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Program Name: Beginning Farmer and Rancher

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{NO DATA ENTERED}

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{NO DATA ENTERED}

Non-Technical Summary

The 2007 U.S. Agricultural Census verifies the demand for beginning farmer help that Practical Farmers of Iowa is experiencing: The number of farms overall has increased, and there has been a 12 percent rise in the number of farms with sales under \$10,000. Most beginning farmers will need to start small with the enterprises identified by the PFI beginning farmers. According to our surveys, the beginning farmers in our membership are most interested in the following enterprises: 1. Vegetables (59 percent); 2. Beef cattle (48 percent); 3. Poultry (46 percent); 4. Tree fruits/orchards (37 percent); 5. Fruits (31 percent). Critical Barriers to Success: According to our surveys, these beginners most want help with 1. Developing a whole farm plan; 2. Researching legal requirements; 3. Acquiring land; 4. Building infrastructure (barns, greenhouses, fences); 5. Networking with other beginners OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES 1. Forty-five farmers, on average, will participate live in each of 12 annual Farminar online seminars, a three-year total of 1,620 farmer learners; archives of the Farminars will be viewed online 9,000 times; 2. 600 beginning farmers will attend workshops, field days, and retreats offered by Practical Farmers of Iowa and its partners that will help them improve their new farms; 3. 50 beginning farmers will receive hands-on mentoring on profitable and stewardship-based farms, through Practical Farmers of Iowa's mentoring program; 4. 60 beginning farmers will have graduated from Grow Your Small Market Farm and will participate in the program's ongoing networking opportunities; 5. 240 women landowners and beginning farmers will attend meetings to learn about land stewardship and land rental/ownership opportunities; 6. 1,500 beginning farmers will use Practical Farmers of Iowa's website to find land, farming resources, internships, and to network with each other; 7. More than 750,000 Iowans will receive information about this programming through the outreach efforts of Practical Farmers of Iowa. Potential Long-Range Impacts: This project will work toward a vibrant American agriculture by stopping the decline of farmers who rely upon their farming operations for their major source of income. With more careful planning, networking with experienced farmers, and training, beginning farmers can start farming in a way that ensures success. With its efforts to serve small farms, the project also will work to preserve rural infrastructure and rural communities. Another major benefit of this project is to facilitate the land linkages that generations ago were made largely between families and neighbors. In Iowa, one of five acres is owned by someone who does not live in the state, and this number is increasing. Additionally, one in 10 acres in Iowa is owned by a single female over the age of 75. This project will help identify opportunities for farmers in this climate of increased farm size and increasing absentee and female inheritor ownership.

Accomplishments

Major goals of the project

Goals The long-term goal of this project is to ensure that Iowa farms continue generation after generation, providing healthful food, profitable businesses, multiple ecosystem services, and contributions to vibrant communities. The intermediate goal of this project is to help beginners network, plan and grow their businesses; learn stewardship, production, and life skills, and apply those skills to become a new generation of profitable, sustainable farmers. Objectives Over this three-year grant period, Practical Farmers of Iowa and its partners will accomplish the following: 1. Forty-five farmers, on average, will participate live in each of 12 annual "Farminar" online seminars, a three-year total of 1,620 farmer learners; archives of the Farminars will be viewed online 9,000 times; 2. 600 beginning farmers will attend workshops, field days, and retreats offered by Practical Farmers of Iowa and its partners that will help them improve their new farms; 3. 50 beginning farmers will receive hands-on mentoring on profitable and stewardship-based farms, through Practical Farmers of Iowa's mentoring program; 4. 45 beginning farmers will have graduated from Grow Your Small Market Farm and will participate in the program's ongoing networking opportunities; 5. 240 women landowners and beginning farmers will attend meetings to learn about land stewardship and land rental/ownership opportunities; 6. 1,500 beginning farmers will use Practical Farmers of Iowa's website to find land, farming resources, internships, and to network with each other; 7. More than 750,000 Iowans will receive information about this programming through the outreach efforts of Practical Farmers of Iowa. Outputs 36 "Fishbowl Farminars," online seminars led by pairings of beginning and experienced farmers to explore topics on production, marketing, legal/issues, finance/recordkeeping, and stewardship; Networking and skills-building opportunities for beginning farmers, including 12 field days, 4 workshops, and 4 retreats; Mentorships (30) between experienced farmers and beginners; A rigorous business planning class for 90 farmers; Quarterly (12) opportunities for women landowners and beginning farmers to improve their land stewardship and share land rent/purchase opportunities; Online web enhancement for beginning farmers to find land, network and learn; Extensive outreach beyond those directly served with this programming;

What was accomplished under these goals?

Practical Farmers of Iowa held 24 beginning farmer field days, 50 farminars (webinars), three overnight retreats, 7 networking events, 4 pasture walks, 19 workshops and two on-site demonstrations. Practical Farmers facilitated 7 trainees for trainer

farms, 8 land matches for beginning farmers, and 59 mentorships. PFI events focused on production and business planning needs identified by beginning farmers.

