



## Leaders of the Land: State Sustainability Series Media Kit



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### In this media kit you will find:

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### Leaders of the Land Purpose Statement

The purpose of the State Sustainability Series is to offer farmers and agriculturists different perspectives regarding environmental stewardship across Wisconsin. These events will bring farmers of all types together to explore how diverse sectors of agriculture achieve similar goals regarding water quality, soil health, waste management, carbon conversations and air quality. Each event will feature a unique learning opportunity, applicable across farms and allow networking across sectors of agriculture and areas of the state.

### Press release

For full press release, please visit the [Leaders of the Land webpage](#).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 29, 2021

### **Wisconsin Farm Bureau Launches Statewide Sustainability Series**

MADISON – Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation is excited to invite farmers and agriculturists to attend “Leaders of the Land: A State Sustainability Series”. This series of nine tours will take place across the state in each of the Farm Bureau districts, highlighting diverse commodities and sustainability practices.

“Farm Bureau is a unique organization because we bring together many different farm types, sizes and commodities,” said WFBF President Kevin Krentz. “This new series is meant to bring farmers and agriculturalists together to talk about what sustainability means on different farms and businesses. Everyone has a sustainability story to share, and we have more in common across the state when it comes to stewardship practices than you might think.”

Attendees will have an opportunity to network and socialize while experiencing stewardship practices across the state. These events will explore how diverse industries achieve similar goals regarding water quality, soil health, waste

management, carbon conversations and air quality. Each event will feature a unique learning opportunity, applicable across industries. Members will have a chance to socialize and learn from each other.

“We encourage members to attend as many tours as possible,” added Krentz “The more tours you attend, the more value you receive from the program. We are very excited to bring our members together around this topic to learn and grow from each other.”

The following is the list of events in the series:

- Heartland Farms, Hancock – 8/20/2021, 12:30 PM
- Gwenyn Hill Organic Farm and Gardens, Waukesha – 8/30/2021, 12:30 PM
- From the Earth Farm and Education Garden, Bowler – 8/31/2021, 12:30 PM
- High Gem Holsteins & Normandes, Neosho – 9/2/2021, 12:30 PM
- Wiese Brothers Farm, Greenleaf – 9/7/2021, 9:30 AM
- Cowsmo Inc., Cochrane – 9/10/2021, 9:30 AM
- Lake Family Farms, Boyceville – 9/13/2021, 12:30 PM
- Roth Feeder Pigs, Wauzeka – 9/21/2021, 12:30 PM
- Gaynor Cranberry Company, Wisconsin Rapids – 9/23/2021, 9:30 AM

Pre-registration is preferred. Cost is \$20 for Farm Bureau members and \$80 for non-members. The cost for non-members includes a one-year Farm Bureau membership. Visit <https://bit.ly/WFBFtours> to register.

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation is the state’s largest general farm organization representing farms of all sizes, commodities, and management styles.

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## Images

For all images including logos and social media graphics, shareables and videos, please visit the [Leaders of the Land webpage](#) to download the zip files.

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## Upcoming tour dates

- **August 20<sup>th</sup>, 12:30-3:30p.m.** Heartland Farms, Hancock
- **August 30<sup>th</sup>, 12:30-3:30p.m.** Gwenyn Hill Organic Farm and Gardens, Waukesha
- **August 31<sup>st</sup>, 12:30-3:30p.m.** From the Earth Farm and Education Garden, Bowler
- **September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 12:30-3:30p.m.** High-Gem Holsteins and Normandes, Neosho
- **September 7<sup>th</sup>, 9:30a.m.-12:30p.m.** Wiese Brothers Farm, Greenleaf
- **September 10<sup>th</sup>, 9:30a.m.-12:30p.m.** Cowsmo Compost, Cochrane
- **September 13<sup>th</sup>, 12:30-3:30p.m.** Lake Family Farms, Boyceville
- **September 21<sup>st</sup>, 12:30-3:30p.m.** Roth Feeder Pigs, Wauzeka
- **September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 9:30a.m.-12:30p.m.** Gaynor Cranberry Company, Wisconsin Rapids

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## Farm and speaker biographies

### Heartland Farms

Heartland Farms is a fifth-generation family business that grows potatoes, sweet corn, canning peas and green beans on about 24,000 irrigated acres spread across five counties in central Wisconsin. The farm began with 80 acres in 1873, and

those original acres are still farmed today. As one of the nation's premier suppliers of chipping potatoes, Heartland Farms has storage facilities with the capacity for more than a one-half billion pounds of potatoes.

