentially harmful pathogens out of your herd.**

Biosecurity is a cost-effective means of preventing infectious pathogens from overwhelming the pig’s immune system. Despite the fact that natural and organically raised pigs often have a stronger immune system, they are still susceptible to being overwhelmed by infectious pathogens. This is especially true of the PED virus. Since this pathogen is new to the United States, our animals do not yet have a natural immunity to it. PEDVs destroys the small villi, which are finger-like projections that line the small intestine. These villi are critical for the absorption of water and nutrients from the small intestine. The result is extreme diarrhea, dehydration, high fever and weakness. This disease is deadly to pigs under the age of 10 days, and pigs older than 10 days will have significantly reduced rate of gain and growth, but will most likely survive. PEDV is highly contagious—it takes a very small amount to cause devastation in the herd. This hardly virus has been found to survive in fresh feces for seven or more days, and in manure slurry spread on fields for up to 28 days. It has been found to still be capable of infecting animals after being in water for up to seven days, and in feed 26 days (S Goyal, Univ of Minnesota, March 2014).

Eighty percent of the farms affected by PEDV reported that their farm had been visited by a live haul, dead haul or feed truck within the two weeks prior to the outbreak. Since it is not possible to keep these trucks off your farm indefinitely, you need to make plans to avoid direct contact of your farm equipment and boots with the area that these trucks visit. This virus travels far in small amounts of manure. A study of 50 convenience stores in Iowa found active PED virus on the floor in 100% of the stores!

A good biosecurity plan will help to keep this virus and other potentially harmful pathogens out of your herd. Consider all the ways pathogens can ‘walk’ onto your farm. Decrease these by having a pair of ‘farm-only’ boots and clothes, and requiring visitors to wear disposable boots and coveralls. Requiring new animals to be tested before coming to your farm will prevent the most common transfer of disease: animal to animal.

Happy hogs are healthy hogs. Keeping your animals stress-free and following simple bio-security guidelines will ensure your hogs stay healthy, and allow your herd the best chance of avoiding the deadly PED virus.

Tracy Harper has over 20 years’ experience in the swine industry. She teaches at Western Technical College in La Crosse. As a private consultant, she has worked primarily with producers of organic and natural pork.

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**Swine Virus — from page 1**

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**Swine Virus**

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**Swine Virus**

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Summit covered field, financial sides of farming for new farmers
By Audrey Alwell

More than 150 beginning farmers and many who hope to farm one day soon attended the New Farmer Summit last month at Primrose Valley Farm in Belleville, Wis. MOSES partnered with Renewing the Countryside to put on this well-received event.

The summit included 24 practical workshops on topics such as livestock, organic vegetables, orchards, bees, soils, and equipment. Other workshop topics covered accessing farmland, finding funding, making a business plan, and obtaining organic certification.

“The three days were packed with new information, thought-provoking conversation, and lots of awesome people,” said Emily Martorano, a beginning farmer from Chicago. “Nothing gets you energized in the spring like spending three days with 150 other people who are also looking forward to getting their hands dirty as soon as possible,” she added.

Along with the workshops, the event included panel discussions, a seed swap, and a square dance with a live band and caller.

Participants also could take a behind-the-scenes tour of three local farms: Jamie and David Baker’s Primrose Valley Farm, Lindsey Morris-Carpenter’s Grassroots Farm, and Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast, an off-grid B&B and farm owned by Lisa Kivirist and John Ivanko.

The summit was the culmination of a three-year grant through the USDA’s Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, explained MOSES Organic Specialist Angie Sullivan. “We had field days and workshops at the MOSES Conference geared toward new farmers the last three years, and at the end of the three years we wanted to have a conference.”

Details and more summit photos are online at mosesorganic.org/newfarmersummit.

Above: Jamie Baker explains how the farm’s seeder works. Photo by Emily Martorano
Right: Farmers gather for a panel in Primrose Valley Farm’s Community Room above its state-of-the-art packing and washing shed. Photo by Angie Sullivan

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North Freedom, Wis.

August
MOSES Organic Farmers of the Year—Podolls of Prairie Road Organic Farm & Seed
Fullerton, N.D.
Rural Women’s Project:
Stoney Acres Farm
Athens, Wis.

September
Pastured Poultry
Mondovi, Wis.
Roller Crimper for Cover Crops
Grant County, Wis.
Additional field days in the works with partner organizations.

Details and registration information:
mosesorganic.org

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New Farmer Corner

Experienced market farmers offer tips for success at your first farmers’ market

By Lisa Kivirist

Ask any seasoned organic grower, and they probably vividly remember their first day selling at a farmers’ market. Maybe it was the ideal stress-free day and resulting combination of cash receipts, happy customers and perfect product. But most likely, that farmer walked away excited about selling at future markets, but with a list of things they will do differently next week.

If you’re heading into your first farmers’ market season, you’re not alone. According to the USDA, there were 8,144 farmers’ markets in 2013 in the United States, which is an increase of more than 450% since the USDA started tracking this data in 1994. With continued interest in local and organic foods, shoppers find farmers’ markets the best opportunity to “know your farmer” and bring healthy, fresh food to their family’s plates.

As with any farm-based venture, selling at a farmers’ market should be a thought-out, strategic part of your farm business plan. Here are some tips to get started—advice from farmers seasoned and experienced in the market-selling scene.

Differentiate

As the new kid at the market, how can you stand out from the crowd?

“Our stand looks very different than others around us,” explained Pam Walgren, farmer-owner of Perennial Journey LLC, who sells regularly at the Monroe Farmer’s Market in Wisconsin. “We aim for a more modern look rather than going along with the ‘old country’ look of baskets and wooden boxes more common at markets.” Walgren found silver restaurant trays used for clearing tables at a salvage yard, and displays her heirloom tomatoes on them. “Customers remark every week about how beautiful our stand is and how different it is from others,” Walgren added. A unique display generates another result: free media exposure, as it is more likely to be photographed and end up on social media like Instagram. Select three key items you have for sale, and showcase these by placing them front and center on your table. If your produce is certified organic, be sure to include that signage on your display.

Detail Your Display

“Eye appeal translates into sales and a little extra effort to plan and pay attention to details goes a long way,” advised Lois Federman, co-manager of the Mineral Point Market in Mineral Point, Wis. "If you have a full table with lots of things for sale, try setting up your table at home and move things around until you get it just right," she recommended. “Don’t forget to label everything to save your potential customers time—so they know exactly what they’re looking at and how much it costs.” Got your table just how you want it? Take a photograph and it will make your market destination set-up much faster.

