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Farm Dream Becomes Reality
for Farmer from Mexico

By Joe Pedretti

Rodrigo Cala was born in Mexico City. His father was a teacher and his mother was a farmer. “We grew up on a small farm. Our home was in one place and the farm was a little farther away. We raised spinach, chard, broccoli and Mexican herbs. We also raised pigs. I really learned farming from my mother,” explained Rodrigo.

In 2001, Rodrigo’s younger brother, Juan Carlos, made the economic decision to move to the United States for work. He found work at a factory in Stillwater, Minn., where they make plastic milk bottles. Juan Carlos talked Rodrigo into moving to Minnesota in 2004, to work at a horseshoe manufacturing plant in Forest Lake, Minn. “At the time, the factory job was good work,” noted Rodrigo. “My brother and I tried to find herbs for Mexican dishes, but they were very hard to find in Minnesota, and the quality was very bad when we did find them in the grocery stores. This really got us thinking about getting a place to raise our own produce.”

In 2005, following their dreams to own a farm, Rodrigo joined the Minnesota Food Association for support. There he participated and successfully completed the Big River Farms Immigrant & Minority Farmer Training Program, Organic Farming Training and GAP training over the course of three years. A major component of the training program is getting started by renting land and working with experienced farmers.

By the time Rodrigo was finished with the program, he was raising peppers, tomatoes, chard, spinach, Mexican herbs and summer squash—all organically, which was a new concept to him. “In Mexico, we did conventional farming, but I became really fascinated with organic farming, and that is a main focus of the MFA program,” noted Rodrigo. He mainly sold to two accounts—Chipotle Restaurante and a community supported agriculture (CSA) program serving Minneapolis/St. Paul market. During this time he maintained his full-time job at the horseshoe factory.

Estate Planning
Plan Now to Preserve Farm for Next Generation

By Karen Thimke, University of Wisconsin Law School, Madison, Wisconsin

Note: The following is intended as an overview of some options that may help when creating an estate plan. This is not legal advice. Every situation is unique, and these options may not be available in your state or for your farm. You should consult an attorney in your state for legal advice on whether any of these options may be appropriate or legal in your unique situation.

What obstacles do organic and sustainable farmers face if they want to preserve their farm for the next generation?

What methods are available for an organic and sustainable farmer to transfer the farm at the farmer’s death in a manner that continues his or her farming practices?

What are the benefits and drawbacks of these various methods?

This article will attempt to answer these questions and give an overview of the best ways to preserve an organic or sustainable farm for future generations of farmers.

Farmers may choose organic and other sustainable farming methods for a variety of reasons, including environmental benefits, personal motives (such as a healthier lifestyle and diet), religion or a sense of land stewardship. Because the benefits gained from sustainable farming, especially organic farming, can be lost if the land is used for another purpose, farmers may wish to take steps to maintain the farm’s organic status.

Problems Caused by Incomplete Estate Planning

Farmers wishing to pass their organic or sustainable farms to future generations should plan ahead. A well-designed and implemented estate plan can ensure that the deceased’s wishes are carried out upon his or her death. Failure to make a solid estate plan can lead to property division, sale of the farm, and family strife, all of which will pose a serious threat to the organic or sustainable survival of the land.

While the law provides methods for an estate to transfer to surviving family members if a farmer dies without an estate plan, this may not happen as the farmer expected. In some circumstances, leaving everything to state law may result in a distribution unpleasing to all, and to property going where the farmer never intended. This can often be a problem if the farm is divided between multiple children. One child may want to farm the property but...
News From MOSES

Without a calendar at hand, it’s been darn tough this year to figure out what month it is. Normally my neighbors would be in the fields about now, getting ready to seed. This year we all just have to shrug, as there is still a few inches of snow covering much of the ground. It’s happened before, and will happen again. Perhaps this is why we all like farming—it is never boring or predictable!

One thing that is predictable is the outpouring of enthusiasm around the MOSES Organic Farming Conference. For 2-1/2 days at the end of February 3,349 folks from 42 states and 5 countries poured into La Crosse, WIs, to listen to 130 speakers give 70 workshops and 3 keynote presentations. Over 14,500 organic meals were served, and 85 volunteers made sure things went smoothly. Scholarships were given to 188 attendees, (a value of over $31,000), and 169 exhibit booths showcased large quantities of information and resources. Vast amounts of fun, learning, exchange and good eating were enjoyed.

This twitter comment from a participant sums it all up: “My brain overflows with information. My cheeks are sore from smiling. Thank you MOSES for another great conference.”

Be sure to save February 27, 28 and March 1, 2014 to help us celebrate the 25th Organic Farming Conference!

What is MOSES Worth to You?

What if you woke up Monday morning and discovered MOSES was gone? Would you miss the end of a quarter century of excellent organic farming conferences? Perhaps you would miss our field days. Or, what about the reliable Organic Broadcaster, right here in your very hands? Starting to feel a little blue or a tad stressed?

You can relax. We are still here! And, with your help, we plan to be here for the long run. That being said, as a nonprofit we are always in need of individual support. Your donation makes it possible for us to answer the farmer help line, to hand out cutting-edge information, and to plan the next round of exceptional events. With your help we are here this Monday morning, and every Monday morning, doing what we do best: educating, inspiring and empowering the farmers that bring us the best food in the world.

Send MOSES a check or donate online at: www.mosesorganic.org/donate.html. Once you hit the “donate now” button you can choose to donate every month, quarterly or just one time by selecting the frequency from a drop down menu. Monthly and quarterly gifts help us know we can count on you in the months to come. Thanks for your support!

Luisa Gerasimo,
MOSES Development Director, luisa@mosesorganic.org

In other MOSES news, we’d like to introduce two new members of the MOSES Board of Directors: David Abazs and Nick Olson.

David is from Finland, Minn., where he and his family own the solar- and wind-powered Round River Farm, a 50-share CSA. David also manages Wolf Ridge Organic School Farm, which supplies produce for Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center. Nick is an organizer with Land Stewardship Project’s Farm Beginnings program, and with his family owns and operates Prairie Drifter Farm, a certified organic diversified vegetable farm in Litchfield, Minn.

David and Nick recently got their MOSES feet wet at a 2-day board meeting in mid April. With their acceptance of three-year terms, the board is growing from nine to ten members. We are grateful for their, and the entire board’s commitment to the organization.

It is also time to say goodbye and express great appreciation to Alina Diffley for her six years of service to MOSES as a board member. Alina’s wisdom and willingness to work hard and take her responsibility seriously did much to move the organization forward. We wish her the best with the next chapter of her life, and congratulate her for well deserved success with her recent book, Turn Here, Sweet Corn.

Good luck with your planting.
Jody Padgham, Organic Broadcaster Editor

SAVE PAPER
Read the OB Online

This newspaper is available as a downloadable pdf and as an html document from http://www.mosesorganic.org/broadcaster.html. If you prefer not to receive a paper copy in the mail, please contact us and you will be removed from the OB mailing list.
Changes Improve Organic Crop Insurance, but Issues Remain
By Harriet Behar

Organic Crop Insurance Payments Determined “Excessive”
In the OIG audit, it was determined that crop insurance payments to organic farmers using county conventional yield averages have been “excessive.” This determination was based on a sample of 76 crop insurance policies nationwide, held by 33 producers in six states. As a result, in the future, farmers who do not have their own organic cropping history may see crop yield projections for basing insurance payments reduced to as much as 35% below county averages.

...farmers who do not have their own organic cropping history may see crop yield projections for basing insurance payments reduced to as much as 35% below county averages.

In response to the USDA’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) audit of organic crop insurance, the Risk Management Agency (RMA) announced changes in early March to the 2014 federal crop insurance program for organic farmers.

The most positive change was the removal of the 5% surcharge added to crop insurance premiums, which has penalized farmers who use organic practices. This surcharge is still in effect for 2013, but will go away in 2014. Although organic farming has been recognized as a “good farming practice” since 2004, it has taken until now for RMA to fully acknowledge this fact in the crop insurance program by equalizing premium rates.

Another welcome change is that organic farmers may now choose to pay a higher insurance premium to cover the higher price organic crops receive in the marketplace. This option will be available for corn, soybeans, cotton, processing tomatoes, avocados and some stonefruits. RMA plans to add additional “organic price selections” for wheat, barley, oats, almonds, apples, pears, blueberries, table grapes, and certain stonefruits in the next two years. Unfortunately, organic forages and pastures—important as livestock feed and in crop rotations—will not be recognized.

Along with these positives are some negatives that will continue to challenge organic farmers and those transitioning to organic when they seek crop insurance.

Origin of Crop Insurance
Crop insurance was put in place in the 1930s to aid farmers during the devastating effects of both the extended droughts of the Dust Bowl and extremely low prices caused by the Depression. In its best application crop insurance protects producers from weather- and market-related losses. Expected crop yields that define the payments for crop insurance are determined two different ways: either the farmer has a minimum of four years of crop yield history for that type of crop, or county averages for the crop are used.

In the OIG report in order to verify that good Practices Based on Organic Inspection Report
Another problem in the changes is the requirement of the Office of Inspector General for insurance providers to review a farm’s organic inspection report in order to verify that good organic farming practices were in use. This il...
It’s hard to find a more enterprising, determined couple than Bryan and Theresa Kerkaert, who began crop farming five years ago. They are giving organic everything they’ve got and then some. Together they are transitioning approximately 500 acres of rented land — a collection of scattered parcels that vary by soil type, topography, distance, and management history. Much of the land is former Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage, while other parcels were what Bryan calls “low-to-no input” organic ground. All of the Kerkaert’s rented acreage is located 30-50 miles away from their seven-acre farmstead. Bryan and Theresa find themselves regularly needing to fine tune-land management strategies as they continue to learn about farming and organic crop production. They also are forced to simultaneously rework cash flow plans as lease arrangements and market prices fluctuate.

