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Food, Faith and Farming Network
Connecting Community, Land, and People

Register NOW for 2026 Seeds of Hope Celebration! Deadline is October 16!

Time to celebrate! We invite you to join us for our 7th annual Seeds of Hope Celebration, where we will engage with our thirteen Seed Money recipients who are working to strengthen connections in southwest Wisconsin. All the recipients have stories to tell that will inspire and energize everyone. We'll share a meal and get to know each other and then listen to our recipients' achievements and how they helped realize goals of expanding access to local food, addressing food insecurity, and educating on sustainable farming and preserving the land. **To learn more about our recipients, see short descriptions here.**

This event is open to the public. We will be meeting at Driftless Area Land Conservancy's historic **Wintergreen Preserve** overlooking the Wisconsin River, 5320 County Road C, Spring Green WI from 11:00 to 3:00.

To register, click HERE. A suggested donation of $30 will help offset the cost of the lunch. **The deadline to register is Friday, October 16.** If you have any questions, please contact John Gaska at (608) 220-2693 or **john.gaska@wisc.edu**

BEYOND THE GRANT: One of the stories you will hear at our Seeds of Hope Celebration

Maggie's Farm Restoring Ecosystems for Harmonious Living

By Rita Hindin, Food, Faith and Farming Network Board Member

As stated on our website, "our Seed Money Initiative supports innovative projects that build vibrant rural communities, promote regenerative agriculture, educate youth, and address food insecurity." Maggie's Farm, with a vegetable garden, cultivated and wild raspberry patches, laying hens, a woodland area, a field, some fruit trees and soon, new plantings of nut trees, all located on a six acre homestead in an otherwise residential neighborhood is a one-of-a-kind, deeply mission-aligned recipient of our funds. What a peaceful and productive respite from the industrial building across the main road abutting the far side of the property!

This newsletter piece hones-in on Maggie's Farm's excellence as an educational venue while, hopefully, providing some new-to-you food-for-thought as you read on.

Have you heard of **WWOOF**, Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms, a decades-old, globe-spanning network that connects "willing workers" to organic farms? The website provides listings of organic farms that invite folks to engage in a process to identify a match--a farm where, in exchange for room and board the individual spends 25 hours/week participating in the life of the farm, aka working. **Maggie's posting** titled **"Restoring ecosystems for harmonious living in my little corner of the world"** is probably the best location to learn (a lot) more about her local homestead/farm. Want to apply?

When we visited and toured the homestead/farm Maggie told us that, over the years, she's hosted more than 100 WWOOFers, as they're called. In 2026, with Food, Faith and Farming Network's Seed Money support, Maggie is purchasing nut trees. The WWOOFers have cleared invasives and brush, are building swales, and will be planting the trees.

Possibly my favorite line in the blurb about Maggie's Farm on the WWOOF site is: "Here you will learn how to live as sustainably as possible by carefully managing resource usage, minimizing waste, and caring for the things we do have."

And my second favorite: "My new neighbor tore out 14 huge dumpster-loads from his entire house and we have been the beneficiary of good lumber, windows and pavers, so perhaps we'll have time to build a greenhouse!!"

Maggie told us about her extensive research to identify the venue from which she wanted to purchase the precious nut seedings. At our site visit she explained that it was taking a little longer than planned to get them. The tree money is being held safely and the seedlings should be planted before snow flies.

What an inspiring visit! So many ways to enrich your little corner of the world and share it with others.

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Pictures above from Maggie's Farm

UPCOMING EVENTS

Valley Stewardship Network Conservation on Tap. "Driftless Prairies: Managing Remnants, Reconstructions, and Gardens."

When: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 at 6:00pm
Where: Hotel Fortney, 100 N. Main Street, Viroqua, WI 54665
What: In this presentation Melinda Knutson and Jim Rogala will discuss Driftless Prairies: Managing Remnants, Reconstructions, and Gardens. Driftless Area prairies are unique in many ways. We'll talk about why we care about prairies in the Driftless Area and what we can do to help prairie conservation. After a brief overview of our prairie legacy and a discussion of remnant prairies, reconstructions, and prairie gardens, we'll have a question and answer session with panelists Melinda Knutson and Jim Rogala. This is your opportunity to take your learning to the next level by asking the experts! Have you had a struggle establishing a diverse prairie garden in your yard? Are your neighbors wondering what you're up to? Get some tips on prairie gardening in your yard or public space. Has your prairie planting on former cropland suffered some setbacks? Find out what you can do to improve it.

For additional information, email us at **info@valleystewardshipnetwork.org** or call 608-637-3615.

Women of the Land: Rooted in Rhythms

When: October 16, 2026 4:00 pm - October 18, 2026 2:00 pm
Where: Sinsinawa Mound Center 515 County Road Z, Hazel Green, WI
What: What season are you in? Women of the Land: Rooted in Rhythms is a weekend retreat inviting women to explore the cycles that shape our lives: the rhythms of land and soil, seasons and bodies, relationships, and spirit.
REGISTER

Michael Fields Institute Fall Fest on the Prairie

When: Oct 17, 2026, 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM CDT
Where: New Farm, N8832 Pickeral Lake Rd, East Troy, WI 53120
What: Please join us for kids' activities, art making, hayride tours, food, vendors, and harvest season selfies at New Farm! This FREE open house event will feature local foods, hot chocolate, and s'mores! Explore the beautiful location and see agroforestry, research fields, and a native prairie in the wild heart of Wisconsin's Southern Kettle Moraine. Enjoy a hayride to a wooded kettle and a presentation on the natural history of this unique region. Make friends, create memories, win auction items, and help support regenerative agriculture!

You don't need to RSVP to attend, but it would help us plan for food and s'mores. AND EVERYONE WHO DOES RSVP WILL BE ENTERED TO WIN ONE OF THE MANY DOOR PRIZES WE'LL GIVE AWAY DURING FALL FEST.

Registration Form | Michael Fields Agricultural Institute

Grounded Gatherings with Fields of Sinsinawa

When: October 21 6:00 am - 10:00 am
Where: 2551 County Rd. Z, Sinsinawa, WI
What: Grounded Gatherings are simple, welcoming morning meetups designed to bring people together over coffee, breakfast, and conversation. Hosted by Fields of Sinsinawa, these gatherings create space to connect with neighbors, build relationships, and explore the ties between soil, food, and human health—no expertise required.
No registration needed.

SUPPORT OUR MISSION

Food, Faith and Farming Network is an all-volunteer board that relies on contributions from individuals and grants to support our programming and outreach efforts.

Your personal contribution helps to ensure the sustainability and expansion of our networking efforts, including our Seed Money Initiative and our Winter Farmers Market and Meal program in Southeastern Wisconsin.

Food, Faith and Farming Network is a 501c3 tax exempt organization.

Donate Now

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