Carefully select the tablecloths you use, aiming for a pop of color that compliments your items for sale. Walgren sewed tablecloths that are open in back for access to storage bins underneath, creating a tidy, clean look.

Organize

Keeping your main supplies organized will help you run much more efficiently every week. For the past seven years, Karen Heege has run Victoria’s Table, selling artisan small-batch jams and jellies at the Des Moines Farmers’ Market in Iowa and has market organization down to a science. “I use large, clear plastic storage bins that immediately after you unload, remove boxes, crates, bags, and other clutter from your display area and only then set up your display. “Many times customers come early to the market, and you never want your booth area less than inviting. If need be, arrive 30 minutes ahead of schedule so you are setup and ready to greet those early bird shoppers.”

Joylene Reavis of Sugar Maple Emu Farm in Brodhead, Wis., suggested having a full “dress rehearsal” at home prior to your first market day. “If you have a full table with lots of things for sale, try setting up your table at home and move things around until you get it just right,” she recommended. “Don’t forget to label everything to save your potential customers time—so they know exactly what they’re looking at and how much it costs.” Got your table just how you want it? Take a photograph and it will make your market destination set-up much faster.

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New Farmer Corner — from previous page

to haul supplies, and have everything I need in there from bags and tissue for wrapping, table-cloths, signs, cups and spoons for sampling, pens, business cards, and even a market toolkit consisting of scissors, pins, tape, a screwdriver, pliers and extra tent pieces.” If the weather gets wet, these bins double as above-ground storage.

Develop your own system for organizing, trans- porting and setting up your product at market. Keep detailed checklists of all the little things you’ll need that easily are forgotten, such as small bills and coins to make change, weights for your tent in case it gets windy.

Likewise, make sure you personally have what you need to get through a busy market day. Pack a cooler with water and high-energy, easy-to-eat snacks like nuts and pre-cut fruit. Bring extra layers of clothing in case the weather changes.

Cultivate Consistency

When you are a new vendor at a market, it is especially important to ask for the same location at every market so your customers don’t need to search for you every week. Visit the market site and get a sense of where sunlight falls. Full sun will droop produce quickly. Early morning is the perfect place to experiment when I was starting out farming with a small group called Louis Morris Center of Grassroots Farm outside Monroe, Wis. “I could bring a bunch of stuff every week, and could readily adapt and try out different pricing and sales strategies and see what works.”

If you do end up with extra wares at the end of the day, remember the power of the post-market barter scene. Don’t go home with what you already have a lot of. Develop relationships with other vendors who sell what you don’t, and make exchanges at the end of the market.

Be Ready to Commit

Fully think through the commitment needed for a weekly farmers’ market, especially the larger markets on weekends. Are you ready to commit all your summer weekends to the market scene? This is an important variable to think through, or you’ll find yourself resentful halfway through the season. Or if that may be a concern—for example, your family has lots of other obligations on weekends that would make this schedule a challenge—research the growing number of weekday markets as a possibility.

Make sure, too, the market draws the right kind of customers for what you’re selling. “Every market has its own culture and vibe,” said Leigh Adcock, Executive Director of the Women, Food and Agriculture Network (WFAN). “Some markets cater to busy shoppers who want to quickly buy their week’s vegetables, while others create a more social setting with music and kids’ activities. Talk to other growers and folks buying at the market to get a sense of what the market is like.”

Smile

“Aside from all the merchandising fundamen- tals, I would reiterate the power of a simple smile and getting to know your customers so you can follow-up on things they mention week to week,” summed up Stacy Miller, Program Advisor for the Farmers Market Coalition, a non-profit dedicated to strengthening the farmers’ market movement across the country. “Building relationships and making each transaction personal and not just financial is what cultivates a loyal customer base.” Make the shopping experience at your booth personal: share recipes, photos of the farm and invite your super-loyal customers out to the farm for a personal tour.

That personal, direct connection between the food on one’s plate and the farmer who grew it is what ultimately keeps both customers and farmers coming back to market and spurs this continued growth of the movement. Celebrate that connection along with a realistic, strategic plan for your market booth and sales and first season success can be yours. For more farmers’ market resources, check out the Coalition website: www.farmersmarketcoalition.org.

Lisa Kivirist writes from Inn Serendipity, her farm and bed and breakfast in Wisconsin, which is completely powered by renewable energy and specializes in local, seasonal, organic cuisine. She also coordinates the MOSES Rural Women’s Project.

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When we started prepping our 4-acre field, we refurbished an 8-foot high deer fence. To make sure that fawns could not get through the fence, we added 4-foot high narrow mesh woven wire to the fence perimeter. This has been 100% successful at excluding deer, which is an absolute necessity in our area.

We spent several days picking rocks. We tilled the field, and picked rocks again. We planted the entire field to oats, wheat, and medium red clover to help build fertility and break weed cycles. We returned the small grain and clover residues to the soil to build organic matter. After a full year of cover crops, we began our 3-year planting schedule. We laid out and tilled one third of our planting beds. We planted cover crops of buckwheat, clover, and sorghum-sudan in the remaining beds to further build fertility and manage weeds. We also sub-soiled all the beds to help break hardpan, allow root penetration, and improve water and nutrient uptake.

**Fertility**

As I mentioned, blueberries need a lower pH than the other crops we grow. To lower our soil pH using organic methods and approved inputs, we incorporated cover crop residues, and added composted horse manure and peat moss. Then we conducted a soil test, and added a customized micro-nutrient fertilizer blend and elemental sulfur. We mulched with pine straw and ground hardwood bark.

We conduct soil, tissue, and pH testing annually. We purchased an easy-to-use soil pH meter for $100. We also do foliar feeding with fish emulsion and kelp extracts, and now inject these inputs using our irrigation system. We use composted horse manure to top-dress around our plants annually.

**Irrigation**

While berries need well-drained soil, they also need water, especially when they are getting established and during fruit set and production, as well as periods of drought. We have installed a solar-powered, drip irrigation system to all berry rows and plum trees. We collect rainwater from the roof of a 24’x36’ metal machine shed we built in the field. We have 6,000 gallons of below-ground and above-ground water storage. We ran a 1” PVC line to be able to pump water from our household well, as needed. The irrigation system has 2, 1-gallon-per-hour emitters per plant. We have manual controls, and keep track of which rows get water, for how long.