Getting Started: Bryan has long had an affinity for plants. “I was always growing something—little seedlings in my room when I was a kid,” Bryan said. He was born and raised “in town” (Marshall, Minn.) but regularly visited and helped out on land farmed by his grandfather and uncle. Theresa grew up on a dairy farm near Marshall.

Bryan and Theresa met in high school and married after college in 1991. They rented and eventually purchased seven acres of land from Bryan’s uncle where they built their “dream home.” Bryan worked for his uncle full-time, assisting with fieldwork, cattle management and farm chores. At the same time, he and Theresa built a hog nursery barn. In 2001, struggling to make ends meet, Bryan quit working for his uncle and bought a manure hauling business. “The hauling business was in bad shape when I first started,” Bryan said. “In a couple of years, I turned it around, and took it from three trailers to six trailers. We haul in a 40-mile radius around Marshall. Customers are happy.” They eventually built one more hog barn and diversified their businesses to include a truck wash in town. “But my passion always remained crop farming,” Bryan said.

Motivation to Transition: When asked why they decided to “go organic,” Bryan responds, “Organic opens up opportunities. When we farm conventionally, our opportunities are the same as that for 99 percent of the other farmers. But we’re in the one percent category when we grow organically and that opens up a lot more opportunities.”

Bryan was able to capitalize on those opportunities through his manure hauling business five years ago. The business put Bryan in touch with organic crop farmers who were “experimenting” with using the manure for fertilizer. Each time Bryan was hired to apply manure, he had the opportunity to talk with organic farmers — to learn about their rotations, to observe successes, watch “some mistakes,” and to begin dreaming about his own crop farm.

Opportunity knocked in September 2007 when Bryan met two brothers who lived 35 miles away who had been “low-input” farming. “They wanted to test out the use of manure for fertility,” Bryan recalled. “I think I was brought in to settle a bet.” The brothers had planned to spread manure on a small parcel — only six of 160 acres. Bryan convinced them that manure was needed on all the land and offered to delay his spreading payment until after harvest when the brothers would be able to see the benefits of the manure application. Later that same year, the brothers turned over management of their land to Bryan—offering him a long-term rental agreement. Bryan borrowed equipment from a friend—a well-established organic farmer—and began farming organically.

Transition Strategies: Today Bryan farms a total of 1,300 acres — including the original 160 acres on long-term lease. He rents all of the land (a mix of short-term and long-term leases) and has transitioned approximately 40 percent of it (land under long-term lease). While held to farm everything organically, Bryan explained that he can’t plan crop rotations on land under one-year leases. “I don’t know if I’ll have that land next year, let alone five years from now.” Much of the organic land was former CRP that certified right away.

Bryan tries to treat each rental location as a field in his rotation. This allows him to make efficient use of his equipment; he schedules field work to minimize equipment movement. Bryan cleans the equipment before moving from one field to another. “We’re required to do this when going from a conventional field to an organic field,” Bryan said. “But we choose to do it when going from an organic field to a conventional field — because of weed seed that we’d be bringing with us.”

Bryan’s dad helps with some of the field work. Other tasks, such as cutting, raking and baling hay that Bryan is unable to perform himself (due to lack of equipment) is custom hired. Some of the employees from the manure hauling business are utilized in the farming operation during the cropping season. In the past he also has hired immigrant labor to walk fields and pull weeds throughout the growing season.

Challenges: The Kerkaerts have overcome several financial and production-related challenges, including the management of widely dispersed rental acreage. Most recently, they’ve struggled with issues that are common to most organic farmers, including how to: 1) acquire favorable operating loans, 2) obtain crop insurance, and 3) successfully transition CRP land.
The Family Farm  
by Stan Szymanski 2013

Now if you're looking for a place to live,  
Just stay with me, a list I'll give.  
You get up in the morning and don't have to leave,  
The family works together, just roll up your sleeve.  
The farm is full of young life,  
Your kids are all home, so is your wife.  
You just can't beat being together,  
The family that works and prays together.  
You go out and buy your kids toys,  
That cost money and make lots of noise.  
You look at the kids, what are their toys?  
Look outside, there's puppies and boys.  
You'll never be bored  
Farming close to the Lord.  
Where do you think I get all my inspiration?  
Well it comes from the heavenly nation.  
Even your three or four year old son  
Will enjoy playing in the barn, until you're done.  
Even the smallest, they want to help.  
Take this small pail, give each cow a handful of kelp.  
It's time to feed calves, go get the pail,  
Just look at his smile, the calf's switching its tail.  
They grow up fast and before you know it,  
A young farmer you have, they really show it.  
They learn so much it's a major factor,  
Now it's time for them to drive tractor.  
This is just the way it happened to me,  
While talking farming on my dad's knee.  
My dad the farmer and biology teacher,  
Has turned me into a soil loving preacher.  
They say when people know how much you care,  
They'll care how much you know.

Harry Potter Defeats GMOs  
by Liam Kivirist 2013 (age 11)

For the first time ever, we explore the question:  
"Why is Harry Potter at the MOSES Organic Farming Conference?"

It was lunchtime at Hogwarts, the wizards were hungry,  
To the Great Hall rushed Harry, Ron and Hermione.  
But Hermione paused before she did dine,  
The meal wasn't looking so fine.  
She cried to the boys: "Look at that label on our Butterbeer,"  
It has high fructose corn syrup," she said with fear.  
"Genetically modified corn in our drink,"  
"The menu at Hogwarts really does stink."  
They left their meal, to the library they flew,  
Hermione, Ron and Harry too.  
As the three researched industrialized ag and GMOs,  
Anger and concern inside them rose.  
Blending fish and tomato DNA,  
All the pesticides and chemicals that spray.  
The dark Monsanto magic is Everywhere,  
Their learned finding healthy food is rare.  
Harry said, "This situation is much more grave,"  
"Organic farmers we must save."  
But a special spell was required fast,  
To grow food system change that will last.  
He whipped out a carrot, no wand he did need,  
Anti-GMO-is, may organic farming succeed.  

Epilogue: Six Months Later  
Change is happening at Hogwarts indeed,  
Let me get you up to speed.  
Hermione convinced the house elves to change,  
The menu; now all the chickens are free range.  
All GMO products the elves did drop.  
Hogwarts is now a member of the Willy Street co-op.  
Ron converted the Hogwarts Express to a biodiesel train,  
He started a community garden, growing veggies, fruit and grain.  
Harry was hungry for more knowledge and inspiration,  
He thought LaCrosse would be a great vacation.  
Hanging with 3500 farmers from the Midwest,  
He knows this is the biggest and the best.

Selections from the 2013 MOSES Conference Poetry Slam  
Harry Potter Defeats GMOs  
by Liam Kivirist 2013 (age 11)  

They grew up fast and before you knew it,  
A young farmer you have, they really show it.  
They learn so much it’s a major factor,  
Now it’s time for them to drive tractor.  
This is just the way it happened to me,  
While talking farming on my dad’s knee.  
My dad the farmer and biology teacher,  
Has turned me into a soil loving preacher.  
They say when people know how much you care,  
They’ll care how much you know.

Now it’s time to take all they know,  
The county fair, let’s go to the show.

The work is there, it will always get done,  
Saddle the pony, watch the kids have fun.

You can hug your wife anytime and call her honey,  
Know you have to agree, that’s worth more than money.

Two of my kids have farms of their own,  
They live next door, closer than a phone.

The third one is now home on the farm,  
Allowing me to set back my morning alarm.

These are some of the reasons daughter number two,  
Would love to raise her three daughters on a farm too.

But her husband with allergies and red eyes,  
Wouldn’t enjoy nature’s pollen-filled skies.

Now my grandsons want to take over my farms,  
I welcome them with open arms!
MOSES has many exciting field days, farm shows and workshops planned for the 2013 season. Topics appeal to a range of interests and experience levels. Check out the following listing for an opportunity to learn more about organic farming.

More details and registration info are on our website, www.mosesorganic.org. If you do not have access to the Internet, call the MOSES office at 715-778-5775 and we'll be happy to answer your questions or get you registered for an event.

We hope to see you this summer at these great MOSES events!

**Farm Hack Gardens of Eagan, Sunday, June 2, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.**
Northfield, Minnesota

Please note: A $15 fee will cover the cost of lunch, and pre-registration is required. For event details see the sidebar on page 17.

**Restoration Agriculture: An Introduction to Farm-Scale Permaculture with Mark Shepard, Friday, June 14, 1 – 5 p.m.**

New Forest Farm, Viroqua, Wisconsin

Please note: This event is free, but registration is required. Limited to 40 people. NO walk-ins will be allowed the day of the event. Registration opens May 1st.

New Forest Farm is a planned conversion of a typical row-crops grain farm into a commercial-scale, perennial agricultural ecosystem using oak savanna, successional brushland and eastern woodlands as the ecological models. Trees, shrubs, vines, canes, perennial plants and fungi are planted in association to produce food (for humans and animals), fuel, medicines, and beauty. Hazelnuts, chestnuts, walnuts and various fruits are the primary woody crops. The farm is entirely solar- and wind-powered and equipment is run with locally produced biofuels.

**MOSES’ Farmer of the Year Charlie Johnson, Organic Crops Field Day, Thursday, July 25, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

Johnson Farms, Madison, South Dakota

Join MOSES for a full-day farm tour hosted by the MOSES 2013 Organic Farmer of the Year, Charlie Johnson, and his family. This third generation farm has been organic since 1976, currently with 2,800 acres of corn, soybeans, oats and alfalfa. A simple, yet elegant, rotation builds soil organic matter. Timely cultivations using a variety of tools have resulted in clean fields and good yields for many years. Environmental stewardship and good animal husbandry are also hallmarks of this exceptional operation. A tour bus will take us around the farm from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., with lunch provided at noon. Dakota Rural Action and Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society are co-sponsors of this event.

