



Rural Legacy

A quarterly newsletter of Women, Land & Legacy
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Women, Land & Legacy's vision is to help agricultural women come together to converse, listen, & become empowered to act on their landscape & in their community.

WLL State Team

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From Pollinators to Legacy Planning, Farm Safety to Farm Crawl, Women, Land & Legacy Wraps-up a Fun and Informative 2016

By Wren Almitra

2016 has been chock-full of great Women, Land & Legacy Learning Sessions (educational and networking events) across the state with over 1,000 people reached! The year kicked-off with our southwest WLL team providing a culinary gathering at Sauced in Red Oak, IA where participants got to learn about farm-to-table and using home-grown produce and herbs in their cooking. The Des Moines/Louisa team sponsored the highly rated play, Map of My Kingdom, which explores the dynamic and often difficult conversations Iowa families face in making decisions about farm transition. Meanwhile, the Iowa Co. and the Buena Vista/Pocahontas teams each brought speakers in to discuss grain marketing.



WLL participants in SW Iowa enjoy networking, learning and eating at Sauced in Red Oak.

The spring saw programming on edible landscaping in Jackson Co., a Women, Land & Legacy webinar hosted by Iowa Learning Farms, a pollinators meeting in Cerro Gordo Co., and a soil health meeting in Mitchell Co., which was a collaboration of the Mitchell Co. WLL team and the Women, Food & Ag. Network's Women Caring for the Land program.

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Jackson Co. WLL drew over 100 people to learn about edible landscaping with Fred Meyer of Backyard Abundance.

Summer was ripe with WLL programming, with an all-day conference on legacy planning in Iowa Co., a tour of Red Earth gardens as well as workshops on farm safety and cover crops in Tama Co., and healthcare finances in Winnebago/Worth counties, among many others. The season wrapped-up with the 2nd annual Johnson Co. WLL Farm Crawl.

Finally, three new teams, Calhoun/Sac counties, Madison Co. and Dubuque Co., formally joined WLL with their first event, a Listening Session, while Palo Alto and Emmet counties formed their local team and are making plans for their Listening Session for winter 2017.



Dubuque Co. WLL team is made up of local women from USDA agencies, ISU Extension, landowners and farmers.

In short, 2016 has been a busy year for Women, Land & Legacy, with our local teams reaching over 1,000 participants (did we mention that already?) through 30 state-wide events! In addition to the information learned at these events, women were able to network with other women in their communities, connect with agencies that provide assistance and resources for farm decisions, and engage in a huge effort to empower women involved in agriculture and land stewardship. Check our [events calendar](#) for 2016 opportunities and please stay tuned for another year of great women-powered outreach across Iowa in 2017!



USDA Reports Coming Soon

Row Crop County Estimates data are being collected now until the end of the year from 11,500 Iowa farmers. Results for corn and soybeans county yield estimates will be published in February 2017. Hay crop county yield estimates will be published in April 2017. The USDA's Farm Services Agency uses this data to determine 2016 payments for producers enrolled in Agricultural Risk Coverage—CO program.

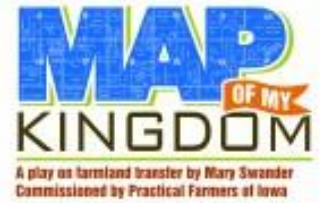
NASS's Organic Survey program will continue its data collection efforts to track trends in the industry with the 2016 Certified Organic Survey. The survey will collect data from certified organic producers only. Data collection is planned for January 2017 – April 2017 with the results released in September 2017.

The Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) is a two part study. In the fall data is collected on management practices, fertilizer use, and pesticide use. Data shows how farmers actually use chemicals as opposed to manufacturers' recommendations. In the past, this data has kept some products available to farmers that would otherwise have been restricted.

Interviewers will revisit some of the farmers in February of 2017 to get a better picture of the financial health of America's farmers. These surveys are heavily used by legislators to analyze how effective farm policies are. Decisions will be made. Better data means better decisions. More at www.nass.usda.gov.

***Map of My Kingdom* Now Available on DVD**

Mary Swander, executive director of AgArts, is releasing a video of her play *Map of my Kingdom*, a drama that has been touring the country from farmer's barns to the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, tackling the critical issue of farmland ownership transfer. Now available on DVD and by download from Swander's website, the play was originally commissioned by Practical Farmers of Iowa and the video made possible from a grant by the Lillian Goldman Charitable Trust.



Written by Mary Swander, directed by Matt Foss of the University of Idaho Theatre Department and recorded by Joe Hubers of Passenger Productions, the video stars Cora Vander Broek, a professional Los Angeles-based actor, giving a masterful performance before a live audience at Northwestern College in Orange City, IA.



