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## The Practical Horticulturist - Update your local food offerings + Funding opportunities for your farm

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Date Thu 4/10/2025 3:23 PM

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



**March 2025**

*Equipping farmers to build resilient farms and communities.*



## Have you updated your listing in PFI's Local Foods Directory?

**PFI's Local Foods Directory** exists to help connect consumers with member farms and their products. As spring approaches, it's time to make sure your listing is up to date with your farm's offerings.

PFI members are listed for free, and you must be a current PFI member to be included in the directory. If you're not a farmer, you can search the directory, which is available on our website, to support local farmers, businesses and organizations that offer local foods near you.

**Update your farm's information today.**

## PROGRAM UPDATES

### Share ideas for the 2025 Midwest Mechanical Weed Control Field Day



PFI is excited to partner with The Land Connection and Glacial Drift Enterprises to bring the **Midwest Mechanical Weed Control Field Day** to Ames, Iowa, on Aug. 20, 2025. This regional event includes education and field demonstrations featuring mechanical weed control equipment for vegetable and field crop production.

Planning is underway, and we invite your input. Are there specific equipment and demos you want to see? Speakers you'd like to hear from? Topics you'd like to cover? **Share your ideas.**

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### Local Foods Purchasing Assistance Program funding ends



The Local Foods Purchasing Assistance Program was established to buy local food from Iowa's producers for distribution to Iowans in under-resourced communities.

**At this time, the upcoming renewal of Iowa's LFPA Program has been cancelled.**

PFI remains committed to creating and fundraising for programs that meaningfully support Iowa's food system.

Questions? Contact **Natasha Hegmann** at (515) 232-5661 or [natasha.hegmann@practicalfarmer.org](mailto:natasha.hegmann@practicalfarmer.org).

## IN THE FIELD

### Encourage your schools to Choose Iowa



Up to \$70,000 is available to public and private K-12 schools to source local foods through a new grant program. **The Choose Iowa Food Purchasing Pilot Program for Schools** enables schools to apply for \$1,000 per school building in the district. Schools must provide at least a 1:1 financial match. Applications are due at noon on April 7, 2025.

**Find details and encourage your local schools to apply.**

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### Enroll in the Iowa Valley RC&D's no-till cost-share



Iowa Valley RC&D's 2025 no-till cost-share program application is open now.

Like any new practice, using no-till for vegetable production has a learning curve with potentially reduced productivity.

To help with the financial risk, Iowa Valley RC&D is offering up to a \$500 cost-share to 10 Iowa vegetable growers to trial a no-till practice on their farm. **Apply by April 1, 2025.**

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### Is the USDA's Value-Added Producer Grant right for you?





The Value-Added Producer Grant program helps fund agricultural producers' value-added activities to generate new products, create and expand marketing opportunities and increase producer income.

There is approximately \$30 million in total available funding. Maximum grant amounts are \$75,000 for planning grants and \$250,000 for working capital grants.

**[Take this self-assessment survey to identify if you are eligible.](#)**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Friends of PFI events

**March 20: Webinar – Integrated Pest Management for Urban Farms**

*Hosted by ISU Outreach & Extension*

1 p.m. | **Online**

**March 26: Webinar – Supporting Your Farm Employees With Physical and Mental Disabilities: Legal Obligations for Injuries and Disabilities on the Farm**

*Hosted by: Farm Commons*

11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. | **Online**

**April 4: Workshop – Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training**

*Hosted by: Iowa State Extension*

8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. | Indianola, IA

**View our events calendar**

### Contact our team

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*Horticulture Education Manager*

**Natasha Hegmann**  
*Senior Horticulture and Local Foods Coordinator*

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**Join Practical Farmers**



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