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# Training, Developing, and Mentoring Beginning Organic and Conventional Dairy and Feed Producers

David Reed

NFO, Inc. (National Farmers Organization)

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development  
Program Award No 2015-70017-22872]



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# Project Audience

- Beginning Dairy and Feed Grain Producers
  - Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota & Missouri
  - Individual Family Farmers interested in Organic Dairy and Grain Production
  - Beginning Farmers who are interested in starting farming organically or converting to organic.
  - All Stages of beginning farmers, from exploring to currently in their first ten years



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# Partners/Collaborators

- Who are the key people on your team?
  - Perry Garner, National Farmers, Communications Director, Publicity and Recruiting of Attendees
  - Rene Niese, CFP, Applied Financial Resources, Financial Practices
  - John Bobbe, Executive Director, OFARM, Group Marketing in Organic Feed Production
  - Dr. Richard Levins, Professor Emeritus, University of MN, Economics of Group Marketing



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# The Real Stars

- Will Ortman, Organic Grain Farmer
- Carmen Fernholz, Organic Grain Farmer
- Dr. Paul Detloff, Staff Veterinarian,  
Organic Valley
- Mark Kopecky, Soils Agronomist
- Tim Ennis, Grain Department Director,  
NFO



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# Key Approach(es)

- Presentation of all aspects of Organic Certification and Operating Procedures through networking with experts in the field
- Originally 5 Full Day Work shops, added #6 in Missouri due to interest by word of mouth
- Personal Contact
- Mentoring Program is still developing. 1 participant from each workshop will be matched with mentor
- Webinars to be designed with input from the participants of the 6 Workshops



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# Overall Target Outcome

Original Goal was to reach 125 beginning farmers who wanted to start farming organically or convert from conventional farming to organic

- Total Attendance of Beginning Farmers at the workshops will exceed this by 25% or a total of 150 plus.
- To Develop and expand the project into an ongoing educational program to help beginning farmers establish organic operations that are sustainable and profitable



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# What do you have to share?

- Access and Contact information to experts in Organic Dairy and Crop Production and Marketing
- Knowledge gained through this development project on holding successful workshops
- “The Producer’s Guide to Basic Farm Lending” and “Organic, The Real Natural” pamphlet. Copies of Power Point presentations used in the workshops



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# What do you hope to learn from other projects?

- Measuring Results
- How to present financial aspects of beginning farming
- Developing meaningful surveys of participants



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# Keep in touch!

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