Playwright Mary Swander, Left, and actress Elizabeth Thompson pose before the play premier at Scattergood Friends School, 2014. Photo Credit: PFI

In the play, character Angela Martin, a lawyer and mediator in land transition disputes, shares stories of how farmers and landowners have approached their land transitions. Some families struggled to resolve the sale or transfer of their land, dissolving relationships. Others found peacefully rational solutions that focused on keeping the land – and the family – together.

The USDA's most recent survey of farmland ownership predicts more than 140 million acres of farmland in the United states will transition in the next four years. Fifty-six percent of Iowa farmland is owned by people over the age of 65, according to a report by retired Iowa State University economist Mike Duffy, "Farmland Ownership and Tenure Report in Iowa 2012". Thoughtful transition will not only help keep farmers on the land but enhance long-range social and ecological benefits, from support of the fabric of small towns and schools, to wildlife habitat, flood control, and carbon sequestration.

The *Map of my Kingdom* DVD can be purchased or downloaded from Mary Swander's website: <http://www.maryswander.com>.

To book a live performance, contact: swanderplays@gmail.com.

More information about Practical Farmers of Iowa and farmland transition can be found at: <http://www.practicalfarmers.org/farmtransfer>.

More information about AgArts, a non-profit designed to image and promote healthy food systems through the arts can be found at: <http://www.agarts.org>.

WLL Updates and News Around the State

Dubuque Co. Joins WLL with Two Listening Sessions

On September 1st the Dubuque Co. WLL local team held two Listening Sessions for women landowners and farmers in that county. Participants were given the opportunity to share what local strengths and needs are for women in their county and to generate ideas on how agencies and organizations can better assist them. Stay tuned for upcoming networking and learning opportunities in Dubuque Co. that will focus on topics prioritized by participants in the Learning Sessions.



Johnson Co. Holds Two Fall Events

September 13th saw the gathering of 25 women from Johnson and surrounding counties to learn and share tips and tools for land transition. The overall goal of the meeting was to help participants learn about legacy planning options and preserving their conservation values on the farm. This was a joint effort of the NRCS, Johnson Co. SWCD, Johnson Co. WLL and the Women, Food & Agriculture Network. The meeting followed the learning circle format designed by WFAN through the Women Caring for the Land Program.



Susan Young and critters of Lucky Star Farm near Iowa City.

The September 24th Farm Crawl highlighted multiple farms where women are at the helm. Over 50 people criss-crossed around southwestern Johnson Co. learning about the diverse and unique agricultural endeavors taking place, from food grown on the Johnson Co. Poor Farm to benefit low-income communities, to an organic blueberry farm, to horses, lamas, and other critters. The day ended with a lovely

gathering at Geyer's Pizza Oven in Oxford, where individuals, couples, and families networked around delicious wood-fired pizza surrounded by flower gardens and fields. Stay tuned for news on the 2017 Johnson Co. WLL Farm Crawl with new farms and new faces!



Farm crawlers talk with a member of Grow: Johnson County at the Johnson Co. Poor Farm.



USDA Agencies in Mahaska and Marion Counties Seek Input on Starting a WLL Chapter

Staff representatives from the Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service in Mahaska and Marion counties are currently gauging interest in starting a local WLL chapter. They invite all women involved in agriculture who would benefit from this to contact them to express interest in participating. They are also inviting women to join them in serving on a local Women, Land & Legacy committee to provide fun, engaging, and informative opportunities for agricultural women to come together to learn and network.

If you are a woman in agriculture and would benefit from women-led programming in Marion and Mahaska counties please contact the following Mahaska County FSA Office at 641-673-3476.

Introducing the Conservation Corner!

Some of the most consistent feedback that Women, Land & Legacy and other outreach groups receive is that women landowners and farmers care deeply about being good stewards of the land. Conservation in agriculture provides huge opportunities for farms to improve soil health, thereby increasing crop health, protecting water quality and wildlife habitat as well. Keep your eye out for the Conservation Corner in this and upcoming *Rural Legacy* newsletters, where we will provide tid-bits of information and resource tips on how to incorporate conservation into your farm-related decision making. If you have ideas or resources you'd like to recommend for a future edition, please let us know!



Photo credit: WFAN



In this edition, I'd like to bring your attention to the on-line [NRCS Soil Health Theatre](#) where you'll find a variety of great short videos on soil health information. Included are some fun, 1-minute videos presented by the "Soil Guy", NRCS Soil Scientist Ray Archuleta, that teach you how to test

your own soil for a variety of soil health indicators (you can find these at the bottom of the web page). Have fun engaging with your soil!

