

# DAKOTA RURAL ACTION 2010 FARMER NETWORK



*Fresh Produce from Flying Tomato Farms, Vermillion, SD*

*Connecting Beginning and Established Farmers*

Internships \* Employment \* Work Exchange  
Field Days \* Informal Day Visits \* Community

# Dakota Rural Action Farm Beginnings



*View from Cider Hill Farm, Arlington, SD*



**Dakota Rural Action** is a grassroots family agriculture and conservation groups that organizes South Dakotans to protect our family farmers and ranchers, natural resources and unique way of life. We strive to build grassroots leadership through community organizing by giving people a strong voice in decisions affecting their quality of life.

**Farm Beginnings** is a farmer-led training and support program offered by Dakota Rural Action that provides participants an opportunity to learn first-hand about lowcost, sustainable methods of farming. Participants can be of any age, and do not need to own land. Prospective farmers with no experience, beginning farmers, part-time farmers looking to further develop their operation, or established farmers wanting to transition their practices or enterprise are all welcome!

910 4th Street, Suite A  
Brookings, SD 57006  
(605) 697-5204  
heidiku@dakotarural.org



# 2010 DRA FARMER NETWORK



09-10 Farm Beginnings Participants learn about low cost and sustainable farming methods, Brookings, SD

- 4. How to use the Network
- 4. Opportunity Definitions
- 7-14 Farmer-Mentor Listings
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## How to use the handbook:

### Definitions of Opportunities:

1. **Internship:** Internships are training and work opportunities for beginning farmers. Each arrangement is unique and set-up to meet the needs of the established farmer and beginning farmer.

2. **Employment opportunity:** Employment can be temporary, seasonal or permanent.

3. **Work Exchange:** Work exchange opportunities can be single project focused or part of a regular day at the farm. An example would be fencing project that could use a couple hands and benefit someone new to fence construction.

4. **Informal Day Visits:** Informal field days are a one-on-one tour of your farm where a beginning farmer has the chance to see your operation and ask questions.

5. **Land Link Opportunities:** land link is a project that connects beginning farmers to established farmers who are willing to offer use of land or equipment in exchange for rent or farm products (vegetables, meat, etc.). Each arrangement is unique and set up to meet the needs of the established farmer and beginning farmer.

## Contact Information:

**Farm Name:** *Battle Creek Gardens*

**Contact Name:** Larry Leshner

**Address:** Mailing: P.O. Box 19 Hermosa, SD 57744  
Physical: 13815 Battle Creek Rd Hermosa, SD 57744

**Phone:** 605-255-4101 ext. 25

**Best time to call:** 8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. Mon-Thur

**Email:** michelle@bhec.org

**Website:** www.bhec.org

### Products and/or Expertise:

- “Certified Naturally Grown” Learn more at <http://naturallygrown.org/>
- Sustainable Farming
- Open field and greenhouse
- High diversity of vegetables
- Grapes and berries

### Training Opportunities:

**Internship:** Internship is seasonal, generally starting late April or early May and ending mid-late Oct. Go to [bhec.org](http://bhec.org) for more detail and application deadline March 30th. This internship offers hands-on experience of learning high diversity, sustainable, small scale farming practices. We do NOT use synthetic pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers. The internship at *Battle Creek Gardens* offers housing, meals and \$600.00 per month stipend.

*Battle creek gardens* will also be conducting a 5 day class may 31- June 4th “Sowing for the Harvest”

Cost:

Program: \$375.00

If meals included additional \$90.00

If room needed additional \$175.00

If have a camper or RV additional \$75.00

Call for more details or go to [bhec.org](http://bhec.org).

**Work Exchange:** Come out to the farm and volunteer, wedding, moving compost, harvesting etc. and leave with some vegetables for dinner.

**Informal Day Visits:** Day tours can be arranged by appointment and we will be having farm dinners in the future. Look on our website [bhec.org](http://bhec.org) under agriculture program and or call 605-225-4101 ext. 25 for appointments.

**Farm Name:** *Belly Acres Green House*

**Contact Name:** Vernon Frye

**Address:** 25466- 475th Ave, Baltic, SD 57003

**Phone:** 605-529-5873

**Best time to call:** 10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. Weekdays

**Email:** bellyacres98@alliancecom.net

**Products and/or Expertise:** Bedding Plants

### Training Opportunities:

**Internship:** Internships are available. Internships include hands on planting, sales and customer service skills.

**Employment Opportunity:** Seasonal employment maybe possible (lease or purchase). We usually start planting.

**Work Exchange:** Come out to the farm and volunteer, wedding, moving compost, harvesting etc. and leave with some vegetables for dinner.

**Informal Day Visits:** We have one hour one on one informal day visits followed by Q &A. Please make an appointment one week in advance.

