



GROWING ORGANIC EXPERTISE IN IOWA

Tuesday, February 16, 2021

Via Zoom (focus on Kalona, Washington, Iowa and surrounding counties)

AGENDA

- 12:00-12:15 Welcome and Introductions**
Olga Reding, IOA Education and Outreach Coordinator
- 12:15-12:45 USDA Organic History and Background**
Olga Reding, IOA Education and Outreach Coordinator
- 12:45-1:15 Organic Regulations and Certification Overview**
Jamey Meyer, IDALS Organic Inspector
(organic regulations and production considerations for crop production including nutrient management, pest/weed management, rotations, buffers, land transition, and natural resources/biodiversity)
- 1:15-1:30 BREAK**
- 1:30-2:00 Organic Agronomics from Mercaris**
James McKellar, Mercaris Economist
- James McKellar** manages Mercaris' Organic & Non-GMO Market survey along with the relationships of its participating data partners. Since graduating from North Carolina, A&T as a Agriculture business major, James worked with Bunge North America as a grain merchandiser. Most recently James comes from Indigo Ag an Ag-Tech Startup where he held a variety of roles working to partner with producers, grain buyers and grain marketing advisors to help facilitate cash grain transactions on a digital marketplace. James passion for agriculture was sparked by his great uncle who farmed peanuts and cotton and his grandfather who raised hogs in eastern North Carolina.
- 2:00-3:00 Organic Producer Panel**
(producers describe their operation, why they farm organically, challenges, opportunities, and open Q&A)
- Kim Andersen, Brighton
 - Nelson Smith, Brighton

Why Organic? - presented by **Kim Andersen**, organic farmer, IOA Board Member. Kim is an organic farmer at Zihlman Family Farms and Blueberry Bottom located in Southeast Iowa, near Brighton, Iowa. Kim is a long-time educator currently teaching for Southern New Hampshire University. Kim and her husband, Steve, grow organic corn, soybeans, oats, hay, blueberries, chestnuts, hazelnuts, paw paw and persimmon.

Nelson Smith is the owner of Springtown Ranch in Brighton, IA. Nelson was raised on a farm and took over the management of his family's 1000 acre farm in 1996, and started certifying organic crops in 1997. The 4 crop, organic rotation includes soybeans, corn, oats and alfalfa, with buckwheat and rye occasionally injected in the rotation. Nelson utilizes the EQUIP program practice of cover crops, rye aerially applied to standing corn, rye drilled and broadcast in fall. He has 102 acres of Skunk River bottom land that are in the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) with enhancements.

3:00

Adjourn