Upcoming WLL Events

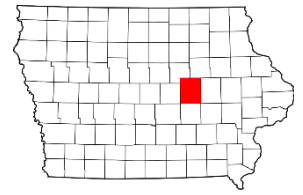
2016 Women, Land & Legacy Statewide Learning Sessions

More details may be found at our on-line calendar, at
www.womenlandandlegacy.org.

Tama Co. Will Provide a Learning Session on Navigating Agency Websites

November 15th, Traer

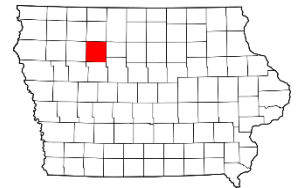
Tama Co. will have an event on working with agency resources online. Come take the mystery out of the FSA, NRCS, NASS and Extension websites. Located in North Tama Elementary's computer lab, 605 Walnut St., Traer. Registration and dessert begin at 6:30 p.m. with the event following at 7:00. Park on 6th Street and enter through the building's northwest door.



BV/Pocahontas Counties Will Provide a Look into Pioneer Farming

November 17th, Laurens

Buena Vista/Pocahontas counties present a Learning Session at the Pocahontas County Historical Society Museum. Dorothy Lamberti and Connie Dallenbach will present on Pioneer Farming. The museum is located at 271 3rd St. in Laurens and the event begins at 10 a.m. Registration in advance are requested: ISU Extension and Outreach Office at 712-335-3103 or email hfrerk@iastate.edu.

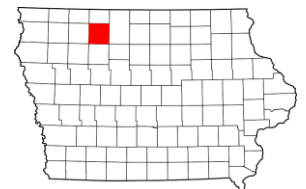


Other Upcoming WLL Events

Emmet/Palo Alto Counties to Join WLL with Listening Sessions

January 9th, 2017, Graettinger

Emmet and Palo Alto WLL team will hold two Listening Sessions at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Parish Center, 503 W. Olive St., Graettinger, IA. Light refreshments will be served and childcare will be provided. Two session options: 9-11 a.m. or 6-8 p.m., with doors opening 1/2 before the program begins. Please RSVP by January 3rd at 712-852-2865 or paemmetwll@gmail.com.



Not sure if you live in an active WLL county? You can see a map of all active counties and contact information at our [website](http://www.womenlandandlegacy.org).

Women, Land & Legacy is on Facebook!

Have you checked out and "liked" any of the four Women, Land and Legacy Facebook pages yet? If not, we highly recommend it!

Iowa Co. www.facebook.com/IowaCountyWomenLandandLegacy/

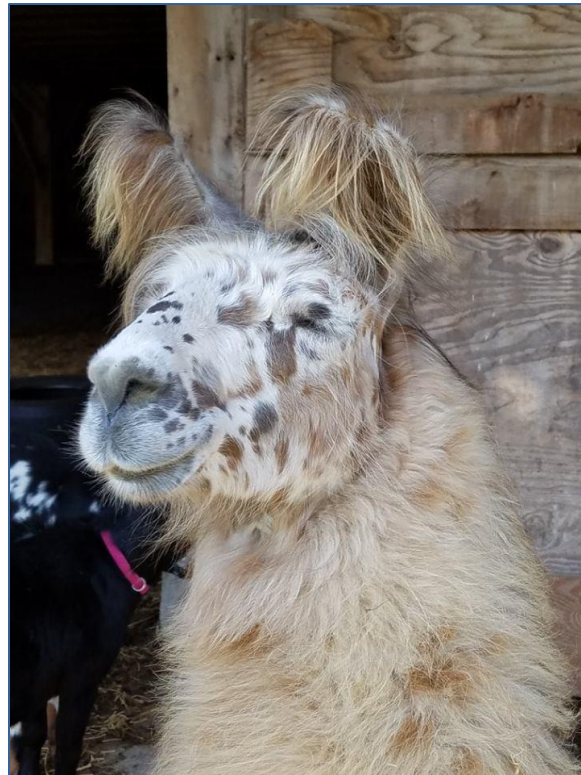
Johnson Co. www.facebook.com/womenlandandlegacyjohnson/

Palo Alto/Emmet Counties
<https://www.facebook.com/paloalto.emmetcountywomenlandandlegacy/>

Tama Co. www.facebook.com/womenlandandlegacytamacounty/

Warren Co. www.facebook.com/warrencountywomenlandandlegacy/

State www.facebook.com/womenlandandlegacy/



Sunny, a member of Lucky Star Farm, was one of the many highlights of the Johnson Co. WLL Farm Crawl in September.

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