**Land Link:** Buildings, water, heat and store front.

**Farm Name:** *B/F James & Son Inc.*

**Farm Name:** *Carl B's Farm*

**Contact Name:** Frank James

**Contact Name:** Ron and Julie Kolbeck

**Address:** 42447 153rd St., Lily, SD 57274

**Address:** 24343 443rd Ave. Salem SD 57058

**Phone:** 605-492-3216  
605-881-2345

**Phone:** 605-247-3220

**Best time to call:** Anytime

**Best time to call:** Anytime

**Email:** bjames@nvc.net

**Email:** koolbeck4@triotel.net

**Products and/or Expertise:**

**Products and/or Expertise:**

- We have a 1st generation grain and livestock operation established in 1965. It's a small family coporation with a cow/calf operation and we raise wheat, corn, soybean and hay. Our only expertise is that we know a little about a lot of things.

- Raise registered herd of Alpine and Nigerian dwarf dairy goats
- Handmade goat milk soap and all natural body care products.

**Training Opportunities:**

**Training Opportunities:**

**Employment Opportunity:** Maybe.

**Employment Opportunity:** Temporary as needed. Cleaning out pens in the barn.

**Work Exchange:** Maybe

**Informal Day Visits:** Explain and show or share in the daily chores. Explain nutritional needs and daily care of the goat. Hands on milking. Informally answer questions- what to look for in a goat; housing; fencing; breeding; birthing; diseases etc. Advatages of raw goat milk.

**Informal Day Visits:** Informal day visits can be arranged by contacting the ranch.

Discussions on using goat products. Milk and soap processing. Milk, meat and cheese.

**Farm Name:** *Cider Hill Farm*

**Farm Name:** *Cliffs Grass Grown Beef*

**Contact Name:** Joan or Gordon Williams

**Contact Name:** Clifford Millsapps

**Address:** 21818 456th Ave. Arlington, SD 57212.

**Address:** 809 Herrick St, Garry, SD 57237

**Phone:** 605-826-4251

**Phone:** 605-880-0658

**Best time to call:** Evenings

**Best time to call:** Anytime

**Email:** ciderhillfarm@yahoo.com

**Email:** ccmillsapps@gmail.com

**Website:** www.ciderhillfarm.com

**Products and/or Expertise:** Cattle

**Products and/or Expertise:** Primarily bread and other baked goods and cheese. Would like to get back to gardening.

- Willing to work with anybody interested in the farm and ranch.
- Also, interested in working with someone on farm transfer.

#### **Training Opportunities:**

**Internship:** Produce item for sale at farmers market. May include vegetables, craftsman items such as baskets, benches, birdhouses etc. Also other items include baked goods such as cheese, salsas etc. We will provide space, amaterials, equipments. we have 200 acres, tractors, tillers, commercial kitchens etc.

**Employment Opportunity:** Possible temporary/seasonal employment to help with any or all of things listed under intership.

**Work Exchange:** Help with fencing and building projects and gardening.

**Informal Day Visits:** May observe any or all of the projects that are underway. The projects include breadmaking, cheesemaking, milking and gardening.

**Land Link:** 200 acres, under grass that could be fenced in whole or in part (but not plowed) for grazing. Also large area for gardening and equipment (tillers, mowers, tractors).



**Farm Name:** *Cross ranch*

**Farm Name:** *Flying Tomato Farms*

**Contact Name:** Tom and Ruth Neuberger

**Contact Name:** Rebecca Terk

**Address:** 45052 260 St. Canistota, SD 57012.

**Address:** 117 Forest Ave. Vermillion, SD 57069.

**Phone:** 605-296-3314

**Phone:** 605-202-0252

**Best time to call:** Evenings

**Best time to call:** Anytime

**Email:** Goose2own@unitelsd.com

**Email:** organicpeas@hotmail.com

**Products and/or Expertise:** Meats (Red meat & Poultry)

**Website:** <http://flyingtomato.wordpress.com>

**Training Opportunities:**

**Products and/or Expertise:** Intensive sustainable (non-cert.organic) vegetable production. Direct marketing-farmer markets/CSA and online farm "blogs" and social media.

**Internship:** April- November. raising, processing and marketing of poultry and red meats. Daylight to dark responsibilities on the farm. January through March is the selection period.

**Training Opportunities:**

**Internship:** Part time internship to train intensive vegetable growers. No full time or paid intership available.

**Employment Opportunity:** Always need help in fall. Responsibilities include processing turkeys, ducks, geese etc.

**Work Exchange:** Can use help occasionally on transplanting, mulching, weeding and manuring projects. These projects are typically full day or two-day projects. Also looking to put up a perimeter deer fence this year.

**Work Exchange:**

- Many people have come to learn and experience about processing poultry in our little plant.
- Quite a few people have spent some time helping to learn about rotational grazing.