**In Her Boots, Sustainable Agriculture for Women, By Women, Sunday, August 4, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.**
Canoe Creek Produce, Decorah, Iowa

Discuss farm diversification, beginning farmer challenges & resources, farming/financing, cheesemaking and goats with Mairi Spees of Sweet Earth Farm, MOSES Organic Resource Specialist Angie Sullivan, representatives from FoodCorps, and Lisa Kivirist of Inn Serendipity and MOSES Rural Women’s Project.

**In Her Boots, Sustainable Agriculture for Women, By Women, Sunday, August 18, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.**
Scotch Hill Farm, Brodhead, Wisconsin

This special session, hosted in partnership with the Fair Share Coalition, celebrates women farmers running CSA operations, sharing advice and resources for beginning farmers. Hosted by Dela Ends, Scotch Hill Farm along with Katy Dickson of Christensen Farms, Anna Hill of Oak Ridge Farm, Lisa Kivirist of Inn Serendipity and MOSES Rural Women’s Project, and other inspiring women CSA farmers who are members of the Fair Share Coalition. We will discuss CSA start-ups, beginning farmer challenges & resources, farming/family balance, and cottage food value-added opportunities.

**Grass-fed Beef, Row Crops and Poultry Field Day, Tuesday, August 27, 8a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**
Sandy Ridge Farm, Tampico, Illinois

$30 pre-registered/$40 at the door.

Please note: Pre-registration is preferred for this event.

Victor, Kendall and Derek Shrock lead a tour of their 1,200+ acres of certified organic crops, grass-fed beef and poultry business. Gerald Fry of Bovine Engineering and Consulting will join the pasture walk to discuss Kendall’s grass-fed beef operation. Derek will explain how he manages his poultry and markets eggs. Lunch will be served by the Shrock family. MOSES is partnering with the Illinois Organic Growers Association and University of Illinois Extension to offer this field day. Agri-Energy Resources and Prairie Hybrid Seed Company will also be on site for the event.

**To Events on page 8**

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**Nominate someone you know for 2013 MOSES Organic Farmer of the Year!**

Download a nomination form at www.mosesorganic.org/fix.html or mail in this information:

- Your name, address, phone, email and website (if you have one)
- Nominator’s name, address, phone, email and website
- Describe the farmer’s innovations in organic farming/livestock management
- Include how this farmer manages resources: soil, water, wildlife and biodiversity
- Explain how the farmer inspires other organic farmers/consumers.

Nominees must be certified organic and farm in the Midwest.

Send your nomination by Sept. 15, 2013 to:
MOSES, PO Box 339, Spring Valley, WI 54777

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**Organic Farmer of the Year Hall of Fame: 2013**

- Charlie Johnson, Johnson Farms, Madison, S.D.
- Francis and Susan Thieke, Radiance Dairy, Fairfield, Iowa
- The Vetter Family, The Grain Place, Marquette, Neb.
- John, Jane and Jarase Fisher-Merritt, Food Farm, Wessahlt, Minn.
- Tom and Irene Frantzen, New Hampton, Iowa
- Gary, Nicholas and Rosie Zimmer, Otter Creek Organic Dairy, Middleton, Wis.
- Florence and Dave Minor, Cedar Summit Farm, New Frague, Minn.
- Stan Schulte, Triple “S” Farms, Stewardson, Ill.
- Carmen and Sally Fernandez, A-Frame Farm, Madison, Minn.
- Martin and Alina Diffley, Gardens of Elgan, Minn.
- Linda Hailey and Richard deWilde, Harmony Valley Farm, Wis.

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**In Her Boots, Sustainable Agriculture for Women, By Women, Thursday, August 8, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.**
Kenyon, Minnesota

Discuss diversification through farmstay, farming as a single woman, starting farms mid-life, beginning farmer land access & financing, cheesemaking and goats with Mairi Doerr of Dancing Winds Farm, Paula Forman of Encore Farm, Kathy Zeman of Simple Harvest Farm Organics, Jan Jeannides of Renewing the Countryside, and Lisa Kivirist of Inn Serendipity and MOSES Rural Women’s Project.

To Events on page 8
They were evaluated for growth, meat quality, and profitability of conventionally raised dairy steers compared to organically raised dairy steers. This project was funded by a North Central SARE graduate student grant.

With the extreme drought conditions in the Upper Midwest during 2012, many dairy producers continue to be worried about high grain and hay prices. Therefore, producers are reducing the amount of grain fed to cattle to reduce feed costs and maintain profitability. At the West Central Research and Outreach Center's organic dairy, we recently completed a study where we evaluated the effects of growth, meat quality, and profitability of conventionally raised dairy steers compared to organically raised dairy steers. This project was funded by a North Central SARE graduate student grant.

There is an increase in global demand for organic products, especially grass-fed and organic beef. Consumers are becoming more concerned about the origins of food, and grass-fed and organic beef has the potential to address some of the concerns. Bull calves may represent a potential additional source of revenue for organic dairy producers. Currently, with the high price of organic grains in the United States, the male offspring of organic Holstein and crossbred dairy cattle represent a potential resource for pasture-raised beef in the Midwest.

This research study used bull calves born from March to May 2011 from the WCROC dairy. They were evaluated for growth, meat quality, consumer acceptability, and profitability over the next 14 to 20 months. Breed groups of calves were: Holstein; crossbred that included combinations of Holstein, Montbéliarde, and Swedish Red; and crossbreds that included combinations of Holstein, Jersey, Swedish Red, and Normande. The bull calves were assigned to one of three groups at birth: conventional, (pasture plus concentrate), and organic-grass only (100% pasture). The conventional steers were fed a diet of 80% concentrate and 20% roughage and received Component E-S hormone implants. The organic steers were fed a diet of organic corn and organic corn silage, and at least 30% of their diet consisted of organic pasture during the grazing season. The grass-only steers grazed pasture during the grazing season and were fed high quality hay or hay silage during the non-grazing season.

The conventional steers were sent to slaughter July 24, 2012 to the Tyson Fresh Meats plant in Dakota City, Neb. and at least 30% of organically raised dairy steers compared to conventional steer. The organic steers were sent to Lorentz Meats, Can- non Falls, Minn. on Sept. 19, 2012 and Nov. 13, 2012, respectively. Strip loins were collected for a consumer taste panel, which allowed 100 beef consumers to rate the beef for overall lik-ing and flavor. Profit was defined to include revenues and expenses for beef value, feed cost, pasture cost, health cost, and yardage.

The table on page 11 shows results for conventional dairy steers compared to organic and grass-only dairy steers. The grass-only dairy steers had greater days to slaughter, lower slaughter weights, lower gains from birth to slaughter, and had lower average daily gains than conventional steers. Conventional steers had 466 days to slaughter, organic had 328 days to slaughter, and grass-only had 584 days to slaughter. Slaughter weights (lb) were 1,263 (conventional), 1,037 (organic), and 884 (grass-only). Average daily gains from birth (lb/day) were 2.52 (conventional), 1.79 (organic), and 1.35 (grass-only). As expected, steers fed higher amounts of grain and concentrate had carcasses with greater fat thickness, larger ribeye area, and higher yield grades than steers fed higher amounts of pasture.

The fat from the grass-only steers was higher in Omega-3 fatty acid and lower in monounsaturated and saturated fat, which may indicate potential health ben-efits of grass-fed beef. Consumers who rated the beef found no significant difference for overall weight for the conventional and organic beef. The organic beef had significantly higher flavor liking than the conventional beef. How-ever, consumers rated the grass-only beef the lowest in overall liking and flavor liking.

To Steer Research on page 11

*West Central Research and Outreach Center, Morris, Minn. For more information, contact: Brad Heins, Assistant Professor, Organic Dairy Management, (320) 589-1711 or hein0106@umn.edu.

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PROOF/POSITIVE
In addition to the Minn. Food Association trainings, Rodrigo also took business and marketing classes through NeDA (Neighborhood Development Alliance), the LEDC (Latino Economic Development Center) and the NDC (Neighborhood Development Center).

Around the same time he began the training programs, Rodrigo began to search for his own farm. His main goal was to find one that was close to the Twin Cities, had a house and some farm buildings, and had at least some fields that could be immediately certified organic. The only way to do that was to look at a lot of farms. “A lot of what we liked was priced very high,” he said. “We looked at 30 farms at least.”

In 2008, Rodrigo and Juan Carlos were able to find and purchase their own farm, Cala Farm Origenes, LLC, located in the small agrarian community of Turtle Lake, Wis. “It was not perfect, but it had a good house, farm buildings and 16 acres of tillable land.” There were seven fields, two that were certified the first year and the rest had to be transitioned. “We tried to get a Beginning Farmer Loan from the Farm Services Agency, but it was too hard, too much paperwork. We wanted to find a different way.”

Ultimately, Rodrigo worked with his banker at his credit union to get the loan. With money coming in from their full-time factory jobs to cover a down payment, and a bank willing to work with their business plan, they were able to get the loan they needed for the farm.

The brothers started with mostly hand tools, raising vegetables for the accounts they had developed while renting land, and courting new customers as they grew. They now have a number of accounts including Chipotle Restaurants customers as they grew. They now have a number of accounts including Chipotle Restaurants, Coop Partners (broccoli, potatoes, heirloom tomatoes, garlic and broccoli. “We will start growing field corn and will start working with pigs this season. We have a lot of experience working with pigs in Mexico.”

