

# **LOCAL RESOURCES**

#### The Land Stewardship Project

https://landstewardshipproject.org/

Offers workshops (such as how to empower farmers during financial stressful times, managing land, food handling, marketing, and more), takes action at the legislature on farmers' behalf, helps farmers build soil health. They also help farmers looking to rent or purchase land.

# Minnesota Association of Farm Mutual Insurance Companies (MAFMIC)

www.mafmic.org/

Provides service to rural Minnesota for more than 150 years and insure nearly two-thirds of the state's rural properties. They focus on keeping harmful legislation from advancing which would impact policyholders.

## The Agriculture Utilizations Research Institute (AURI)

www.auri.ora/

Offers workshops on such topics as "How to Add Value to Your Dairy Farm without Adding Cows! (See *Spring Grove Herald*, February 26, 2019)

# The Farm Service Agency (FSA)

www.farmers.gov/recover

Offers low-interest loans for agricultural producers in Minnesota impacted by natural disasters.

#### **Center for Rural Affairs**

www.cfra.org/

A private, non-profit organization working to strengthen small businesses, family farms and ranches, and rural communities through action oriented programs addressing social, economic, and environmental issues.

## Riverland Community College Farm Business Management Program

www.riverland.edu/

Helps with a wide variety of farm-management practices, issues and challenges.

#### **Sustainable Farming Association**

www.sfa-mn.org

Supports the development and enhancement of sustainable farming systems through farmer-to-farmer networking, innovation, demonstration, and education.

#### **International Farm Transition Network**

www.farmtransition.org

Supports farmers in the process of transitioning in and out of farming.

# **SMIF Grow a Farmer Fund**

smifoundation.org/news-events/newsroom/blog-archives/grow-a-farmer-fund.html The Grow a Farmer Fund is a revolving loan fund managed by SMIF that offers lower-interest loans up to \$15,000 to individuals in SMIF's 20-county region for inventory, supplies, working capital or machinery/equipment.

### **Workforce Development Inc.**

www.workforcedevelopmentinc.org/

An independent, non-profit agency with a long history of serving the needs of job seekers and employers in Southeast Minnesota, dedicated to developing and advancing the workforce to meet the current and future needs of the communities we serve.

## National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Minnesota

https://namimn.org/

A non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults with mental illnesses and their families. For over 40 years, NAMI Minnesota has worked to promote the development of community mental health programs and services, change public attitudes about mental illnesses, improve access to services and increase opportunities for recovery.

# **Houston County Economic Development Authority (EDA)**

https://houstoncountymn.com/

Our goal is to get to know our farmers, develop plans based on their individual interests and needs, and help them adapt so that they can be successful.

#### **Houston County EDA – Agriculture**

https://houstoncountymn.com/agriculture/

Needing additional loan options? Looking for options to transition your ag business to a more sustainable model? All inquiries welcomed! More information, contact EDA Director Allison Wagner at eda@co.houston.mn.us or (507) 458-2492.

#### Fillmore Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)

http://www.fillmoreswcd.org/

The mission of the Fillmore SWCD is to promote natural resource stewardship by providing educational, technical and financial assistance.

## Rural Finance Authority (RFA) Restructure Loan program

www.mda.state.mn.us/restructure-ii-loan-program

Designed to help farmers who remain in good credit standing with their local agricultural lender, but are having trouble with cash flow due to adverse events. Only debt of an agricultural nature is eligible for refinancing.

#### Minnesota Land Trust

https://mnland.org/

(651) 917-6282 and Root River SWCD (507) 724-5261 ext. 3. Protects and restores Minnesota's most vital natural lands in order to provide wildlife habitat, clean water, outdoor experiences and scenic beauty for generations to come.