**Informal Day Visits:** Happy to do any time.

**Informal Day Visits:**

Experience:

- Tending chores for poultry, beef, pork and lambs
- Processing poultry
- Direct marketing meats

**Land Link:** Currently, looking for a flower farmer to use/develop more space in the garden for annual (possibly perennial) flower production. Large cache of seed is available to get it started. Flower sales could be through the owner's market stand or grower's own. Primarily, looking for this system to attract beneficial insects/pollinators for the vegetable crops.

**Land Link:** 160 acres of sub divided pastures for rotational grazing. Poultry processing facility.



**Farm Name:** *Glacial Lakes Permaculture*

**Contact Name:** Karl J. Schmidt

**Address:** 46554 SD Hwy 28, Estelline, SD 57234

**Phone:** 605-873-2390

**Best time to call:** Weekends, Evenings Before 9 PM..  
Have answering machine- can leave message.

**Email:** Karl@glaciallakespermaculture.org

**Website:** <http://glaciallakespermaculture.org>

**Products and/or Expertise:**

- Permaculture
- Trained Permaculturist ( Australia and Brazil)
- Also SDSU extension master gardener

**Training Opportunities:**

**Internship:** Helping implement and develop permaculture forest garden on-site. Internship ( 8-10 Hrs. weekly-on weekends during growing season). Would consist of tending existing trees, adding new plants based on existing design, making compost, keeping records, weeding, trimming, pruning, other related duties. Will train.

**Work Exchange:**

- Helping develop and maintain edible landscaping/ food gardens ( summer 2010)
- Helping erect 10'\*42' high tunnel (April 2010)
- Planting , fruiting trees, bushes, as part of forest garden on-site ( April-2010)
- Measuring and preparing one acre site for demonstration sustainable coppice woodland (Summer 2010).

**Informal Day Visits:**

- Visit to glacial lakes permaculture
- Tour of property, highlighting design elements
- Can provide short presentation on permaculture design principles to provide context.

**Farm Name:** *Jensen Sweet Corn & Produce*

**Contact Name:** Pat Jensen

**Address:** 21324-479th Ave. Aurora, SD 57002

**Phone:** 605-693-4364

**Best time to call:** Early Morning 6-7 AM

**Email:** jensenproduce@sutu.com

**Website:** [www.jensenproduce.com](http://www.jensenproduce.com)

**Products and/or Expertise:**

Sweet corn and many other products of produce

**Training Opportunities:**

**Internship:** Internships are available June through September. Interns are expected to work full time i.e. 40 hrs. Would consist of picking and leaning vegetables and helping with farmers markets. Need 2 months notice to quit the internship.

**Employment Opportunity:** Seasonal employment available. gardening work for wholesale and retail produce. Also, bakery is added to business

**Informal Day Visits:** Informa day visits can be arranged during early spring and early summer or later in the fall. Will show the complete operation of produce farm. Sweet corn puller, green bean puller and refig storage on site.

**Farm Name:** *Johnson Farms*

**Farm Name:** *Maveric Heritage Ranch Co*

**Contact Name:** Charlie Johnson

**Contact Name:** Arie McFarlen

**Address:** 45169 243rd street, Madison, SD 57042

**Address:** 47869-242 St Dell Rapids SD 57022

**Phone:**

605-256-6784 (Landline)  
605-270-2665 (Cellphone)

**Phone:** 605-21-51441

**Email:** maveric9@hotmail.com

**Best time to call:** Early morning 7 AM or late evenings.  
Cell phone anytime.

**Website:** www.maveric9.com

**Email:** c-bjohnson@svtv.com

**Products and/or Expertise:** Livestock production marketing, business planning, rotational grazing, crop planning, feed formulation.

**Website:** www.ciderhillfarm.com

**Training Opportunities:**

**Products and/or Expertise:** Organic Farming

**Internship:** Internships are available. Duties include handling and feeding livestock, construction projects of all kinds, participate in breeding, birthing and regular checkups on livestock and maintain records, repair/build fences and other livestock facilities as needed. Monthly stipend, housing and meals are provided. Please contact the ranch for further information.

- Beet
- Corn
- Soy Beans
- Alfalfa Hay
- Oats

**Training Opportunities:**

**Employment Opportunity:** Part Time and Full Time and summer employment available. Duties include animal care, general farm operations, breed planning and record keeping.

**Internship:** Internship is available. Available anytime for phone calls and questions

**Work Exchange:** Opportunities for learning in all areas of farm management and livestock production.

**Employment Opportunity:** July or August . Have to clean out weeds in row crops.

**Informal Day Visits:** By appointment, open year round

**Informal Day Visits:** Farm is always available as mutually arranged to host groups.

**Land Link:** Opportunities to raise livestock in exchange for help with owner's livestock.

- Ride along in tractor
- Short time tour to fields and operations
- Conduct business in town

**Farm Name:** *Moonrise Mountain Ranch*

**Contact Name:** Talli Nauman or Dahl McLean

**Address:** 11853 Acorn Ridge Rd, Spearfish, SD 57783.

**Phone:** 605-269-2206

**Best time to call:** Day or Evening

**Email:** moonrisemountain@hughes.net

**Website:** <http://www.localharvest.org/listing.jsp?id=16096>

**Products and/or Expertise:** Natural gardening of fruit and vegetables.

**Training Opportunities:**

**Internship:** Internships are available Duties include bed preparation, planting, transplanting, weed control, mulching, watering, harvesting and farmer's market.