Both brothers still work full-time off the farm, but Rodrigo has plans to move to full-time farming in three to five years. His brother plans to work off-farm for two more years than Rodrigo does. Rodrigo is married and has four children, all of whom still live in Mexico. His next move is to be financially independent. “It’s amazing to be here in the United States. His wife has only visited the farm once, and his parents will visit for the first time this year. “Sometimes, when you have a dream, you need to go forward. To change and create a dream, you need to take a risk.”

Rodrigo’s tips for beginning farmers:

- To be a farmer, you need to love farming first.
- Take business classes and develop a business plan.
- Rent land for a few years before buying your own farm.
- Find buyers and develop your accounts before buying a farm.
- Be prepared to work off the farm to generate cash flow for the first few years. 
- Be prepared to look at a lot of farms before you find the right one.
- With the right tools and equipment, you have more chances to succeed. 
- Record keeping is critical. This information will show the bank you have the skills to succeed.
- Set yearly goals for your business and revisit your plan and adjust for mistakes.

Joe Pedretti (joe@mosesorganic.org) is the MOSES Organic Education Specialist.

Rodrigo and his brother have made a number of improvements to the farm since they bought it in 2008. They now have three tractors and have mechanized a lot of their field work. They added a greenhouse and high tunnels to extend their season and have now transitioned all of their fields to organic production. They have also increased production and now focus mostly on five crops: onions, peppers, heirloom tomatoes, garlic and broccoli. “We will start growing field corn and will start working with pigs this season. We have a lot of experience working with pigs in Mexico.”

Soil Sisters: South Central Women in Sustainable Agriculture Farm Tour, Sunday, September 8, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. www.soilsisterswi.org Celebrate local agriculture by visiting small family farms led by Wisconsin women committed to a healthy, fresh future for our children. From eggplants to emus, sheep to solar energy, bed & breakfasts to beef – these six farms offer a unique diversity of farm experiences showcasing the summer’s bounty in one afternoon tour highlighting a cross-section of women farmers in south central Wisconsin: Primrose Valley Farm, Scotch Hill Farm, Lucky Dog Farmstay, Circle M Farm, Grassroots Farm, Inn Serendipity Farm and B&B, Sugar Maple Emu Farm. Free and open to the public.

Transitioning to Organic Field Day, Sunday, September 15, 1 – 5 p.m.
Gardens of Eagan, Northfield, Minnesota
MOSES New Organic Stewards program will partner with Gardens of Eagan and the Organic Field School to present a field day about the process of transitioning into a certified organic farming operation. If you are purchasing conventional land, and the task of becoming certified organic seems daunting, attend this field day and learn how the process works.

Vegetable Diversification, Monday, September 16, 12:30 – 4:30 p.m.
PrairiErth Farm, Bloomington, Illinois
For those who wish to scale up their vegetable operation, or want to learn how to diversify to include small-scale livestock or value-added products, join us for an afternoon at PrairiErth Farm with Hans & Katie Bishop. In addition to vegetables, this two-generation operation raises poultry, beef, pigs, and fresh baked goods. Marketing outlets include a CSA, farmers market and other direct-to-consumer channels. Learn to build synergy between diverse production systems while enticing consumers with a wide range of products.

Visit MOSES at these summer farm shows:
- Wis. FFA, June 12, Madison, Wis.
- Wis. Farm Technology Days, July 9-11, Dallas, Wis.
- Kickapoo Country Fair, July 27, La Farge, Wis.
- Farm Fest, Aug. 6-8, Redwood County, Minn.
- MOSES will also be partnering with Practical Farmers of Iowa and CROPP-Organic Valley, on several field days. See the MOSES website for details.

Events... from page 6
New Tool for Organic Growers:
PuraMaize Blocks GMO Contamination

The following is based on information provided by Blue River Hybrids.

One of the challenges organic farmers face is the potential of organic crop contamination from genetically modified crops. With ever-growing numbers of GMO crops and increasing acreage being planted with GMO seed, the problems for organic producers continue to escalate.

In the 2012 publication, “GMO Contamination Prevention—What Does It Take,” Jim Riddle of the University of Minnesota Southwest Research and Outreach Center notes that “Since different types of agriculture are practiced on adjoining fields, suitable measures during planting, cultivation, harvest, transport, storage, and processing are needed in order to prevent the accidental mixing of GMO and non-GMO materials. Contamination may result from seed impurities, wind or insect-borne cross-pollination, volunteer or feral plants, and/or inadequate harvest and handling practices.”

Riddle continues: “As of 2012, numerous varieties of GMO field corn have been released, with traits including herbicide resistance, insecticidal properties to kill corn borers and/or corn rootworms, and alpha-amylase to break down starch for production of ethanol. Herbicide-resistant soybeans, canola, sugar beets, alfalfa, and summer squash have been released, along with insecticidal cotton and sweet corn and disease-resistant papaya. Many crops are “stacked” to contain multiple traits of herbicide resistance and insecticidal protein.”

Although there are ways to minimize potential contamination, such as the timing of planting and maintaining clear communication with neighbors, there is rising concern in the organic community about the issue.

New Option Available
PuraMaize, developed via plant breeding to create corn hybrids with the ability to resist cross fertilization by GMO pollen, is now available in organic yellow dent corn seed. An important new tool to assist organic growers, PuraMaize provides a choice for grain buyers, grain exporters, and organic livestock farmers who want assurance that their grain will be free from GMO contamination or color impurities.

The PuraMaize gene system was first developed in the late 1990s by Tom Hoegemeyer, Cerrado Natural Systems Group, while exploring ways to preserve color purity in white corn. Although ultimately another method was derived to ensure white corn’s pureness, Hoegemeyer recognized that PuraMaize could be the solution to the emerging problem with GMOs. In 2000, Hoegemeyer began breeding the PuraMaize gene into field corn using traditional plant breeding, not genetic engineering. Working with tropical varieties of corn over 10 years, Hoegemeyer brought together specific gene characteristics from obscure sources and bred out deleterious “baggage” to produce the PuraMaize gene system. Cerrado Natural Systems Group, an independent company not affiliated with any seed company, holds the PuraMaize patent, which is limited to the use of GA1S in yellow dent corn.

In 2007, Blue River Hybrids of Kelley, Iowa, secured a license to breed the PuraMaize gene system into its elite corn hybrids. Maury Johnson, an owner and founder of Blue River Hybrids recalls, “We concluded that PuraMaize would be a tremendous asset to farmers who wish to prevent GMO contamination, so we invested resources in breeding the PuraMaize gene system into hybrids that meet our standards for dependable performance in organic environments.”

Scott Johnson, Ph.D., another owner and founder of Blue River, led the effort to breed the PuraMaize gene system into Blue River’s corn hybrids, enabling Blue River to be first-to-market with three PuraMaize corn hybrids in 2012.

The Science of PuraMaize
PuraMaize is a natural gene-blocking system which impedes fertilization from GMO and blue corn pollen. It is a pollen recognition system, which strongly prefers its own pollen. When GMO or blue corn pollen drifts onto the silk of PuraMaize corn hybrids, the “foreign” pollen is quickly overtaken by the PuraMaize pollen which travels down the silk channel at a faster rate and fertilizes the ovule first. As a pollen-recognition system, PuraMaize does not affect the growth of the plant nor grain fill of the developing ear. It does not alter taste or other agronomic or functional properties.

Some varieties of tropical corn cannot be pollinated by other varieties due to the presence of one or more cross-incompatibility genes. Known in corn genetics as gametophyte factors, or GaS, they selectively control fertilization by only accepting pollen from corn plants with the same genotype. Ga1S and Ga28 are two such pollen-blocking genes. PuraMaize is a gene system made up of the GA1S and other genes or gene expressions.

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Farmers see PuraMaize’s Success
Blue River Hybrids has conducted several years of replicated testing of PuraMaize at 20 locations, with consistently positive and reliable results. In side-by-side field tests with GMO corn, PuraMaize either eliminates or virtually eliminates contamination.

Bred into elite Blue River corn hybrids, PuraMaize yields are competitive with similar organic hybrids. Farmers have seen the reliable yield performance they have come to expect.

Alan Ward of Viborg, Wis. has been happy with PuraMaize results in his fields: “One major challenge I faced was the delay in planting. Up until PuraMaize, I was planting at least four weeks after the conventional farmers to avoid their pollination window. That shortened my growing season and my yields. I also had trouble getting natural dry-down with such a long growing season.”
In this column we provide answers to common questions received by MOSES organic specialists. Feel free to give MOSES a call; Harriet at 888-551-4769 or the MOSES office at 715-775-5775, with any questions about organic agriculture you’d like answered…We will do our best to help!

Question: I have the opportunity to rent some pasture from my neighbor who hasn’t used it in many years. What do I need to do to get this certified, and what is the best way to start pasturing organically?

Answer: by Organic Specialist Joe Pedretti

You can add rented land, or new fields of your own, by adding them to your current year field plan and providing your organic certifier with the previous three years of field histories. If the land has been truly fallow, you can substitute a letter from the land owner stating that no inputs have been used. This letter is usually called “Prior Land Use Declaration” or something similar and is available from your certifier.

Make sure that prohibited substances have not been used for at least three years. It is not uncommon to find that the owner may have spot treated weeds or applied manure. If herbicides have been used, it will take a full three-year transition from the last application date before the land can be certified. Conventional manure is allowed, but be sure that the manure and bedding source does not contain prohibited materials like recycled lumber waste, has not been treated with herbicides or insecticides or had chemical treatments to control odor or nutrient loss. Ask a lot of questions to be sure there are no surprises.