Heartland Farms is home to more than 100 center pivot irrigation systems. Proper irrigation is vital for maintaining yield and quality of a crop highly sensitive to stress from Mother Nature. They are committed to energy efficiency and overall sustainability in all areas of the farm.

### **Gwenyn Hill Organic Farm and Gardens**

Gwenyn Hill is a 450-acre sustainable, integrated, organic farm. "Gwenyn" means 'honeybee' and serves as a nod to the farm's Welsh heritage and the importance of the primary pollinators that bring new life to the gardens, fields, and orchards every year. They grow and sell certified organic vegetables, pastured eggs, and grass-fed beef and veal among other unique Wisconsin products. Gwenyn Hill is home to a certified organic dairy herd, raised on pasture. Their milk is purchased by Westby Creamery and made into organic cheeses. The beef herd and sheep flock are exclusively grazed on pasture. Gwenyn Hill also offers a CSA program to provide locally grown food in their community. The Gwenyn Hill team is passionate about being stewards of the land. Linda Halley, General Manager of Gwenyn Hill, has 25 years of experience and is recognized as a leader in organic farming.

The farm is an interconnected ecological web, committed to building soil health, replanting hedgerows, and increasing the number of pollinators that call it home. Gwenyn Hill utilizes annual cover crops for livestock grazing and forage, as well as unseeding legumes into growing crops. It's underground springs, deep woods, and bucolic hilltop views are being protected and nurtured for future generations. At Gwenyn Hill, their eyes are on tomorrow's children, the health of the land they will one day inherit, and the nutritional value, flavor and diversity of the food that will nourish us all.

### **From the Earth Farm and Education Garden**

The Stockbridge-Munsee tribe is one of 11 tribes in Wisconsin. There are close to 1,500 members, one-third of which live on the 24,000-acre reservation in Shawano County. Shawano County Farm Bureau member Kellie Zahn serves as the agricultural agent for the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. She began the community's farm, "Keek-oche" in Mohican, or "From the Earth" in English. The six-acre farm is comprised of two acres of garden and is home to 14 types of produce, a high tunnel, three hydroponic machines, and a beehive. The garden's Community Supported Agriculture program runs for 15 weeks and has 55 subscribers.

Kellie provides resources to the community to learn about food and farming. Her goal is to grow the farm into what will best serve the community and to work toward food security. She has hosted classes on seed starting, composting, plants and food preservation. Throughout the growing season, staff provide classes on gardening techniques, harvesting and storage of food items. There are also classes that provide lessons on cooking healthy with produce that has been harvested from the garden. Produce from the garden is distributed in the community through the Mohican Farmers Market, Share the Bounty Tables, and through the Elderly Center.

### **High-Gem Holsteins and Normandes**

High-Gem Holsteins & Normandes is located outside of Neosho in Southeastern Dodge County. It is comprised of Chris and Brenda Conley along with their daughters Mckayla (14) and Paige (11). They farm on Chris's grandparent's farm, Rita and the late Paul Sigrist. The farm was bought by Chris's great grandparent's, Henry and Lena Sigrist, in 1927 when they immigrated here from Switzerland. The rolling hills found on the farm reminded them of Switzerland, so they decided to settle there.

Rita still owns the farm, but Chris and Brenda are the main managers of the operation for the past 7 years. They milk 52 registered Holsteins and registered Normande cattle with an additional 50 head of youngstock.

The farm consists of 174 acres, 120 being crops and the additional pastures and woodlands.

The cows are pastured from about May until November. They started converting their farm from full tillage to no-tilling about 4 years ago and also added cover crops. They are now 100% no-till and are planting all green into their cover crops. They have also started grazing the cover crops this spring and they will likely be continuing to do this as well because it worked very well for them. They are in the process of converting their herd to 50/50 Holsteins and Normandes. Their goal

is when they are ready to retire, they can easily convert their animals to a more beef Normande and then continue to raise cash crops and pasture Normande beef. The Conley's feel that the conservation practices they are using on their farm not only improve their soil now but will help the future generations that farm there as well.

