
The Monthly Feedstuff - Beekeeping resources after a hard winter + Join a Livestock Farmer Meet-Up

From Amos Johnson <amos.johnson@practicalfarmers.org>

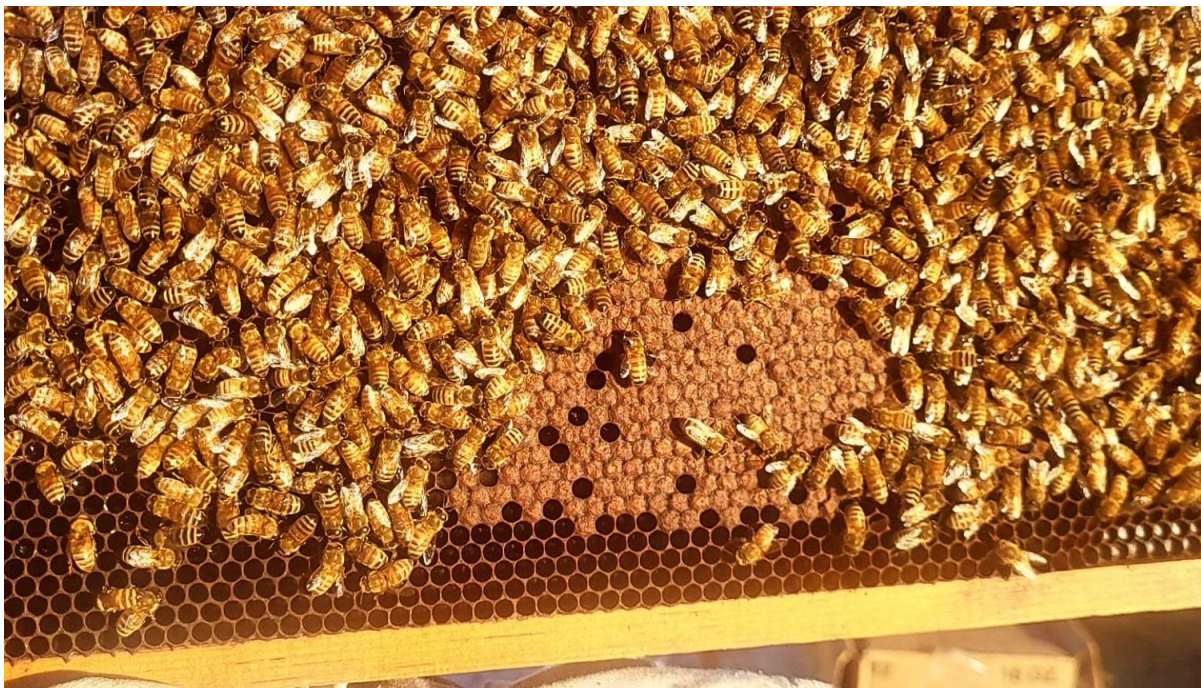
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To Anna Pesek <anna.pesek@practicalfarmers.org>



Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.

February 2025



Resources for beekeeping through challenging times

It seems last year was a hard one for bees. The Honey Bee Health Coalition reports that beekeepers nationwide have discovered sudden and significant colony losses over the winter, with average recent losses well over 50%. When

these losses are combined with colony losses over the past 12 months, many beekeepers experienced a loss rate of 70% to 100%, according to the coalition.

If your hives are struggling, here are a couple of resources for you:

- [Submit emergency assistance claims through the Farm Service Agency for losses by March 3.](#)
- The scientists behind these findings are planning a free webinar to share more information at the beginning of March. [Keep an eye on their website for details.](#)
- Take a look at [this study](#) investigating the efficacy of varroa mite treatment based on application timing.
- Sign up for [this educational retreat](#) focused on the business of beekeeping and building community with PFI member **Julia McGuire**.

And if you need something a little lighter, spend some time with "The Practical Farmer" article ["Oh, for a Bee's Experience"](#) about the challenges and joys of beekeeping in Iowa.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Magazine: "A Practice in Faith"



Arlyn and Sue Kauffman own Green Ridge Family Farm near Weldon, Iowa. As practicing Mennonites, their faith interweaves with how they show up in the world and approach farming – which includes managing their 20,000-hen layer barn.

