

The Germinator

FALL 2023

VOL. 43 NO. 4

**LEGACY OF
GENEROSITY
TO NPSAS**

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DAY RECAP**

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BIOCHAR
A SOIL
SAVIOR**

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A FARM
FROM
NOTHING**

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Photo by Krysti Mikonen

Cover Credits

The 4th annual Organic Farm Innovation Expo in Cokato, MN was a great success. Approximately 450 people attended watching live demos of equipment used in organic row crop farming from cultivators to weed flammers. This group of farmers is “outstanding” in their field. They are standing in the field watching demos of the various pieces of equipment ready to kneel down, and eagerly grab a handful of soil to test soil compaction before and after each passes. Read the full article on this event on page 23 of this issue and watch for the release of the 2024 event date so you can mark your calendar.



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Thank God For Dirty Dishes

*Thank God for dirty dishes, they have a tale to tell.
While others may go hungry, we're eating very well.
With home and health and happiness I shouldn't want to fuss.
For by the stack of evidence God's been good to us.*



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Mission Statement

Northern Plains Sustainable
Agriculture Society
promotes sustainable food
systems through education,
advocacy, and research.

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The Germinator is published quarterly by
Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society (NPSAS), a
501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Contributions to NPSAS are tax deductible.

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NPSAS occasionally includes guest articles and opinions. The opinions
in these articles may not reflect the opinions or policy of the Northern
Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society or its Board of Directors.

From the President

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer; if it was anything like mine, it went by way too fast. Over the last few months, a lot of things have been happening for the Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society; the board, committee members, and staff have been working hard to make things happen. We have had successful field days, continued to sell off equipment that is no longer needed, and re-ignited the Farm Breeders Network. And at this point, it's looking like in this next fiscal year, we will have our finances back in the black!

Speaking of staff, Kelly Monroe will be leaving us this month as she has had to step back and place her focus on family. We will be sorry to lose her, she has been a vital part of our team. She has been diligently working to contact members, reach out to sponsors, and help Krysti to make this group a success. Within NPSAS, we are all family here and understand the value of our own families and the priority they take; we fully support her decision, thank her for all of her hard work, and wish her well.

As we plan our return to Aberdeen this winter, we hope you are also planning on returning with us. If you know of past members or sponsors who may not be aware of us anymore, please let them know; if you know of any potential members or sponsors that could bring value to our group and we could help them, please let them know as well. In the spirit of Regenerative, we are regenerating and restoring the Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society. This is our time to step up and steer the conversation to true Regenerative farming. We, as an organization, have been spreading this same message for decades, and there is no better time than now to spread the message. We cannot do this without you and need you now more than ever to participate, spread the message, and help us preserve the North Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society and our mission!

See you in Aberdeen



President Martin Goter



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Fill Your Cup with Connection

I work from home, which can make for an isolating and lonely workplace. There's no one to create, share, and bounce ideas off of for event and project improvements, proofread an important email, or share successes and commiserate problems. More than anything, there isn't anyone to simply connect with and talk shop. This is very similar to many farmers who work alone. It doesn't matter how introverted a person is; we all need connection.

Nick Horob, founder of Harvest Profit software, recently shared this story on social media. He was sitting in a coffee shop working on some new features for the program in his John Deere sweatshirt. A retired farmer nearby struck up a conversation. He had great insight on parts/repair, tracking, depreciation, and opportunity costs. Horob said, "It was surely one of the most valuable chance encounters I've had." It filled his cup.

This summer, I noticed the conversations and connections that farmers made at the field days and other ag events I attended. As someone involved in their shared industry, it was also invigorating for me to connect and "talk shop." I heard this phrase many times in multiple forms from participating farmers, "I wasn't going to come because things are so busy, but I'm glad I came."

Sometimes, being around people or conversing with people with similar interests fills a cup you didn't even know needed filling. While online events won't quite create connections like live events, they have the ability to add to the "connection cup." How many times have you been invited to an event, live or virtual, that you REALLY don't want to attend? You go, and like the farmers at the events this summer, by the time you're done, you're saying, "I am so glad I went."

Be aware that you may need these connecting opportunities more than you know for your physical, mental, and emotional health. NPSAS has a number of events throughout the year, live and virtual, that can help you connect and add to or even fill your connection cup. Seize them, take part, and relish the time. We'd love for you to join us and keep filling that cup.



Executive Director Krysti Mikkonen

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 - How Stress Affects Your Body
 - Demons, Dragons, and Devils (Derek Gilbert, KeyNote)

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Board Minutes

NPSAS MINUTES SUMMARY - June 2023

Financial Report

Brad noted that a donation was received. Membership signup is now available on the website. Some buckwheat seed was sold.

Executive Director Report

- TOPP Grant has been submitted
- The Germinator will go out by the end of June, and an E-Sprout was sent out.
- Membership appeal has been ongoing. Emails and phone calls were made to a combined curated list of previous members. Membership is also advertised on E-Sprout, Facebook, and in Germinator. Positive feedback and excitement were received for the location of the upcoming conference.
- BFRD Building a Resilient Future Grant Project, also known as (OARS) - Continue to have monthly meet-

ings with participating states, speakers, organizers, and agencies. OARS Preconference on Thursday, January 25th, and may have a speaker at Stengel Field Day on August 25

- The search continues for women landowners in North or South Dakota to serve as Stewardship Ambassadors.
- Changed sponsorship program to a package deal.
- Doug and Anna Crabtree are confirmed speakers for the winter conference.

Governance/Strategic Planning

Discussion was held on open board seats.

Farm Breeder Network Update

Rich gave an overview of the last meeting. Discussions were had about seed availability and crops of interest to the group.

A bid came in for a piece of equipment, there also was interest in a combine. Calls

will be placed to individuals that have expressed interest.

NPSAS MINUTES SUMMARY - July 2023

Financial Report

Brad gave a high-level overview of June and year-to-date preliminary financial reports and noted we are a little in the red this month.

Executive Director Report

- Summer Germinator went to the printer Jun 10.
- Summer events were posted on social media & on the website. Upcoming events are the Carrington Research Center and the Johnson farm tour.
- BFRD Building a Resilient Future Grant Project - Bringing in Nate Powell Palm, to speak at Stengel's Field Day on August 25th.
- TOPP Grant was submitted for the 3rd time on June 10



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Board Minutes

- Women, Food and Agriculture Network Grant - \$7600 Grant will be discussed for possible submission before year-end.
- Working on a second keynote for the winter conference. Will call for speakers and content in The Germinator
- System for Award Management (SAM) file needs updating
- The 990 is about to be completed.
- An E-Sprout newsletter was sent.
- Member profiles will start on social media, and maybe The Germinator
- NPSAS was Invited to the Organic Farm Innovation Expo - August 17, 2023, in Cokato, MN

Farm Breeder Network

Dylan wheat is being grown at several locations in the US to look at the environment and grain quality. Devyatka buckwheat is being grown at three locations to look at flowering dates, yield, and other agronomic data. Radish work is going to continue. And there is still discussion about white sorghum.

Governance/Strategic Planning

- Martin and Krysti have been working on filling vacant board seats.
- Discussion was had about priorities made during the past two board retreats. Many priorities have been completed or are in progress.
- Attending farmer's markets to promote the organization and possibly selling small bags of flour made from Dylan wheat.
- Discussed setting up a membership committee.

NPSAS MINUTES SUMMARY - August 2023

Financial Report-Brad gave an overview of July, the year-to-date preliminary financial report, and noted there are plans with TOPP Grant projects.

Executive Director Report

Summer Events: The first 3 summer events went well with great attendance. We will have a booth at the Organic

Farm Innovation Expo. Remaining events include Stengel Seed on August 25, Brad Wolbert's field day on August 29-POSTPONED to 2024

Fall Germinator content will include articles on the following topics: Biochar, SD farmer who took over organic farmland, and land donated to NPSAS

Winter Conference Planning is underway, and currently looking for an additional keynote speaker. Aberdeen CVB will be able to help with registration, and there will be a preview of keynote speakers in the Germinator. Sponsorship/registration information will be out in the middle of October. Workshops and breakout sessions will be lined up in the next month.

Categories for interviews for the TOPP Grant online learning for beginning organic farmers include Requirements, inspection, weed control, fertilizer, crop varieties, plant breeding, planting timing and tips, certification, hydroponic, documentation/data, storage/grain bins/dryers, marketing, seed saving & cleaning, and understanding plant variety

protection.

