



a program led by
Angelic Organics
Learning Center

2021 Information Packet



CRAFT Field Day | Poultry & Sheep
Riemer Family Farm | Broadhead, WI

Main Office & Farm
15747 Rockton Rd., Caledonia, IL
61011
815.389.8455 (p)
www.learnconnect.org



Chicago Office
1647 W Fulton St., Chicago, IL
60612

Dear Aspiring Farmer:

2020 has been a year of upheaval and awareness.

This year has shown us how fundamental a healthy local food system is to the stability of our nation's food supply. We need diverse urban & rural farms & farmers and we need eaters who wholeheartedly support them.

In 2020, so many of us were able (or forced) to slow down and ask ourselves the hard questions: What is essential? What do I need and value? How do I contribute to the kind of world I want to see in the future?

My guess is: If you are reading this, it is because some aspect of growing food for people was central in your answers. Welcome! You are in good company.

Angelic Organics Learning Center (AOLC) has also been asking the hard questions. How do we best support aspiring and beginning farmers? What is essential, needed, and valued? What best supports farmers to create farm businesses that are joyful, profitable, and viable even in uncertain times. We re-envisioned Stateline Farm Beginnings® to better support you as you begin your farm journey.

AOLC is proud to offer this fresh approach as we enter our 16th year of Stateline Farm Beginnings®. I hope you will join us in building a solid vision and plan for realizing and sustaining your farm dream.

Sincerely,

Danica Hoehn
Program Director, Farmer Training Initiative

Here are some highlights:

- **We're going virtual!** Winter and Fall classes will be offered online. No more long drives to and from class or rescheduling because of snow days!
- **A restructured approach** Connect with a farm mentor before starting work on your farm business plan. This will provide added farmer insight and support as you work through the logics of creating a farm business plan.
- **Pace Yourself** Not quite ready to commit to writing a business plan, but really need to focus on making your farm dream into a reality? Great! You can now enroll in the Farm Dreams Intensive, then take the Farm Business Intensive when you are ready. Ready to take the complete course? Enroll in the full SFB course and receive a tuition discount.

What remains the same?

- **Join a vibrant farmer alliance** By enrolling in Stateline Farm Beginnings®, tuition includes a yearlong membership to Upper Midwest CRAFT (Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training), the most robust network of sustainable farms in the region. You'll have access to hands-on field days as well as a chance to connect with other farmers of all different experience levels.
- **Learn farm business planning from real farmers** Farmers training farmers is the education model behind Farm Beginnings®. You'll get real-world, practical, and specialized knowledge from the farmers leading the local food movement in the Upper Midwest.
- **Focus exclusively on sustainable agriculture** Examples used in class materials are solely from Biodynamic, organic, and sustainable farm operations.
- **Leverage knowledge from across the country** Classes are facilitated by staff who network with and learn from 10 other Farm Beginnings® programs across the country.

Learn. Grow. Connect.



**“Stateline Farm
Beginnings made us
realistically look at
farming as a business
instead of a lifestyle.
And we realize that we
can eventually have
both!”**

**- Angie Mitchell
3 Flat Acres**



Stateline Farm Beginnings®

farmer-led training & support



ANGELIC ORGANICS
Learning Center

Course Schedule & Session Details

Farm Dreams Intensive
January to March 2021



Farm Dreams Intensive is focused on goal-setting, writing a mission & vision statement, marketing strategies, planning for profit, creating a personalized learning plan, and developing a farm proposal. As its name suggests, this course is intensive. Each week, you will have approximately four (4) hours of self guided work & homework + two (2) hours of optional enrichment, in addition to four-five (4-5) hours of class time and optional office hours with your facilitator. There will be a lot of deep digging into the realities that create barriers and/or opportunities to achieve your dreams (personal values, finances, skills, etc). Your experiences will culminate with a Farm Dream Proposal. This will help you clarify your vision for the future and talk with potential investors, customers, and stakeholders about your farm or future farm.

Each session is held two days per week, online via Zoom, on **Thursdays 6:00pm-8:00pm & Saturdays 10:00 am-12:00 pm** (some sessions may be extended by 1 hour. Notice will be provided in advance). Office hours are **Wednesdays 6:00pm-8:00pm**. Session content, dates, and times are subject to change, based on farmer availability.

Session 100 Welcome to SFB: Farm Dreams Intensive

Understand the framework and course objectives of Stateline Farm Beginnings®. Get to know your fellow participants...this is your first farmer-network! Familiarize yourself with the online learning platforms used during the program. Take your first step in planning your farm business.

Thursday Class 01/07/2021
Saturday Class 01/09/2021

*Session 101 Farm Dreams Pt 1: Defining Your Dream**

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. Start developing holistic goals for your farm venture. Hear about farm start-ups from recent Stateline Farm Beginnings® graduates.