# **Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship**

www.dga-national.org

Contact Bonnie Haugen, Education Coordinator for Minnesota, based in Canton. (507) 421-7170, bonnie@dga-national.org

## **MORE RESOURCES**

## **Extension Office or Land Grant University Directories and Publication Sites**

- National Institute of Food and Agriculture Cooperative Extension System Offices https://nifa.usda.gov/land-grant-colleges-and-universities-partner-website-directory
- eXtension is a searchable website for research-based information on a wide range of Extension or Outreach-oriented subjects. Search for specialty crops or alternative crops
- Agriculture and Natural Resources Publications https://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/default.aspx
- Agronomy Research and Information Center http://agric.ucdavis.edu/

https://impact.extension.org/search/

- Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program https://asi.ucdavis.edu/programs/ucsarep
- Cooperative Extension Service Vegetable Research and Information Center https://vric.ucdavis.edu/main/veg\_info.htm
- Specialty Crops Program https://specialtycrops.agsci.colostate.edu/
- Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises https://smallfarm.ifas.ufl.edu/
- EDIS topics, including alternative crops and livestock http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topicindex.jsp
- Iowa State University Agriculture and Natural Resources www.extension.iastate.edu/ag/
- Center for Crop Diversification: Crop Profiles http://www.uky.edu/ccd/production/crop-resources
- University of Minnesota Extension https://extension.umn.edu/
- Cooperative Extension Service Agriculture and Natural Resources publications https://store.msuextension.org/Departments/Publications.aspx
- University of Nebraska. Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources https://ianr.unl.edu/
- North Dakota State University Extension https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/publications/crops
- Center for Profitable Agriculture https://ag.tennessee.edu/cpa/Pages/default.aspx
- University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension https://extension.wisc.edu/

# **AGRICULTURAL ALTERNATIVES**

### Where can I find information on agricultural alternatives?

**1.** To find out more about alternatives suited to your area, start by contacting your local or State Extension office.

**Houston County Extension office** 

https://local.extension.umn.edu/local/houston

(507) 725-5807

email: mnext-houston@umn.edu

Fillmore County Extension office

https://local.extension.umn.edu/local/fillmore

(507) 765-3896

email: mnext-fillmore@umn.edu

Minnesota Extension office

https://extension.umn.edu/

612-624-1222

email: mnext@umn.edu

**2.** The Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC) maintains the Specialty Crops Website and publishes *Great Places to Find Information about Farming Alternatives*, both of which offer a selection of information-rich websites and organizations.

www.nal.usda.gov/afsic

www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/great-places-find-information-about-farming-alternatives

**3.** Evaluating a Rural Enterprise (ATTRA) provides more detailed discussion about assessing farming alternatives.

www.ngfn.org/resources/ngfn-database/knowledge/evaluatingrural.pdf

- **4.** Alternative Crop Suitability Maps (Illinois State Water Survey) presents "climate and soil requirements for alternative and traditional crops." www.isws.illinois.edu/data/altcrops/
- **5.** Additional resources on specific agricultural alternatives are available from your State Department of Agriculture; your local and/or university library; and crop and livestock associations.

Minnesota Department of Agriculture www.mda.state.mn.us

# **AGRICULTURAL ALTERNATIVES**

#### **FARM AND HOME ENTERPRISES**

#### Services:

- Antique shop/Antique restoration
- Boat storage
- Direct marketing operations: U-pick, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), farmstand
- Child care in country setting
- Composting services and products
- Custom machinery work
- Custom planting and care of window boxes and container annuals
- Custom planting and care of vegetable gardens
- Custom slaughter
- Farm sitting
- Gift shops
- Pet motels for large as well as small animals
- Religious services held on farm (e.g. sunrise Easter services, weddings)
- Restaurant
- Seed and supplies distributor
- Small engine repair
- Taxidermy

# Recreation and Education:

- Barn dances
- Bed and breakfast
- Campground
- Chuck wagon
- Fee hunting and fishing/ game farms
- Hunting, fishing, and nature hike guides
- Lectures on herbs, gardening at farm
- Museum of old farm equipment on working farm
- Petting zoo
- Sleigh rides with work horses
- Tours for public, school children
- Trail rides
- Vacations on farm
- Wagon trains