Farm Breeder Network

A material transfer agreement was presented for seed sales that are developed by the FBN. Radish Research that was started, looks like the seed can be developed for a good fall cover crop. The buckwheat project has potential for growth. There is enough growing that Krysti was asked to reach out to seed companies to see if there's interest in purchasing seed for resale. Participants in the meeting were asked for input on speakers for the conference. It was suggested that a Specialty Block Grant may be a good idea for furthering the radish research. Other grant opportunities might be AURI grant, Bush Grant, and MDA AFREE Minnesota Demonstration Grant Research

Governance/Strategic Planning

There are still two seats on the board. Ideally, it would be beneficial to have representation meeting one or more of the following: from SD, a producer/farmer, and/or a sponsor/business/organization that supports the organic industry.

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USDA to Invest up to \$300 million in New Organic Transition Initiative

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced details of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) \$300 million investment, including with American Rescue Plan funds, in a new Organic Transition Initiative that will help build new and better markets and streams of income for farmers and producers. Organic production allows producers to hold a unique position in the marketplace and thus take home a greater share of the food dollar.

According to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, the number of non-certified organic farms actively transitioning to organic production dropped by nearly 71 percent since 2008. Through the comprehensive support provided by this initiative USDA hopes to reverse this trend, opening opportunities for new and beginning farmers and expanding direct consumer access to organic foods through increased production.

The initiative will deliver wrap-around technical assistance, includ-

ing farmer-to-farmer mentoring; provide direct support through conservation financial assistance and additional crop insurance assistance, and support market development projects in targeted markets.

"Farmers face challenging technical, cultural, and market shifts while transitioning to organic production, and even during the first years after successful organic certification," said Vilsack. "Through this multi-phased, multi-agency initiative, we are expanding USDA's support of organic farmers to help them with

every step of their transition as they work to become certified and secure markets for their products."

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Risk Management Agency (RMA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are the primary agencies supporting the Initiative, which will focus on three areas.

Transition to Organic Partnership Program

Through this initiative, USDA aims to ensure that farmers transitioning to organic have the support they need to navigate that transition, including a full supply chain to American consumers who demand organic choices in their supermarkets daily. AMS will build partnership networks in six regions across the United States with trusted local organizations serving direct farmer training, education, and outreach activities. The organizations will connect transitioning farmers with mentors, building paid mentoring networks to share practical insights and advice. Each regional team will also provide community building, including train-the-mentor support; as well as technical assistance, workshops, and field days covering topics including organic production practices, certification, conservation planning, business development (including navigating the supply chain), regulations, and marketing to help transitioning and recently transitioned producers overcome technical, cultural, and financial



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shifts during and immediately following certification. USDA will provide up to \$100 million for this program.

Direct Farmer Assistance

NRCS will develop a new Organic Management conservation practice standard and offer financial and technical assistance to producers who implement the practice. Payments will be modeled on those already available to producers meeting the existing nutrient and pest management conservation practice standards. USDA will provide \$75 million for this effort. This will include an increase in organic expertise throughout its regions, creating organic experts at each of its regional technology support centers. These experts will train staff who provide direct services to USDA customers. These services include hosting hands-on organic training for state and field NRCS staff and fielding organic-related staff questions.

USDA will provide \$25 million to RMA for the new Transitional and Organic Grower Assistance Program (TOGA) which will support transitioning and certain certified organic producers' participation in crop insurance, including coverage of a portion of their insurance premium.

Organic Pinpointed Market Development Support

Stakeholders have shared that specific organic markets have market development risks due to inadequate organic processing capacity and infrastructure, a lack of certainty about market access, and insufficient supply of certain organic ingredients. This AMS initiative will focus on key organic markets where the need for domestic supply

is high, or where additional processing and distribution capacity is needed for more robust organic supply chains. Examples of markets seeking support include organic grain and feed; legumes and other edible rotational crops; and livestock and dairy. USDA will invest up to \$100 million to help improve organic supply chains in pinpointed markets. The Department will seek stakeholder input on these pinpointed initiatives beginning in September, resulting in an announcement of specific policy initiatives later this year.

Other USDA Organic Assistance

This USDA initiative complements existing assistance for organic producers, including FSA's Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) and Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program (OTECP). OCCSP helps producers obtain or renew their

organic certification, and OTECP provides additional funding to certified and transitioning producers during the pandemic.

NRCS offers conservation programs, such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), which can provide assistance to help with managing weeds and pests, and establishing high tunnels, improving soil health, and implementing other practices key to organic operations. RMA also administers federal crop insurance options available to organic producers, including Whole Farm Revenue Protection and Micro Farm.

The National Organic Program (NOP) is a federal regulatory program, administered by AMS, that develops and enforces consistent national standards for organically produced agricultural products sold in the United States.



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The Remarkable Story of a Man's Gift to NPSAS

In the rolling hills of the Northern Plains near Wahpeton, ND, amidst the golden waves of wheat, corn, and soybean fields and the quiet rustling of prairie grass, there lies a 160-acre piece of land that was recently converted to organic production. Rane Richardson, who currently lives in Albuquerque, NM, is a man of remarkable character and unparalleled generosity. He's doing what he can to ensure the land his father left to him is taken care of in an environmentally friendly way and wants that legacy to continue. He made a decision that would leave an indelible mark on the landscape. In his will, Rane has chosen to donate this farmland to the Northern Plains Sustainable Ag Society, to continue to keep a watchful eye and make every attempt to ensure this land is maintained as a testament to his unwavering commitment to sustainable agriculture.

While Rane Richardson did not grow up on this land, his dad, a farm manager and wise investor, purchased the land and left each of his children a quarter. In his early 20's, he learned about organic production and sustainability through the Rodale Institute. He was so invested he spent the next summer pouring every ounce of energy into a very large garden spread over a full acre. It was an impactful experience in soil, weather, marketing, and more. "The growing went extremely well, but I wasn't great at the marketing side and ended up with a plethora of food I didn't know what to do with" Rane said, chuckling at the memory.

Over the years, Rane has seen the landscape change, witnessed the ebb and flow of agricultural practices, and saw the challenges faced by farmers. Rane has been a strong believer and advocate for sustainable agriculture. He firmly believes that the land is not merely a resource to be exploited but a living entity deserving of care and respect. His dedication to organic farming and sustainable practices has been a philosophy throughout his life. He thought the land he inherited should be taken care of in a way that fit that philosophy.

"We all have to do the best we can with our values and goals," he said, and regarding the land, "mine are to help support and grow organ-



Kneeling_ Vince Gorder, organic farmer left & Rane Richardson, landowner, & Charles Peterson, farm manager check on a field's soil quality.

ic production. We all must strive to align our values with our actions."

The Northern Plains Sustainable Ag Society (NPSAS) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting sustainable and organic agriculture in the Northern Plains region. For decades, NPSAS has been at the forefront of the sustainable agriculture movement, providing education, resources, and support to farmers who share their vision of a more environmentally conscious and socially responsible approach to farming.

Rane Richardson's connection with NPSAS was established in the last ten years. Former NPSAS

executive director, Verna Kagnes, shared with him the mission of the organization. He was quite impressed and became a member of the organization soon after. He attended two conferences in Fargo, but unfortunately, due to health reasons, attending the conference has become more difficult.

Through NPSAS, Rane was able to expand on the learning that started back with Rodale. He learned about innovative farming practices, attended soil health and conservation workshops, and connected with like-minded individuals who share his passion for sustainable agriculture.

When Rane inherited the land, he was torn. The land had been farmed conventionally for many years by a friend of his father's. "I was probably quite a pain. He's a nice guy, but my efforts and pleas to get him to convert the land to organic production went unanswered." Finally, the farmer told Rane he completely understood if he wanted to find another farmer who would farm it the way he wanted.

The search for that farmer seemed daunting, so Rane enlisted the help of Charles Peterson, a farm manager of Thoreson Steffes Trust Company out of Fargo, ND, who paired a farmer willing and wanting to farm organically with Rane's farm. This is the first year the land

Continued on page 11

Pitchfork and Hoe Gathering

The Pitchfork and Hoe Gathering will hold their 6th annual event this fall on October 27-28, 2023, at the Eagle's Club in Valley City, ND. Their mission statement is 'to encourage and celebrate our rural way of life.' They pledge to provide education, interactive workshops, vendors, product displays, and, of course, fun and fellowship above all.