**Birds and the Bees**

By far, fruit-eating birds are our most challenging pests. (I used to like robins and bluebirds!) We have tried numerous tactics to deter birds, including scare eye balloons, aluminum pans, fake owls and falcons, scare crows, raptor roots, and row netting. We installed a Bird Guard sound system, which emits bird stress calls and raptor screams. It is supposed to protect up to 6 acres. It seems to help, but not enough. This year, we plan to install Smart Net overhead netting, which covers about ¾ of the field. All of the bird deterrents are mounted on untreated locust posts, which are allowed in organic production, and we were lucky to source locally.

We are writing pest management action plans for specific insect problems. We use monitoring and hand removal. We initially used BT for a brief forest tent caterpillar infestation, but prefer not to spray. We use a small propane torch to scorch eastern tent caterpillar nests. We have released beneficial nematodes to help control currant borers and elderberry mites. So far, we have had minimal insect pest damage.

We have had some problems with raccoons—like humans, they love berries! They are not deterred by row netting, so we installed a line of electric fence around the field perimeter. We also live trap and shoot the raccoons.

Young berry plants need to be protected from rabbits and mice during the winter. For small plantings, we have used tree wraps, plastic tree guards, chicken wire or hardware cloth. We haven’t had rabbit or mice problems in our field, likely because there are quite a few raptors and our field is quite open.

For weeds, our pre-plant tillage and cover cropping was critical in getting them under control in advance. We tried using paper mulch on our first plantings, but it was a failure—frustrating to apply, expensive, and ineffective. We used 20-year landscape fabric covered with hardwood bark mulch in the beds where we have the best weed control. We have planted white Dutch clover between the beds to help with weed control and to provide food for pollinators. We mow between the beds, alternating so that the clover is allowed to bloom. We do a lot of hand weeding around the plants. We also use a string trimmer and backpack flame weeder, and try to be diligent in preventing weeds from setting seeds.

To manage diseases, we count the plants frequently, looking for signs of disease. We prune our plants aggressively to maximize air flow and sunlight penetration. When we discover infected plants, we remove them from the field. We have replaced susceptible varieties such as Consort black currant, which we discovered was susceptible to powdery mildew. Two years after planting 115 Consort black currants, those plants were pulled from our field and replaced with the variety Titania.

We actively provide food sources and habitat for pollinators and predators. In addition to clover, we have planted native plants, such as New Jersey Tea and butterfly weed, in the field and manage a 4-acre prairie adjacent to this field. This year, we’re adding hairy mountain mint and arnise hyssop to the mix. Since we don’t have honeybees, we have installed native bee tube boxes and leave areas for bumblebee nests. We have flowering plants from early to late in the season, and have planted numerous varieties of blueberries (16) and honeyberries (9) to increase production, and therefore production.

**Harvest and Sales**

All of our fruits are hand harvested. We have limited cold storage in a large refrigerator, but plan to install a small walk-in cooler. We sell our MOSA-certified organic fruits through a variety of channels. Most of our blueberries are sold directly to people on our customer list, many of whom sign up through our website, www.bluefruitfarm.com. We market some of our fruits to restaurants in Winona and the Twin Cities. We also sell fruit to and through Hoch Orchards, which is located about 12 miles from us.

Jim Riddle and Joyce Ford established Blue Fruit Farm near Winona, Minn., nearly six years ago. They have been involved in all areas of organic, from farming to teaching and helping to write standards. Joyce served on the MOSA board, and Jim was chair of the National Organic Standards Board. Jim currently serves as Organic Research Grants Coordinator for the Ceres Trust.

**Varieties Grown at Blue Fruit Farm**

Jim’s advice to growers who want to add fruit to their operations: buy bigger plants.

“If you have a choice between one-year and three-year-old plants, go with the older plants, even if they cost more,” he said. “They will complete better and produce fruit sooner.”

**Blueberry**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northland</td>
<td>Polaris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriot</td>
<td>Northblu, Superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluecrop</td>
<td>Bluegold, Chippewa, St. Cloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aronia</td>
<td>Viking, Brilliant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Currant</td>
<td>Titania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Plum</td>
<td>Mt. Royal, Ewing Blue, Todd, Northern Blue, Black Ice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherry Plum</td>
<td>Sapalta, Deep Purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serviceberry</td>
<td>Regent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jostaberry</td>
<td>Jostaberry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honeyberry</td>
<td>Night Mist, Borealis, Tundra, Midnight Blue, Bluebird, Blue Belle, Blue Moon, Berry Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey Tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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What you need to know before buying/building irrigation system

By Angie Sullivan

With the changing climate delivering hotter, drier summers, many farmers are seeking solutions by irrigating crops. Options for irrigation depend on a farm’s size, crops grown, soil type, and budget. Here’s what you should know before you invest in an irrigation system for your farm.

Benefits of Irrigation

Most often, irrigation is used to meet the water needs of the current year’s crop, giving the plants the moisture they need to reach peak flavor and quality. Irrigation significantly increases crop yields, particularly on sandy soils which have low moisture-holding capacities. In addition, irrigation can allow a farmer to double crop—plant a field with soybeans following wheat in the same year, for example.

In other situations, irrigation is viewed as insurance against occasional drought. Knowing there is a way to water crops without depending on rainfall, brings many benefits by reducing risk, helping the farmer to control crop loss and income fluctuation.

Best Management Practices

Irrigation systems can use surface or ground water. However, avoid using a water source that might be polluted by manure runoff, which could contain pathogens. If you are certified organic, your certifier might request a water test if you’re using a water source that could contain prohibited materials such as herbicides. Ground water pumped through your farm’s well might be the best water source for irrigation, especially for a small-scale system.

No matter what water source you use or what system of irrigation you choose, you should follow these best management practices:

• Minimize water use. Apply only enough water to meet crop needs. This can be determined through regular soil moisture monitoring or through a “checkbook” system to monitor water applied and crop needs.

• Use efficient systems. Choose the system that makes best use of water and results in the least waste of this precious resource.

• Apply at a rate the soil can absorb. Runoff due to excess irrigation can cause soil erosion and wastes water.

• Apply water uniformly. This reduces the chance of runoff and leaching in areas where water may pool.

• Provide good drainage. Good drainage along with irrigation minimizes soil salinization in areas of low rainfall by allowing salts to percolate down through the soil profile.

Drip Irrigation

Drip irrigation targets the water supply directly to the base of plants, reducing runoff, evaporation and wetting of non-targeted areas. This kind of system nearly eliminates wet foliage, making plants less susceptible to disease. It is a popular choice for vegetable farmers, but also can be used on a larger scale for row crops.

A drip irrigation system includes a main header line with individual drip lines running from it. Timers allow for automatic watering. Even on a small operation, installing a timer will prevent the flooded fields that happen when someone forgets to turn off the water. To make the best use of timers, you need to know the water requirements of the plants served by the irrigation system. Overwatering or watering at the wrong time can be just as detrimental as watering too little for many plants.