# Value-added Products / On-farm Processing:

- Cheese
- Cider and other apple products
- Confections and candles
- Corn snack foods
- Crafts
- Dried flowers (e.g. cultivated, arid, wild)
- Dried Fruits
- Fresh or stone ground grains
- Furniture (e.g. outdoor chairs, picnic tables)
- Honey and beeswax products
- Meat processing (e.g. jerky)
- Sawmill
- Soap-making
- Tanning hides
- Toys from wood
- Wheat-weaving
- Winemaking
- Wool processing and spinning

#### FIELD CROPS

### Feed and Forage:

- Bird seed (sunflower, proso millet, canary grass, etc.)
- Forage brassicas (turnips, rutabagas)
- Kochia
- Medics
- Sainfoin
- Switchgrass

# <u>Fiber, Fuel, Edible and</u> <u>Industrial Oils:</u>

- Borage
- Broomcorn
- Canola
- Castor beans
- Comfrey
- Corn (for oil)
- Crambe
- Cuphea
- Flax
- Guayule
- Jojoba
- Kenaf
- Lesquerella
- Lupine
- Maple Syrup
- Meadowfoam
- Milkweed
- Perilla
- Safflower
- Sesame
- Sunflowers
- Vernonia

# <u>Food Grains, Pseudo-cereals,</u> <u>Legumes, etc.</u>:

- Adzuki beans
- Amaranth (food and feed)
- Barley
- Buckwheat
- Dry edible beans (fieldbeans)
- Einkorn
- Emmer
- Field peas (food and feed)
- Garbanzo beans (chickpeas)
- Hazelnuts
- Hemp
- Hops
- Indian corn
- Jerusalem artichokes (food and feed)
- Kamut
- Krenza
- Lentils
- Malting barley
- Mung beans
- Organically grown grains of all types
- Peanuts
- Pearl millet
- Popcorn (white and colored)
- Psyllium (medicinal)
- Quinoa
- Seed production (registered and certified seed, turfgrass, etc.)
- Sesame (seeds)
- Sorghum (syrup)
- Soybeans, incl. natto soybeans for tofu, tempeh; and Edible soybeans (edamame)
- Spelt
- Triticale
- Wheatgrass
- Wild rice

# **AGRICULTURAL ALTERNATIVES**

## FIELD CROPS cont'd

# <u>Specialty and Ethnic</u> Vegetables:

- Asparagus
- Baby vegetables
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Celery
- Chinese water chestnuts
- Cole crops (broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, kohlrabi)
- Corn, miniature
- Fenugreek
- Edible flowers
- Garlic
- Gourds, ornamental
- Gourmet vegetables
- Greenhouse production for out-of-season crops
- Heirloom varieties of any vegetable
- Herbs (culinary, medicinal)
- Horseradish
- Luffa gourds
- Mushrooms (agaricus, shiitake, oyster, morel, etc)
- Onions (transplants, shallots, sweet, early)
- Organically grown vegetables of all types
- Oriental vegetables
- Peas and pea shoots
- Peppers: specialty types (purple, hot, etc.)
- Pumpkins
- Red beets
- Salad greens (mesclun)
- Sprouts (alfalfa, bean)
- Squash
- Sweet corn
- Sweet potatoes
- Tomatoes: specialty types
- Truffles
- Wasabi

## Fruits and Nuts:

- Apples, esp. heirloom varieties
- Asian pears
- Brambles (blackberries, raspberries, loganberries, black raspberries, etc.)
- Blueberries
- Cranberries, currants
- Elderberries
- Gooseberries
- Kiwi, hardy
- Lingonberries
- Melons: specialty types
- Paw paw
- Rhubarb products
- Strawberries: day neutral types
- Table grapes (seeded and seedless)
- Wine grapes for home brewing market

## Horticultural / Nursery:

- Bedding plants: annual flowers, herbs, etc.
- Field grown cut flowers
- Field grown mums
- Flowers for drying
- Greenhouse production
- Hydroponic production
- Organically grown bedding plants and fruit trees
- Potted annuals
- Native plants/wild flowers and seeds
- Regionally hardy shrubs and perennial flowers

# LIVESTOCK / ANIMALS

#### Game Related:

- Beefalo (hybrid of buffalo and beef)
- Buffalo (American Bison)
- Deer (fallow deer, red deer)
- Elk (wapiti) for meat and antlers
- Fish bait (worms, minnows)
- Pheasant for release/ restocking programs and meat