**Informal Day Visits:** Informal field visits can be setup by appointment.

**Land Link:** Tractor and Tiller.

**Farm Name:** *Prairie Coteau Farm*

**Contact Name:** Kristianna Gehant

**Address:** 19079 487th Ave, Astoria, SD 57213

**Phone:** 605-832-2062

**Best time to call:** Before 8 pm

**Email:** vegfarm@itctel.com

**Website:** [www.prairiegarlic.com](http://www.prairiegarlic.com)

**Products and/or Expertise:** Garlic braids and garlic scape pesto

**Training Opportunities:**

**Work Exchange:**

Garlic Weeding- May/June

Garlic Harvest- July/Aug

Garlic Planting/ Mulching- Sept/ Oct.



**Farm Name:** *Prairie Drifter Farm*

**Farm Name:** *PrairieSun Organics*

**Contact Name:** Joan and Nick Olson

**Address:** 3825 220th St. Montevideo, MN 56265

**Phone:** 320-269-2105

**Best time to call:** Anytime

**Email:** prairiedrifterfarm@gmail.com

**Website:** www.prairiedrifterfarm.wordpress.com

**Products and/or Expertise:**

•Organic Vegetables/CSA

**Training Opportunities:**

**Work Exchange:** Variety of opportunities to come and work on a small diversified vegetable operation. Assist with planting, harvesting, weeding and general farm work.

**Informal Day Visits:** Identify several areas of interest before you visit which can be arranged over phone or email. When you visit the farm we can walk you through our farm and discuss these areas as well address any additional subjects.



**Contact Name:** Angela Jackson

**Address:** Farm Store: 108B E. main Street, Vermillion, SD 57069

**Farm Location:** 1041 Carroll Ave., Sioux City, IA 51108

**Phone:** 605-624-1966 or 605-638-0748

**Best time to call:** Afternoons, evenings and weekends.

**Email:** angela@prairiesunorganics.com

**Website:** www.prairiesunorganics.com

**Products and/or Expertise:** Certified organic pasture raised poultry. Certified organic grassfed beef. Certified organic greenhouse vegetables. Wholeselling to restaurants and grocers. Organic regulations and writing an organic system plan..

**Training Opportunities:**

**Work Exchange:** We move and assemble very large tunnels around the farm as part of our rotation. We could use help and also teach how to assemble a high tunnel for permanent and temporary usage. We have a medium sized operation for greenhouse vegetables. An work exchange could be a day or a week to learn about maintainin , washing, packing, distributing and invoicing grocers and restaurants for organic vegetables. Would also include understanding supply and demand, storage and customer service.

**Informal Day Visits:** We have the farm 40 miles southeast of Vermillion. A day trip would include a tour of the facilities, plots, pastures, feeding area, chickens, mobile poultry houses, high tunnels and packing center. We would also arrange a lunch prepared on site with products we produce.

**Land Link:** We have really nice commercial vegetable planting equipment, bed forming machines, planters, etc., that we would be willing to share in exchange for help on the farm..

**Farm Name:** Ravenscroft Farms

**Farm Name:** Rosin organics

**Contact Name:** Brant or Emily Ravenscroft

**Address:** 20863 467th Avenue, Brookings, SD 57006

**Phone:** 605-651-4634

**Best time to call:** 8 am- 5 pm

**Email:**becraven@yahoo.com

**Products and/or Expertise:**

•At Ravenscroft Farms we raise dairy goats for milk production and put in an extensive garden utilizing all natural cultivating methods. We are also in the process of restoring our historical barns and fencing the farm so as to maximize our intensive rotational grazing schedule.

**Land Link:** Ravenscroft farms has a 2bd/ 1 bath/ laundry/kitchette retnal property available may, 2010. Tenant would have access to their own garden area. Livestock/horses/dogs negotiable. Tenant may have the oppurtunity to help with farm operations.

**Contact Name:** Bill or Julie Rosin

**Address:** 30956 129th Street Selby, SD 57422

**Phone:** 605-649-7224

**Best time to call:** Evenings

**Email:**wildbill@venturecomm.net

**Products and/or Expertise:** Natural Horsemanship (Parelli). Western price chapter leader- whole unprocessed traditional foods- mthods-recipes- fermented foods and beverages Kombucha, Kefirs.