Because the drip lines rest on top of the soil, they can be damaged by hand tools or cultivation equipment. Be aware and use caution when working fields that have a drip irrigation system.

The distance between the holes in the drip lines can be matched to fit the plantings in a particular row. Vegetable farmers can take advantage of that fact by laying drip tape on a prepared bed and turning on the water to mark where to put transplants.

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Comparison of Irrigation Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Surface Irrigation</th>
<th>Surface Irrigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advantage</strong></td>
<td><strong>Disadvantage</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water goes directly to the plant's roots; no plastic tubing on the surface of the soil; less evaporation; no runoff</td>
<td>Easily damaged by hand tools and other farm equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surface</strong></td>
<td><strong>Surface</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basin</strong></td>
<td><strong>Border</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low to Mid-range</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depending on the topography of the land</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-high</td>
<td>Rice; wheat; maize; sorghum; trees; pastures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widely used, conserves water</td>
<td>Can lead to waterlogging and not properly drained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surface</strong></td>
<td><strong>Surface</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Furrow</strong></td>
<td><strong>Furrow</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-range</td>
<td>Mid-high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depending on the topography of the land</td>
<td>Depending on the topography of the land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row crops; fruit trees; broadcast crops and vegetable crops</td>
<td>Best suited for large mechanized farms with long, uninterrupted field lengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be used on a wide range of soil types, crops and slopes. Good for crops that would be damaged by having their stems or crown under water</td>
<td>Can have high up-front cost maintenance due to the use of large equipment and ongoing weeding and shaping of the border</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing labor of keeping the field channels and drains free from weeds. Needs to be checked during irrigation to ensure the water is reaching the end of the furrows</td>
<td>Efficient in water placement; potential for disease with wet foliage; high maintenance equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surface</strong></td>
<td><strong>Surface</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Border</strong></td>
<td><strong>Border</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-high</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-range</td>
<td>Low to Mid-range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close growing crops - alfalfa; can also be used for crops &amp; trees</td>
<td>Row crops; field crops. Not for delicate, leafy crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best suited for larger mechanized farms with long, uninterrupted field lengths</td>
<td>No surface shaping or burying drip equipment; wide range of discharge capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can have high up-front cost maintenance due to the use of large equipment and ongoing weeding and shaping of the border</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
People passionate about good farming gathered at 2014 MOSES Conference

By Audrey Alwell

An enthusiastic group took part in the 25th MOSES Organic Farming Conference Feb. 27 to March 1 in La Crosse, Wis. The 3,400+ participants came from 43 states and six countries—the largest geographic spread we’ve ever seen at the MOSES Conference. Ninety people served on the helpful volunteer crew for this year’s conference. Another 393 individuals attended the conference through scholarships and special group discounts.

The keynotes fueled the crowd’s passion for organic and sustainable farming. Anna Lappé, author of *Diet for a Hot Planet*, explained how the industrial food chain is responsible for about one-third of all greenhouse gas emissions. She noted that farmers are “at the very front lines” and have the capability of being “climate heroes” by adopting organic farming practices.

Mark Shepard, organic farmer and author of *Restoration Agriculture*, said organic farmers are making real ecological change for the planet. “We’ve liberated five-and-a-half million acres of ground from poisonous assault, and we’ve created a multi-billion dollar food industry,” Mark said. He explained how restoration agriculture allows farmers to produce food crops while performing ecological restoration, and shared how it’s working on his farm.

Journalist Alan Guebert talked about American farm policy and its focus on producing the cheapest food possible—not the highest quality food. His insightful views of farm policy and check-off programs gave the audience plenty of food for thought.

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To MOSES Conference Highlights next page

Left: Theresa Podoll, one of the MOSES Organic Farmers of the Year, implores conference-goers to act to stop the approval of 2,4-D-ready crops.

Below Left: Organic farmer Mark Shepard delivers an empassioned keynote speech about organic farming’s role in restoring ecological balance to the planet.

Right: Conference participants proudly wear plaid.

Below Right: Paul Betz of High Mowing Organic Seeds helps a farmer choose seeds. Farmers could buy products and get information from more than 170 vendors in the two-floor Exhibit Hall.

Bottom Left: Faye Jones, MOSES Executive Director, cuts the cake marking the 25th Organic Farming Conference.
Videos of the keynote presentations are posted on our conference webpage at mosesorganic.org/conference. There’s also a video of the presentation by the 2014 MOSES Organic Farmers of the Year: the Poddjis of Prairie Road Organic Farm and Seed in Fullerton, N.D.

The conference provided six sessions of workshops—66 total—on a wide range of topics, including crop management, how to grow specialty crops, livestock concerns, marketing, insurance and more. Audio recordings of all of the workshops are available online through the MOSES Store at mosesorganic.org/store or by mail, using the form on the page.

This was the fifth year for the Organic Research Forum, which is supported by a grant from the Ceres Trust. The Research Poster Gallery was nearly the double the size of previous years with 52 posters. Conference participants had the opportunity to talk directly with the researchers involved in the studies.

The two-floor Exhibit Hall at this year’s conference featured 174 vendors with wares and services for farms of every size. You can see the list of exhibitors linked to their websites (if available) on the MOSES website at mosesorganic.org/conference/exhibit-hall. This page also explains how vendors can get on the waiting list for the 2015 conference.

Contact information for all of the exhibitors, sponsors and presenters for the 2014 MOSES Conference is included in both the Program, which is available through our website (http://mosesorganic.org/conference/#program), and in the first-ever MOSES Conference App, which is still available free to download through iTunes and Google Play. More than 30 percent of conference attendees used this portable, interactive conference program in its debut year.

The 26th MOSES Conference will be Feb. 26-28, 2015 in La Crosse, Wis. Proposals and recommendations for workshops and presenters can be submitted through May 16 to Joe Pedretti at MOSES (joe@mosesorganic.org).

Audrey Alwell is the Communications Director for MOSES and the Managing Editor of the Organic Broadcaster.
Certification Opens Doors — from page 1

The produce buyer at our co-op directed me to a larger buyer in the Twin Cities who offered to buy some, but not at the price the smaller co-op was paying for our “chemical-free, member-grown carrots.” Without certification, our carrots could be sold only as “local conventional.” The larger buyer already had a lot of uncertified carrots, but was looking for certified organic carrots to meet customer demand. If we had been certified, we could have sold them all on the spot for a premium price. How many other opportunities had we given up by not being certified?