Learn more about their story in ["A Practice in Faith"](#) from the winter edition of "The Practical Farmer."

And [listen to Arlyn's closing remarks at PFI's 2018 Cooperators' Meeting](#), where he shares more about how his faith underpins his life and his farming practices.

Apply for a position with our 2025 Labor4Learning trainers



Our 2025 Labor4Learning trainers are seeking employees across the state to work on their operations while receiving mentorship and support for learning opportunities.

The **Labor4Learning program** pairs beginning farmers seeking employment and additional training in farm management and production skills with experienced farmers seeking extra help on their farm.

Explore the job postings.

BEYOND THE GATE

Financial and mentorship resource from Farm Bureau



Are you interested in financing your livestock operation? Do you want to connect with experienced farmers to continue their legacy and begin your own?

The Building Your Livestock Legacy Program can provide helpful resources. They connect aspiring farmers with financial resources or match them with seasoned farmers looking to pass on their farm to non-heirs. **Enroll today.**

Choose Iowa Butchery Innovation Grant Program



Small-scale meat processors and custom lockers are encouraged to submit proposals through the **Choose Iowa Butchery Innovation Grant Program.**

Proposed projects should support job creation and expanding meat processing capacity within Iowa by enhancing processing, storage and meat transportation efficiencies. Grants are intended for smaller-scale facilities.

Applications are due by March 31.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Webinar: "Dying To Start Dyeing? Raising, Processing and Marketing Wool"



Tuesday, Feb. 25 | Noon-1 p.m.

Join our upcoming webinar where farmer **Emily Tzeng** will discuss the value chain for wool, the benefits and potential difficulties of producing natural-dye crops and ways to market these items.

Learn how small-scale farms can add value to their wool by processing the fibers into roving, yarn and finished goods and by dyeing those products. **RSVP**

Join a Livestock Farmer Meet-Up this winter



Livestock Farmer Meet-Ups are a new offering from PFI this winter.

These casual events are aimed to establish networks of local connections and support among livestock farmers within each region of the state. Join fellow farmers in your area for good conversation and good food, courtesy of PFI.

To RSVP, email Amos at amos.johnson@practicalfarmers.org.

Register today for Midwest Covers and Grains Conference



Wednesday, March 5 | Great Wolf Lodge, Baraboo, WI

Consider taking a trip to Wisconsin to connect with other farmers interested in the benefits of small grains in rotation at the Midwest Covers and Grains Conference.

The conference will include:

- Plenary and breakout sessions and time for networking
- Delicious locally sourced food
- A farmer social immediately following the conference

Register now.

Upcoming PFI events

All events listed in Central Time.

Feb. 20: Meet-Up – Livestock Farmer Meet-Up

Host: Chad Hensley
10:30 a.m. | Lamoni, IA

Feb. 28 Meet-Up – Livestock Farmer Meet-Up

Host: Steve Riggins
10 a.m. | Nevada, IA

March 8: Meet-Up – Livestock Farmer Meet-Up

Host: Stennie Nelson
2 p.m. | Onawa, IA

Feb. 28 Meet-Up – Livestock Farmer Meet-Up

Host: Steve Riggins
10 a.m. | Nevada, IA

Friends of PFI events

**Feb. 20, 25, 27, March 5:
Workshop – Iowa Dairy Days**

Hosted by: ISU Extension
10 a.m.-3 p.m. | Various locations

Feb. 26: Workshop – Are milking robots the future of dairy farming?

Hosted by: University of Minnesota Extension
10 a.m.-3 p.m. | Paynesville, MN

March 13: Webinar – Pasture Poultry and Bird Flu: How to avoid it and what to expect if you get it

Hosted by: Food Animal Concerns Trust
Noon | [Online](#)

March 15: Workshop – Keeping Bees Year After Year

Hosted by: University of Minnesota Extension
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. | St. Paul, MN

March 19-20: Workshop – Midwest Grazing & Soil Health Summit

Hosted by: Sustainable Farming Association
Wilmar, MN
Say hi at the PFI booth!

[View our events calendar](#)

Contact our team

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