**Training Opportunities:**

**Internship:** Short term internships maybe available. Please contact the ranch for further information.

**Work Exchange:** Maybe- can exchange horse training tips and instruct horse owner for some temporary work.

**Informal Day Visits:** Could be related to horse trainig, tradional diets , cell grazing and organic crop production.



**Farm Name:** Wunder Seed Inc.

**Contact Name:** Larry Eisenbeis.

**Contact Name:** John Wunder

**Address:** 44438 280th St, Marion, SD 57043

**Address:** 22646 434th ave., Howard, SD 57349.

**Phone:** 605-925-7322

**Phone:** 605-772-5349

**Best time to call:** 12-1 noon & after 7 pm

**Best time to call:** 7 am to noon.

**Email:** laran@gwtc.nett

**Products and/or Expertise:** Flax seed planing, harvesting, packaging, marketing. Soil preparation and enhancement.

**Products and/or Expertise:** Artisanal products from milk, butter, soft/hard cheese, yogurt. Intensive rotational grazing

**Training Opportunities:**

**Training Opportunities:**

**Informal Day Visits:** By appointment only. Time of year is significant.

**Work Exchange:** can be a part of a 4 person crew on slaughter days.

**Informal Day Visits:** Summer visit at the dairy. Move fence for fresh cut pasture after milking. Move hogs/cows from one pad dock to another. Make a simple hard cheese also cottage cheese.



Following list contains contact information and interests of the students in our farm beginning class.

**Aaron Johnson**

24255 453rd Ave.  
Madison, SD 57042  
(605) 695-0847  
talk2aaron@hotmail.com

**Mentoring Interests:** Formal Internship/  
Apprenticeship

**Farming Interests:** Grazing, Beef, Grains/Crops,  
Organic Production

**Amanda Svec**

1708 8th St.  
Brookings, SD 57006  
(605) 695-6660  
astarry.dreamer@gmail.com

**Mentoring Interests:** Informal Mentoring

**Farming Interests:** Grazing, Beef, Goats, Dairy,  
Hogs, Chickens, Baking, Permaculture, Herbs, Soils,  
**Machinery/Equipment Use** (for Draft Animals)

**Anne and Josh Hauglid**

23562 465th Ave.  
Wentworth, SD 57075  
(605) 690-5984  
anne.hauglid@dsu.edu

**Mentoring Interests:** Informal Mentoring

**Farming Interests:** Chickens (starting a laying hen and  
broiler operation this spring), Vegetables (asparagus),  
Beef

**Eowyn Corral**

PO Box 1602  
Watertown, SD 57201  
(512) 825-2296  
eowynheartsjacqui@yahoo.com

**Mentoring Interests:** Formal Internship/  
Apprenticeship

**Farming Interests:** Goats, Dairy, Chickens, Fiber,  
Permaculture, Flowers, Herbs, Orchards, Vegetables,  
Greenhouse, Soil, Organic production, Machinery use

**Hailee Sieh & Will Rennich**

510 Medary Ave. #A  
Brookings, SD 57006  
(605) 359-9208  
hmsieh@jacks.sdstate.edu

**Hailee:** Formal Internship/ Apprenticeship, Informal

Baking, Permaculture, Flowers, Herbs, Vineyards,  
Orchards, Vegetables, Greenhouses, Organic Production,  
**Machinery/Equipment Use**, Beekeeping

**Will:** Mentoring Interests: Formal Internship/  
Apprenticeship, Informal Mentoring  
**Farming Interests:** Chickens, Grains/Crops, Herbs,  
Vegetables, Soils, Organic Production

**James and Tammie Dewald**

48248 147th St.  
Milbank, SD 57252  
(605) 432-4253 home  
(605) 949-3002 work cell  
jmdewald@tnics.com

**Mentoring Interests:** Informal Mentoring

**Farming Interests:** Grazing, Beef, Grains/Crops,  
**Machinery/Equipment Use**

**Laura and Joel Clark**

25052 474th Ave.  
Baltic, SD, 57003  
(605) 529-4007 home  
(605) 366-8393 cell  
jlclark@alliancecom.net

**Mentoring Interests:** Formal Internship/  
Apprenticeship, Informal Mentoring, on-farm  
consulting

**Farming Interests:** Orchards, soils, and tree care

**Laura and John Halvorson**

800 S. Williams Ave.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57104  
(605) 610-6464  
(605) 610-6466  
jonlaurahalvorson@yahoo.com

**Mentoring Interests:** Informal Mentoring

**Farming Interests:** Chickens, Baking, Herbs,  
Vegetables, Greenhouses, CSA, Farmers Market,  
Organic Production

**Nathan Glazier**

1924 S. Summit Ave. Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
(605) 334-4242  
nateg1112@yahoo.com

**Mentoring Interests:** Informal Mentoring

**Farming Interests:** Goats, Dairy, Chickens, Grains/  
Crops, Permaculture, Vegetables, Greenhouses, Soils,

CSA, Farmers Market, Organic Production

**Steve Lantsberger**

45952 180th St.

