

Program Components and Schedule

Stateline Farm Beginnings® Year 14: 2018-2019

Stateline Farm Beginnings features 4 program components:

1. **Winter Course Saturday Sessions** – October 2018 to March 2019
2. **CRAFT Field Day Workshops** - April to October 2019
3. **One-on-One Mentoring** - April to October 2019
4. **Last Session and Graduation Event** - September 2019

Please see details on each of the four SFB Program Components below.

1. Winter Course Saturday Sessions – October 2018 to March 2019

2018 Dates	2019 Dates
Session 1. October 6 – 10:00am-4:00pm	Session 7. January 5 – 10:00am-3:00pm
Session 2. October 20 – 10:00am-4:00pm	Session 8. January 19 – 10:00am-3:00pm
Session 3. November 3 – 10:00am-4:00pm	Session 9. February 2 – 10:00am-4:00pm
Session 4. November 17 – 10:00am-4:00pm	Session 10. February 16 – 10:00am-3:00pm
Session 5. December 1 – 10:00am-4:00pm	
Session 6. December 15 – 10:00am-4:00pm*	

* Note these sessions have MORE than two weeks in between them and the next session.

LOCATION: TBD; Near Angelic Organics Learning Center, 1545 Rockton Rd., Caledonia, IL 61011

SNOW DATE (Please keep this date open. The snow date is often used.): Saturday, March 2, 2019 – 10:00am-3:00pm

Session #1 Saturday, October 6, 10am-4pm—Starting on Solid Ground with Whole Farm Planning

Presenters: Peg Sheaffer, AOLC Farmer Training Program Director; Panel of 3 Beginning Farmers.

Understand the framework and course objectives of Stateline Farm Beginnings® and hear about recent farm start-ups from Stateline Farm Beginnings graduates. Get to know your fellow participants... this is your first farmer-network! Brainstorm all products and services you've been considering so that your ideas are on paper. Begin assessing your resources.

Session #2 Saturday, October 20, 10am-4pm—Whole Farm Planning Part 2

Presenter: John Peterson, Angelic Organics

Having a successful farm business depends on creating goals that consider long-term sustainability. Learn how clear and specific personal goals relate to a strong, viable farm business. Assess your skills and connect them to enterprise ideas. Tour Angelic Organics CSA farm with Farmer John Peterson and see a farm as an integrated system.

Session #3 Saturday, November 3, 10am-4pm—Right-sizing your Farm: Benchmarks and Scale

Presenter: John Hendrickson, CIAS University of Madison and Stone Circle Farm

Hear about research on what is possible on various size farms, in terms of income potential, land use, and labor hours. Learn about the "front end" and "back end" of a direct market farm operation, specialized equipment, and spending priorities. Learn how to categorize expenses. Write your farm's Mission Statement.

Session #4 Saturday, November 17, 10am-4pm—Land and Soils

Presenters: Nathan Aaberg, Liberty Prairie Foundation and Grant McCarty, UofI Extension

Learn about the pros and cons of various land access options that go beyond ownership and renting. Considering a farm as an ecological system will help you plan your business. Most farms depend on rich soil biology for successful production, and in this session you'll learn how to take a soil sample, read test results, and brush up on soil-health facts.

Session #5 Saturday, December 1, 10am-4pm—Planning for Market and Distribution

Presenters: Beth Osmund, Cedar Valley Sustainable Farm and other TBA

Hear successful strategies of 3 farmers marketing different products through a variety of channels. Understand the difference between advertising, marketing, and public relations, and identify what's best for your enterprise. Consider your farm enterprise more specifically now and identify your own marketing strategies.

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Session #6 Saturday, December 15, 10am-4pm—Assembling Financial Data

Presenter: Sheri Doyel, AOLC Farmer Training Facilitator

Learn how holistic financial planning will help you make better decisions on your farm. All aspects of preliminary planning, categorizing income and expense, developing annual cash flow, and identifying “wealth generating expenses” will be covered. Practice using specific charts to plan everything from cover crop schedules to equipment pay off.

Session #7 Saturday, January 5, 10am-3pm—Analyzing the Situation: Financial Tools

Presenter: Paul Dietmann, Compeer Financial (to be confirmed)

Hear an in-depth presentation of farm financials from one of the best advisors in the region. Traditional tools such as balance sheets, profit and loss, and cash flow will be discussed with real-world examples. Understand the power in budgeting and creating solvency. Analyze your own production skills and identify immediate goals for the upcoming Growing Season.

Session #8 Saturday, January 19, 10am-3pm—Realities from the Market

Buyer Panel: Irv Cernauskus, Irv and Shelly's Fresh Picks; Rich Horbaczewski, Grass Is Greener/Bushel & Peck, Local Grocer; Yescenia Mota, City of Chicago (to be confirmed)

Learn about the buying practices of retailers, what farmers markets might expect from you as a vendor, and what strategies to use to enter markets. Hear from buyers and farmers alike about “the other side” of the equation. Participants are encouraged to prepare questions ahead of time.

Session #9 Saturday, February 2, 10am-4pm—Connecting with Resources and Building a Mentoring Plan

Presenters: Phil Lehman, Harvard State Bank; Insurance specialist TBA, Grant McCarthy, University of Illinois Extension; David Peterson, USDA Farm Service

Local and regional resource people will present on financing options, legal issues, insurance, trademarks, taxes, and business names. Regional continuing-education resources available to new farmers will also be presented. Mentorship guidelines for the upcoming growing season will be discussed.

Session #10 Saturday, February 16, 10am-3pm—Class Presentations

Synthesize the work you've done throughout the course thus far into a presentation or final project. Hear strategic business plans, challenges, and changes to the “farm dream” from fellow participants, and identify “next steps” for yourself.

2. CRAFT Field Day Workshops - April to October 2019

Stateline Farm Beginnings® participants take part in multiple field day workshops of their choice. Field days take place primarily from April to October, with a few winter field days sprinkled in. The workshops are hosted and led by member farms in the Upper Midwest CRAFT (Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training-Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin), and are **included** in the course fee.

3. One-on-One Mentoring - April to October 2019

Stateline Farm Beginnings® participants are paired with mentor farmers on a case-by-case basis. The Stateline Farm Beginnings® facilitator helps each student assess his or her learning goals for the growing season and matches the participant with a mentor.

4. Last Session and Graduation Event - September 2019

Participants meet to share and reflect on their summer-time experiences at field days and with their farmer-mentor. This event celebrates the completion of Stateline Farm Beginnings® with a graduation potluck at the Angelic Organics Learning Center picnic shelter.