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OATS | the Organic Agronomy Training Service

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OATS to Host the Intro to Organic Grain Workshop in Glencoe, MN

Glencoe, MN: OATS, the Organic Agronomy Training Service, is hosting the workshop “Intro to Organic Grain: Weed Management, Soil Health, and Marketing a Diverse Rotation” on August 28 at Fitzgerald Family Farm in Glencoe, MN. This event is designed for ag advisors, CCAs, NRCS professionals, Extension educators, and agronomists who work with organic farmers or are interested in expanding their expertise in organic grain production.

Organic grain farming presents lucrative opportunities, yet weed management and marketing remain significant challenges. This workshop addresses these issues through hands-on field walks and machinery-shed tours, and presentations led by experienced organic farmers and ag professionals. Attendees will gain practical knowledge on weed management techniques, soil health practices, and effective marketing strategies for organic grains.

Why should I attend? Organic grain farming requires specialized knowledge and skills. This workshop offers valuable insights from farmer Matt Fitzgerald and other experts, helping ag advisors broaden their weed management toolbox and better support their clients. Participants will learn about balancing tillage and soil health, marketing a diverse rotation, and navigating organic transition programs.

“This event will be a great opportunity for ag advisors to improve their knowledge of organic grain and learn from an experienced organic farmer and other experts in organic agronomy,” said Sam Oswald Tilton, event organizer.

Workshop Details:

- **What:** Intro to Organic Grain: Weed Management, Soil Health, and Marketing a Diverse Rotation
- **When:** Wednesday, August 28, 2024, 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM CT
- **Where:** Fitzgerald Farm, 4564 110th St. Glencoe, MN 55336
- **Cost:** \$25 (includes lunch)
- **Register:** <https://organicagronomy.regfox.com/intro-to-organic-agriculture-advising>
- **Registration Cap:** 30 participants
- **Registration Deadline:** August 23, 2024

Workshop Agenda:

- **Morning:**
 - 9:30 - 10:00: Arrival, registration, coffee, and pastry
 - 10:00 - 10:10: Welcome by Sam Oswald Tilton
 - 10:10 - 10:30: Intro to Organic by Matt Fitzgerald
 - 10:30 - 11:00: Forever Green, Organic Support Programs, and TOPP by Matt Levitt

- 11:00 - 12:00: Marketing Presentation and Panel Discussion by Christian Reveland
- 12:00 - 12:45: Lunch
- **Afternoon:**
 - 12:45/1:00 - 1:45: Soil Health - Tillage Field Walk by Dr. Anna Cates
 - 1:45 - 2:45: Cultivator Tour and Talk, Speed Disc in the Field by Matt Fitzgerald and Sam Oschwald Tilton
 - 2:45 - 3:00: Informal Networking and Adjourn

Speakers:

- **Matt Leavitt:** Perennial and Winter Annual Agronomy Specialist, University of Minnesota Forever Green Initiative
Matt helps farmers adopt new continuous living cover crops into their rotations. He previously worked as the organic seed lead and agronomist at Albert Lea Seed and serves as the national steering committee chair of OATS. [More about Matt Leavitt](#)
- **Christian Reveland:** US Crop Specialist, Grain Millers
Christian grew up on a small hobby farm in South Central Minnesota. Here is where he first gained an interest in agriculture. From here he worked on larger farming operations and gained exposure to the tremendous career opportunities that agriculture holds.
- **Dr. Anna Cates:** State Soil Health Specialist, MN Office for Soil Health
Anna focuses on soil organic matter cycling and soil structure in various cropping systems. She holds a PhD in Agronomy and an MS in Soil Science and Agroecology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- **Matt Fitzgerald:** Farmer, Fitzgerald Family Farm
Matthew has been a partner on his family's organic farm for several years, diversifying crop rotations and implementing new technologies. He is also a certified organic inspector with the International Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA). [More about Matt Fitzgerald](#)

This workshop is made possible by generous support from North Central Region SARE (award number ENC22-215) and is sponsored by the UMN Forever Green Initiative and the USDA's TOPP program.

For more information and to register, please visit

<https://organicagronomy.regfox.com/intro-to-organic-agriculture-advising>. Questions? Contact Sam Oschwald Tilton at sam@organicagronomy.org.

OATS, the Organic Agronomy Training Service, is a collaboratively-managed training program for agricultural professionals working with organic or transitioning farmers in the United States. We seek to grow domestic organic production by strengthening the educational support network of agronomists, certified crop advisors, extension agents, and technical service providers. Our aim is for every transitional and certified organic farmer to have robust access to technical service expertise to provide unbiased, science-based agronomic support for their farming operation.

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