Farm Beginnings®

Sowing the Seeds for New and Transitional Farmers with Training and Support
Cultivating New Farmers
WHAT IS FARM BEGINNINGS®
Farm Beginnings®

• Farm Beginnings® is a year-long training and support program for beginning and transitioning farmers
Farm Beginnings®

- Provides training and hands-on learning opportunities
  - Classroom sessions
  - Farm workshops and tours
  - Mentorships
Farm Beginnings®

• Values Clarification
• Goal Setting
• Business Planning
• Marketing
• Networking
Farm Beginnings®

- Farmers and other agricultural professionals, including Extension educators, serve as the primary presenters, mentors and steering committee members
Who will be farming the land in the next generation?

OVERVIEW AND HISTORY
History of Farm Beginnings®

• Meetings with Land Stewardship Project farmer members – *Wabasha County Give-A-Dams* – need for beginning farmer training

• The Land Stewardship Project held the first class held in 1997-1998

• Over 380 individuals have graduated from LSP Farm Beginnings® - over 60% of respondents* indicated that they were farming

* From a 2005 survey
Expansion of Farm Beginnings®

• In 2005, Land Stewardship Project received a grant from NCR SARE Professional Development Grant Program to train other organizations

• Four Programs
  – Illinois (2)
  – Missouri
  – Nebraska
Illinois Farm Beginnings®

• Two Programs
  – Central Illinois Farm Beginnings®
    • The Land Connection
    • University of Illinois Extension
    • http://central.illinoisfarmbeginnings.org
  – Stateline Farm Beginnings®
    • Angelic Organics Learning Center
    • http://learngrowconnect.org/what/training/stateline
Current Farm Beginning Programs®

– Illinois
  • Central Illinois
  • Stateline-Northern Illinois/Southern Wisconsin

– Minnesota
  • Lake Superior (NW Wisconsin/NE Minnesota)
    – Lake Superior Sustainable Farming Association
  • Land Stewardship Project
    – Driftless Region (SE MN, Western WI, NE Iowa)
    – Prairie Region (Western MN, SE S. Dak., NW Iowa)
Current Farm Beginning Programs®

– Nebraska
  – University of Nebraska Lincoln Extension
  – Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society
  – Center for Rural Affairs
  – Nebraska RC&D’s

– New York
  • Hawthorne Valley Farm

– North Dakota
  • Foundation for Agricultural and Rural Resources Management and Sustainability (FARRMS)
Current Farm Beginning Programs®

– South Dakota
  • Dakota Rural Action

– Wisconsin
  • Stateline-Northern Illinois/Southern Wisconsin
  • Lake Superior-NW Wisconsin/NE Minnesota
  • Land Stewardship Project - Driftless Region (SE MN, Western WI, NE Iowa)
Farm Beginnings® Programs working together

FARM BEGINNINGS® COLLABORATIVE
What is the Farm Beginnings® Collaborative?

• Coalition of organizations that run Farm Beginnings programs® and work with a farmer-to-farmer educational model
Purpose of the Farm Beginnings® Collaborative?

• Share best practices
• Offer mentorship to new and emerging programs
• Educational and governing body to shape common evaluation and educational materials.

• Awarded a CSREES Beginning Farmer and Ranched Development Program Educational Enhancement Grant
Farm Beginnings® Collaborative

Working Together to...

• Define common mission, vision, and principles
• Implement common evaluation components
• Support farmer associations connected with each individual program
• Share program materials among organizational partners
Farm Beginnings® Collaborative Working Together to...

- Strengthen and broaden the training process, model transfer, and successful implementation for Farm Beginnings®, CRAFT* and Farm Dreams
- Strengthen advanced farmer training areas that address barriers facing FB graduates in years 2-5 of farm start-up

*Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training
Farm Beginnings® Collaborative
Working Together to...

• Explore long-term economic viability of the FB Collaborative
• Provide professional development opportunities for staff of each organization in the collaborative
• Raise awareness of Farm Beginnings® and FB Collaborative
Thanks!

• Karen Stettler, Land Stewardship Project
• Terra Brockman, The Land Connection
• Kathy McGroarty-Torres, The Land Connection
Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant
University of Illinois Extension
Extension Specialist
Small Farm and Sustainable Agriculture
SARE Coordinator
Central Illinois Farm Beginnings®
Co-facilitator
P.O. Box 410
Greenview, IL 62642
217-968-5512
cvnhgrn@illinois.edu
www.extension.uiuc.edu/smallfarm