That was the tipping point for us. We began to get serious about going for certification. We used the certification cost share program through the USDA NRCS to help cover the costs associated with the paperwork involved in certification (such as a new copy machine and file cabinet). Then we went to the MOSES Conference and talked to all the certification agencies there. We decided to go with MOSA. They helped us figure out how to comply with the rules with just the right amount of paperwork.

The inspection came, and we were pleasantly surprised to find it more helpful than intimidating. We were certified in about six months from the day we decided that we were going to do it. It wasn’t as hard as we thought. At the time, we didn’t know if it would be worth it, but it feels good to have accomplished the certification. We were (and still are) proud of it.

The real proof of the certification’s worth came to us last winter while planning our upcoming season. Each winter our co-op produce manager meets with local growers to discuss what each farm plans to grow for the co-op in the upcoming season. She explained that the co-op goes through to keep certified and uncertified product separate. When uncertified local spinach comes in for sale and is put in the bulk bin, that bin must be cleaned thoroughly before certified spinach can go in it. So if a farm only has a portion of the co-op’s spinach for a week, the staff has to go back and forth between local spinach and certified California spinach, creating a lot of work for them. Our certified spinach, though, the staff only has to switch out the sign to “certified local.” This makes it much more attractive to work with us on the edges of the season when our production is not high enough to meet all of the store’s needs.

The certification also allowed us to be bumped up by not being certified?

That meeting with the co-op’s produce manager started off my year with a new perspective about certification, and it only got better. We had been selling “chemical-free” produce at the Downtown Eau Claire Farmers’ Market during the week for a few years. The market’s policy states that product labeled as “organic” must be certified organic—no “we use organic practices” allowed. I had regular customers, and an idea of what we would make there in a day. But I was surprised when we made almost twice as much as we did before we were certified. We gained over a dozen loyal, regular customers who thanked us every week for being at the market and being certified. In my mind, I had always grown organic produce. But in the educated customer’s mind, I wasn’t growing organic until I had the certification to prove it.

The customer response to us was amazing. They pushed the market manager to get us into the busier Saturday market. By the first Saturday of September last year, I had a stall—I had to float through the market, but I had a place where! The market is very popular and there is a lot of competition for stalls at peak season on Saturdays. The market board has ruled that no new stalls will be available to vegetable vendors. If we were not certified organic, we would not have any chance of a Saturday stall until one was given up through retirement, death, or other means. Instead, we have a very good chance of being in the market every week this season because we can offer something most vendors cannot. Consumers are demanding organic choices. We can deliver.

In addition to our produce, we grow organic grains, hay, and straw. When I look at the biggest benefit the certification brought us it is in the grain enterprises. Before we were certified organic, we were growing non-GMO corn and soybeans and transitional oats and barley. Getting any premium for the non-GMO crops was very difficult. Many buyers promised a premium price, but it didn’t materialize come harvest time. After certification, we were able to secure a contract with Organic Valley for our grains. This is such a comfort to us. We have a reliable buyer for our grain—one that we know will pay us and will value the effort put into those crops.

The most surprising change that has occurred since we have become certified organic is the attention we have received from area landowners. We live in an area of western Wisconsin that has a lot of new, absentee landowners who have an interest in conservation and environmental issues. They want to realize an income by renting their land, but do not want it farmed in a conventional row crop system. Several landowners have asked us if we would be interested in operating their land organically. We are being approached at a time when many conventional farmers in our area are looking land to rent and pay market rates to do so. Most of the landowners approaching us are willing to take much lower rates to get us to farm their property organically.

Organic certification has brought us new opportunities and renewed confidence in our choice to farm. Steve and I are old farm kids who have seen the ups and downs of farming all our lives. We know that farming is a difficult career choice. We have struggled for a long time over if how we should farm. We feel like we made the right decision by certifying. We are proud to be certified organic farmers. And, we look forward to seeing our farm business grow further.

Mary Maier-Abel and her husband, Steve, own and operated Blooming Hill Farm, an 80-acre diversified operation near Plum City, Wis. They have been certified organic through MOSA since 2012.

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spread around the farm. We injected a one-inch polyethylene pipe into the ground about 10 inches deep, connecting the 4,000-gallon tank to all the paddock watering tanks. The system has high capacity, and, even on cloudy days, the solar pump runs fast enough to keep up with over 100 cows drinking water.

We shut down that solar watering system during the winter months, and use two other watering systems located below a pond dike and gravity-fed by the pond that work all winter without supplemental heat. One of these water tanks has a two-foot-diameter tube extending eight feet into the ground beneath it. The geothermal heat from the ground below, in addition to the regular flow of water from the cows drinking, keeps the water from freezing hard. Some ice will crust on the tank overnight during very cold weather, but we can easily break the ice on top when we check the cows each morning.

The other pond water tank uses a constant overflow of water from the pond to keep the tank from freezing. Instead of the water overflowing and making a mess in front of the tank, a standpipe in the back of the tank carries the overflow of water out through an underground pipe to a nearby ravine. It amazes me how a small, constant trickle of pond water can keep that tank ice-free in the coldest weather. These two tanks work well for outwintering cows.

About five years ago, we installed a solar hot water system. We put four solar-thermal panels (each 4’ by 10’) on the roof of our on-farm dairy processing plant. These solar panels are connected to two 120-gallon water tanks that store heated water by the panels, and that feed water into our regular hot-water heater. During summer months the solar panels will preheat hot water to 145 degrees F. This system saves a lot on propane costs to heat water in our dairy processing plant and milkhouse.

Other renewable-energy systems we use include solar-powered electric fence chargers, which also improve flexibility of fencing in our grazing systems, especially for remote pastures that are far from electricity sources. There are some very good solar chargers available today. We also installed a geothermal heat exchanger in our house, with loops of piping in a nearby pond. The geothermal system uses the pond water as a heat source and sink for heating and cooling the house (extracting heat with a heat pump is more energy-efficient than burning fuel).

When we built our house we included a cupola on its top. Inside, the house is open from the roof cupula, through the stairwell, to the first floor. The cupula has windows that we can open by remote control. On summer nights, we open windows in the cupula and on the first floor, causing a strong natural convection current, which pulls warm air out through the cupula and cool air in through the downstairs windows. As a result, we rarely use air conditioning.

Also, we have begun using biodiesel made from waste cooking oil for our tractors. A local organization makes the biodiesel from restaurant and cafeteria cooking oil, and delivers it to our farm.