A soil test should be a top priority. Fallow land may or may not be fertile. The soil type and previous land use have a large impact on the quality of the soil. Large fields may even have multiple soil types and can vary in fertility from location to location. It is extremely rare to find a soil that isn’t lacking in some nutrients, and may even have an overabundance of others. The soil test can help you plan for the right fertilizer applications.

In general, fallow land tends to need renovation: fertility amendments and, often, reseeding for improved forage quality. Fallow land tends to revert to lower quality grasses over time. So you should also take an assessment of the plant population and type. You can request an assessment and assistance with a grazing plan from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) which will have a grazing specialist available for consultations. If you look in the blue pages (government pages) of your phone book, you can find your county NRCS office. The grazing specialist can help you assess your pasture quality, help you design a fencing and paddock layout and can determine ideal stocking rates. The NRCS also has programs providing cost share for some of these improvements, if you have a long-term lease on this pastureland.

Pastures, too, can revert to low-quality grasses and plants will need to be renovated. Ideally you want a mixture of cool and warm season grasses and a mix of legumes and other broad-leaf plants to provide a resilient mix of forages throughout the growing season and changing climatic conditions. Legumes can sometimes be seeded into existing pastures by broadcasting them at the right time of year, typically late winter. If the thatch (root mass and decaying materials) is very thick, you may need to use a no-till seed drill to open up the soil enough for the new seed to make contact. These drills can sometimes be rented through local grazing groups. Good fertility, the right plant population and a good rotational paddock design are the keys to getting good production on your new pasture. Make sure you follow all requirements for your seed, such as planting organic seed or using seed that does not contain any prohibited treatments or inoculants.

Fencing that is already in place can be used even if the posts had been treated with prohibited materials, although your certifier may require an interior fence to prevent grazing right next to these posts. Any new fencing must comply with organic standards and cannot contain these prohibited materials.

205, 206 (f) The producer must not use lumber treated with arsenate or other prohibited materials for new installations or replacement purposes in contact with soil or livestock.

Natural wood, metal posts, and concrete posts are allowed. ACZ copper-treated posts are allowed with restrictions such as having a buffer in place between the posts and organic grazing land.

Check with your certifier for details about fencing, or refer to this article for specifics: www.mosesorganic.org/attachments/broadcaster/obonline194.html#T7.

Buffer zones are required along any pasture that borders conventional fields. A 25-30 foot buffer, which cannot be grazed or harvested for organic use, will help prevent contamination from neighboring conventional fields. In most cases, an interior electric or similar fence will be adequate. The buffer zone can be harvested mechanically, or by grazing non-organic livestock such as horses, it cannot be sold or used as organic.

To Specialists on page 11

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To Specialists on page 11
Question: Can I sell organic fruits and vegetables from plants and planting stock I buy at my local garden center?

Answer: by Organic Specialist Harriet Behar

You probably will not be able to buy plants at your local garden store. When using annual transplants (tomatoes, peppers, onion plants, etc.), the plants must be certified organic in order to sell organic produce from them in any given crop year.

The land you raise them on must be free of prohibited materials for 36 months prior to your first organic harvest. If you have planted nonorganic annual transplants in the same fields in the past, your certification agency may consider the land to be nonorganic, and require you to wait three years after that planting to have your first organic harvest. This decision may depend on whether the plants were bare root or were transplanted with their nonorganic potting mix. There is some difference between certifiers. Some allow one year to pass and others require three years. The interpretation of this regulation is something you want to discuss with your certification agency if you are requesting organic certification for the first time.

Your transplants cannot be purchased from an “exempt from certification” (under the $5,000 limit) operation. They must be certified organic, grown by you or someone else who has a valid organic certificate. Some natural food stores may be able to provide you with an organic certificate for the plants they sell, but most garden centers do not sell certified organic transplants.

You can grow the transplants yourself, using approved planting media which does not contain any synthetic fertilizers, fungicides, wetting agents or other prohibited materials. These items are not mandated to be listed on the label of commercially available potting media, so you must get information in writing from the manufacturer detailing the ingredients, stating that the media has not been treated with prohibited fungicides, insecticides, etc. There are many organically approved potting mix and input suppliers. For resources, see the MOSES Resource Directory (www.mosesorganic.org/resourcedirectory.html) or the OMRI Products List (www.omri.org).

Be very careful when purchasing any fertility input or potting mix, since the word “organic” on these items does not always mean the same thing as “approved for organic production.” Long before the USDA organic regulation, the word “organic” on a label meant it contained the element carbon. To find products you can use, you must look for the OMRI seal and the words “approved for organic production.” Always verify with your organic certification agency that whatever you want to use is acceptable before you buy it.

For fruit trees, raspberry bushes, or other perennials, you are mandated to search for organic planting stock. However, if you cannot find the variety, quality or quantity you want as organic, you can use non-organic planting stock. You must document this search.

In a recent National Organic Program guidance it was clarified that an organic harvest from non-organic planting stock can be done immediately after beginning organic management and planting into organic soil. However, you cannot create and sell organic planting stock from parent nonorganic stock until it has been managed or treated with prohibited materials for 36 months or not, or you are exempt from certification. If you buy a non-organic tarragon plant, you can sell the tarragon as organic immediately after planting in organic soil, but could not make cuttings and sell those as organic tarragon plants for 12 months.

Items such as potatoes, garlic, and sweet potatoes (in other words, roots, tubers, rhizomes, shoots, leaf or stem cuttings) are subject to the organic search, and can be planted as non-organic if none were found. However, each year there is more and more availability of these items as organic, and your search must truly cover not just your local store, but also the many mail order and internet operations that sell these items.

Remember, if you sell less than $5,000 per year in organically labeled products, then you are exempt from organic inspection and certification. However, whether or not you are required or exempt from organic certification, you must still follow the same rules.
Incubator Farms Grow New Farmers

By Lindsay Rebhan

The New Farmer Corner highlights issues of particular interest to those new to farming, no matter what age. If you have an idea for an article, contact Lindsay at neworganicstewards@gmail.com. See the New Organic Stewards webpage www.neworganicstewards.org.

New farmers are commonly challenged in finding support for training, land and capital investments. Beginning farmers may need to consider a large amount of debt in order to start their farm business. They may not have farming backgrounds, and have much to learn about business and production. One solution to filling the diverse needs of the next generation of farmers is through incubator farm programs.

An incubator farm offers land, technical assistance and equipment for beginning farmers during the critical early years of start-up. There are only a few incubator farms in the Midwest. Organic Field School in Northfield, Minn., is one. Organic Field School (OFS) is a 501c3 nonprofit of the Wedge Community Co-op, hosted at Gardens of Eagan. Three farms are currently “incubating” at OFS: Fazenda Boa Terra, Bossy Acres, and Humble Pie. Both Bossy Acres and Humble Pie will start their first season at Organic Field School in 2013.

“We’re proud to welcome two such distinctive farms into our incubator program,” OFS Program Director, Allison Goin, said. “As OFS broadens its reach in the community, we know that farms like Bossy Acres and Humble Pie represent the future of our growing, robust organic farming community, and we’re looking forward to fostering these viable, independent farm businesses.”

Karla Pankow and Elizabeth Millard co-own Bossy Acres. This will be their second season farming, and their first at Organic Field School. An incubator program is “an environment that fosters education, experience and hands-on learning,” Karla explained. “It enables us to have the interaction, land, wealth of experience and a networking foundation. These local pioneers have opened a whole new world. Now we get to focus on farming. We can learn systems and efficiencies. It’s an umbrella of support to own and operate our business.”

John Middleton and Lidia Dungue co-own Fazenda Boa Terra. “This is our third season,” John said. “We moved in 2010 and founded the business while working at Gardens of Eagan. Our current operation is a CSA vegetable farm with 110+ varieties on five acres. We’ve done CSA farming for 10 years. There is a huge difference from being an employee to managing the books, understanding production, and running a business.”

Humble Pie Farm was started in 2012 by Jennifer Nelson and Mike Leck, both of whom gained organic farming experience as employees of Gardens of Eagan. In 2013, they will grow cut flowers and herbs at Organic Field School as a specialty add-on to CSA shares of Fazenda Boa Terra.

Incubator Farms Grow New Farmers

The incubator farm is “Land plus materials, support and resources—a safety net,” John explained. “Land access allows us to develop our business and clientele, without spending our nest egg on land, or taking out a large loan first. For example, we’ve purchased a post-harvest handling walk in cooler and quality washable harvest totes. (Working in the incubator) allows us to do things the way we want to, and decreases our waste. We are able to invest in specialty equipment, so when we’re ready to buy a farm we’ll hit the ground running without having to do it all at once.”

An incubator farm’s available space, farm type and resources will dictate how the incubator program will operate. At Organic Field School, Fazenda Boa Terra joins with the other farms in purchasing items such as cover crop seed, row cover and irrigation supplies, to get better prices and save on shipping. John explains that the incubator farmers have easy access to supplies and are able to “pay for it as we need it.” John also appreciates being able to share greenhouse space, and being able to schedule equipment use. The opportunities for cross-pollination are great.

There’s a need for more incubator farms. The opportunity sets up a natural framework to connect experienced farms with beginning farmers. “It would be awesome to see more veteran farmers stepping up and giving an opportunity like this to new farmers,” Karla added. Gardens of Eagan was an incubator for Loon Organics, renting land, greenhouse space, tractor time, and mentoring support. “We heard about this experience, as Loon Organics was our mentor in the MOSES mentor program,” she said. “We started courting Gardens of Eagan and Organic Field School. It was a good fit and they let us on board. We are all learning together.”

