

LOCAL FOOD/SMALL FARMS NEWSLETTER

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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
EXTENSION

GREETINGS FROM UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION

Hello. My name is Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant and my position within the U of I Extension organization is as a Local Food Systems and Small Farms (LFSSF) Educator.

I have over 25 years of experience working in the area of small farms and sustainable and organic production systems. For the past six years, I served as the statewide Small Farms and Sustainable Agriculture Extension Specialist.

I am one of fourteen LFSSF educators working across Illinois to develop and deliver high impact and relevant educational programs and materials in three areas: (1) sustainable local food production, marketing of local food systems and

initiatives, and delivery of a diverse and local supply of nutritious foods; (2) organic and IPM plant protection systems; and (3) small farm educational programs that stress environmental stewardship and economic sustainability.

I would like to develop an email list so that I can provide you with timely information about educational programs and resources in our three county area as well as those in Central Illinois. If you would like to receive this information please send your name and email address to: cvnghgrn@illinois.edu

For those of you who are Facebook users, I have developed two pages — (1) Local Food Systems and

Small Farms and (2) Illinois Beginning Farmers Program. If interested, please “Like” these pages.

Lastly, I would like to develop a forum for input from farmers as well as interested community members. If you have an interest in this area and would like to serve on the Logan, Menard and Sangamon Counties Local Food Systems and Small Farms Advisory Committee please contact me by phone or email.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Following are the programs we'll be offering during the winter months in preparation for the 2012 growing season. I hope you can find some useful and relevant information.

THE “BASICS” SERIES

A series of 4 telenet sessions will be offered to provide information to individuals considering the options of commercial production for the first time or expanding a current operation with an additional product. The

programs will be at the University of Illinois Extension office in Springfield from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. The programs are free to the public, but registration is required. To register call 217-782-4617 or online at www.extension.illinois.edu/lms

Dates and topics:

November 28

Berry Production

December 5

High Tunnels

December 12

Pumpkins

December 19

Vegetables

EFFECTIVE COVER CROPPING

Effective Cover Cropping in the Midwest conference will be held Dec. 7-8 in Decatur and will provide a forum for farmers to exchange information, discuss opportunities for collaboration, and learn about new and successful practices related to cover crops. Specific tracks will be held for no-till, tillage, and organic applications. Speakers will include farmers, crop consultants, and university re-

searchers who have extensive experience in cover crop management. The goal of the conference is to get farmers together to learn how to effectively manage cover crops in a way that enhances soil quality, keeps nutrients in the fields, and increases the bottom line. For more information and to register, www.swcs.org



ILLINOIS SPECIALTY GROWERS CONFERENCE

The premier event for fruit and vegetable growers in Illinois will be held in Springfield on Jan. 12-13. The 2 day conference is split into 6 tracks--fruits, vegetables, herbs, organic, agritourism, and emerging issues and opportunities. The conference also includes a large trade show.

Four pre-conference workshops will also be offered on Jan. 11 prior to the conference. Workshops include:

- Getting Started: Guidelines and Resources for New Growers;
- Scaling Up Local Food Systems;

- Expanding Farmers' Market Opportunities;
- Legal Issues for Specialty Crop Producers.

For more information or to register for the conference go to: www.specialtygrowers.org

PUTTING SMALL ACRES TO WORK

This program will be held on Saturday, February 18, at John Wood Community College, 1301 S. 48th Street, Quincy. Designed for those who have a few acres they'd like to find an enterprise which could supply some income or provide for family enjoyment. We'll begin at 8:30am and finish at 1pm. Topics you can select from include: Agrotourism/ Recrea-

tional land use opportunities; Getting the most from pasture/hay acres; Beginning beekeeping; Pond/lake management; Cut flower production; Asparagus/rhubarb. Three sessions per hour are offered, and some are repeated, but you may want to bring along an extra person. A general session will dis-

cuss- Business planning, marketing and goal setting. Local producers will provide the training in each of these hour long sessions.

Cost for the program is \$30 per person (\$40 for couples) which includes lunch. Students can attend for \$10. Register on line at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/abhps/>

SMALL FARMS/LOCAL FOODS WEBINARS

We'll be offering a number of webinars during the next few months on topics of interest to producers of local foods. These sessions are designed to provide information to help you manage your acreage, on a wide variety of topics. The sessions will be held at the U of I Extension Office in Springfield. All sessions will be offered on Thursdays at 1pm. The sessions are free to the public, but registration is required.

Listed below are the topics and

dates for each program:

Pastured Poultry

January 26

GAPS (Good Agricultural Practices) Training

February 2

Soil Fertility

February 9

Raising Sheep and Goats

February 16

Extending the Growing Season

February 23

Are you Farm to School Ready?

March 1

Managing your Woodland

March 8

Common Garden Pests

March 15

Companion Planting

March 22

Pasture Management

March 29

To register for each event call 217-782-4617 or online at web.extension.illinois.edu/lms. All the programs will be recorded and available for viewing at a later date.

HOLIDAY FARMERS MARKET



Saturday, December 17 at the Artisan's Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds, Springfield from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Stock up for the winter or your next holiday meal with locally produced meats, cheeses, eggs, honey, baked

goods, veggies, wine and more!

This event will feature: 35+ Vendors; Kids Activities; Lunch Available by Real Cuisine; Wine Tasting; and Holiday Gifts. There is plenty of parking in the old "Happy

Hollow" at the foot of the Artisan's Building. A ramp and stairs are available to get to the Artisan's Building. Enter through gate 1 and follow signs for Holiday Farmers Market Parking.