Weds Office Hours 01/13/2021
Thursday Class 01/14/2021
Saturday Class 01/16/2021

*Session 102 Planning for Profit I**

Brainstorm all products and services you've been considering so that your ideas are on paper. Begin assessing your resources. Assess your skills and connect them to enterprise ideas. Learn the purpose and importance of a mission statement & vision statement, then draft your own. Meet farmer John Peterson, founder of Angelic Organics Farm and hear about his enduring career in organic farming. and how holistic goals kept his business on track over the decades.

Weds Office Hours 01/20/2021
Thursday Class 01/21/2021
Saturday Class 01/23/2021

*Session 103 The History of Land & Land Access**

Investigate the history of land ownership in the United States, understand the intersections of land access and racial justice. Think about how your land is, or can be, an asset to your farm business goals. Understand the pros and cons of various land access options that go beyond ownership and renting. Learn basic farm math. Hear epic land access stories directly from your fellow UM CRAFT farmers.

Weds Office Hours 01/27/2021
Thursday Class 01/28/2021
Saturday Class 01/30/2021

*Session 104 Small Farm Economics & Infrastructure **

Hear about research farms scale, in terms of income potential, land use, and labor hours. Learn about the "front end" and "back end" of a direct market farm operation. Explore specialized equipment, and spending priorities. Then think deeply about what skills, resources, and services are necessary to bring your farm to fruition.

Weds Office Hours 02/03/2021
Thursday Class 02/04/2021
Saturday Class 02/06/2021

*Session 105 Marketing for a Small Farm**

Discover the successful strategies of three different 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 in more detail and identify your own marketing strategies.

Weds Office Hours 02/10/2021
Thursday Class 02/11/2021
Saturday Class 02/13/2021

*Session 106 Farm Dreams Part 2: Putting Dreams into Action**

Package the dreams you mapped out during the Farm Dream Intensive into a personalized farm proposal. Shape your personalized learning goals into a one-of-a-kind learning plan based on where you want your farm dreams to take you.

Weds Office Hours 02/17/2021
Thursday Class 02/18/2021
Saturday Class 02/20/2021

*Session 107 Feedback & Mentor Matching**

Meet with your Stateline Farm Beginnings® facilitator and get personalized feedback on your farm proposal. We'll finalize the details of your learning plan and assess your goals for the growing season. You will explore the UM CRAFT network and if you are continuing into the Skill Building Practicum, you will springboard into a mentorship connection with a suitable farm mentor.

By Appointment

Course Schedule & Session Details

Skill Building Practicum
March to October 2021



Skill Building Mentorship

Each Stateline Farm Beginnings® student will explore the wealth of knowledge, experience, and expertise available to them within the UM CRAFT network. Students select mentors who are best positioned to help them meet their growing season learning goal and inform the creation of their farm business plan. SFB® staff will help facilitate a successful mentorship match. Mentors are given a stipend for meeting with SFB® students during the growing session and an additional stipend for advising their mentor during the Farm Business Intensive, these stipends are included in the course fee. Mentorship specifics are decided between the mentor and mentee.

Upper Midwest CRAFT Field Days**

Each year 10 or more Upper Midwest CRAFT (Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training-Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin) farms invite the UM CRAFT network on to their farms to learn about a wide variety of farm topics. This is a great opportunity to connect with UM CRAFT farmers and learn from their amazing wealth of knowledge and experience. It is a perfect time to make progress on your learning goals or discover aspects of farming you never thought of before. Stateline Farm Beginnings® participants take part in field day workshops of their choice. UM CRAFT 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, and are included in the course fee.

For reference, here is a list of past Field Days:

- Spring Biodynamic Pick
- Livestock (Chickens & Sheep)
- Livestock (Cattle)
- Grazing & Regenerative Agriculture
- Using Hand Tools
- Soil Fertility & CSA Customization
- Post-Harvest & Winter Storage
- Hemp Production
- Urban Agriculture & Small-Scale Farming
- Fall Biodynamic Prep
- Extend Your Season with Alternative Income

*Session 201: Farms as Living Organisms***

Visit Angelic Organics Farm and tour one of the largest CSA operations in the nation. Explore the basic principles and practices of Biodynamics on Angelic Organics Farm. TBA

*Session 202: Soil Health and Farm Fertility***

At some point we will have to get our hands dirty! Learn about soil health and farm fertility from local experts. Find out the right way to test your farm's soil. Understand how your farm's soil impacts your farm business. TBA

*Session 203: Farm Production Math**

Ever wonder how to factor in seed germination rate to your seed starting plan? Or how many seeds to order in order to meet your production goals? What about how to figure out bed feet or row spacing? What about compost per yard or acre? Or, if your focus is livestock: How many acres of pasture are needed per cow calf pair? How many large bales of hay do I need to ensure I can cover my feed needs through winter? This session will cover it all. TBA

Course Schedule & Session Details

Farm Business Intensive
September to December 2021



Dive into budgeting, pricing strategies, completing and understanding financial statements, and developing a business plan. Learn how to build enterprise budgets. Understand how to evaluate profitability by comparing different enterprises you are considering on your farm. Practice using specific charts to plan everything from cover crop schedules to equipment pay off. 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. Each session helps you build and inform aspects of your farm's business plan.