This is going to be an amazing year for the Bossy ladies. “The smallest taste of this experience already has made us know we can’t imagine going back to our inefficient system of last season,” Karla said. “Driving to multiple sites, not having proper post harvest handling resources, working five times as hard. We feel like we won the lottery! Our time and energy is not diffused on extraneous things that are not farming. We’ll probably be renting land, and poor land at that. It’s so much more than just land access—which was our big focus initially. Our operation last year was farming 1.5 acres with 47 members and markets. This year at Organic Field School will be with three acres, 71 members, farmers markets and specialty markets.”

Aside from the land rental, Bossy Acres has access to high quality coolers, the pack shed, greenhouse, tractors, implements and irrigation at a subsidized cost. “We get advantages like bulk ordering. They have storage, fork lifts and we can place separate orders and get bulk volume items, compost, potting soil, vermiculite, poultry litter, organic fertilizer blends” Karla said. “Sometimes you just don’t know what you need. We are learning what parts/
Cropland... from page 4

“Bankers did not understand organics at first,” Bryan explained. “Bankers are very familiar with conventional but not organic. In order to get financing, we had to contract all of our corn and use that to cash flow.”

Crop insurance too has been a challenge, particularly for small grains. The Kerkaerts use a combination of conventional insurance (for corn and soybeans) and the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program insurance (for small grains). The Risk Management Agency (RMA) provides insurance for organic and transitional crops at conventional prices. RMA will insure damage caused by insects, disease or weeds if recognized organic farming practices fail to provide control. Bryan, however, expects that crop insurance decisions will become easier in the future for organic farmers. For the first time, in 2012, the Kerkaerts were able to insure certified organic corn and soybeans at projected organic prices.

Finally, Bryan has been disappointed with his transition experience on CRP acreage. He acknowledges that there is a learning curve when transitioning land but suggests that challenges become exacerbated when tilling up CRP ground. “There’s a reason that the land was put in CRP.” Bryan said. “Nutrient availability has been really low. We’ve worked hard to make sure that fertility is available at the right time.” In Bryan’s experience, the CRP land didn’t produce well until the third year following initial tillage.

After overcoming many hurdles, the Kerkaerts face one final challenge: rental costs. Land prices in their area have gone up by 25 percent annually over the past few years. This has become a significant cash flow issue for the Kerkaerts. Their solution: negotiate long-term rental agreements. “We didn’t go to auctions and outbid someone who’s been farming land for 20-30-40 years,” Bryan added.

Goals: The Kerkaerts fully intend to continue farming organically but say they’d like to do so only under long-term lease agreements or, ideally, on farm land of their own. “Five years ago, we had to learn the agronomics of how to farm organically,” Bryan said. “Now we need some land security. We’d like to buy a farm and pay for it before we retire.” The Kerkaerts are actively looking for a farmstead with land so they can eliminate the drive time to fields and the financial uncertainty associated with rental agreements.

Advice: “Your transition years are less years,” Bryan explained. “You have to change your mindset when switching to organics—you have to think long term about rotations and really plan ahead—for productivity and cash flow.”

Gigi DiGiacomo is a research fellow at the Department of Applied Economics, University of Minnesota.

This profile was prepared for the Tools for Transition project-a four-year research and education effort funded by the USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Transition scholarships are available for Minnesota field crop and dairy farmers participating in the Farm Business Management Program. Contact Meg Moonihan for scholarship information at 651-201-6616 or email meg.moonihan@state.mn.us.

PuraMaize... from page 9

short season. PuraMaize is a game-changer for organic farmers because it will allow us to plant how we want and when we want without the worry of GMO contamination.”

Recent GMO testing by independent agency Genetic ID of Fairfield, Iowa, rated farmer PuraMaize samples as “GMO Not Detected, negative at the operational limit of 0.05%.” This affirms that PuraMaize performs as expected, making it possible for the organic farmer to grow a GMO-free crop.

Although PuraMaize is confirmed to prevent contamination, it is not, however, a silver bullet. PuraMaize cannot stop pollen movement, but it can block successful fertilization by non-PuraMaize pollen. Farmers still have to clean out and monitor all equipment used for planting, harvesting, and hauling grain. For more information on other ways to reduce GMO contamination, refer to “GMO Contamination Prevention- What Does it Take?”

Organic Certification
PuraMaize has been reviewed and approved for organic use by OCAI of Lincoln, Neb., the organic certifier for Blue River Hybrids. Blue River Hybrids currently offers three PuraMaize hybrids: 38PM36 is USDA certified organic, 47PM36cnv and 71PM50cnv are provided as conventional untreated seed, approved for use on organic farms under the NOP provision that an organic equivalent is not available. Plans are being made to offer organic 71PM50 for the 2014 growing season.

To learn more about PuraMaize including information on summer field days and conference workshops, visit www.blueriverorgseed.com or call the Blue River Hybrids office 800-370-7979. To read Jim Riddle’s publication “GMO Contamination Prevention- What Does it Take?” go to http://mosesorganic.org/otherresources_farmers.html#farmersites.

PuraMaize is a registered trademark of Cer rado Natural Systems Group, Inc., of Hooper, Neb.
be unable to buy the other children’s interest in it, potentially resulting in the sale of the farm.

This is especially true for organic farmers, who must renew organic certification each year. There is not be a lot of time to transition the farm and maintain its organic status. A farm left in limbo while a family feud or complicated financial situation is untangled risks losing its organic certification simply through neglect. It is clear that farmers seeking to transfer their farm to the next generation in one piece must engage in estate planning.

Organic Farmer’s Estate Planning Toolkit

So what can a sustainable farmer do to avoid the pitfalls listed above? First of all, it is vital to work with an estate planner to tailor a plan that meets the needs. The following are a few tools a farmer might use to transfer not only the farm, but the farm’s organic or sustainable nature.

Tool #1: Agriculture Conservation Land Easements. Farmers uncertain about who will receive the land after their death, or who know that the next generation does not cherish sustainable farming practices, may be able secure the farm’s status through the sale of an agriculture conservation land easement. Such an easement can be tailored to fit each farm and to include organic or sustainable practices. Including these practices in the easement ensures the land’s future use as an organic or sustainable farm.

Tool #2: Agricultural Preservation Programs. The Wisconsin Working Lands Initiatives offer a variety of programs seeking to preserve agriculture. They offer various levels of tax breaks for program participation. Farmers can participate in Farmland Preservation Agreements, Farmland Preservation Zoning, and Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement Programs, as described above. Preservation Agreements and Preservation Zoning are briefly discussed below. While these programs are not particularly tailored to protect the organic status of a farm, they can help to ensure that a farm remains a farm.

If you are not a Wisconsin farmer, you may wish to ask your county agent or state’s Department of Agriculture about similar programs.

Tool #3: Trusts. Trusts can be used for any lawful purpose and are useful in a variety of ways to promote sustainable and organic farming practices on a parcel of land. A farmer wishing to encourage future generations to farm sustainably, but who is shy of land conservation easements, may consider placing the farm or farming equipment in a trust. Trusts can be very flexible, and it may be possible for a farmer to place the entire farm in a trust and direct the trustee to only allow organic farming practices.

Tool #4: Wills and Marital Agreements. Wills can control the disposition of the probate estate, such as property that is not in a trust. A will may be a viable option if the farmer does not anticipate any problems with the next generation continuing farming the farm. In addition, a farmer could add a component to the farmer’s will which requires a deed restriction to be put on any land transfer (see Tool #7). However, it is important to remember that marital property, which may very well include the farm, is owned equally by the spouses, so both spouses should be on board with the estate plan. In general, a will is the best way to dictate a property’s usage into the future, but a farmer can memorialize his or her wish that the farm continue its sustainable practices. While communicating one’s wishes with the family before death is the best option, this temporary reminder may help prevent family members from opposing the deceased farmer’s wishes. Additionally, marital agreements can be used to ensure that both spouses transfer a farm to the same person.

Tool #5: Long-Term Rental Contracts and Options to Purchase. In the right circumstance, a farmer who knows that his or her family does not intend to farm the land after the farmer’s death could consider a long-term rental contract. Including longer terms and organic or sustainable techniques in the lease agreement could help ensure those land usage. A farmer who is aware that his or her family is not interested in farming sustainably or organically, but who knows someone who is, could prepare a lease agreement with an option to purchase as part of the estate planning process.

Tool #6: Conservation Reserve Program’s Transition Incentives Program. A retiring farmer with expiring CRP land may use the Transitions Program to allow a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer (cannot be a family member) to begin a Conservation Reserve Program—or the new farmer may begin transitioning to organic farming. The retiring farmer must then sell the land to the new farmer, or enter into a long-term lease of at least five years with the new farmer. The program gives the retiring farmer acreage written into the deed of CRP payments, while helping the next generation of farmers. While not specific to organic farming, the CRP program does tend to ease the transition of land from conventional to organic farming if the land has been fallow.

Tool #7: Deed Restrictions. In theory, when a farmer sells or otherwise transfers land, the farmer can put any restrictions he or she wants right on the deed. This can be useful if the owner wants to guarantee the farm’s sustainable use after his or her death. However, it considerably ties the hands of the recipient. It may take court intervention (or a release form prepared written into the deed) to get the restriction released. And it would almost certainly significantly impact the sale price of the land if the children or other recipient had legitimate reasons for selling.

Tool #8 (And Perhaps the Most Important of All): Communication. Talking about estate planning and one’s last wishes is vitally important. The best estate plans can go awry if the farmer fails to communicate his or her wishes with the family. This is especially important if the estate plan contains provisions that may upset or surprise members of the family.

Estate planning can be a difficult topic, even for what seems like a simple estate. For organic and other sustainable farmers hoping to preserve their land’s sustainable farming practices for future generations, this problem can become even more difficult. However, with a proper estate plan in place, farmers can help ensure their wishes will be carried out and their way of farming will continue.