Efficiency
As mentioned above, often the greatest gains in energy self-sufficiency can come from conservation and improved efficiency. We think that one of our greatest efficiencies comes from our grass-based dairy system—in comparison with conventional confinement dairies. In a grass-based system, after each milking a new paddock is opened for the cows, and the cows happily do the work of harvesting their own forage while spreading their manure right where it needs to be. By contrast, in a confinement dairy system, the cows’ forage has to be harvested mechanically, put into storage, and delivered to the cows for daily feeding. Then the cows’ manure must be collected, put into storage, and eventually taken back out to the fields. All those energy-requiring steps in a confinement dairy are avoided in a well-designed and managed grazing system.

These are exciting times for renewable-energy innovations. Solar prices have dropped dramatically. Many states and power companies are providing economic incentives for renewable-energy installations. However, there are still some significant roadblocks to allowing small-scale, locally owned renewable energy to compete on a level playing field with large-scale utility companies. I believe that in the future we will see renewable-energy systems become increasingly competitive with fossil fuels as costs for renewable energy continue to decline, fossil-fuel costs rise, and states remove roadblocks and provide incentives for renewable energy. Now is a good time to look into how you can make your farm more energy self-sufficient.

Francis Thicke and his wife, Susan, own and operate Radiance Dairy, an alternative energy-powered grass-based, organic dairy near Fairfield, Iowa.

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Fire Blight Control in Organic Fruit
A new publication from The Organic Center provides the latest information on controlling fire blight in organic fruit production without the use of antibiotics. Oxytetracycline, an antibiotic which was approved in organic production, will sunset in October 2014. Streptomycin, another antibiotic that is allowed in organic production, is likely to sunset soon thereafter, so growers will need to implement non-antibiotic control programs within the next year.

The Critical Issue Report includes highlights of emerging research plus lessons from growers who have implemented non-antibiotic fire blight control over the past decade. Successful non-antibiotic fire blight control centers on combining orchard management practices into an integrated systems approach which is multi-faceted, and marries effective fire blight prevention with fungal control, insect control, bloom thinning, spray coverage, tree training, soil and foliar nutrients, and cultivar and root stock selection. The full report is on the MOSES website (mosesorganic.org) under Farming By Topic in the Orchards section.

Farming Skills 101
Enrollment is open for the Sustainable Farming Association’s Fall 2014 semester of Farming Skills 101, which covers the hands-on essential skills necessary for a forage-based livestock producer. The program consists of 50 hours of on-farm education over three weekends at farms near Alexandria, Minn. Instructors are farmer-educators: Sue Wika, PhD; Tom Priewe, DVM; and Susan Lesley, MS. All students receive a free one-year SFA membership. For more information, see www.sfa-mn.org/farmskills101.

2015 Research Symposium
The Organic Agriculture Research Symposium is tentatively set for Feb. 25-26, 2015, immediately before the MOSES Organic Farming Conference in La Crosse, Wis. Researchers working in disciplines related to organic farming and food systems or sustainable agriculture using techniques compatible with organic standards may submit proposals. Abstracts should not exceed 500 words, and include names of authors, contact information, a working title, the topic area, an introduction that explains the context and purpose of the research, the methods used, and a brief summary of the results and conclusions. Works in progress may be considered, but the paper for the proceedings will need to be completed by Dec. 31, 2014. Send abstracts to Brian Baker at bpb35@cornell.edu by May 31, 2014. If you have questions about the symposium, call 541-228-0876.

Women in Farming Conference
The 5th National Conference for Women in Sustainable Agriculture will be Nov. 14–15, 2014 at the Fairfield Arts and Convention Center in Fairfield, Iowa. The conference is sponsored by the Women Food & Ag Network (WFAN). See details at wfan.org.

Open Source Seeds
The University of Wisconsin-Madison introduced 29 new varieties of broccoli, celery, kale, quinoa and other vegetables and grains last month through the Open Source Seed Initiative. The initiative, started in 2011, encourages development of new varieties of seeds free from patents and other restrictions. These seeds are free for all people to grow, breed and share for perpetuity. Both High Mowing Organic Seeds in Hardwick, Vermont, and Wild Garden Seed in Philomath, Oregon, have added open source seeds to their catalogs this year.

Plant Breeding Manuals
The Organic Seed Alliance has published four organic plant breeding manuals to encourage organic farmers to participate in developing varieties suited to organic systems. The manuals include an introduction to plant breeding and three crop-specific manuals (tomatoes, carrots, and sweet corn) that provide step-by-step instruction for identifying good breeding material and maintaining a new variety for quality and uniformity. All are available at mosesorganic.org/farming/farming-topics.

Organic Research Highlights
The University of Wisconsin-Madison has issued Organic Agriculture in Wisconsin, a report summarizing 23 studies conducted by researchers in the university’s College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) in partnership with farmers across the state. The Ceres Trust also recently released a report, Organic Research and Outreach in the North Central Region – 2014, that includes details about organic research happening in the region, sources of organic research funding, and other relevant information. Both of these resources are posted on the MOSES website (mosesorganic.org) in the new section “Organic Research Forum,” under the Projects tab.

Board Vacancies
An organic producer, organic handler, environmentalist, and retailer are needed to fill vacancies on the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB). The 15-member board reviews material and recommends changes to the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances and advises the Secretary of Agriculture on organic regulations. Appointees will serve a five-year term beginning Jan. 24, 2015. Individuals can nominate themselves for one of the appropriate slots. Nominations must be postmarked by May 15. For more information, contact katherine.benham@ams.usda.gov at the USDA.

Online Resource Directory
The Upper Midwest Organic Resource Directory, produced by MOSES, now is searchable online. The directory lists certification agencies, suppliers, buyers, processors, and other organic-related organizations in seven states: Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. To update information in a listing, email info@mosesorganic.org.

News Briefs
World Organic Congress
Registration is open for the 18th IFOAM Organic World Congress coming to Istanbul Oct. 15-17, 2014. This congress takes place every three years. This year’s keynote speakers include Anna Lappé, who presented at the 2014 MOSES Conference, and Will Allen of Growing Power.

Certified Organic Operations
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced new figures showing that 763 producers became newly certified organic in 2013. The industry today encompasses a record-breaking 18,513 certified organic farms and businesses in the U.S., which is a 245 percent increase since 2002.

GMO Avoidance, Testing
Protecting Organic Seed Integrity: The Organic Farmer’s Handbook to GE Avoidance and Testing, a new 64-page publication from the Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association, covers the risks associated with growing crops that have a GMO equivalent, best management practices that will lower the risks of GMO contamination, and the testing protocols a farmer can use to track their success in avoiding GMOs in their organic crops. It includes sections on each GMO crop on the market, farmer’s handbook to GE avoidance and testing, and the MOSES website (mosesorganic.org) in the new section “Organic Research Forum,” under the Projects tab.