The group began a few years ago when Rodney Fernow retired from the railroad and started producing hay to sell. He sold some hay to a family who had just moved to ND to begin their new journey of homesteading. They had no knowledge of what to do, nowhere to turn for help, and the only tools they had were a pitchfork and hoe. As Fernow kept delivering hay to smaller operators, he found this common theme among all of them. He decided to create a home for them to learn the old-fashioned homesteading practices and started the Pitchfork and Hoe Gathering. About the same time, Fernow ran into John Andrus, an old college buddy, who was giving banjo lessons. Andrus wanted to create a bluegrass festival, so they joined forces. Then they found out that there was a ND Goat Association, and they also joined the Gathering.

This Gathering is a wonderful opportunity for homesteaders, hobby farmers, homemakers, and anyone else with the desire to go back to our rural roots to learn some of the skills for which they may be looking. There will also be continuous bluegrass music: workshops, open jamming, band scrambles, and a concert on Friday night: Bluestems, Kohlrabi Soup, and The Norskey Brothers. Wherever you may fall along the line, this event promises to have something for you.

Some of the workshops will be on goat raising, rotational grazing, cover crops, food preservation, bird watching, grant funding, and superfoods. Dr. Maggie Peterson will also be speaking on 'How Stress Affects Your Body.' The keynote speaker will be Derek Gilbert. Gilbert hosts the daily news analysis program Five in Ten for

SkyWatchTV and co-hosts SciFriday and Unraveling Revelation with his wife, author and analyst Sharon K. Gilbert. Since 2014, the Gilberts have produced a weekly audio series of Bible studies, the Gilbert House Fellowship, available online at www.GilbertHouse.org. Gilbert will be speaking both Friday and Saturday night at 7:00 pm. You can visit his website at www.derekgilbert.com.

Because of their goal to attract new attendees, Pitchfork and Hoe Gathering is charging a minimum fee this year: \$25 per person and \$35 per family to attend both days. The Bluegrass Concert on Friday night will be an extra \$15 per person. For more information, you can visit their Facebook page, Pitchfork and Hoe Gathering Spot, and their website. Please note that the website is still under construction. www.pitchforkandhoe.com

Continued from page 10

was fully certified. It's been a fun and interesting journey for Rane, Charles, and Vince Gorder, the tenant.

Rane's decision to give a quarter of land to NPSAS is a generous act of philanthropy that will have a lasting impact on the organization and the members who rely on it as a resource to support their endeavors. The land, situated in an area with a rich agricultural history, is fertile ground for sustainable farming practices. With this gift, NPSAS will have a much-needed boost in financial security. At the same time, they will have the opportunity to

support Vince Gorder in maintaining a model sustainable farm and have an up-close view of the latest techniques in organic agriculture, regenerative farming, and ecological stewardship.

Rane's vision for the future is clear and unwavering. He hopes that his gift will inspire others to consider how they can align their values and goals with their actions. "We all have a responsibility to the land and to future generations," he says. "By supporting sustainable agriculture, we are ensuring that the earth can continue to provide for us without compromising the well-be-

ing of our planet."

NPSAS has expressed its deep gratitude for Rane's extraordinary gift, recognizing the potential it holds to advance the mission for its members. Rane Richardson's decision to donate this farmland to NPSAS serves as a shining example of the profound impact one person can have on the world through their actions and generosity. His legacy will continue to inspire others to take a closer look at their own values and how they can make a positive difference in the world.

Could Biochar Be a Soil Savior?

At a South Dakota Soil Health Coalition event in July on the farm of Dennis Hoyle of Roscoe, SD, attendees viewed one of the fields spread with black substance unknown to many.

Called biochar, this ash-type substance has been used throughout the world as a soil amendment, but research on its potential benefits has recently gained the attention of researchers and agricultural producers.

Most in the group at Roscoe were unfamiliar with the use of this material. Hoyle agreed to have the substance spread across some of his acres to give people a chance to see how it may be used as a soil amendment. An advocate for soil health practices, Hoyle, is a member of the South Dakota Soil Health Coalition board. He is open to innovative ways to improve soils and agreed to be one of those hosts of the test sites.

Organic farmers may be interested in this product as they seek to provide a growing share of the U.S. food sector.

Several sources say the main advantages of biochar is that it can save fertilizer, save water, provide nutrient retention, and increases soil microbial abundance in addition to direct carbon sequestration. If research can show results in South Dakota fields, that will be a huge advantage for farmers seeking to reduce costs.

This black, highly porous form of carbon is prepared by charring wood or other organic matter such as corn cobs, stove, grasses, manure, and waste forest products, in a kiln or retort in which oxygen is largely excluded. This process is called pyrolysis. The materials are reduced to a very high carbon-content material which contains millions of microscopic pores in a stable, carbon-lattice structure. Biochar provides a habitat for soil microbes as well as water and nutrient storage. It does not provide nutrients for the plants but reduces soil acidity.

Dr. Sutie Xu, Assistant Professor in the Department of Agronomy, Hor-



ticulture, and Plant Science at South Dakota State University (SDSU) in Brookings, SD, explained why biochar is being studied and its potential use. Sutie is working with collaborators Dr. David Clay (Distinguished Professor, SDSU), Anthony Bly (SDSU Extension Soils Field Specialist), and Mengistu Geza (Associate Professor, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology), graduate student Varshith Kommineni (Advisor: Dr. Xu) and Sujun Pokhrel (advisor: Dr. Geza), on the study.

"The field demonstration is part of a three-year study designed to demonstrate that cover crops combined with organic amendments can be successfully integrated into dry land no-tillage cropping systems," Sutie said. "This will be accomplished by using biochar or manure amendments in cover cropping fields to improve soil water holding capacity and soil carbon sequestration while reducing evaporation, nutrient loss, and greenhouse gas emissions."

Sutie explained the three goals for the project. The first is to introduce new management practices to lessen the effects of moisture stress and build climate resilience in moisture limited dryland production systems. Second, it will provide knowledge on alternative cropping system management strategies to improve ecosystem

productivity and sustainability. The third goal is to promote the adoption of cover cropping (a conservation management practice), which is currently constrained by limited precipitation and lack of effective techniques to conserve moisture.

Similar tests were conducted in three other areas. Besides Roscoe, there are plots in Selby, Fort Pierre, and Frankfort. The study seeks to compare results from plots from central and eastern South Dakota which experience different weather conditions.

In explaining the project, Sutie said, "The overall objectives include improving water and nutrient management and soil health in dry land production systems using innovative integrated management practices."

The first objective is to improve water use efficiency. This will be done by demonstrating how the addition of cover crops and organic amendments impact row crop production in dryland systems and will evaluate the impacts on improving water holding capacity, water use efficiency and building resilience to climate change.

The second objective is to improve soil health by investigating impacts of cover crops and organic amendments on soil organic carbon sequestration.

The third objective is to improve nitrogen management by estimating nitrogen dynamics and nitrous oxide emission influenced by cover crops and organic amendments.

Selected soil health indicators similar to the Haney test will be used. Indicators are measurable properties of soil or plants that provide clues about how well the soil can function. Indicators can be physical, chemical, and biological properties, processes, or characteristics of soils. They can also be morphological or visual features of plants.

Continued on page 14



2023 Field Days

Great Information/Great Speakers

July 18
NDSU , SARE, & NPSAS
in Carrington, ND

9:00 am - 12:00 noon - LUNCH -1:30 pm - 4:00 pm
Carrington Research Center is 3.5 miles N on Hwy 281

July 20
Johnson Farms in Madison, SD

8:30 am - 1:00 pm
24311 452nd Ave.

August 4 - 5
Complete Hemp Processing
Open House & Conference
in Winfrid, SD

1:00 pm Aug. 4 -12:00 pm Aug 5th
530 Main Str.

August 25
Stengel Seed (50th Anniversary)
in Milbank, SD

10:00 am - 2:00 pm
14698 State Hwy 15

September 28
Menoken Farm & Dockter Organics Menoken, ND

8:00 am - 7:30 pm
1107 171st Str. NE, Menoken, ND

United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program
Transition to Organic Partnership Program



Continued from page 12

Testing is the only way to determine how much of an impact these applications will have. It is estimated that changes in the biological properties of soil, such as microbial biomass, and labile nitrogen components such as mineral nitrogen may be detected within two to three years. That's why these test areas are important for data collection.

Biochar is unique because it presents a promising absorption ability. It is a possibility that biochar could potentially reduce fertilizer requirements. Not all soils are as receptive of biochar. A review by RP Premalatha and others in 2023 indicated that

biochar is an effective amendment in acid soils more than alkaline or calcareous soils. The application rate varies depending on different biochar types and the objective of a specific farmland.