Women, Food and Ag Network held 12 learning circles to bring together women landowners and beginning farmers. Iowa Valley RC&D held 15 classroom trainings, 2 field days and one networking event. Grow Your Small Market Farm held 39 business planning classes.

Year 3: Of those who attended events this past year, 14.8% plan to start farming and 72.2% are farming and continue to do so.

Nobody reported they plan to stop farming. 98.8% responded they had a change in knowledge as a result of attending: they rated the change in knowledge on average as 3.48 out of 5, 1 being none and 5 being a great deal. Attendees also rated effectiveness of presentations as 4.2 out of 5, 5 being very effective.

As a result of participating in beginning farmer programming, 250 report they plan to start farming, and 1050 reported they plan to continue. 62.3% of beginners reported they changed farming/land management practices as a result of participation, and 53.7% reported they changed marketing practices as a result of participation.

Year 2: Field day outcomes: Season-long field day data is not yet calculated. Here is an sample of the impact these events have made: Labor Saving field day: 81.8% of attendees (100 total attendees) who filled out a survey reported that they plan to make farm changes due to attending, and 12.1% reported they might make changes. 66.7% of attendees reported that they have incorporated changes due to attending a past event.

Retreat outcomes:

For the enterprise budgeting session, on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being no change and 5 being great change, 16% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 28% reported 3, 40% reported 4, and 12% reported 5. For the managing paperwork session, 16% reported 1, 8% reported 2, 28% reported 3, 28% reported 4, and 16% reported 5. For the financial tables session, 4.2% reported 1, 8.3% reported 2, 29.3% reported 3, 33.3% reported 4, and 16.7% reported 5. For the employee management session, 8% reported 1, 8% reported 2, 32% reported 3, 12% reported 4, and 24% reported 5. 96% of participants who attended reported a change in attitude about farming as result of participating. On a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being not at all and 5 being absolutely, without a doubt, 4% reported 1, 12% reported 2, 44% reported 3, 12% reported 4, and 12% reported 5. 100% of those who attended reported a planned change in behavior/approach as result of participating. 33.6% of those who attended the retreat reported planning to start farming as result of participating. 66.7% of those who attended the retreat reported planning to continue farming as result of participating.

Farminar outcomes: 98.8% of those who watched a live farminar reported a change in knowledge as result of participating. 98.7% of participants who participated reported planning to change farming behavior/approach as a result of participating. 28.7% of those who participated reported planning to start farming as result of participating (67.1% who responded were already farming. 97% of those who participated reported planning to continue farming as result of participating.

Workshop outcomes: 71.4% of attendees to a workshop plan to make changes to their farming practices due to attending,

with the remaining 28.6% considering making changes.

Three land matches have been confirmed, and six land matches are pending between landowners and beginning farmers due to Practical Farmers' Find a Farmer website.

GYSMF outcomes: As a result of attending the class, 29% plan to start farming. One year after completing the program, 65% have created a farm plan. 65% have changed marketing practices, 80% have changed business practices, and 80% plan to continue participation in the program.

Year 1: PFI Outcomes:

Field day outcomes: As a result of attending PFI field days, 68.2% are considering changing farming practices.

Next Generation Retreat outcomes:

100% Of those who attended the retreat reported a change in knowledge as result of participating. For the legal structures session, on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being no change and 5 being great change, 4.5% reported 1, 9.1% reported 2, 22.7% reported 3, 36.4% reported 4, and 18.2% reported 5. For the marketing research session, 0% reported 1, 4.5% reported 2, 31.8% reported 3, 31.8% reported 4, and 22.7% reported 5. For the financial projections session, 0% reported 1, 4.8% reported 2, 23.8% reported 3, 38.1% reported 4, and 33.3% reported 5. For the practical farm bookkeeping session, 9.2% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 22.7% reported 3, 40.9% reported 4, and 27.3% reported 5. For the gauge if you are making a living farming session, 0% reported 1, 4.5% reported 2, 9.1% reported 3, 45.5% reported 4, and 40.9% reported 5. For the banking and loans session, 4.5% reported 1, 9.1% reported 2, 27.3% reported 3, 50% reported 4, and 9.1% reported 5.

100% of participants who attended the retreat reported a change in attitude about farming as result of participating. On a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being not at all and 5 being absolutely, without a doubt, 0% reported 1, 10.5% reported 2, 42.1% reported 3, 31.6% reported 4, and 15.8% reported 5.

100% of those who attended the retreat reported a planned change in behavior/approach as result of participating. 80% of those who attended the retreat reported planning to start farming as result of participating. 100% of those who attended the retreat reported planning to continue farming as result of participating. On a scale from 1 to 5, 0% reported 1, 0% reported 2, 15.8% reported 3, 31.6% reported 4, and 15.8% reported 5.

Farminar outcomes: 99.5% of those who watched a live farminar reported a change in knowledge as result of participating.

82.2% of participants who watched a live farminar reported a change in attitude about farming as result of participating.

38.6% of those who watched a live farminar reported planning to start farming as result of participating (57.9% who responded were already farming). 83.4% of those who watched a live farminar reported planning to continue farming as result of participating.

