


5-31-2005

PFI field days: Collaboration and farmer research

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Recommended Citation

Iutzi, Fred and Exner, Derrick N., "PFI field days: Collaboration and farmer research" (2005). *Integrated Crop Management News*. 1412.
<http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cropnews/1412>

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PFI field days: Collaboration and farmer research

Abstract

Oilseed flax production, grass-fed beef, and the Conservation Security Program are among the topics featured in Practical Farmers of Iowa's (PFI) 2005 field day schedule. PFI celebrates 20 years of farmer-driven research and outreach with a special anniversary field day at the farm of Ron and Maria Rosmann, Harlan, on June 30. The Rosmanns, longtime sustainable agriculture leaders in Iowa, will showcase their diversified farming operation and will host Dick Thompson, PFI co-founder, and George DeVault, past editor of *New Farm* magazine.

Disciplines

Agricultural Education | Agricultural Science | Agriculture | Agronomy and Crop Sciences



Announcements

PFI field days: Collaboration and farmer research

by Fred Iutzi and Rick Exner, PFI/Iowa State University Extension

Oilseed flax production, grass-fed beef, and the Conservation Security Program are among the topics featured in Practical Farmers of Iowa's (PFI) 2005 field day schedule. PFI celebrates 20 years of farmer-driven research and outreach with a special anniversary field day at the farm of Ron and Maria Rosmann, Harlan, on June 30. The Rosmanns, longtime sustainable agriculture leaders in Iowa, will showcase their diversified farming operation and will host Dick Thompson, PFI co-founder, and George DeVault, past editor of *New Farm* magazine.

New markets for organic flax and new low-linolenic acid soybean varieties may allow farmers to benefit from consumer demand for healthier vegetable oils. The new markets bring questions about production and economics of these niche crops. PFI farmers are collaborating with the Department of Agronomy, ISU Extension, and the Organic Agriculture Program at Iowa State to provide answers for both organic and conventional systems. Field day hosts include:

Greg and Norma Wiley	Washington	June 21	flax
Bob and Dick Gallagher	Washington	June 21	low-lin beans
Ron and Maria Rosmann	Harlan	June 30	flax
Jeff Longfellow	Bedford	July 1	flax
ISU Neely-Kinyon Farm	Greenfield	August 24	flax
			low-lin beans
Paul Mugge	Sutherland	August 27	flax
Ron Dunphy	Creston	August 29	low-lin beans

With corn breeders from Iowa State, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-Agricultural Research Service (ARS), and the Michael Field Ag Institute, PFI is working to improve the feed quality of corn and germplasm availability to producers and small seedhouses. Exotic corn populations are being crossed with elite inbred lines under farm conditions to develop both hybrids and populations with improved amino acid and nutrient profiles and good yield. Farmers and researchers involved will share their progress at five PFI field days this year:

Laura Krouse	Mount Vernon	July 27
ISU Neely-Kinyon Farm	Greenfield	August 24
Don Adams and Nan Bonfils	Madrid	September 11
Mike Natvig and Amy Miller	Cresco	September 27
Gary Laydon and Pat Mennenga	Plainfield	October 1



Several PFI field days will take place during flax bloom. This crop, on the farm of Paul and Karen Mugge, yielded well and received an organic premium. (Paul Mugge)

Multiple benefits of grazing systems will be featured at PFI field days this summer. Tom and Kristi German will be joined by industry specialists in discussing genetics, management, and marketing in grass-fed beef production. Conservation Security Program (CSP) participants Vic and Cindy Madsen, in conjunction with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Land Stewardship Project, and local watershed representatives, will discuss how production practices and perennials come together in their CSP contract. Rotational grazing, perennials, and soil quality, concepts central to the new Green Lands, Blue Waters program, will be the focus of a field day presented by Linda and Ron Grice, with assistance from Rick Cruse, ISU Department of Agronomy; Tom Isenhardt, Department of Forestry; and John Sellers, coordinator of the Iowa Grassland Agriculture Program of the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture.

Tom and Kristi German	Holstein	August 3
Vic and Cindy Madsen	Audubon	September 8
Linda and Ron Grice	South English	September 24

PFI farmers will offer updates on their efforts to improve knowledge about maintaining herd health in antibiotic-free swine production systems at two field days, and alternative production systems will be demonstrated at two more. ISU Extension Swine Specialist David Stender

and private veterinarian Kurt Van Hulzen will lead a herd health workshop for veterinarians and producers preceding a tour of Dan and Lorna Wilson's greenhouse and pasture farrowing. Gary Laydon and Pat Mennenga will demonstrate on-farm research on herd health and the wood-burning farrowing barn furnace they constructed with help from the USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Farmer and Rancher Grant Program. Ron and Maria Rosmann and Vic and Cindy Madsen will showcase their alternative swine production systems as well.

Ron and Maria Rosmann	Harlan	June 30
Dan and Lorna Wilson	Paullina	July 26
Vic and Cindy Madsen	Audubon	September 8
Gary Laydon and Pat Mennenga	Plainfield	October 1

Other 2005 PFI field day topics include:

Grape and wine production and marketing

Richard Black Farnhamville July 23

Alternative cucumber beetle and apple pest management—Wallace Country Life Center

Mark Gleason, Department of Plant Pathology Orient July 28

Local foods

Wright County Food Festival Clarion July 30

Weed management field school

Robert Hartzler, ISU Extension
Matt Liebman, Department of Agronomy
Richard and Sharon Thompson Boone August 22

Direct-marketed meats, cheeses, and vegetables

Susan Jutz Solon September 10

For detailed descriptions, directions, and times, visit the Farming Systems Program section of the PFI Web site at www.practicalfarmers.org, or contact PFI Communications Coordinator Todd Kimm at 515-232-5661 x108 or todd@practicalfarmers.org. For more information about the PFI-ISU Extension Farming Systems Program, contact Rick Exner, 515-294-5486, dnexner@iastate.edu or Fred Iutzi, 515-294-8512, iutzi@iastate.edu.

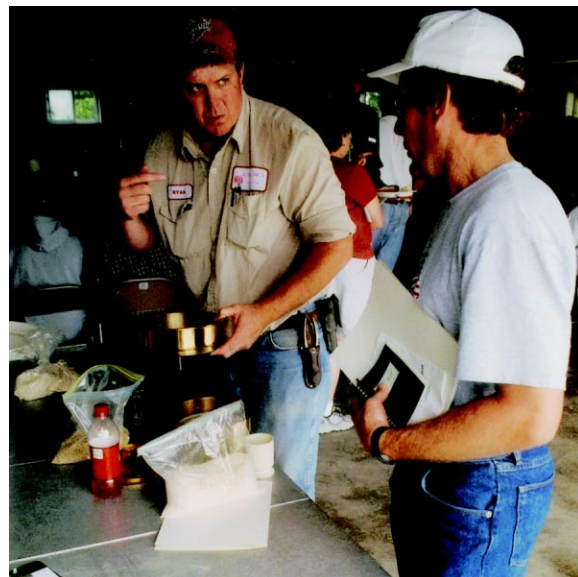
Fred Iutzi is the associate coordinator and Rick Exner is the coordinator for the PFI/ISU Extension Farming Systems Program.



Laura Krouse demonstrates the tractor-mounted transplanter that she uses in her member-subscription vegetable operation. (Rick Exner)



The cultivation demos at the Ron and Maria Rosmann field day will focus on ridge tillage. (Rick Exner)



Ryan Ubben, St. Ansgar Mills, shows the importance of feed particle size with a screening demonstration. The workshop took place on the farm of Wayne and Ruth Fredericks, Osage. (Rick Exner)