Urban Farming Resources
A new set of free resources guides urban farmers through the business planning process. The Urban Farm Business Plan Handbook, and its complementary Urban Farm Business Plan Worksheets were created by the Partnership for Sustainable Communities through EPA’s Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization. These resources are the result of a project that provided technical assistance to the Toledo Community Development Corporation to turn a two-plus-acre former industrial site into an urban farm. The handbook and worksheets, are online at www.epa.gov/brownfields/urbanag.

Cover Crops in Conventional Farming
Nitrogen pollution from agricultural runoff is a major problem in inland waterways and coastal regions where it contributes to the formation of “dead zones.” An article in the May issue of BioScience promotes an alternative to conventional a’s standard management for corn, soybeans, and winter wheat. Researchers at the Kellogg Biological Station in southwest Michigan have found that these crops can be grown using a third of the usual amount of fertilizer—or none at all—by using cover crops to fertilize the fields. The result was a more than 50 percent reduction in the amount of nitrogen that escaped into groundwater and rivers. The change in practice produced similar crop yields to those of standard management, while delivering more fertile soil.

Pollinator Habitat
Michigan State University Research reported in the Journal of Applied Ecology shows that investing in wild pollinator habitat can improve crop pollination and pay farmers back within four years. Researchers found that, after two years, blueberry fields adjacent to wild pollinator habitat showed higher populations of wild bees and more and larger berries.

Organic Commodity Pricing Resources

Organic Milk Prices
NODPA 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342 www.nodpa.com/payprice.shtml 413-772-0444

Organic Livestock Prices
CROPP Cooperative Organic Trader farmers.coop/feed-program/organic-trader 1-888-809-9297

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Find Buyers and Sellers of Organic Products
MOSES Organic Resource Directory
Most up-to-date listings: moseselect.org/publications/organic-resource-directory

Request print copy at 715-778-5775.
OPPORTUNITIES

Emerging Food Hub in Amery, WI, seeks talented local foods chef/GM. See details at: www[resilientnorthernhabitats.com.

Harmony Valley Farm is now hiring for the 2014 season. Open positions include: CSA Coordinator, Seasonal Farm Chef, and Packing Shed Lead. Each of these positions requires excellent communication skills and the ability to work as a team member. Visit www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com for opportunities for more detailed job descriptions and send resume with cover letter to bookkeeper@harmonyvalleyfarm.com.

Trillium Dell Farm in Knoxville, IL is seeking a farm manager. Lodging & utilities included. 18/hr. must have license. Small scale vegetable and livestock/poultry operation is seeking to grow and expand. rcollins@trilliumdell.com.

Business For Sale: Natural & Organic Food & Products Retail Store. Established & Profitable Business in Neenah, WI. Owner will be moving out-of-state. Price includes Real Estate, Inventory, FF&E, Customer List etc. Contact G. Earl Real Estate, Inc. to obtain more information. Phone: 920-426-0417 or Email: ge@gebroker.com.

Organic produce delivery business for sale. Work from home year-round. Loyal customer base, strong potential for growth. Purchase existing routes or develop in your area. Established in 2006. mcra0435@gmail.com.

FARMS/LAND

I have approximately 25 acres of land that has been laying fallow for about 40 years. It is ideal for someone wanting to start an organic project. Also available to cut native hay. Located in the SE part of Adams County, Wisconsin. Willing to work with good tenant with good future plans. Contact: showperg@aol.com.

Looking to Rent: Family of 3 seeks farm rental situation, 2-4 acres, for maintaining a family cow and two - grazing-based, sustainable husbandry. Will work to develop pasture. Will need modest housing. Within 30 minutes of Madison, ideal. References available. Thanks for considering. Paul, 608-467-2278 or gadjolune@gmail.com.

For Sale: 33.6 acres, 18.3 tillable certified organic. Land is beautiful with variety including tillable, woods, a marsh, a natural pond and wild plums. Land is beautiful with variety including tillable, woods, a marsh, a natural pond and wild plums. For Sale: 100 acres, 40 tillable. NO pesticides and only organic fertilizers for the last 24 yrs. 3/4 mile river frontage. Timber frame house with barn and many sheds. 45 minutes north of Madison, WI. Asking $550,000, 608-448-3762.

For Sale: SUSTAINABLE LIVING NEAR THE BW-CW! Small town homestead for sale at edge of Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness – Ely end. Well-insulated, two BR, one bath, 1955 rambler on a 60 x 180 foot lot. Fenced back yard has 200 feet of raised beds, drip irrigation, 10 x 22 greenhouse, chicken coop with 12 bird capacity, and a woodshed. Inside has hardwood floors, Hearthstone “Heritage” woodstove on main floor, and Vermont Castings “Encore” in the basement. Huge wood room downstairs with study, work room, and partial bathroom. Rising beds, white fish/tulibee netting, and public access all nearby. Price reduced to $525,300. Call Steve 360-918-8397.

MISCELLANEOUS

For Sale: 2, 8’ x 8’ portable A-Frame chicken/hog houses, $150 each. 608-873-9847.

For Sale: ORGANIC FISH FERTILIZER 15-1-1, 100% dry water soluble, 5-7 times more nutritious than liquid fish. Will not clog drip irrigation. 1 lb or 55 lb packaging, can be shipped UPS. Frommelt Ag Service, Greeley, IA, 563-920-3674.

Classified Ad Placement
Reach 11,000+ organic-minded readers with a classified ad in this newspaper.

$15 up to 30 words; $5/each additional 10 words.

Includes free listing in the Online Organic Classifieds at mosesorganic.org/farming/organic-classifieds.

Submit ads online at organicbroadcaster.org.

Place my ad in (rate is per insertion):

January - February    July - August
March  - April        September - October
May - June            November - December

Word rate x number of insertions (above) = TOTAL DUE

PAYMENT INFORMATION:
I’m enclosing a check made out to MOSES.
Please charge $ ____________
Card #: ____________________________
Visa □ Mastercard □ Discover □ Am. Express
Expiration Date: (mm/dd/yy)

Signature: __________________________

WANTED: ORGANIC DAIRY FARMERS
Horizon® is Seeking New Farmer Partners for the #1 Organic Milk Brand
Richard Klossner (Midwest) 303-319-6899
www.horizonorganic.com
Find us on Facebook and Twitter!

Hay & Grain Farmers!
Organic FARMERS! Are you a farmer, and organic dairy farmers to organic. Contact us to learn more.