# Exotic Livestock / Minor Breeds / Special Uses:

- Alpacas and llamas for pack animals, hair, and pets
- Boar
- Butterflies (for gardeners)
- Fox, red, silver, and blue
- Goats for milk, meat, and hair (Angora)
- Horses draft horse breeding, miniatures, exotics
- Mink
- Mules and donkeys
- Ostriches, rheas, emus
- Rabbits for meat, lab animals, and hair (Angora)
- Reindeer
- Sheep/Lambs for meat, wool, milk (for cheese)
- Veal, conventional and certified
- Water buffalo
- Worms (for composting)
- Yaks

#### Poultry:

- Balut (duck eggs partially incubated)
- Chicken eggs partially developed (for Asian markets)
- Doves
- Duck (meat and paté)
- Free range poultry of all types
- Geese
- Guinea fowl
- Organically raised poultry of all types
- Peafowl/Peacocks (feathers)
- Pigeons
- Quail/Squab
- Turkey

# **AGROFORESTRY / FOREST PRODUCTS:**

- Bamboo
- Christmas trees
- Firewood
- Paulownia
- Sawlogs
- Tree seed collection
- Wild nuts

# **AQUACULTURE / FISHFARMING:**

- Aquaponics (combining aquaculture and hydroponic operations)
- Bass, Trout, Catfish, Crayfish, Tilapia
- Watercress and other aquatic plants

#### PET AND MEDICINE RELATED:

- Dogs (guardian)
- Guinea pigs
- Pet foods crickets, mealy worms, etc.

# PODCASTS, VIDEOS

## **TransFARMation: There is Life After Farming Podcast**

https://www.rrfn.com/podcast/2019/04/19/transfarmation-life-beyond-the-farm/ (12 min., 37 sec.)

From the Red River Farm Network: Reporting Agriculture's Business April 19, 2019

After a few tough years farming in the 1980s, Randy Koenen found a new career in farm radio. "I do miss farming at some points, but there are a lot of things I don't miss; I don't miss the stress," said Randy. "I was under immense pressure. I couldn't sleep at night, and I wasn't eating. Once I made the decision to step away, a big weight was lifted off my shoulders."

For farmers that are struggling, Randy encourages them to consider the many options. "As farmers, we're builders, we're electricians, we're mechanics, we're truck drivers. As farmers, we have a skill set where we can do just about anything." Randy shares his story in this edition of TransFARMation.

## **Portraits From Rural Wisconsin**

https://wpt4.org/portraits/ (56 min., 47 sec.)

Wisconsin Public Television

A documentary offering a series of interwoven personal stories, conveying why some western Wisconsin residents still say that "rural life is the best life" even in the face of hardship and change.

### Farmer's Footprint / Regeneration: The Beginning

https://zachbushmd.com/farmersfootprint/episode-1/ (20 min., 19 sec.)

This film series explores scientific findings from Zach Bush MD and soil health expert Dr. Allen Williams of Soil Health Consultants, LLC that identify the root cause of the current chronic disease epidemic and its connection to chemically dependent agricultural practices.

This film features the trials, learnings and victories of the four generation Breitkreutz family from Stoney Creek Farm transitioning from conventional farming to regenerative agriculture in Redwood Falls, Minnesota. Using conventional methods they saw their soils degrade and their input costs rise every year. Transitioning to regenerative practices has helped their row cropping operation and significantly reduced their input cost for their cattle. This film tells the story of how they did it.

## Raising a Farmer blog

www.raisingafarmer.com

A lot of work but always room for laughter

"My name is Brenda. My husband Nathan and I dairy farm in Central Minnesota with our two children, Everett and Vivian. They are with us every step of the way. Our farm has been in Nathan's family for over 125 years making our children the 6<sup>th</sup> generation to be raised in our farm yard. It is extremely humbling to think of all the strong women who came before me and raised their children in the exact same yard as I am raising mine. We purchased the farm from Nathan's parents in 2011 becoming the sole owners. Nathan and I share the work load. We learned very quickly going through a farm transition we needed to have open and strong communication for our family, our marriage and our farm. On a dairy farm what affects the farm affects the family and what affects the family affects the farm.

