

NEWS RELEASE

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Photos available – see download link & sample captions at end of release

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Upcoming Farm Field Days show farmers how to serve food on their farms

Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin – An innovative field day coming up on August 23, 2018, will help farmers interested in hosting pizza farms, farm dinners and other culinary events on their farm. Riding a growing wave of public enthusiasm for agritourism, these events offer an attractive way for farmers to diversify their income and forge a closer connection with their customers. However, the logistics of starting up and licensing such an operation can be challenging and few resources exist to support farmers.

The field days are part of Come & Get It!, a project led by the Minnesota-based nonprofit, Renewing the Countryside, to provide low-cost training and resources to support farmers in launching farm-based food businesses in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Each day will include a Q&A session, farm and food operation tour, as well as informational sessions on business start-ups issues.

“The reality is that state regulations regarding food service, particularly when you take something to a farm setting, can get complicated and confusing quickly,” said Jan Joannides, the Executive Director at Renewing the Countryside, a non-profit offering various educational resources for farmers and rural entrepreneurs. “The key is to thoroughly research and understand your options and ask questions and determine what may be best for your farm business before investing money. This program uniquely supports such an approach.”

The Wisconsin specific day (Aug. 23) will be held at Campo di Bella, a farm-based winery and restaurant that specializes in seasonal, farm-to-table fare in Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin, about half an hour west of Madison.

“I’m excited to host the Come & Get It workshop here in August because it can often be overwhelming and intimidating when you start to navigate the regulations of serving food on your farm,” shared Mary Ann Bellazzini of Campo di Bella in Mt Horeb, where she and her husband, Marc Bellazzini, opened a winery and restaurant on their farm in 2015 that specializes in seasonal, farm-to-table fare. “We learned so much in our start-up process and love sharing our story and experiences with other farmers. Having more options for the public to visit and experience where your food comes from helps our whole local, sustainable agriculture movement grow.”

Attendees will also receive a printed, detailed on-farm food service start-up manual with specific information on Wisconsin and Minnesota regulations. This project is funded by the North central Sustainable Agriculture Research Education (SARE) and involves seven farm partners in Minnesota and Wisconsin including Together Farms (Mondovi, WI), Suncrest Gardens Farm (Cochrane, WI), Borner Farm Project (Prescott, WI), Dream Acres Farm (Spring Valley, MN) and Moonstone Farm (Montevideo, MN).

An additional, separate, component of this project is to conduct a research analysis of attendees coming to these types of events to better help farmers in their marketing and understand questions such as what type of target market is coming and how far are they traveling. This data will be available via *Renewing the Countryside* in the fall of 2018.

The Come & Get It Field Days runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and include a sampling lunch, full farm and kitchen tour and printed materials. Cost is \$35 and \$15 for an additional person from the same business. Space is limited and pre-registration required. To register, see renewingthecountryside.org/on_farm_food_service. Or contact Eli Goodwell at eli@rtcinfo.org or 612-208-8354.

Renewing the Countryside is a nonprofit organization that works to strengthen rural areas by championing and supporting rural communities, farmers, artists, entrepreneurs, educators, activists and other people who are renewing the countryside through sustainable and innovative initiatives, businesses, and projects. For more information, see renewingthecountryside.org.

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Note to Editors: Please list this event in your Community Calendar.

August 23 - Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin (Campo di Bella)

Cost is \$35 and \$15 for an additional person from the same business. Includes lunch, full tour and printed materials. Workshop runs 10 am - 2pm and pre-registration is required. See http://www.renewingthecountryside.org/on_farm_food_service for registration information.

Photos & sample captions:

Campo di Bella:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1bJRLx62SZF8LYfAwVqIXObu1fvP39Ni2>

Sample caption:

“Mary Ann Bellazzini will be sharing her experience, advice and insight with farmers looking to serve food on their farms during a Field Day on her farm on August 23, 2018.”

Pizza close up:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1HUuk4NY_4R6DLiaPuE8stRQcl41caI6

Sample caption:

“Farmers will be offering advice on starting pizza farms and other ways to serve food on the farm during two Field Day workshops on August 13 at Squash Blossom Farm (Oronoco, MN) and August 23 at Campo di Bella (Mt. Horeb, WI).