Castlewood, SD 57223

(605) 793-2301

**Mentoring Interests:** Informal Mentoring

**Farming Interests:** Grazing, Beef, Chickens, Grains/  
Crops, Flowers, CSA, Organic Production

**Treasure and Ben Overmyer**

19334 478th Ave.

Toronto, SD 57268

(605) 212-6971

treasure.overmyer@gmail.com



# SKILLS ASSESSMENTS



09-10 Farm Beginnings participants learn about profitability and sustainability:

The following templates can be obtained by either calling or emailing Parker Forsell in the Lewiston office (507-523-3366 or [parker@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:parker@landstewardshipproject.org)) Note: The Growing Season Learning Plan template is also available for vegetables and animals.

## Farming Skills Evaluation—Vegetables

Goal: The Farming Skills Evaluation is used by farmers and prospective farmers to assess competence areas in farming.

Two uses for the trainee:

- (1) Take a beginning and end of season survey of your exposure and competence in the given skill areas
- (2) Use the beginning of the season survey to fill out a Growing Season Learning Plan

Two uses for the farmer:

- (1) Request that trainees evaluate themselves using the Farming Skills Evaluation at the beginning of their seasonal work on the farm. Farmers may also want to ask the trainee to fill out a Growing Season Learning Plan for clarity on which topics are priorities in the given season.
- (2) Farmers may wish to highlight certain areas on the Farming Skills Evaluation that are enforced on their farm.

*Please evaluate your level of competency in each of the areas listed below at both the beginning and end of this season. This will help you to clarify areas where you need additional training or experience. Please evaluate all of the areas listed, even if you have no experience or there has been no change in your skill level.*

1. Soil Fertility	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Understanding the basics of soil health	1	2	3
Making soil mixes	1	2	3
Soil testing	1	2	3
Organic matter management	1	2	3
Fundamentals of composting	1	2	3
Hand built compost	1	2	3
Manure windrows	1	2	3
Vermiculture	1	2	3

2. Bed/Field Preparation	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Primary tillage/incorporating organic matter	1	2	3
Cultivation	1	2	3
Rototiller use	1	2	3
Tractor and spading machine use	1	2	3
Secondary tillage/seed bed preparation	1	2	3
Bed-shaping with hand tools	1	2	3
Cover-cropping	1	2	3

3. Plants	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Concepts of crop botany	1	2	3
Vegetable crop planning	1	2	3
Succession planting	1	2	3
Crop rotations	1	2	3
Yields	1	2	3

## Farming Skills Evaluation—Vegetables

*Please evaluate your level of competency in each of the areas listed below at both the beginning and end of this season. This will help you to clarify areas where you need additional training or experience. Please evaluate all of the areas listed, even if you have no experience or there has been no change in your skill level.*

4. Greenhouse Management	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Direct seeding techniques	1	2	3
Transplanting	1	2	3
Judging water needs	1	2	3
Watering	1	2	3
Hardening off	1	2	3

5. Plant Care & Culture	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Irrigation	1	2	3
Compost and plant-based teas	1	2	3
Tea application	1	2	3
Support structures for plants	1	2	3
Graphing, pruning & training orchard trees	1	2	3
Climate control/shading	1	2	3
Pollinating	1	2	3
Supplemental Fertilizing	1	2	3

6. Weed/Pest Management	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Weed identification	1	2	3
Hand tool cultivation	1	2	3
Mechanical cultivation	1	2	3
Natural & plastic mulching	1	2	3
Insect & disease monitoring	1	2	3
Pest control	1	2	3

7. Harvest/Post-Harvest	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Judging readiness for harvest	1	2	3
Harvesting	1	2	3
Washing & packing for multiple market outlets	1	2	3
Dry & cold storage	1	2	3
Collecting & processing seed	1	2	3

8. Equipment Use	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Hand tool use & maintenance	1	2	3
Tractor safety/emergency procedure	1	2	3
power equipment safety/emergency procedures	1	2	3
Basic operation	1	2	3
Routine maintenance	1	2	3
When to use tractor attachments	1	2	3

## Farming Skills Evaluation—Vegetables

*Please evaluate your level of competency in each of the areas listed below at both the beginning and end of this season. This will help you to clarify areas where you need additional training or experience. Please evaluate all of the areas listed, even if you have no experience or there has been no change in your skill level.*

9. Farm design/management	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Whole farm planning:			
consideration of land, financing, markets, etc.	1	2	3
Farm business plan development & writing	1	2	3
Seasonal planning and planting strategies	1	2	3
Recordkeeping & Accounting	1	2	3
Organic Certification	1	2	3
Computer literacy	1	2	3
Water drainage management	1	2	3
Construction & woodworking	1	2	3

10. Marketing	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Direct—CSA & Farmers' Markets	1	2	3
Wholesale—Restaurants	1	2	3
Customer service/outreach	1	2	3
Newsletter production	1	2	3
Value-added production	1	2	3

12. Conservation Practices	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Buffer zones	1	2	3
Woodlot management	1	2	3
Water management	1	2	3
Prairie management	1	2	3

Note: The Skills Evaluation template was developed by Angelic Organics Learning Center and Michael Fields Agricultural Institute based on the experiences of their farmer members in the Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training (C.R.A.F.T.). It is used by permission.