As young farmers we farm on faith and love. Praying for a good crop, trust that God will keep our family safe, and cows healthy and faith that next year is always going to be a better year. When we feel like we are just about ready to run out of faith, we laugh. We find the little things to give us strength for the next day. Laughter fills my soul and keeps me going.

On Raising a Farmer you will find what life is really like on a small dairy farm in Central Minnesota. I love cooking with my kids, getting our hands dirty in the dirt, loving on my family and enjoying the life Nathan and I have created together."

You can also find them on Facebook (Raising a Farmer), Instagram (raisingafarmer), and YouTube.

#### Field Work

https://www.npr.org/podcasts/721147867/field-work

Hosted by two commercial row-crop farmers, Field Work provides space for frank, realistic discussions about the benefits and challenges of sustainable agriculture. Hosts Zach Johnson and Mitchell Hora explore the successes and challenges farmers experience as they adopt new practices, without greenwashing over the difficulties.

# **COPING WITH FARM & RURAL STRESS**

From Minnesota Department of Agriculture

## **Signs and Symptoms of Stress**

## Behavioral Signs:

- Worrying about things you didn't worry about before
- Loss of interest in things you used to enjoy (hobbies)
- Poor concentration, confusion; forgetfulness
- Uncertainty or trouble making decisions
- Relationship problems
- Sad mod
- Feeling anxious
- Change in personality, irritability
- Negative thinking
- Wanting to withdraw from people and activities
- Increased smoking/drinking

# **Physical Signs:**

- Poor or disturbed sleep
- Weight loss or gain
- Changes in appetite
- Stomach or gastrointestinal problems
- Clenching or grinding teeth
- Chest pain
- Poor hygiene

## What can you do?

### Yourself:

- Reach out to a loved one. Talk about how you are feeling.
- Talk to your friends, clergy, or medical provider.
- Reach out to a mental health counselor.

### Someone you know:

- Listen attentively and without judgment. Try to understand where they are coming from.
- Share your concerns about his/her behavior, mood, appearance, etc.
- Ask questions about changes you observe.
- Encourage them to reach out/tell a family member.

## Help for Stress, Anxiety, Depression, Anger, or Feeling "Stuck"

- Minnesota Farm & Rural Helpline: (833) 600-2610 ext.1
   Free, confidential, 24/7. Translators available.
- Ted Matthews, Rural Mental Health Counselor: (320) 266-2390 www.centerofagriculture.org (search for "mental health")
- Mobile Crisis Teams www.mn.gov/dhs (search for "adult mental health phone numbers")
- U of M "Dealing With Stress" www.z.umn.edu/stressresources

### **Help With Daily Living**

 The United Way
 For help securing food, heat, electricity, health care, childcare, senior programs, or other resources call 2-1-1 or go to www.222.211.org.

## **Business, Financial and Legal Help**

- Farmer-Lender Mediation: (218) 935-5785
   www.extension.umn.edu/get-help/farmer-lender-mediation
- Farmers Legal Action Group (FLAG): (877)-860-4349 www.flaginc.org
- Minnesota Farm Advocates: (218) 346-4866 www.mda.state.mn.us/farmadvocates
- Minnesota Rural Finance Authority: (651) 201-6556 www.mda.state.mn.us/agfinance
- Minnesota State Farm Business Management Education: (218) 894-5163 or (507) 389-7263 https://agcentric.org/farm-business-management
- University of Minnesota Extension Free, Confidential Financial Counseling for Farmers: (800) 232-9077
   www.z.umn.edu/financehelp
- Oak Ridge Teletherapy, LLC, Cynthie Christensen, LPCC: (507) 961-8537 oakridgeteletherapy@gmail.com

# **MINNESOTA FARM STRESS**

Farming can be a stressful occupation. Often, you live where you work. Your coworkers may be your spouse and/or other family members. While you get to be your own boss, you feel responsible for a lot and can control very little.