Workshop outcomes: Effectiveness of three workshops was rated at 4.5, 4.14, and 3.88 on a scale from one to five.

IVRC&D: As a result of participating in IVRC&D events, 10 % of participants anticipate changing farming\land management practices, 15% plan to develop a farm plan, 10% plan to start farming, 80% plan to change marketing practices, and 20% plan to change business practices.

The beginning farmer network of each partner has grown, bringing the network to 3500.

Media exposure was secured for all outputs of the grant, resulting in exposure to more than 750,000.

When asked if participating in beginning farmer programs helped them, here is one response:

Oh my yes. I don't know if I'd be starting out on my own if I hadn't been introduced to PFI and all the other young people entering farming. Just meeting and talking to others like myself who didn't study it in college or grow up on a farm, but who are making this life and career work for themselves made me feel like I could do it, too. Also meeting the older generation of growers who paved the way for us in educating their communities, pooling their production knowledge, and coming together to highlight how the next generation can be more successful with marketing, record keeping and more of an emphasis on seeing a farm as a farm business. I have felt so supported by all of the more experienced growers I've met through PFI.

What opportunities for training and professional development has the project provided?

Social media and outreach training helped improve the outreach for this project.

How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?

Results have been disseminated through news releases, social media, websites, radio and print news publication, brochures, Practical Farmers' blog, Facebook and Twitter. Numbers for these items are detailed under 'Other Products.' More than 750,000 were reached with information about beginning farmers in Iowa as well as educational events to help these beginners.

What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?

{Nothing to report}

Participants

Actual FTEs for this Reporting Period

Role	Faculty and Non-Students	Students within Staffing Roles			Computed Total by Role
		Undergraduate	Graduate	Post-Doctorate	
Scientist	0	0	0	0	0
Professional	3.5	0	0	0	3.5
Technical	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Computed Total	3.5	0	0	0	3.5

Target Audience

The primary target audience for this project is beginning farmers. Also targeted are those wanting to farm, and established farms interested in adding another generation to their operation or passing their land/business along to a new generation. Of participants in year one, 570 qualified as socially disadvantaged; 378 qualified as limited resource; 1 was identified as a farm worker; 569 were female; 819 were currently farming; and 100 were farming/ranching less than one year. Of participants in year two, 47 qualified as socially disadvantaged; 248 qualified as limited resource; 299 were identified as a farm workers; 594 were female; 863 were currently farming; and 279 were farming/ranching less than one year. Of participants in year three, 52 qualified as socially disadvantaged; 248 qualified as limited resource; 240 were identified as farm workers; 20 were veterans; and 636 were female.

Products

{Nothing to report}

Other Products**Product Type**

Audio or Video

Description

Fifty farminar video archives and fifty farminar audio archives, made during this reporting period are accessible <http://practicalfarmers.org/events/farminars.html>

Product Type

Other

Description

The Practical Farmer, PFI's quarterly newsletter, was published 12 times during the grant. Each edition features beginning farmers, and also provides profiles, production, research and business development articles that feature Iowa farmers. Mailed to 1750 constituents, available online at <http://practicalfarmers.org/news/index.html>.

Product Type

Audio or Video

Description

Four videos geared toward beginners were created. It benefited primarily beginning farmers, but also increased beginning farmer awareness to the general public.

Product Type

Educational Aids or Curricula

Description

Financing Guide, Business Plan Resource Guides, Farm Employment FAQ fact sheets online and in print

Product Type

Educational Aids or Curricula

Description

600 brochures on business plan development

Product Type

Evaluation Instruments

Description

80 surveys were sent over this reporting period to gauge the quality of work and changes in skills

Product Type

Other

Description

Five websites were created and maintained, plus information was shared on 40 partner websites

Product Type

Educational Aids or Curricula

Description

220 worksheets were created and used in classroom teaching

Product Type

Other

Description

22 brochures were created: three annual conference (mailed to 3500 each year), three field day (mailed to 3500 each year), Savings Incentive program (distributed to 2000 each year), twelve for Iowa Valley RC&D workshops (sent to 100 each, each year) and one for Grow Your Small Market Farm (distributed to 100 each year)

Product Type

Other

Description

30 event flyers were distributed: 18 for field days, 12 for WFAN beginning farmer/landowner meetings. Each flyer was sent to approximately 40 people.

Product Type

Other

Description

Media exposure, approximately 750,000: Published newspaper articles on beginners (52), beginning farmer-related news releases (73), requests from press to speak with staff on beginning farmer related news topics (24), features on radio/etc about a release (100)

Product Type

Other

Description

Social media: Facebook posts(90); beginning farmer photos on facebook (90); @practicalfarmer (150); pfigeneral@ (50); beginning farmer email updates (44); blog posts (60)

Changes/Problems

There were no major changes/problems in approach. Our beginning farmer network is continuing to surge in number and interest, and it is crucial we continue to offer services to this group of farmers. Their needs and interests are vast, and they need a lot of support to create viable businesses.