Much of the commercial production of biochar is in the Pacific Northwest where supplies of forest waste are readily available. For now, getting the biochar is an issue since transportation costs are high. For that reason, it may be used on smaller acreages where growers can document the improvements.

Currently the availability of biochar in South Dakota is limited.

For this study, SDSU purchased the quantities needed at Biochar Now (<https://biocharnow.com/>). Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln are also looking at the benefits of biochar and also potential sources for the product which could be produced from Eastern red cedar trees that are infesting their state.

Could biochar be something used in the future on a large scale? If research can show positive benefits for improved soil health, then that might lead to developing infrastructure to produce biochar. The research on fields such as Dennis Hoyle's may open up a new source to improve soils.

Additional sources:


(More information is available from: Premalatha RP, Poorna Bindu J, Nivetha E, Malarvizhi P, Manorama K, Parameswari E and Davamani V (2023) A review on biochar's effect on soil properties and crop growth. Front.

Energy Res. 11:1092637. doi: 10.3389/fenrg.2023.1092637)


Farmers can find more information about biochar at <https://www.climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/northwest/topic/biochar>

<https://biochar-us.org/welcome-biochar-learning-center>

The University of Nebraska is also doing research on biochar: <https://tinyurl.com/ynlgc7vd>



The USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program has been helping farmers, ranchers, gardeners, and students achieve their goals for improved profit, production, natural resources, and quality of life for 30 years.



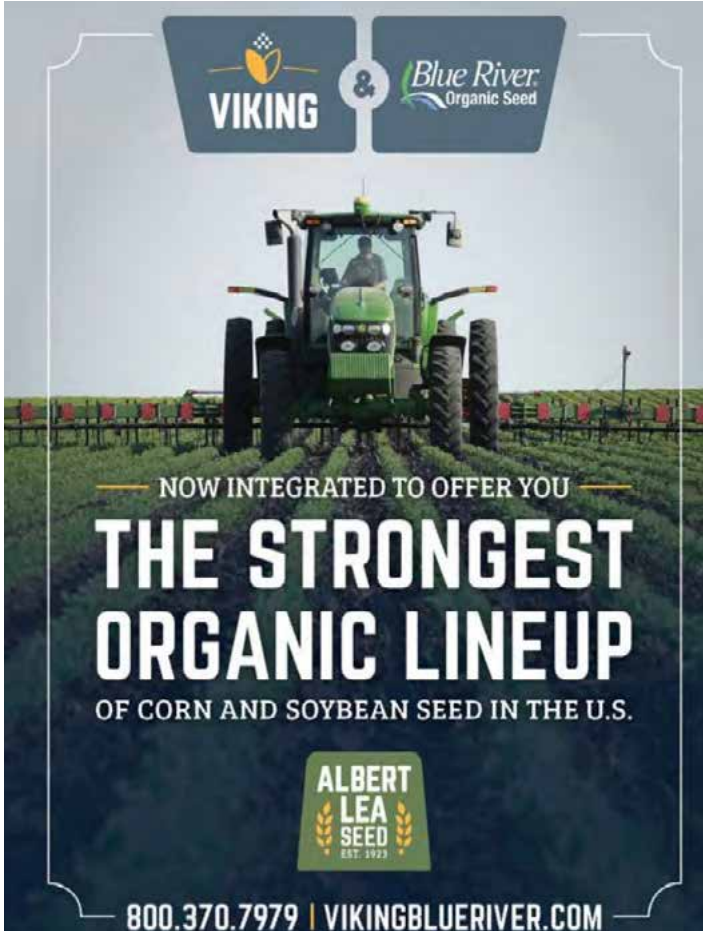
Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

Contact:
Karl Hoppe, Lindy Berg & Jeff Gale

State Coordinators –
ND SARE – NDSU Extension

Karl.Hoppe@ndsu.edu
Lindy.L.Berg@ndsu.edu
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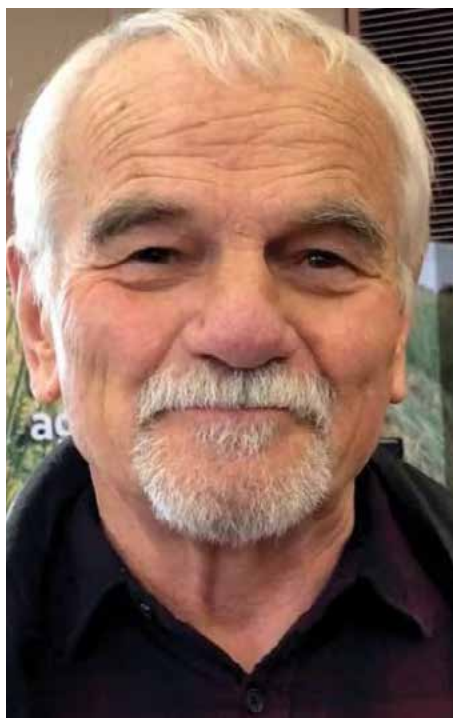


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Gary Zimmer

2024 Conference Keynote Speaker

.....



Gary Zimmer - Father of Biological Ag

Gary Zimmer is one of the founders of Midwestern Bio Ag, also known as the “father of Biological Agriculture.” Zimmer is an internationally known author, speaker, and consultant. He has authored three books on Biological farming, plus numerous articles on soils and livestock nutrition. He is bringing decades of experience and know-how to the team to pioneer a sustainable approach to farming in the best interests of farmers, consumers and communities.

Zimmer holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a mas-

ter's degree from the University of Hawaii. Midwestern Bio Ag deserves the credit for taking dairy nutrition to the soils to create ideal feed for livestock.

Zimmer and his family own Otter Creek Organic Farm, a 1400-acre farm in SW Wisconsin. The farm went from organic dairy cows to cash crops. They have developed an extreme regenerative farming system of one year corn the next a rye/clover soil building year. The soils have radically changed, soil OM is up, mineral levels up, yields up, profits up, and inputs down.

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Lamb & Garlic with Prairie Coteau Farm

Have you been curious about lamb? You want to feed your family healthy, local, and delicious grass-fed lamb, but with so many different cuts of meat, it's hard to know where to start. Kristianna Gehant Siddens of Astoria, South Dakota, knows exactly how you feel, and she's here to help! She, her husband, Nick Siddens, and their two daughters raise grass-fed lamb at Prairie Coteau Farm.

Years ago, a health crisis compelled Kristianna to add meat to her primarily vegetarian diet. Grass-fed lamb was the natural choice because of its excellent nutrition and amazing flavor. Since she and her husband were already farmers growing garlic, they decided to raise sheep to improve their personal health, farmland, and that of their customers. Lucky for them, garlic also happens to be the perfect pairing for lamb!

As a certified organic farm, the Siddens utilize practices such as crop rotation, cover cropping, mulching, and rotational grazing to produce a healthy crop without synthetic herbicides, pesticides, or fertilizers. They've been farming their land for 20 years. In that time, they've tested over twenty varieties of garlic. They strive to provide their customers with the highest quality and best-tasting flavors. This year they grew six varieties and continue to hone in on the best of the best.



Kristianna on her farm

The lamb was a challenge Kristianna embraced. She had to learn the basics of cooking lamb, and today, her skills have improved significantly. She can prepare delicious, home-cooked, healthy meals with any cut. So, if you're looking for great lamb paired nicely with fresh garlic, check out Prairie Coteau Farm and then use one of her favorite recipes she's shared here.



Garlic Herb Lamb Chops

Mouthwatering, pan-fried chops are easy-peasy!



Ingredients

- 6 to 8 loin or rib chops from Prairie Coteau Farm
- 4 T olive oil, divided
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 T fresh mint, minced
- 1 T fresh rosemary, minced
- 1 T fresh oregano, minced
- 1 T fresh parsley, minced
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 T butter



Instructions

1. Place lamb chops in a shallow dish.
2. In a small bowl, stir together 2 T olive oil, garlic, pepper, and herbs. Rub over chops. Place herbed chops in fridge and let marinate at least 1 hour, or up to 12 hours. Hint: if you don't have time for a long marinade, even 15 minutes will work.
3. Remove chops from marinade and season with salt.
4. Preheat a large skillet over medium high heat. Add in 1 T butter.
5. When butter is melted, cook chops in skillet 4-5 minutes per side for medium rare.
6. Allow chops to rest 5-10 min, but keep warm. Serve garnished with additional fresh herbs.