Each session is held two days per week, online via Zoom, on **Thursdays 6:00pm-8:00pm & Saturdays 10:00 am-12:00 pm** (some sessions may be extended by 1 hour. Notice will be provided in advance). Office hours are **Wednesdays 6:00pm-8:00pm**. Session content, dates, and times are subject to change, based on farmer availability.

Session 210 Planning for Profit II

Learn how to plan tasks and activities to help you clarify if you have the time, space, and money for the desired enterprise or activity. Start organizing the details for your farm business plan. Refamiliarize yourself with the course objectives of Stateline Farm Beginnings® and the online learning platforms used during the program.

Thursday Class 10/07/2021
Saturday Class 10/09/2021

Session 211 Business Planning Part I: Enterprise Development*

Dive deep into creating & utilizing enterprise budgets to plan and manage your farm business's growth. Get a first hand glimpse into UM CRAFT farmer enterprise budgets. See how variable & fixed expenses influence scale. Create an enterprise budget tailored to your business.

Weds Office Hours 10/13/2021
Thursday Class 10/14/2021
Saturday Class 10/16/2021

Session 212 Buyers & Sellers: Product Distribution & Relationships*

Get a unique glimpse, through a panel discussion, into the vibrant buyer/seller relationships within the Stateline area. Learn about the buying practices and expectations of local wholesalers and from UM CRAFT farmers regarding their strategies to build relationships with restaurants, wholesalers, and other farmers. Explore product pricing & distribution and how to secure and expand your customer base. Discover your business most pressing threats and opportunities.

Weds Office Hours 10/20/2021
Thursday Class 10/21/2021
Saturday Class 10/23/2021

Session 213 Recordkeeping: Making Sound Financial Decisions*

Learn how to use three key financial recordkeeping tools to identify strengths and weaknesses in your farm business and how to leverage that information to make timely management decisions that increase profit and your quality of life. Meet a panel of seasoned farmers who will discuss how they use different recording keeping tools to analyse their business health on the fly and during their seasonal planning sessions. Begin to develop your post graduation goals and action plan.

Weds Office Hours 10/27/2021
Thursday Class 10/28/2021
Saturday Class 10/30/2021

Session 214 Recordkeeping: Working with Your Lender*

Thinking about a loan to buy land or expand your farm business? If you're not there yet, you will be at some point in your farm journey. Meet local leaders. Gain advice from experienced business & financial planning consultants on the recordkeeping basics for working with a financial lender. Practice what you have learned through hands-on activities in small groups.

Weds Office Hours 11/3/2021
Thursday Class 11/4/2021
Saturday Class 11/6/2021

Session 215 Business Planning Part II: Pulling it All Together*

Learn about risk management on your farm and the legal issues that will need to be addressed as you grow your farm business, employ farm workers, and interact with customers. Meet with local farmers to explore their farm business plans and ask questions about your own. Finalize your post graduation goals and action plan.

Weds Office Hours 11/10/2021
Thursday Class 11/11/2021
Saturday Class 11/13/2021

Session 216 Resource Week*

Meet with local farm educators and support organizations. Find out what resources are available to support your farm business after graduation. Put the final touches on your farm business plan.

Weds Office Hours 11/17/2021
Thursday Class 11/18/2021
Saturday Class 11/20/2021

Session 217 Final Presentations & Graduation**

Share your farm vision, goals and Stateline Farm Beginnings experience with family, friends, AOLC staff, and next year's students. The final presentation is a chance for you to synthesize the work you've done throughout the course thus far into a compelling farm story to share with your peers and potential customers. Turn in your Farm Business Plan and celebrate your Graduation!

Weds Office Hours 12/08/2021
Saturday Class 12/11/2021

Farm Beginnings® Collaborative



Angelic Organics Learning Center is a member of the Farm Beginnings® Collaborative. The Farm Beginnings Collaborative is a national alliance of independent regional groups of farmers and farmer-training support organizations working together to promote Farm Beginnings, a farmer training model that is farmer led, community based and rooted in sustainable agriculture.