### **Wiese Brothers Farm**

Wiese Brothers Farm in Greenleaf is home to 5,300 milking cows and 2,500 head of youngstock. The dairy was started in 1995 with 1,200 cows. They farm 6,200 acres and apply manure to an additional 2,500 acres in the area. Wiese Brothers also own and operate a feed mill and trucking company. Dan Wiese is a third-generation partner in Wiese Brothers Trucking. Dan partners in the farm alongside his uncles and cousins. Dan and his wife, Angela, have three daughters, Madison, Alivia, and Elsie.

Wiese Brothers Farm is located less than 20 miles south of Green Bay. They are uniquely stationed to transport, feed, and sell various feed byproducts from production facilities in the greater Fox Valley region. The farm's nutritionist balances these cost saving commodities in the ration for their dairy cows.

Wiese's are active members of the surrounding community and are responsible stewards of the land they manage. They use precision technology in their equipment to lower their impact and operate efficiently.

### **Cowsmo Compost**

Cowsmo Inc. is a compost business associated with Rosenholm Dairy in Waumandee in Buffalo County. John Rosenow is the fifth generation on his family's 600-cow dairy farm. John and his wife, Nettie, manage the dairy while selling and distributing organic compost and potting soils in 20 states and 4 foreign countries. Demand for their compost grew dramatically during the pandemic. An interest in conserving natural resources and using them wisely drove them to compost their cow manure. By composting the separated cow manure solids and transforming them into a quality byproduct that has value for their customers, the Rosenows are not wasting a valuable resource or harming the natural resources around them.

The Rosenows make a conscious effort to reduce their environmental impact and operate sustainably. Their cows are bedded with sawdust, a byproduct of a furniture manufacturer located within twenty minutes of the farm. Using cow manure for fertilizer on their farm and transforming manure into compost has reduced their reliance on commercial fertilizers. They also utilize a barn flushing system, which not only helps to achieve proper moisture consistency for composting, but also reduces fossil fuel consumption because they do not have to use machinery to clean out the barns for most of the year. Rosenholm Dairy has been enrolled in the NRCS Conservation Stewardship program for 5 years. They are 100% no-till and have improved streambank protection with buffer strips. Transforming manure into compost offers a creative solution for manure management and addresses the nutrient needs of garden enthusiasts across the Midwest.

### **Lake Family Farms**

Lake Family Farm is a fifth-generation farm located in Boyceville in Dunn County. The farm transitioned from dairy to cash grain in 1999. Jeff and Kelley Lake, along with their children April and Jake, grow 1,500 acres of corn, soybeans, and alfalfa. They also raise a small beef herd. The Lake family has embraced innovative management and conservation practices and are continually promoting and protecting soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat, all while strengthening the farm's bottom line. Jeff Lake was recognized for his conservation efforts in 2019 as a recipient of the prestigious Aldo Leopold Conservation Award.

The Lakes have been planting cover crops at a full scale for ten years. They have greatly improved the tilth of their soil by utilizing no-till practices. Precision technology has aided in cutting seed and fertilizer costs. Jeff worked with area conservation agencies to install buffer strips around his fields. These buffers prevent water from leaving the field and running into streams. They also provide wildlife habitat and enhance water quality in the area. Since implementing buffer strips, the Lakes have seen an increase in crop production. They have found that deer, turkeys, racoons, and other wildlife prefer the habitat of the buffer strips over the nearby corn fields. Large rain events don't scare the Lake family, they have proactively prepared their soil and land through utilizing cover crops, no-till, and buffer strips.

### **Roth Feeder Pigs**

Roth Feeder Pigs is a fifth-generation pig farm in Wauzeka. Howard “AV” Roth manages a 3,000 head farrow-to-wean swine operation. The operation includes 1,200 acres of corn, oats, and alfalfa, along with a black angus herd. AV and his wife Christine love to involve their kids in the farm and always stress the importance of taking care of their animals. AV serves as the president for the National Pork Producers Council.

Sustainability has been a pillar of the farm since AV’s great-great grandfather began farming the land. The Roth family believes in preserving the land and farm for the next generation.

### **Gaynor Cranberry Company**

Gaynor Cranberry Company is proudly owned by the Dempze family. They have been growing cranberries in Wood County for over 140 years. Heidi Slinkman and her sister Jennifer Dempze are the fourth generation on the marsh in the Cranmoor township.

Heidi believes a cranberry bed is one of the most beautiful places in the world. The marsh supports an incredible amount of bird life, from bald and golden eagles, to whooping and sandhill cranes, owls, loons, and songbirds. They take pride in keeping their farms healthy because they are directly tied to the environment.