Roast Leg of Lamb

With Ginger and Potatoes



Ingredients

- 2-3 lb leg of lamb roast from Prairie Coteau Farm
- 2 lb potatoes, chopped into small chunks
- 2 T olive oil
- 1 teaspoon rosemary, fresh or dried
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 T fresh ginger, peeled and minced
- 1 T mint, dried or chopped fresh



Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375° Combine the ginger, mint, rosemary and 1 T of olive oil in a small bowl.
2. Make 1/2 inch slits in the lamb, and stuff holes with herb mixture. Put lamb on a rack in a roasting pan (OK to skip the rack if you don't have one) and roast uncovered for 25 minutes for a 2 lb roast.
3. Combine the the potatoes with 1 T oil in a bowl and stir to coat potatoes. Add potatoes to the roasting pan, sprinkle rosemary, salt and pepper over the potatoes. Return to oven and roast for 60-90 minutes, depending on size of roast and preferred doneness.
4. Remove from oven. Let stand 15 minutes. Serve with the potatoes and your favorite green vegetable. Enjoy!

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NPSAS Member Feature: Kristiana Siddens of Prairie Coteau Farm

As first generation farm, what is the best advice you've gotten that helped your operation?

Just do the thing. You can talk and research forever; eventually, you have to try something.

Do you have anything new you're working on or a goal for the operation next 5 years?

We are renovating our mostly Ash grove and windbreaks to add more diverse and native tree and shrub species through NRCS' Environmental Quality Improvement Program. I'm also working on doing more to utilize and direct-market the wool from our sheep.

What year were you certified organic?

2010

Do you have any great advice for new and transitioning farmers?

Be proactive in getting help and advice. Find someone who's successful at what you're trying to achieve and talk to them and/or visit their operation. There's no substitute for direct experience, so try out what you learn on your own farm and adapt to your situation.



Who is your mentor and why?

I've had a couple of mentors over the years. Caroline Van Schaik of Wolf Hill Farm in MN was instrumental in helping me gain confidence and skill working with my flock, lambing, and just understanding sheep. The late Cliff Millsapps helped me understand the art and science (but more art, he claimed) of pasture management and managed grazing. Both were generous with their time and knowledge, made themselves available, and took every question seriously no matter how elementary it may have seemed to them.

Why are you part of NPSAS and how does it help your operation?

It's reassuring to know there is a community of like-minded, organic, and sustainable producers here in my region that I can relate to and learn from. When I first moved to SD and started farming 20 years ago, the first thing I did was go to the NPSAS conference. I got the names of experienced producers at the annual meeting and later called some of them for advice.

Tell us a little about your family?

Nick and I met in high school in

southern Illinois, where he grew up on a dairy, and I was a town kid. We have two delightful teenage daughters.

What is the biggest failure or success in your operation?

Our biggest success is being able to enjoy working together as a family to tackle big farm projects like garlic planting and harvest, working sheep, and shearing. Raising my family on a farm was my dream, and now we are living it! It's certainly not always (or ever?) easy, but I'd call it a success.

What's the best thing(s) you've done that made your operation better?

Taking care of myself. When I'm centered, healthy, well-rested, and getting what I need for my own mental, spiritual, physical, emotional, and social well-being, then my family and my farm get what they need. As women, we often take care of everyone else to the point where we're barely staying afloat ourselves, or perhaps we even lose sight of why we're doing what we're doing. I've experienced that, and I've found if I keep my own cup full, I have so much more to offer.

Construction Begins on Damm's Research Greenhouse

Construction has started on Damm's new research greenhouse. The addition to the new factory and headquarters will allow for easier development and testing of new products and techniques.

The new 2,500 sq. ft. facility will feature several cropping systems, from fixed and movable benches to hydroponic systems. Various water sources will be used, from rainwater and pond water to recycled and municipal water. Multiple water treatment systems will be installed for regular use and to test different methods and tools for best efficacy with different sources and water qualities.

Trials of the Drammatic® Organic Fertilizer will be conducted in the greenhouse. Another benefit will be growing plants for Damm's lobby "green wall" and flowers for spring planting.

The new research greenhouse

will honor Kurt W. Damm, who left a legacy of developing and testing high-quality products.

"We've wanted a research greenhouse for a long time," says Heidi Damm Becker. "It will enable us to trial fertilizer and test watering tools during the winter months and continuously try different air flow patterns for best results, test drippers, and various irrigation equipment and systems. The most exciting thing is that we can grow some spring flowers as a benefit! I just wish my father had lived to see it built to completion."

The DeCloet Venlo-style greenhouse has a 22' gutter height and a 42' wide-span bay, eliminating posts in the middle of the structure. Bio-

therm in-floor hydronic heating will keep the greenhouse warm during our cold winters. A Wadsworth Seed controller will manage the climate and allow remote access at any time of the day.

Completion of the facility is scheduled for early-Fall for 2023, allowing for the first crops and research work to begin this winter.

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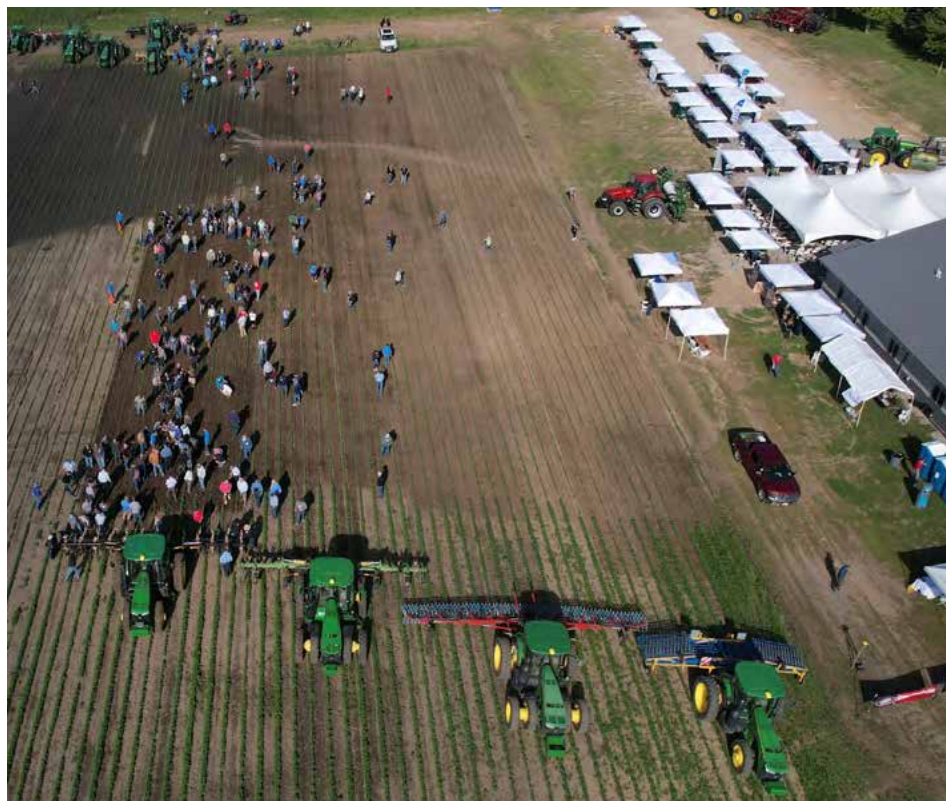
Problem-Solving Success at 2023 Organic Innovation Expo

A conference in the winter for farmers makes sense because that's when most farmers would have time to commit to learning about new equipment innovations, soil nutrition, networking, and sharing ideas, successes, and struggles. The downside is that in the Northern Plains, you don't have the luxury of seeing any equipment demonstrations in the frigid snow-covered fields of winter. Crop Fertility Services, a long-time sponsor of Northern Plains Sustainable Ag events, thought this needed to change and started the Organic Farm Innovation Expo in Cokato, MN. The 4th annual event held in late July was a great success.

According to CFS, the mission of the Organic Farm Innovation Expo is simple. "Find and demonstrate technology that works with organic crop farming." More specifically, the event is niched down to focus on organic row crop farming, although all types of farmers are welcome. In speaking with Tyler Holanen at CFS, he said, "We hope each year to find and demonstrate equipment, technology, and products that are innovative and/or solve problems that we have here on our own organic farms and that other organic farmers are likely facing." The event is designed to demonstrate not just one specific type or brand of equipment, but as many as we can side by side. This season, the event featured 18 equipment demonstrations of tine weeders and cultivators, as well as two tillage and one-row crop flamer demonstrations.