PESTICIDE TESTING

If you purchase or use restricted use pesticides you must be licensed. There will be a training/testing opportunity in our region on Feb. 9th at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 3000 S. Dirksen in Springfield. The training will be held from 8:00-11:30am for and testing starts at 12:30 pm. The cost is \$30 per person for the training. Pre-registration is required. Call 877-626-1650 or register online at

www.pesticidesafety.uiuc.edu As long as room is available, you may elect to take the test only and avoid the \$30 fee. Just show up at noon. You may also take training online. <http://m.extension.illinois.edu/privatepest/> You must still pass the test to receive a license. Cost for the license is \$30 and is valid for three years.

There will be a two test only sessions: Dec. 9th at the Sangamon Co. Farm Bureau, 2631 Beechler Ct., Springfield (call 217-782-4617 to register) and Dec. 13th, Menard Co. Farm Bureau, 420 S. 7th St., Petersburg (call 217-632-7491 to register). Both sessions will be held from 9:00-11:00. There is no cost for the test only session.

MARKETREADY/MARKETMAKER WORKSHOP

MarketReady is a program designed to help small and mid-sized producers understand the evolving commercial market opportunities of locally produced foods. The curriculum was developed as a result of an extensive survey of commercial buyers across Illinois, Kentucky and Ohio and introduces a variety of important issues that producers should be

aware of as they evaluate the potential opportunities. Informative checklists and suggested Best Marketing Practices are included in the training to help producers be better prepared to meet the needs of potential commercial buyers/customers.

Topics include: communication/relationship building; packaging/labeling;

pricing/invoicing; supply/delivery; insurance; certifications and audits; quality assurance; marketing. The program will be presented on Dec. 13th, 9am-3:30pm at the Knox County Extension office in Galesburg. The program is fee, but space is limited to 50 people. Call Mary Hosier at 217-333-7512 to register.



Photo by Ginny Lee



Buy Fresh Buy Local (BFBL), is a local foods' campaign to encourage the community to support local farmers. This includes everyone from individual consumers to larger buyers, restaurants and

grocery stores. Through the BFBL campaign's marketing materials consumers can identify locally produced foods and farmers can reach new local markets. If you are a grower, producer, retailer, restaura-

nt or other Central Illinois institution specializing in or utilizing locally produced foods and are interested in becoming a member of BFBL Central Illinois learn more at www.ilstewards.org

BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL

4TH ANNUAL SLOW FOOD® SPRINGFIELD FILM FESTIVAL

On Friday, January 27, the 4th Annual Slow Food® Springfield Film Festival will have a showing of the film **GROW!** at the Abraham Lincoln Unitarian Universalist Congregation at 745 Woodside Road in Springfield. It's not just 'Old MacDonald' on the farm anymore. All across the U.S. there is a growing movement of educated

young people who are leaving the cities to take up an agrarian life. **GROW!** takes a look at this new generation of sustainable farmers through the eyes, hearts and minds of 20 passionate, idealistic and fiercely independent young growers. In the film they speak of both the joys and the challenges involved in tending the land. The

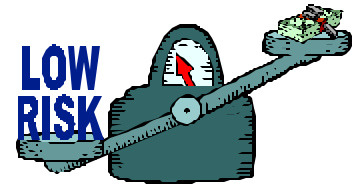
evening will feature the showing of the film, followed by a panel discussion with young Springfield area farmers. Refreshments and beverages provided by RealCuisine Catering will be available for purchase. Cost \$5.00 per person; Slow Food Springfield Members \$3.00; and students with I.D., no charge.

DON'T WORRY, BE SAVVY: FARM SAVVY RISK MANAGEMENT

This series of four webinars will provide a comprehensive look at methods of evaluating, managing and reducing risk on small farms. The first webinar will help farmers evaluate their capacity for taking risks, and present an overview of various types of insurance available to manage particular risks. The second webinar will examine managing risk using pro-

duction and marketing practices. The third webinar will look at business and financial risk management practices, such as choosing the correct business entity and effective business planning. The final webinar will address human risk, focusing on contingency and estate planning and other personnel risks. In-person workshops, will be offered in the spring

to follow up on the materials presented in the webinar series and address farmers' specific issues in compiling a comprehensive risk management plan. Dates are January 23rd and 30th, February 6th and 13th, from 6:30-8:00pm. Reservations are required web.extension.illinois.edu/lms or call 217-782-4617.



LIVING ON THE LAND

Simply stated, Living on the Land is a program designed to provide basic and necessary information to those folks who have recently moved onto a rural property or who are looking to learn more about the possibilities of their acres. This program is designed to help you better manage your property. The goal is to assist small acreage owners in being good

stewards of their properties and their surrounding environment by conserving natural resources and protecting water.

The program will be held on Thursday evenings, 6pm-9pm, from January 26th through March 29th (no class on February 23rd). The 10 week sessions will be taught partially in classroom and some session will be offered via webinar. For

the webinar sessions you can listen in from home while viewing the lesson on your computer or you can attend at the University of Illinois Extension Sangamon County Unit office located at 700 S. Airport Drive in Springfield. The cost for the program is \$200 per individual or \$300 per couple. Pre registration is necessary by contacting the University of Illinois

Extension Sangamon County Unit office at 217-782-4617 or online at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/lms/> Registrations are needed by January 23rd. For more information, contact Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant at the above phone number or email cvnghgrn@illinois.edu