Edited by Terry Dunst, Babke Norman, S.C., New Richmond, Wisconsin
While the number of women farmers increased nearly 30 percent according to the last US Census of Agriculture, few resources exist to support this movement, particularly for women launching small-scale, sustainable operations with a goal of growing healthy, seasonal food for their local community. Not any more.

The Rural Women's Project, a venture of the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES), uniquely champions these women farmers. The project recently received a 2012 Top Rural Development Initiative Award from Wisconsin Rural Partners in recognition of its innovative approaches to women farmer training and outreach.

"Since the MOSES Rural Women's Project (RWP) launched in 2009, we've connected with and trained over 1,000 women farmers, the vast majority of which are beginning and young farmers," MOSES Executive Director Faye Jones said. "It's an honor for MOSES to receive this award and to showcase the amazing movement and mission of women farmers both in Wisconsin and across the country who are committed to stewarding the landscape and raising healthy food that positively affects our rural areas."

“These Top Rural Development Initiative awards are designed to identify, highlight, and share innovative models, practices and programs that have a positive impact on rural Wisconsin communities and to provide a mechanism for rural communities to learn from each other," added Rick Rolfsmeyer, Executive Director of Wisconsin Rural Partners (WRP). WRP is a statewide non-profit organization that develops leadership, networks and partnerships with other non-profits and local food systems and build committed, engaged partnerships with other non-profits and agencies such as the Wisconsin Farmers Union and the Women, Food and Agriculture Network (WFAN). Three key rural Wisconsin projects include the “In Her Boots: Sustainable Farming for Women By Women” on-farm training series, “Women Caring for the Land” conservation training for women landowners, and “Soil Sisters: South Central Wisconsin Women in Sustainable Agriculture Farm Tour.” These initiatives receive support from a variety of sources, including USDA Risk Management and Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE). “Plate to Politics,” a partnership project with WFAN, encourages and supports women farmers to take on community leadership roles to promote healthy food systems change.

"Each of these initiatives came to life based on the collaborative networking and peer-driven model that women farmers learn best from each other," shared Lisa Kivirist, founder and coordinator of the RWP. Kivirist and her family also run Inn Serendipity Farm and B&B outside Monroe, Wis. She is the co-author of Farmstead Chef, Rural Renaissance and ECO-preneuring.

“Lisa Kivirist exemplifies the collaborative spirit of women farmers today who see their farm business as much more than just a job or a paycheck–it’s a passionate calling that is driven by a desire to truly transform our food system and increase healthy food access for future generations," Faye added. "Lisa's leadership and vision creates connections and opportunities for women farmers that never existed before in our state's rural communities, particularly for young and beginning growers who are drawn to her positive energy for championing new farm business start-ups."
(NEWS BRIEFS)

Organic Research and Outreach in the North Central Region Report Released
A new report from the Ceres Trust includes state-specific details about current and past organic research, student organic farms, certified organic research land and animals, sources of organic research funding, dissemination of organic research results through field days and peer-reviewed journals, and organic education efforts of nonprofit organizations. www.cerestrust.org

Organic Contributes to Climate Protection
In a newly released study German Professor Kurt-Jürgen Hülsbergen from Technische Universität München (TUM) developed a comprehensive model that shows organic farming not only produces less greenhouse gases, but also uses less energy than conventional farming techniques. The benefit of organic practices is especially apparent in dairy farming. http://bit.ly/13h2Kxpc

NSAC Food Safety Website
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition has launched a new food safety website with resources for farmers, on-farm processors, and consumers. NSAC’s new site provides an overview and background of the Food Safety Modernization Act, information about two proposed rules, and instructions on how to comment. http://sustainableagriculture.net/fsma/

Help for Creating Farm Food Safety Plans
Food safety should be on everyone’s mind, and recent legislation provides funding for the Conservation Stewardship Program, which was left out of the government spending bill last October. This program rewards farmers and ranchers for good conservation measures currently in place, plus provides cost-share funds for additional conservation activities. CSP applications are managed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). You can apply through your local NRCS office.

Minn. Specialty Crop Grants
The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is accepting grant proposals for specialty crop research under the USDA’s Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. The goal of the program is to fund projects that will increase the competitiveness of specialty crops. For a complete list of crops that qualify for research, go to www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp. For a copy of the Minnesota Specialty Crop Block Grant RFP/Grant Manual and application form, go to www.mda.state.mn.us/grants/grants/specialty.aspx. MDA will accept applications from eligible entities submitted by 4:00 p.m. on May 29, 2013.

Midwest Vegetable Production Guide Released
The Midwest Vegetable Production Guide for Commercial Growers from Purdue University Extension is available for sale in print, or online. Topics include soil, transplants, diseases, production, and specific crop recommendations, with chapters on organic vegetable production and on reduced-risk pesticides/biopesticides. www.bit.ly/13h2Kxpc

Videos on Soil, Hoophouses, and Coolers Available in Hmong and Spanish
Spring Rose Growers Cooperative in Madison, Wisconsin, has released three educational YouTube videos in both Hmong and Spanish. Titles include: “How to build a low cost hoophouse,” “How to make an organic soil mix,” and “How to build a low cost cooler.” http://bit.ly/2zVEgK

UW-Extension Compost Survey
 UW Extension is asking farmers to fill out a survey about on-farm composting practices in Wisconsin, to determine if the farming community needs assistance with their composting operations. The survey is web based and should take about 5 minutes to complete. https://uwex.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6erRsKTJuVnxuLgp

Diffley Wins Book Award
Alina Diffley, former MOSES Board member, was recently awarded one of the 25th Annual Minnesota Book Awards under the category of Memoir and Creative Non-fiction for her recent book, Turn Here, Sweet Corn. The annual Minnesota Book Awards program is a project of The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library and the City of Saint Paul.

KOPN Food Sleuth Radio
Join Melinda Hemmelgarn, MOSES Board member, registered dietitian and investigative nutritionist, for 28-minute, weekly interviews with national experts in food, health and agriculture. Provocative, practical and personal, Food Sleuth Radio helps us think beyond our plates to find “food truth.” Podcasts are available at www.prx.org/series/32432-food-sleuth-radio

CSP Sign-up Now Open for 2013
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system. They are not organic because you can’t become organic and have the ability to change once you are certified.

The cost of being organic is high, but the benefits are also high. Organic farming is not just a way to make a living, it is a way to make a difference. Organic farmers are changing the world, one field at a time. They are showing that it is possible to grow food in a sustainable way, and that it is possible to do so without the use of synthetic chemicals.

So, if you are thinking about becoming organic, or if you are already organic, I encourage you to keep going. It is a hard road, but it is a road worth traveling. Organic farmers are changing the world, and they need our support.

If you would like to learn more about organic farming, or if you would like to get involved in the movement, please visit the website of the National Organic Farmers Association at www.nofa.org. They have a wealth of information and resources available.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I would be happy to help in any way I can.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Contact Information]
For Sale: Case “950” self-propelled windrower, 10 ft. cut, draper head, good condition. Also windrow-er trailer. Ridgeway, Iowa. Call 563-379-2726.


For Sale: 3-pitch, 2-man operated seeder or pumpkin planter, $375.00. Glenbeulah, Wis. Don Schroeder. 920-529-3510.


For Sale: 4-row Kovar drag, long lines, used very little, excellent condition. $2500.00 OBO. 4-row LP flamer, $1500.00 OBO. Mayville. Wis. Call Gordy at 920-904-4962.


Wanted: Front or mid-mount 6-row cultivator to fit J.D. tractor or other equipment. Greenwood, Wis. Call 715-229-4681.

For Sale: For Sale: Red polled Holstein bulls. Some A2A2 and Homozygous polled. Eaton, Ohio. Contact Mark Yeazel at y2kows@gmail.com or call 937-533-0557.

For Sale: Twenty-five Angus cows pregnant with MOSA-certified organic calves. 100% grass-fed, free-range cattle. Vet verified fall calves. South- west Wis. Call 608-452-2861.


For Sale: Certified organic hay, first crop, $4.75 per bale. Certified organic straw, fine chopped, $3.50 per bale. Ray Ronniger, N2955 State Rd 54, Melrose, Wis. 54642-8133.

For Sale: Certified organic corn, $16 per bushel. Ear or shelled. Ray Ronniger, N2955 State Rd 54, Melrose, Wis. 54642-8133.


For Sale: Open pollinated seed corn, MN13 88-day, Wapsie Valley 85-day. MOSA certified. 50# bags for $89.00. Call Rich Holman, 715-684-2488 or 715-410-1060 (cell).

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For Sale: Organic Broadcasted Classified Ad Form

All ads must be pre-paid by Oct 1, Dec 1, Feb 1, April 1, June 1, or Aug 1 to run in the next issue! We encourage you to place your classified ad online at www.mosesorganic.org/broadcaster.html or email it directly to broadcaster@mosesorganic.org. Or, mail this form and pre-payment to: MOSES, PO Box 339, Spring Valley, WI 54767.

If you have questions, contact Jill at 715-778-5775 or broadcaster@mosesorganic.org.

Write your ad in the blanks below. Each blank can hold a word or a number. Punctuation is free.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8 9 10 11 12 13 14
15 16 17 18 19 20 21
22 23 24 25

up to 15 more words for an additional $6.00

Amount due: 25 words or less. $12.00-
Up to an additional 15 words $6.00=
Total per ad =

Payment Information:

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Mailing Address: ________________________________________
City: __________________ State: __________ Zip: ____________
Phone: __________________ email: ________________________

Method of Payment: (please check one) □ Check (enclosed) □ Credit Card (MC/Visa only)
CC number; ________________________ Expiration date; __________
signature (needed for cc payment): __________________________

Opportunities: Female on small farm offering opportunity for another female who wants to learn and experience the work and fun involved with Jerseys, Belties, gardens and our corner of God’s creation. Business arrangement only. Different options available. Let’s talk. Wetfee, Wis. Leave message at 715-669-3472.