Farm Beginnings is now offered to people in: Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Indiana, Ohio, Missouri, Kentucky, North Carolina, New York, Vermont, and Maine.

Farm Beginnings was started by the Land Stewardship Project in Minnesota, in collaboration with a network of experienced farmers. To this day farmers participate at all levels, as steering committee members, classroom presenters, on-farm presenters, and on-farm mentors. Farm Beginnings offers new and beginning farmers a means to establish strong relationships with local farmers, businesses, resources, and consumers within a community network that supports and strengthens the local food and farming system. Farm Beginnings programs support sustainable farming by promoting farming practices that are ecologically sound, economically viable, socially just, and achievable for new and beginning farmers.

For a listing of all of the Farm Beginnings collaborators, please visit <http://farmbeginningscollaborative.org/>

LOOKING TO JUMP-START A FARM BUSINESS? Farm Beginnings®

Farm Beginnings is an education and training program designed to help people who want to plan their farm enterprise.

- Learn from innovative farmers
- Attend high quality seminars
- Experience field days
- Engage in mentorships

For further information visit www.farmbeginningscollaborative.org to contact the organization nearest you.



extension.unl.edu



www.mofga.org



www.farmbeginnings.org



www.nebsusag.org



www.grownyc.org



www.oeffa.org



www.eatsouthernillinois.org



www.FARRMS.org



www.learn-grow-connect.org



Central Illinois
Farm Beginnings
www.central.illinoisfarmbeginnings.org



www.organicgrowersschool.org




www.dakotarural.org



www.hawthornevalleyfarm.org

Application Information

 a program led by Angelic Organics <i>Learning Center</i>			
Course Name	Farm Dreams Intensive Jan - Mar	Skill Building Practicum Mar - Oct	Farm Business Intensive Sep - Dec
Prerequisites	A farm dream	Farm Dreams Intensive	Skill Building Practicum
Session Description	Focus on goal-setting, writing a mission & vision statement, marketing strategies, planning for profit, creating a personalized learning plan, and developing a farm proposal.	Visit local sustainable farms during UM CRAFT Field Days. Participants are matched in a 1-to-1 mentorship with an experienced sustainable farmer in their field of interest.	Dive into budgeting, pricing strategies, completing and understanding financial statements, and developing a business plan or 5-year strategic plan.
Topic Highlights	Holistic Goal Setting Clarifying Personal Values Vision Statements Mission Statements Whole Under Management History of Land Ownership Land Access	Connect with experienced farmers UM CRAFT Field Days 1-to-1 mentorship Soil Health & Farm Viability Farm Production Math	Enterprise Budgets SWOT Analysis Pricing Products & Services Financial Statements Working with a Lender Marketing
Split Tuition*	\$1,200	\$1,200	
Paid-in-Full Tuition*	\$2,000		

*Tuition Includes: Online classroom, course files, mentorship, 1-year CRAFT membership, entry for up to 2 people as 1 business

Scholarships We encourage you to take the course in two sessions or arrange a payment plan as your first option towards financial support. If requesting funding from Angelic Organics Learning Center is necessary, we invite you to apply for a scholarship. We also have a limited number of specially designated scholarships for military veterans. Applications are due November 30, 2021.

Payment Plans We now offer the flexibility to take the course in two sessions. Start with the Farm Dreams Intensive, then take the Skill Building Practicum & Farm Business Intensive. We also allow you to divide your tuition into smaller payments, just pay in full prior to the first day of class.

Application Review begins October 20, 2020. Applications will be reviewed in the order received. We try to keep class sizes small to maintain strong connections between participants, facilitators, and guest speakers, therefore space is limited. If space allows, we will continue accepting applications through November 30, 2020. Once you submit the application form on our submission page, be sure to check your email for a confirmation and reserve a date/time for a phone interview.

To apply

1. Download the Stateline Farm Beginnings® [digital application](#).
2. Visit our [submission page](#), complete the brief form, and upload your course application (and [scholarship application](#), if applicable).
3. Pay the \$75 application fee. **We will review your application once we receive the fee.**

Refund Policy

The Stateline Farm Beginnings® **application fee is non-refundable**. If accepted, this fee will be applied toward your tuition balance. Stateline Farm Beginnings® course **tuition is non-refundable** after the end of the first session (Saturday, January 8, 2021). After the end first session, if you are unable to attend for any reason, you will receive up to a 50% tuition credit toward the next Stateline Farm Beginnings® course, prorated based on your progress in the course. If you are unable to attend the follow year course, we will send you documentation so your tuition fee can be recorded as a tax deductible contribution to the ongoing work of Angelic Organics Learning Center.

The full cost of the program is more than \$5,000 per participant. Through the generous support of our funding partners, we are able to offer this program to participants at a lower cost.