For Rent: 6 acre organic farm w/ 3bd home in Lafayette, WI (Walworth Cty). $1350/mo + util. 262-661-4284, michellette@mpcm.com.

For Sale: 100 acres, 40 tillable. NO pesticides and only organic fertilizers for the last 24 yrs. 3/4 mile river frontage. Timber frame house with barn and many sheds. 45 minutes north of Madison, WI. Asking $550,000, 608-448-3762.

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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Farm Dreams Workshop**
May 4 | 1-5 p.m. | L'Arche, Wis.
June 22 | 1-5 p.m. | Winneshiek, Iowa

Farm Dreams is an entry level, four-hour, exploratory workshop designed to help people who are seeking practical, common sense information on whether sustainable farming is the next step for them. Farm Dreams is a great prerequisite for the Farm Beginnings course. www.landstewardshipproject.org/more-farmers/farmdreams

**Thrive Sustainability Series: Know Your Farmers**
May 12 | 4-7 p.m. | Minneapolis, Minn.
May 10 | 3-5 p.m. | La Crosse, Wis.
May 8 | 6 p.m. Central | Free

A two part series, which offers public workshops throughout the year on skills required to run a local farm. Contact Cary Peterson about the importance of local sourcing and partnerships in food businesses. bit.ly/1nJGQjG

**Webinar: Profitable High Tunnel Management**
May 9 | 6 p.m. Central | Free

Designed to help specialty crop farmers take advantage of these benefits, webinar topics will include identifying the costs of production; fertility, disease, and pest management; profitable crops and cultivars; successful rotations; product pricing, and market strategies. Organized by the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association and Countryside Conser-vancy. bit.ly/1F00jpp

**Restorative Agriculture: Urban-Rural Partnerships**
May 8 | 4-7 p.m. | Minneapolis, Minn.

Join the Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Organization to learn more about the technology. bit.ly/1kJlQm3

**Introduction to Apple Orchard and Integrated Pest Management**
May 7 | 1-5 p.m. |豆浆, Ill.

Full-day workshop geared towards backyard and beginning growers of all skill levels. The class will provide an overview of issues related to growing healthy trees & fruit and controlling pests and diseases throughout the season. Class will go over an introduction to apple trees and varieties, followed by an introduction to Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and organic management of fruit trees. Contact Cindy at cindy@clovervalleyfarms.com.

**Farmland Access Field Day**
May 10 | 3-5:30 p.m. | Heyworth, Ill.

Learn about all aspects of farmland access from experts including a soil specialist, attorney, loan officer, and farm appraiser. Terra Brockman, of The Land Connection, will discuss the pros and cons of owning and leasing land, along with creative sustainable lease, rolling lease, and long-term lease options. Community experts will be on hand to discuss legal and financial aspects of farmland access. bit.ly/1SUXW

**Postharvest Handling and Food Safety**
May 12 | 4-7 p.m. | SIS | Kansas City, Kan.

This evening workshop is part of the Growing Growers series, which offers public workshops throughout the year on skills required to run a local farm. Contact Cary to learn more or register: crivard@ksu.edu.

**National Value-Added Agriculture Conference**
May 1-3 | Baltimore, Md.

Presentations cover food safety, agri-tourism, entrepre-neurship, rural development, marketing and distribution, regulation and policies, sourcing and branding, and business planning and financing. bit.ly/1ehQ0

**Midwest Women’s Herbal Conference**
June 6-8 | Mukwonago, Wis.

Centered in the Wise Woman Tradition, the conference provides a gathering space to focus on earth-centered healing, nourishment, and the plants that grow around us. Conference includes plant walks, entertainment and over 40 workshops. midwestwomensherbal.com

**Webinar: Practical Soil Biology**
June 1 | 7 p.m. | SIS

Learn practical applications of soil biology and how to manage this resource. Review the fundamentals of soil biology and how to apply a biological approach to gardens, farms, or landscapes. bit.ly/1r5nSw

**Introduction to Small Fruit Production**
June 14 | 9 a.m.-2 p.m. | $30 | Kingsville, Mo.

This workshop is part of the Growing Growers series, which offers public workshops throughout the year on skills required to run a local farm. Contact Lala to learn more or register: kumarl@missouri.edu.

**Agritourism Intensive**
June 25 | 8 a.m. | $30 | Kansas City, Mo.

Delve into the details on running agritourism operations. Details include walking through the risks and risk mitigation strategies of successful agritourism businesses with a farm law expert, learning from regional tourism boards and The Land Connection staff about the potential markets and opportunities for growth in agritourism and receiving tours and presentations of four successful farms in the “Land of Lincoln” that will cover topics from start-up and capital access to pricing, regulation and infrastructure. bit.ly/1H2lqj

**Seeking Executive Director**
Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society is seeking a creative, experienced, energetic professional to become the Executive Director for this 35-year-old nonprofit membership organization based in LaMoure, N.D. Experience in and commitment to sustainable/organic agriculture and local food systems essential. Offering competitive wages. For a full job description visit: www.npsas.org/about-us/job-openings.html

Call 701-883-4304 • e-mail npsas@drtel.net

**Bookmark the MOSES Community Calendar**
Click on Events: . . . . . . . . . . mosesorganic.org . . . . . . .

Webinar: Using RUSLE2 to Evaluate Soil Health Planning Principles
May 11 | 1 p.m. Central

Learn about the NRCS Soil Health Management Sys-tem. The link between NRCS’ four soil health planning principles (minimize disturbance, maximize diversity, keep a living root growing, provide soil cover) and the Soil Tillage Intensity Rating. Soil Conditioning Index, tillage operations, vegetation, growth curves, residue type, climate impacts, and other data used in RUSLE2 will be explored. bit.ly/1iuxM3g

Aquaponics Master Class
May 15-17 | 8 a.m. | L’Arche, Wis.

3-day Aquaponics Master Class is intended for anyone seriously considering getting into aquaponic food pro-duction, or those already doing aquaponics who want to learn more about the technology. bit.ly/1kQJq3m

Introduction to Small Fruit Production
June 2 | 4-7 p.m. | $15 | Oakl, Kan.

This evening workshop is part of the Growing Growers series, which offers public workshops throughout the year on skills required to run a local farm. Contact Cary to learn more or register: crivard@ksu.edu.

Webinar: Commonly Used Organic Inputs
June 4 | 7 p.m. | Free

Oregon Tilth and the USDA Natural Resources Conser-vation Service present this webinar. To participate, see tilth.org/events/commonly-used-organic-inputs.

Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture
Seeking Executive Director
www.npsas.org/about-us/job-openings.html

**MOSES Community Calendar**

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