While there are obvious similarities, the problems organic farmers have are widespread and somewhat different than conventional farmers. The list is endless and includes things like record management (field activity, population maps, harvest records), marketing grain, equipment issues, and agronomy solutions. "Ideally, we aim to build a networking platform for serious farmers to meet with quality vendors solving real problems to help both parties succeed," Holanen added when asked about the overall goal.

The well-thought-out preparation needed to make the Innovation Expo demonstrations at this event truly impactful is extensive. For example, the bean crops used in the equipment demo were planted at various times throughout the spring & summer, so the plants are at differing heights for the cultivator, like those the farmer



will experience throughout a growing season.

"We could've done without the five-plus inches of rain that fell on the field at the expo site just a couple of days before the event. Everyone was pretty nervous that it wouldn't be dry enough to proceed," said Holanen with a nervous laugh. While it did add some different field conditions to several of the demos, the 450-plus attendees at the event this year still got to see live demonstrations of innovation firsthand and could even walk into the fields to see and touch the actual impact on the soil before and after equipment had gone through it. The purpose of demonstrating equipment side by side is to give farmers an opportunity to see

everything in one place, rather than piece by piece.

This event was built by and for organic farmers, or those considering transitioning to organic. It's a genius idea and if you ask others who have attended, you'll hear the praises. It will be worth it to make the time to see for yourself.

Dates for 2024 will be released this winter, information can be found at: <https://ofiexpo.org/>. Planning has already begun for next year so while you're there, if you have ideas on what you'd like to see at this event in the future, helpful feedback, or suggestions for improvement, let them know.

Starting a Farm From Nothing

A 2024 NPSAS Conference Keynote Speaker's Story of Transition

.....

When considering 4-H project options as a 9-year-old, Nate Powell-Palm initially thought he'd try raising rabbits. Encouraging him, his parents suggested that if he was going to raise livestock, he should "go big or go home" and raise a steer instead.

Buying, raising, and selling a 4-H steer at the Gallatin County Fair in Belgrade, MT, in 2001 hooked Nate on production agriculture and led him to become a first-generation organic farmer. He currently owns and operates Cold Springs Organics, a 1500-acre certified organic grain and cattle operation in the Gallatin Valley, MT.

Back then, "A local veterinarian bought my steer at the 4-H Livestock sale," Nate explained. "When I went to thank him for buying my steer, he asked if I was going to raise another next year. He wanted to make sure that kids experienced success. He was the first example of many mentors who shaped my life and gave me a chance in agriculture."

Nate applied that positive experience and ran with it. While his mother worked on ranches around Montana in her 20s, he would go on to be the first person in his family to own a farming operation and make it his profession.

By the time he was 12, a local 4-H leader suggested that he apply for a Junior Agriculture Loan from the Montana Department of Agriculture. With the funds, he bought three bred cows, a stock trailer (though it would be another three years before he had a driver's license), and some mobile fence panels, and he embarked on a career as a cattle producer.

"Since we only had 10 acres growing up, I learned there was no free grass coming my way and I had to do something to add value to make my venture profitable. I started looking at organic certification. About that same time, I met two certified organic farm-



ers in Helena, MT, who sold my mom organic chicken feed. They generously shared their time to teach me what it meant to have a certified organic operation. Despite me calling them nearly every day with questions, they always picked up the phone."

Making light of his inexperience, Nate said, "I was so new to agriculture, but with their mentorship, I was able to get my organic certification from the Montana Dept. of Agriculture in 2008 and sold my first load of organic calves the next spring." From there, he leased a 40-acre pasture and became the youngest certified organic grower in the state.

In any organic operation, the first

consideration is transition. The rules require that land be free from prohibited substances for three years prior to grazing organic cattle or harvesting an organic crop. When getting started, Nate sought out land that was ready to transition, mostly old hay fields that had sat dormant for at least three years.

He said, "I think the key to minting new farmers is providing mentorships. My success came from those farmers and ranchers who gave their time and resources to teach me about agriculture. I called them up daily and asked questions about cows, growing better hay, and what I should look out for in a good used tractor."

If given the chance, Nate says many kids would benefit from similar agricultural education experiences, especially if they can see how it can tie into a career. Thinking outside the box, there are many ways to attract young folks to agriculture. They might not be who you expect to become farmers, especially if they don't come from a family farm or ranch. There are also many ways to keep kids from farming families in the operation. Organic production provides a key pathway.

Being in 4-H gave Nate a chance to raise sheep, show pigs, train homing pigeons as well as refine his cooking skills. "Exhibiting our projects at the county fair was our Mecca."

"One of the most satisfying projects was being able to raise certified organic steers and see them compete well with conventional ones. By the age of 17, I figured out how to breed and feed animals organically that placed well in the ring and on the rail."

When Nate went away to college, his farming business was never far from his mind. On the first day of new student orientation, he walked into the office of the dining hall and said, "I want to be your beef supplier." That eventually led to the head of the dining service talking to him about his ideas. The school needed pork, not beef. From there, he started a pig farm near the school that was a sanctioned school group where students learned to raise, slaughter and eventually serve the pork in the dining hall.

"That experience taught me to match supply with demand, how to market my product by finding out who my customers are and what they wanted."

While still in college, Nate joined the Montana Organic Producers Coop, which allowed him to contribute his finished animals to a cattle pool. This allowed him, and the other growers in the coop, to access bigger retail customers resulting in dou-

bling their income per animal. All the grass-finished animals he raises now go to retailers on the West Coast.

With more demand, Nate had to find more pasture. "I drove around my neighborhood and looked at land that wasn't being farmed. I looked up addresses for the landowners and sent out 90 letters in 2012 and got a dozen responses back from those who would be willing to lease land to me. That equated to 500 acres, including some irrigated hay ground. Those letters allowed me to get my foothold as a tenant farmer."

Sticking with his early plan to seek out old hay ground that was immediately ready to certify as organic, Nate put together this first round of leased ground and received certification for it in 2012.

Around the same time that he sent the letters to prospective landlords, Nate began working as an organic certification inspector, traveling around the country during breaks from school and quiet times on the farm. Through these inspections, he realized a range of different crops could be grown besides hay on his farm.

In 2014, he got a contract to grow soft white spring wheat from a mill in Montana. He found he could make more money per acre on this cash crop than using it as hay ground. "I knew if the farm was going to grow, it had to diversify and this was the next step. I got serious about grain production and actively started seeking out contracts. Today all of my land raises both cash crops and pasture (crop stubble or cover crops), allowing me to maximize the return on every acre."

His operation has now grown to 1,500 acres, where he grows certified organic grains, alfalfa, and pulse crops, as well as grass-fed certified organic cattle. Being in the organic organizations such as Montana Organic Association and the Organic Trade Association, it gives him a chance to learn from other farmers and meet

potential customers.

The question of transition, though, is always on Nate's mind. "It's hard enough to get started farming but when you have to balance the transition with all the expenses of starting an operation, it can be daunting," Nate said. He's tried three paths to transition: As he grew after his initial 500-acre expansion in 2012, Nate's acquired a number of leases with ground in all phases of transition from conventional grain fields to ready-to-certify pastures. Nate tried growing cover crops over the transition, perennial forages, and pulse rotations, as well as his regular wheat-pulse-oil seed rotation. Nate will share which of these strategies emerged as the most profitable at his keynote speech during the 2024 NPSAS Winter conference.

Dedicated to agriculture, he's always looking to expand and learn more. As a way to add value to his wheat, he is building a flour and feed mill on his land. He's learning about processing and milling as construction takes place. "I encourage others to take a look at what your community needs and work to match that production to those markets."

It comes down to this. "To make agriculture a thriving career for all farmers, we need to look beyond just the agronomy and understand what makes a great community. There is so much exciting work for everyone when it comes to food production in rural America."

Make sure you attend the Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Convention January 25-27, 2024, in Aberdeen, SD, where Nate will share how he grew his business from the ground up without debt, recruited customers that include some of the largest food companies in the country, and where he will map out how America can revitalize rural communities by attracting young people back to the farm.