Gaynor Cranberry Company supplies cranberries for Ocean Spray. One hundred percent of their 200-acre crop is verified sustainable.

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## TAKEAWAYS

### **SUSTAINABILITY TAKEAWAYS**

- Farmers are working hard towards progress today to meet the needs of tomorrow. The fundamental idea surrounding sustainability and conservation is to leave the land, water, and soil better for the next generation.
- Wisconsin farmers share the goal of being safe and sustainable while keeping their farms productive.

### **DAIRY TAKEAWAYS**

- Wisconsin dairy farmers are committed to long-term environmental stewardship, both on their farm and in their communities.
- Information provided by Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin. Find more information on dairy and sustainability here: <https://wisconsinmilk.org/Our-Farms/Sustainability>

### **BEEF TAKEAWAYS**

- The United States produces the most sustainable beef in the world. Beef producers are committed to producing high quality beef while continually innovating to become even more sustainable.
- Information provided by the Wisconsin Beef Council. Find more information on beef and sustainability here: <https://www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com/raising-beef/beef-sustainability>

### **CORN & SOYBEANS TAKEAWAYS**

- Corn growers are committed to increasing land efficiency, decreasing soil erosion, increasing water and energy use efficiency, and reducing GHG emissions
- Information provided by the Wisconsin Corn Growers Association. Find more information on corn and sustainability here: <https://ncga.com/key-issues/current-priorities/sustainability>

### **PORK TAKEAWAYS**

- As food needs rise, pig farmers are working to reduce their environmental impact and advance animal agriculture’s environmental and conservation efforts, while producing more food.
- Information provided by Pork Check-Off. Find more information on pigs and sustainability here: <https://www.porkcares.org/our-practices/environmental-stewardship/>

## **POTATO AND VEGETABLE TAKEAWAYS**

- Potato and vegetable growers do more than provide produce. They provide clean ground water, biological diversity, carbon accumulation, and healthy soil.
- Information provided by the Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Grower Association. Find more information about produce and sustainability here: <https://wisconsinpotatoes.com/growing/sustainable-practices/>

## **CRANBERRY TAKEAWAYS**

- The cranberry industry is a strong part of Wisconsin's heritage and economy. Cranberry growers realize that to preserve that legacy for generations to come, they must foster sustainable farming.
- Information provided by the Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association. Find more information about cranberries and sustainability here: <http://www.wiscran.org/sustainability/>


**Social media channels**

	<b>Webpage</b>	<b>Facebook</b>	<b>Instagram</b>	<b>LinkedIn</b>
<b>Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation</b>	<a href="https://wfbf.com/">https://wfbf.com/</a>	@WIFarmBureau	@wifarmbureau	<a href="#">Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation</a>
<b>Heartland Farms</b>	<a href="https://www.heartland.farm/">https://www.heartland.farm/</a>	@HeartlandFarmsWI		<a href="#">Heartland Farms, Inc.</a>
<b>Gwenyn Hill Organic Farm and Gardens</b>	<a href="https://gwenynhillfarm.com/">https://gwenynhillfarm.com/</a>	@gwenynhill		
<b>From the Earth Farm and Education Garden</b>	<a href="https://rainerscott.wixsite.com/mo-licanagriculture?fbclid=IwAR3XSKFIMRS1AtnREbZyCBK6gJplgiKfpse9SPdf-0O7oEJXB2uVAIeuje8">https://rainerscott.wixsite.com/mo-licanagriculture?fbclid=IwAR3XSKFIMRS1AtnREbZyCBK6gJplgiKfpse9SPdf-0O7oEJXB2uVAIeuje8</a>	@FromtheEarthFarmSMC		
<b>High-Gem Holsteins and Normandes</b>		@HighGemHolsteinsandNormandes		
<b>Wiese Brothers Farm</b>		@WieseBrothersFarmsWI		<a href="#">Wiese Brothers</a>
<b>Cowsmo Compost</b>	<a href="https://www.cowsmocompost.com/">https://www.cowsmocompost.com/</a>	@cowsmobiochar1	@cowsmocompost	<a href="#">Cowsmo Compost</a>
<b>Lake Family Farms</b>				
<b>Roth Feeder Pigs</b>		<a href="#">Roth Feeder Pig Inc.</a>		
<b>Gaynor Cranberry Company</b>		@GaynorCranberry		

