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IN THIS EDITION

News Releases specific to NE Iowa:

- ISU Extension Hosts Tomato Grafting and Pest Workshop
- Registration now open for the April 8 Iowa Local Food Conference

Previous Editions:

Download here: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/winneshiek/news/news-ne-iowa-isu-extension

News Release
Contact: Teresa Wiemerslage, Regional Program Coordinator, 563-794-0599, wiemer@iastate.edu

ISU Extension Hosts Tomato Grafting and Pest Workshop

Grafting tomatoes is centuries old and it has come to the forefront in the past decade for several reasons. Grafting can be used successfully to manage soil borne diseases and improve yields in both hybrid and heirloom tomatoes. Growers also are interested in learning about grafting tomatoes for yield improvement and disease management.

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach will conduct a tomato grafting and pest management workshop Friday, March 28 at Iowa’s Dairy Center, Calmar. Iowa State University presenters at the workshop include Ajay Nair, extension horticulturist, and Erika Saalau-Rojas and Melissa Irizarry, plant pathologists with the ISU Plant and Insect Diagnostic Lab. The workshop is co-sponsored by The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture.

The workshop begins with a 9:45 a.m. registration, followed by the basics of tomato grafting and a hands-on grafting exercise before lunch. Insect and disease identification and pest management strategies and options will be covered during the afternoon session.

Live samples will be available to learn how to identify pests and disease, and their symptoms. Master gardeners, home gardeners and commercial vegetable growers will find this hands-on grafting and pest management experience beneficial.

Workshop cost will be $25.00 and advanced registration is required. To register, contact Teresa Wiemerslage, Regional Program Coordinator for ISU Extension at wiemer@iastate.edu or 563-794-0599 or register online at www.extension.iastate.edu/winneshiek.

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News Release
Contact: Lynn Heuss, leheuss@iastate.edu

Registration now open for the Iowa Local Food Conference
The spotlight is on local food business expansion in this year’s Iowa Local Food Conference. Keynotes and panels will highlight the growing number of opportunities available to food producers in their local networks. Conference attendees may participate in three tracks: food hubs, processing centers, and marketing.

Registration is now open at: [www.leopold.iastate.edu/2014-iowa-local-food-conference](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/2014-iowa-local-food-conference)

Sponsored by the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Local Food and Farm Initiative (LFFI) and the Iowa Food System Working Group of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, the one-day conference at the Quality Inn, Ames on April 8 will include presentations from successful local food practitioners and advocates.

Keynote speaker Lucie Amundson is the marketing brainchild behind her family’s pasture-raised chicken business, Locally Laid. Her social media savvy led Locally Laid to the final four in a national competition for small businesses to earn a 30-second TV spot at the Super Bowl.

Bill Menner, USDA Rural Development State Director, and Kamyar Enshayan, director of the Center for Energy and Environmental Education at University of Northern Iowa, will also give keynote talks.

Registration includes lunch, and some need-based scholarship options are available.

Conference coordinator Lynn Heuss says many business opportunities right now focus on local foods.

“The one-day conference will look at issues that can impact the bottom line of local food producers and those affiliated businesses, such as the sustainability of food hubs that aggregate supplies, the benefits of processing centers for value-added products, and cutting edge options for marketing,” Heuss said.

"There is always plenty of time for networking, and we'll provide a delicious lunch featuring some locally sourced ingredients.”

In the conference track on food hubs, participants may learn about different kinds of food hubs and the resources needed to create and sustain them. The processing centers track will cover shared kitchens and kitchen incubators, as well as integrating value-added products from dairy, fresh or frozen processing. The third track for the conference covers marketing strategies including online and institutional opportunities, as well as CSAs and cookery classes.

**Reduced-price early registration** ends on March 28. The conference is geared to general audiences, students and vendors, and will be of interest to small growers, business owners and food service personnel, as well as others who are interested in the growing local food system in Iowa.

Contact Lynn Heuss for details, including scholarship application questions, at [leheuss@iastate.edu](mailto:leheuss@iastate.edu)

-30-

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