Opportunity: Peaceful Country Living! Rent a room, share a beautiful home on a CSA farm. Board your horse and ride in an outdoor arena, pasture, woods. Enjoy organic produce, honey, eggs, bonfires. Easy commute into Rochester, Minn. $350.00/month. Available May 1. Contact Norm Gross at norm.the.farmer@gmail.com

For Sale: SUSTAINABLE LIVING NEAR THE BWCAW! Small town homestead for sale at edge of Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness – Ely end. Well-insulated, two BR, one bath, 1995 rambler on a 80 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. Ricing beds, whitefish/tulibee netting, and public access all nearby. $62,500.00. Call Jan Erchul, Bear Island Real Estate, 218-349-0515.

50 ACRE NORTHERN ILLINOIS ECOLOGICAL FARM AUCTION, Sat., June 1 10 a.m., 9669 N Bellview Rd, Freeport, Ill 61032. Details: 49.57 acre conservation farm, modern, secluded, 1840 sq. ft. earth-shelter home with solar power, storage buildings, flowing creek, shallow water pond, forest management timber, cropland, pasture area, CRP contract land income, recreational use, hunting, abundant wildlife. Great organic farm possibilities. Bequeathed to Northwest Illinois Audubon Society. Rare opportunity to own a unique property in a private setting. Adjacent to Jane Addams Trail. Located southwest of Orangeville, IL, west of RT. 26. For more info or private showing please contact Hack’s Auction & Realty Service, Pecatonica, IL, 815-239-1436, www.hacksauction.com

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NOSB Votes to End Antibiotic Use for Fireblight Treatment

In 3 days of meetings April 9-11 in Portland Ore., after extensive verbal and written comments both pro and con, the National Organic Standards Board voted to end the use of oxytetracycline to control fireblight in apples and pears as of October 21, 2014. Ten positive votes were needed to keep this on the national list, and the vote was 9 to 6. This controversial material has been on the National List of approved synthetics for organic production since 1995.

Consumer groups shared strong protests to allowing further use, tying their comments to the public health emergency with antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Scientists spoke to the possible risk of bacterial resistance spreading not just among the bacteria causing fireblight, but also through gene transfer to other types of bacteria in the environment.

Organic orchardists made a strong case to retain this material. Fireblight not only destroys a given year’s crop, but can also destroy a whole orchard of apple or pear trees. Many years of labor, investment and the grower’s livelihood are at stake. Fireblight bacteria are present in the environment, although the exact climatic conditions of humidity, temperature, hail etc. may only be present once every 2-5 years causing a problem requiring treatment. Growers lamented the lack of research for alternatives to oxytetracycline. One promising material was registered for use last summer (not yet allowed in California). This yeast-based product, Blossom Protect, as well as a copper-based product not yet registered for use, show some promise in trials. However, these products will not meet the needs of growers if weather conditions cause significant fireblight across the U.S. this year.

NOSB passed a resolution asking the National Organic Program to look into allowing the use of oxytetracycline until October 2017, if fireblight is declared an emergency by a State or Federal agency. This would then make that year’s crop nonorganic, but as an emergency by a State or Federal agency. This add-in is still on the National List of approved synthetics for organic production since 1995.

While efforts were made to find a compromise, in the end, the two thirds majority needed to keep oxytetracycline on the national list was a hurdle that could not be cleared.

In other NOSB business, the following petitioned materials were not approved for addition to the national list: Polyoxin D Zinc Salt as a fungicide, Indole-3-butryic acid as a rooting hormone, Sulfuric Acid as a processing aid for seaweed, Sugar Beet Fiber and Barley beta fiber as agricultural products not available as organic, and 1,3, Dibrom-5 dimethylhydantoin as a disinfectant. Only Taurine was voted to be listed as a synthetic amino acid for pet food.
May 2, Online AgriMarketing: Planning Before You Plant Webinar. Join Scott Skelly of Corn Mazes America (Janesville), to look past the hoopla of online marketing and social media and help you determine what online platforms are the best tools for your job. Sponsored by Wis. Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. More information and registration: http://1.usa.gov/GuXbF0X (800) 624-5012

May 2, Farm Food Safety Plan Workshop, Bottnellle, N.D. A one-day Food Safety Plan Workshop to give you the tools to document, plan, and approach food safety on your farm; and an opportunity to write your own Food Safety Plan with the staff from the Entrepreneurial Center for Horticulture and Dakota College in Bottnellle and FARRMS in Medina. A follow-up webinar will be included in the course materials with additional information on North Dakota Farm to School opportunities, insurance, and marketing using your plan’s www.farms.org.

May 5-6, Annual Spring Planting Festival, Mansfield, Mo. Browse through thousands of varieties of plants and learn how to grow them with our acclaimed guest speakers. Info at www.naresseeds.com. 417-924-8917

May 6, Ten Simple Steps to Safer Produce Webinar. The Missouri Beginning Farmers Program is offering this webinar with Chris Blanchard of Rock Spring Farm beginning at 7 pm CDT. To join the webinar go to univmissouri.adobeconnect.com/ debekelly. No registration is needed. http://agebbi.missouri.edu/macagpo/calendar.htm

May 9, Wisconsin Food Labeling and Requirements Webinar, Shannon Dom, WDACP. This webinar will cover basic label requirements for retail-packaged food products in Wis. Nutritional labeling exemptions and appropriate declaration of major food allergens will also be discussed. More information and registration: http://1.usa.gov/GuXbF0X (800) 624-5012

May 9, Answers About Organic Webinar. An overview of the organic certification process, what it takes to transition, and the resources available to make the change. The webinar is sponsored by the NRCS West National Technology Support Center, in partnership with Oregon Tilth. www.consevationwebinars.net/webinars/answers-about-organic

May 11, Small Farm Machinery Field Day, Spence Farm, Fairbury, Ill. Sessions will include: choosing the right implements for the job, maintaining those tools, demonstrations of the machinery in action and several different methods for keeping your body unjured while using large and small scale equipment. More information and registration http://spencemachineryfoundation.org. (815) 992-3296

May 16, Soil Health Testing Webinar. Missouri Beginning Farmers presents a webinar with David Hammer, Director of MU Soil Health Lab and Professor of Soil Science, MU College of Engineering. To join the webinar log in at univmissouri.adobeconnect.com/debekelly

May 17, Farm-SCALE Composting: A Means to attaining Farm Sustainability through building Soil Fertility Workshop, East Troy, Wis. This course will provide the theoretical and practical basics regarding the importance of composting in agriculture. More info at www.agesbb.missouri.edu/

May 22, Employees On Your Farm Webinar. This evening webinar offered by Countywide Conservancy Tom Green of Kastner Western & Wikins will discuss what you need to have in place before you make the first hire. Learn the differences between laws for employees, contractors, and apprentices so you can make the appropriate choice when the time comes. www.countycityoffarmers/SpecialtyCropSeries.php


June 12, Wisconsin FFA, Madison, Wis. Visit the MOSES booth!

June 14, 1:00 – 5:00 Restoration Agriculture: An Introduction to Farm-Scale Permaculture with Mark Shepard, New Forest Farm, Viroqua, Wis. This event is free, but registration is required. Limited to 40 people. NO walk-ins will be allowed the day of the event. Registration opens May 1st. More info on page 6 and at www.mosesorganic.org.

June 22-24 Spaulding’s Famous Goat School, Littlefork, MN. Weekend of hands-on training and education in the care, breeding, and management of dairy and meat goats. Subjects will cover disease prevention, dehorning, emergencies, kidding, parasites control through rotational grazing, and good milking procedures. Optional after-session will cover cheese making and soap making from goat milk. Presented by Ken and Janice Spaulding; hosted by Elizabeth Pendertgast at North County Farm. Call 218-278-8898.

July 9-11, Wis. Farm Technology Days, Dallas, Wis. Visit the MOSES booth!

July 25, 9:00 – 3:00 MOSES Farmer of the Year Charlie Johnson, Organic-Crops Field Day @ Johnson Farms, Madison, SD. More info on page 6 and at www.mosesorganic.org.

July 27, Kickapoo Country Fair, La Farge, Wis. Visit the MOSES booth!

Aug. 4, 10:00 – 4:00 In Her Boots, Sustainable Agriculture for Women, By Women, Canoe Creek Produce, Decorah, Iowa. More info on page 6 and at www.mosesorganic.org.

Aug. 6-7 Farm Fest, Redwood County, Minn. Visit the MOSES booth!

Aug. 8, 10:00 – 4:00 In Her Boots, Sustainable Agriculture for Women, By Women, Kenyon, Minn. More info on page 6 and at www.mosesorganic.org.

Aug. 18, 10:00 – 4:00 In Her Boots, Sustainable Agriculture for Women, By Women, Scotch Hill Farm, Brodhead, Wis. More info on page 6 and at www.mosesorganic.org.

Aug. 27, 8:00 – 4:30 Grass-fed Beef, Row Crops and Poultry Field Day, Sandy Ridge Farm, Tampico, Ill., $30 pre-registered/$40 at the door. Pre-registration preferred. More info on page 8 and at www.mosesorganic.org.


Sept. 15, 1:00 – 5:00 Transitioning to Organic field day, Gardens of Eagaon, Northfield, Minn. More info on page 8 and at www.mosesorganic.org.


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Kathy Kloiber. This comprehensive manual on raising hogs the natural way includes sections on housing and fencing, farrowing, herd management, feeds and feeding, marketing and more. Softcover, 320 pages, $16.95 – $25.00

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