2023 Field Days –Tours Recap

A focus and highlight of each and every field day presentation and tour in 2023 was the transition to organic. The goal was to tell the story of transition to encourage and help those in

attendance who may be considering a move to organic production. While many of the 250 + attendees of these events throughout the summer were already organic or in some way tied to the organ-

ic industry in a different way, at least 10-15 percent attended to learn more as they look at the possibility of making an impactful move to organic farming.

Carrington Research Center Field Day

The Organic Field Day at the NDSU Carrington Research Center in Carrington, ND, held on July 18, was a resounding success, showcasing the Center's commitment to sustainable agriculture and organic farming practices. With about 40 attendees joining the organic part of the tour, the event provided a platform for knowledge sharing, fostering community engagement, and promoting the adoption of organic farming methods. The insightful presentations included: protecting soil surfaces, plant diversity in crop rotations, the value of continuous roots, integrating livestock, and minimizing soil disturbance.



Participants got a good old-fashioned hay ride looking at crops and learning about organic production, soil health, and more.



Jeff Gale of NDSU Extension gave a hands-on presentation on the value of a continuous root system.

United States Department of Agriculture
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Johnson Farm Field Day

The sun shone brilliantly over the Johnson Farm for the NPSAS & USDA TOPP organic farm tour of 2023 in Madison, South Dakota, on July 20. The much-anticipated annual organic agriculture field day at Johnson Farm unfolded with ideal weather for the 30 participants. Charlie Johnson and his nephew Aaron Johnson were wonderful hosts. Participants had lessons on creating a crop rotation plan, marketing, transitioning strategies, inspection process, record keeping, equipment, bin storage & system for grain tracking.



Susan Luschas from Brandon, SD and Steve and Kim Boyda from Kansas tell their stories of transitioning to organic farming.



Participants listen as Charlie Johnson talks about crop rotation strategies in the Johnson Farm bean field.

Complete Hemp Processing Field Day

It was a mixture of much-needed rain and sun at the much anticipated Complete Hemp Processing Field Day and Hemp Conference on August 4 -5th. Over 170 participants attended the 2-day event ten states. Participants learned about the value and versatility of hemp, its place in organic farming and the use of hemp as a crop in transitioning to organic production. Roger Gussiaas shared a spirited keynote about the value of hemp. First-generation farmer Blake Burggraff gave extensive insight on organic crop rotation, the necessity of creating systems for success, good cover crops during & after transitioning to organic, cover crops for soil, and more.



This fiber-cutter is a unique piece of hydraulically driven pull-behind sickle mower that can cut hemp with 1, 2, 3, or 4 blades simultaneously at varying heights.



Blake Burggraff shares his organic transition and hemp-growing story.

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Stengel Seed 50th Anniversary and Plant Tour

In addition to celebrating a monumental 50th Anniversary, Stengel Grain and Seed hosted a plant tour and an educational program that highlighted value-added ag opportunities. The 50-plus attendees got a behind-the-scenes look at the seed-cleaning side of the business. Participants also heard insight from Nate Powell-Palm on how he started as a first-generation farmer, growth strategies, starting young, grant opportunities, creative ways to gain industry knowledge as you grow, how to transition your organic farm operation and more.



Groups were given tours of the Stengel Seed Plant and learned how the operation grew.



Doug Stengel & David Vetter gave insight on taking risks, growing a business, & value-added ag.

Menoken Farm - Dockter Organics

If you haven't been to Menoken Farm and heard from Jay Fuhrer it is definitely a must-see place with so much valuable research and data to take in. A visit to Dockter Organics was impressive to see organic farming done on such a large scale. The evening speaker, Jonathan Moser and networking and speaker had people mingling long after. Harvest may have held back some attendees but those that made it were in for a treat both in weather, learning, and community building. The day's lessons included cover crops, soil health & the cycle of carbon, cattle grazing gains & fertilizer, marketing, organic inspections, grants, equipment, mentorship, & more.



Jay Fuhrer shared with participants the combined value of cover crops and cattle grazing and the incredible mutual benefit to the animals and to the ground.



Thane Dockter demonstrates the value of using the penetrometer in measuring soil compaction and the desired numbers needed for the best results.

Stengel Seed and Grain Celebrates 50 Years of Organic Farming Innovation

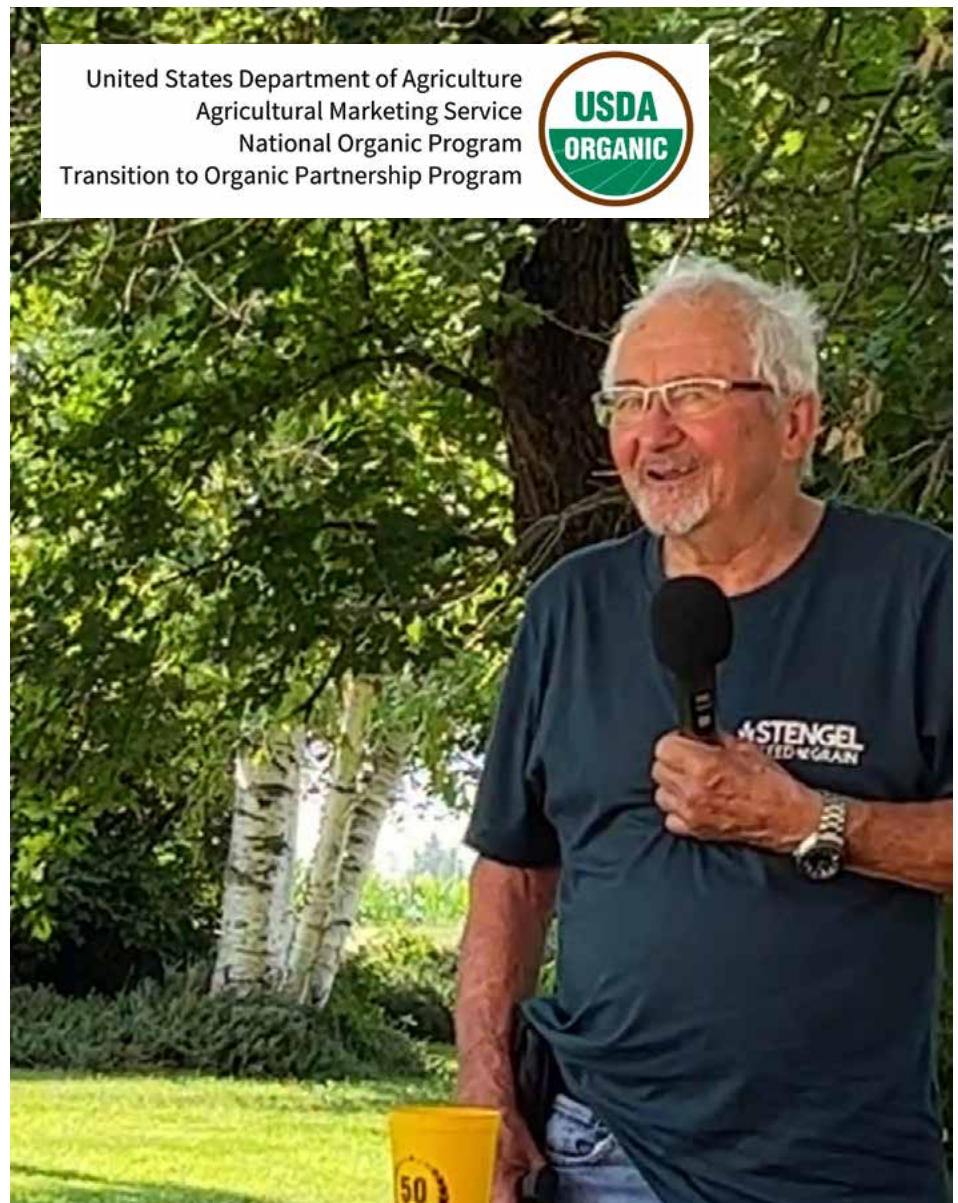
In the heartland of America, where amber waves of grain stretch as far as the eye can see, a small seed and grain company has quietly revolutionized the organic farming industry. Stengel Seed and Grain a family-owned business founded initially as a side-gig winter grain cleaning business. Under owner Doug Stengel the company grew into a much more significant business, making a remarkable impact in the organic food industry. Stengel's hosted a 50th-anniversary celebration, tour, and educational program that showcased its remarkable journey and enduring impact.

Doug Stengel, a visionary farmer, established the company in 1973 with a commitment to sustainable and organic agriculture. His pioneering spirit led Stengel Seed and Grain to develop cutting-edge organic farming practices that prioritize environmental stewardship and soil health.