For more information contact: [www.learnrowconnect.org](http://www.learnrowconnect.org).

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## Farming Skills Evaluation – Animals

Goal: The Farming Skills Evaluation is used by farmers and prospective farmers to assess competence areas in farming.

Two uses for the trainee:

- (1) Take a beginning and end of season survey of your exposure and competence in the given skill areas
- (2) Use the beginning of the season survey to fill out a Growing Season Learning Plan

Two uses for the farmer:

- (1) Request that trainees evaluate themselves using the Farming Skills Evaluation at the beginning of their seasonal work on the farm. Farmers may also want to ask the trainee to fill out a Growing Season Learning Plan for clarity on which topics are priorities in the given season.
- (2) Farmers may wish to highlight certain areas on the Farming Skills Evaluation that are enforced on their farm.

*Please evaluate your level of competency in each of the areas listed below at both the beginning and end of this season. This will help you to clarify areas where you need additional training or experience. Please evaluate all of the areas listed, even if you have no experience or there has been no change in your skill level.*

1. Cattle Skills	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Applying ID tags	1	2	3
Castration	1	2	3
Breed Knowledge, breeding	1	2	3
Dehorning, hoof trimming	1	2	3
Medication (shots, worming)	1	2	3
Delivering calves	1	2	3
Milking cows	1	2	3
Handling/moving cattle	1	2	3
Restraining large animals	1	2	3
Behavioral knowledge/control for aggression,			
Birthing, sickness	1	2	3
Shelter needs	1	2	3
Feeding/water	1	2	3
Rotational grazing	1	2	3
Manure handling	1	2	3
Fencing	1	2	3

2. Hog Skills	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Breed knowledge, breeding	1	2	3
Flushing	1	2	3
Applying ID tags	1	2	3
Castration, ringing	1	2	3
Restraint for health care	1	2	3
Birthing of litters	1	2	3
Handling/moving hogs	1	2	3
Restraining large animals	1	2	3
Behavioral knowledge/control for aggression,			
birthing, sickness	1	2	3
Shelter needs	1	2	3
Feeding/water	1	2	3
Manure handling	1	2	3
Fencing	1	2	3

## Farming Skills Evaluation—Animals

*Please evaluate your level of competency in each of the areas listed below at both the beginning and end of this season. This will help you to clarify areas where you need additional training or experience. Please evaluate all of the areas listed, even if you have no experience or there has been no change in your skill level.*

3. Sheep Skills	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Breed knowledge, breeding	1	2	3
Flushing	1	2	3
Applying ID tags	1	2	3
Tagging (removal of wool around udder), docking (removal of tails)	1	2	3
Medication application (shots, worming)	1	2	3
Delivering multiple lambs	1	2	3
Shearing	1	2	3
Handling/moving sheep	1	2	3
Behavioral knowledge/control for aggression (rams), birthing, sickness	1	2	3
Shelter needs	1	2	3
Feeding/water	1	2	3
Rotational grazing	1	2	3
Manure handling	1	2	3
Fencing	1	2	3

4. Poultry Skills	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Applying ID tags	1	2	3
Breed Knowledge, layers/broilers	1	2	3
Incubating & hatching eggs	1	2	3
Baby chick care	1	2	3
Layer management	1	2	3
Egg management	1	2	3
Broiler requirements	1	2	3
Meat processing options	1	2	3
Feed/nutrition requirements	1	2	3
Shelters	1	2	3
Fencing options	1	2	3
Predators	1	2	3
General health/diseases	1	2	3
Pasture rotation	1	2	3
Manure handling	1	2	3

## Farming Skills Evaluation—Animals

Please evaluate your level of competency in each of the areas listed below at both the beginning and end of this season. This will help you to clarify areas where you need additional training or experience. Please evaluate all of the areas listed, even if you have no experience or there has been no change in your skill level.