Financial problems, price and marketing uncertainties, farm transfer issues, production challenges, marital difficulties, and social pressures can be real sources of stress -- even crisis -- for farmers and farm family members.

There are people and organizations ready to help.

#### **Explore them here:**

<u>Help with Stress, Anxiety, Depression, Feeling Stuck, and Crisis Situations</u>
Minnesota Farm & Rural Helpline, Farm Counselor Ted Matthews, Mobile
Crisis Teams

#### **Help with Daily Living**

Help with food, heat, electricity, health care, childcare, senior programs, etc.

#### **Business, Financial and Legal Help**

Help with business and legal problems

If you need help figuring out who to contact, call us at (833) 600-2670, ext. 0, during business hours, or use TTY at 711.

www.minnesotafarmstress.com



# **ARTICLES OF INTEREST**

• Pizza in the pasture: Rural Waseca pizza farm adds to southern Minnesota's agri-tourism

https://www.minnpost.com/economic-vitality-in-greater-minnesota/2019/07/pizza-in-the-pasture-rural-waseca-pizza-farm-adds-to-southern-minnesotas-agri-tourism/

- Out of the Darkness https://www.johndeerefurrow.com/?s=Out+of+the+Darkness&post\_type=post
- Program available for farmers with unplanted fields
   https://www.crowrivermedia.com/independentreview/program-available-forfarmers-with-unplanted-fields/article\_30d17b7c-f49d-5422-b505-640b05f486f6.html
- To beat the first frost, Midwestern farmers switch to faster-growing seed http://www.startribune.com/to-beat-the-first-frost-midwestern-farmers-switch-to-faster-growing-seed/511382821/
- Help America's dairy farmers by getting them out of dairy farming http://www.startribune.com/help-america-s-dairy-farmers-by-getting-them-out -of-dairy-farming/511325182/
- Is value added right for the farm? (Dairy Star, June 8, 2019)
- Organic farmers stalk fraudulent imports that taint market http://www.startribune.com/organic-farmers-stalk-fradulentimports/511952972/
- "American Soil" Is Increasingly Foreign-Owned
   https://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=723501793

# ARTICLES OF INTEREST CONT'D

- How do you cope with the stress of farming? (Dairy Star, April 27, 2019)
- Higher limits now available on USDA farm loans (Dairy Star, April 27, 2019)
- Differences in philosophies still exist in St. Paul (The Land, April 10, 2019)
- Agriculture and demand keeps evolving (The Land, April 5/April 12, 2019)
- We need forages, and forages need funding (The Land, April 5/April 12, 2019)
- Finding success in the new normal (Dairy Star, March 11, 2019))
- They added revenue, not cows (Hoard's Dairyman, February 25, 2019)
- Ag in the Classroom: teaching and reaching out (The Land, March 27, 2019)
- Big Farm. Big Vision. Open-minded management creates a closed loop operation. (The Furrow #10)
- Urge legislators to pass Forever Green Initiative (The Land, April 5/April 12, 2019)
- Matthews: 'Stress has always been part of farming' (The Land, 10, 2019)
- Farm Bureau's work with legislators is vital to farming (The Land)
- Dairy forecast released at USDA ag outlook conference (Dairy Star, March 9, 2019)
- Growing dairy in China (Dairy Star, March 9, 2019)
- An aging process: Two cheese owners share insight about value-added side of dairy (Dairy Star, March 9, 2019)
- Food corporations hunt organic, natural startups (Star Tribune, March 16, 2019)
- Kernza crop failure sends General Mills unit to remake plans for new cereal (Star Tribune, April 10, 2019)
- Perhaps snow isn't the real burden on those collapsing barns in Minnesota (Star Tribune, March 19, 2019)
- Novel crops can save rural Minnesota's drinking water, U says (Star Tribune, May 28, 2019)

Above referenced publications can be found here:

**Dairy Star:** https://dairystar.com

Hoard's Dairyman: https://hoards.com/ Star Tribune: www.startribune.com The Furrow: www.johndeerefurrow.com

The Land: www.thelandonline.com