The plant tour was a testament to Stengel's dedication to organic farming. Visitors were treated to a behind-the-scenes look at the company's reliable, high-quality facilities, where organic grain is carefully cleaned and distributed to food processors across the nation. Stengel's commitment to quality and purity was evident in every step of the production process.

But Stengel Seed and Grain's impact extends far beyond its well-maintained facilities. Doug is one of the founders of NPSAS and has served as a mentor to a number of farmers. Over the past five decades, Doug and the company have played a pivotal role in advancing organic farming ideas, providing farmers with the tools and knowledge needed to transition from conventional to organic farming.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Stengel Seed and Grain, we honor Doug Stengel's vision and the enduring legacy of



innovation in the organic farming industry. This company has not only stood the test of time but has also paved the way for a more

sustainable and environmentally responsible future in agriculture.

NPSAS Equipment For Sale

The following pieces of equipment are for sale. Interested parties have until Aug 1 at 8:00 am to submit a bid for any of the following pieces of equipment to director@npsas.org. Bids will be presented to the board at the board for approval. Questions Call Krysti Mikkonen at 605-380-3770

Allis Chalmers

All crop pull harvester (60 inch head) with pickup header and optional 4 bat reel (not put on) included, Allis Chalmers engine. Missing reel belt and drive chain.



2011 Bumper Hitch Trailer - 20 ft



Push Planter

Simulates planting technique of larger ALMACO planters by using the same precision metering cone. Cone makes one complete revolution per plot length Standard 3" diameter seed cup is well-suited for planting large to medium-sized seeds Other seed cups available.



HELP WANTED



Seeking Part-time NPSAS Assistant

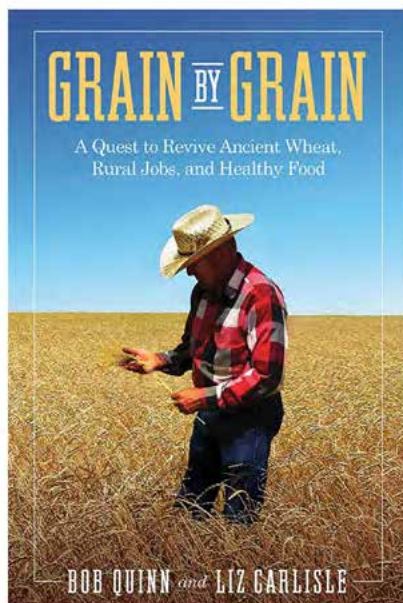
If you're looking for extra income and want to work from home, this opportunity might be for you. NPSAS is looking for assistance with events planning, communications, membership development, and more. We need someone for 10-20 hours per week who is:

- Is excited about organic, sustainable, and regenerative farming
- Has strong oral, written, and verbal communication skills
- Willingness to take initiative and share ideas
- Able to do some regional travel
- Possesses strong computer skills

If this sounds like you, please send a letter of inquiry and resume to Krysti Mikkonen at director@npsas.org.

Great Reads for Better Farming

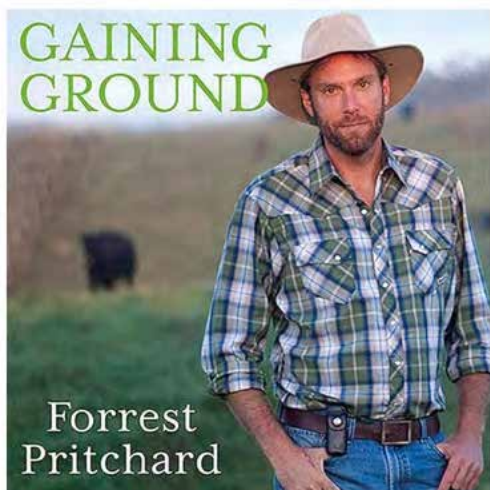
.....
"Grain by Grain" by Bob Quinn and Liz Carlisle



"Grain by Grain" is a must-read for anyone interested in the future of agriculture and food. Bob Quinn and Liz Carlisle offer a compelling vision for a more sustainable and just food system, one that is rooted in regenerative farming practices and values. Through engaging storytelling and expert analysis, they take us on a journey from the farms of Montana to the fields of ancient Egypt, showing us the power

of diverse grains.


NOTE: Join NPSAS for an interview with Bob Quinn on October 18 at 7:00 pm. This virtual event will give participants and opportunity to ask questions. For sign-up to get the link go to www.NPSAS.org/events



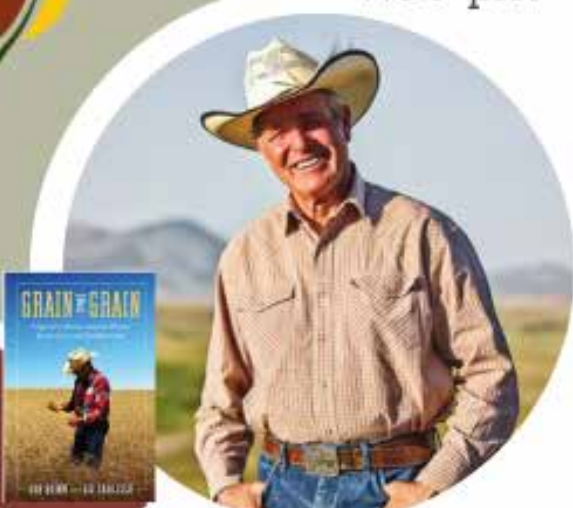
Gaining Ground

"Gaining Ground" is a compelling tale of one farmer's journey in Virginia, offering an honest look at the challenges faced by family farms. Forrest Pritchard's story beautifully

intertwines personal struggles with the importance of sustainable farming and local food systems. Educational yet engaging, it highlights the value of farmers' markets in bridging the gap between producers and consumers. This heartwarming narrative inspires hope for the future of agriculture and the preservation of rural communities.




October 18
7:00 pm




Live Interview with Bob Quinn

Author of Grain By Grain



Hear Bob's remarkable story of innovation & why he converted to organic farming after obtaining a PhD in conventional farming related fields of study.

Supported with



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To Register for this virtual event, use the QR code above or go the the link below.

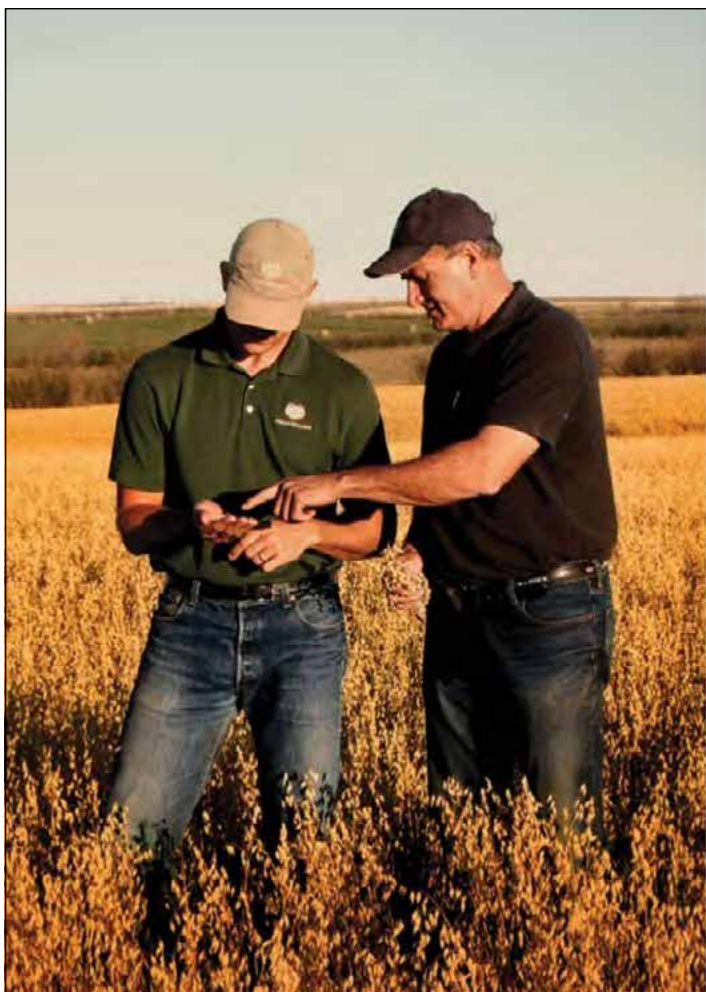
hwww.npsas.org/quinn



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