5. Equipment Use	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Hand tool use & maintenance (woodworking; concrete working; fencing; electrical; chain-saw operation)	1	2	3
Tractor safety/emergency procedure	1	2	3
Power equipment safety/emergency procedures	1	2	3
Basic operation	1	2	3
Routine maintenance	1	2	3
When to use tractor attachments	1	2	3

6. Farm design/management	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Consideration of land, financing, markets	1	2	3
Farm business plan development & writing	1	2	3
Seasonal planning and planting strategies	1	2	3
Recordkeeping & Accounting	1	2	3
Organic Certification	1	2	3
Computer literacy	1	2	3
Water drainage management	1	2	3
Construction & woodworking	1	2	3

7. Marketing	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Direct—CSA & Farmers' Markets	1	2	3
Wholesale—Restaurants	1	2	3
Customer service/outreach	1	2	3
Newsletter production	1	2	3
Value-added production	1	2	3

9. Conservation Practices	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Buffer zones	1	2	3
Woodlot management	1	2	3
Water management	1	2	3
Prairie management	1	2	3

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The animal skills portion was based on information from *Making Your Small Farm Profitable* by Ron Macher: from the section "Skills a Farmer Needs".

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## Grazing Skills Evaluation

**Goal:** The Farming Skills Evaluation is used by farmers and prospective farmers to assess competence areas in farming.

**Two uses for the trainee:**

- (1) Take a survey of your exposure and competence in the given skill areas
- (2) Use the beginning of the season survey to fill out a Growing Season Learning Plan

**Two uses for the farmer:**

- (1) Request that trainees evaluate themselves using the Farming Skills Evaluation at the beginning of their seasonal work on the farm. Farmers may also want to ask the trainee to fill out a Growing Season Learning Plan for clarity on which topics are priorities in the given season.
- (2) Farmers may wish to highlight certain areas on the Farming Skills Evaluation that are enforced on their farm.

*Please evaluate your level of competency in each of the areas listed below at both the beginning and end of this season. This will help you to clarify areas where you need additional training or experience. Please evaluate all of the areas listed, even if you have no experience or there has been no change in your skill level.*

1. Grazing System Plan/Layout	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Setting goals for production model	1	2	3
Understanding soil maps	1	2	3
Understanding Forage Suitability Groups	1	2	3
Identifying/managing sensitive areas	1	2	3
Mapping vegetation in pastures	1	2	3
Computation of livestock/forage balance	1	2	3
Determining paddock size and number	1	2	3
Locating fences and lanes	1	2	3
2. Fencing Skills	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Constructing permanent fences	1	2	3
Troubleshooting electric fence problems	1	2	3
Determining temporary fence use	1	2	3
3. Livestock Watering System	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Identifying sources of water	1	2	3
Determining water delivery method	1	2	3
Determining water tank size	1	2	3
Determining water tank locations	1	2	3
Determining when to haul water	1	2	3
Determining type of pump to use	1	2	3
4. Heavy Use Area Protection	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Determining heavy use protection areas	1	2	3
Material use for heavy use protection	1	2	3



## Grazing Skills Evaluation

*Please evaluate your level of competency in each of the areas listed below at both the beginning and end of this season. This will help you to clarify areas where you need additional training or experience. Please evaluate all of the areas listed, even if you have no experience or there has been no change in your skill level.*

5. Forages	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Identifying common forage plants	1	2	3
Identifying desirable forage species	1	2	3
Establishing new pastures	1	2	3
Managing forage production	1	2	3

5. Pasture Fertilization	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Determining pasture shortage/imbalance	1	2	3
Understanding pasture soil amendments	1	2	3
Applying soil amendments	1	2	3
Mapping nutrient movement on farm	1	2	3

6. Brush and Weed Control	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Identifying common pasture weeds	1	2	3
Biological weed control in pastures	1	2	3
Mechanical weed control in pastures	1	2	3
Chemical weed control in pastures	1	2	3

7. Grazing System Management	No exposure	Some exposure & some competency	Advanced level competency
Identifying when to move animals	1	2	3
Addressing forage deficiencies and surpluses	1	2	3
Computing reserve herd days	1	2	3
Monitoring pastures	1	2	3
Identifying sacrificial paddocks	1	2	3
Planning and managing outwintering	1	2	3

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Land Stewardship Project adapts these original materials based on the experiences of its member-farmers. The grazing skills categories were created in cooperation with Howard Moechnig of Midwest Grasslands.

## Growing Season Learning Plan – Grazing Track

Name:

Growing Season (list year):

After reviewing your completed GRAZING SKILLS ASSESSMENT, you will have identified a number of skill areas where you want to develop competency. You will address many of these over several years. Since it isn't possible to address all the core competencies in one growing season please select the top skill areas to address this coming season and write them down below. This will be the outline of your Growing Season Learning Plan.

The core competencies listed in the GRAZING SKILLS ASSESSMENT are also a sometime-focus of both Field Days and Skills Sessions offered through Land Stewardship Project and other organizations. For purposes of the Grazing Track, Howard Moechnig will help you define your Growing Season Learning Plan for the upcoming year.

SKILL AREA

1.

SKILL AREA SPECIFICS

1a.

1b.

1c.

SKILL AREA

2.

SKILL AREA SPECIFICS

2a.

2b.

2c.

SKILL AREA

3.

SKILL AREA SPECIFICS

3a.

3b.

3c.

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