



- Stateline Farm Beginnings student  
Tracey Hall  
Grace Note Farm

*I enjoyed the farmers' presentations and have come away with a firmer understanding that my farm will be unique and that there are many paths that lead to success. Each of the speakers seemed to leave me with an important thought. I now realize that it is important to work out your plan on paper and there is a steep learning curve in farming and no getting around it. But, if there is a strong will to create a farm, Stateline Farm Beginnings™ can help you write a plan and begin to take the first steps toward creating it.*

Angelic Organics Learning Center  
1547 Rockton Road  
Caledonia, IL 61011



**Stateline Farm Beginnings®**  
A Farmer-led Mentorship/Educational Program  
Passing Innovative Skills on to the Land's Next Generation

The Stateline Farm Beginnings program is a project of the Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training (CRAFT) in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin, offered through Angelic Organics Learning Center, in partnership with Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, The Land Connection, Liberty Prairie Foundation, Illinois Department of Agriculture, Illinois DCEO, Farm Aid, North Central Risk Management Education Center, The Land Stewardship Project, University of Illinois Agroecology Program, University Extension, Churches' Center for Land and People, Patagonia, North Pond, Willy St. Coop, Goodness Greeness

**Why Start Farming** at a time of staggering start-up costs, plummeting commodity prices, declining farm numbers and increasing farm consolidation? Well, even in this difficult time, there are farmers who are making a go of it. These farms are economically and environmentally viable, and provide their families with a good quality of life.

**How Can Beginners Do It?** One way is by learning how to use low cost methods and treat farming as a skill that requires top-notch management and attention to the needs of the land and its people. Another way is setting goals and choosing tools and methods of production based on those goals, rather than vice-versa. This combination provides an important advantage for farmers' success.

**Stateline Farm Beginnings® is a project of the Collaborative Regional Alliance For Farmer Training (CRAFT)**, a coalition of organic, Biodynamic, and other sustainable farmers in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin. The educational and training program is designed to help people who want to evaluate and plan their farm enterprise. Farm Beginnings participants learn directly from a variety of successful, innovative farmers; attend practical high quality seminars, field day workshops and exchanges; engage in internship, employment, or mentorship with an experienced farmer.

**Stateline Farm Beginnings** partners with Prairie Crossing, Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, and Churches' Center for Land and People, to link graduates to land, capital, and markets.

### **Farm Beginnings® participants will have the opportunity to:**

1. Tap the knowledge of some of the most innovative and skilled farmers operating in the Midwest.
2. Develop lifelong friendships and networks with other beginning farmers.
3. Learn critical farm management skills such as creative financing and innovative market strategies.
4. Engage in an internship, employment, or mentorship with an experienced farmer.
5. See sustainable farming practices being used on real farms under a variety of conditions.
6. Learn to view your farm as an interconnected system and learn how goals determine farming practices.
7. Craft a tailor-made farming/business plan.

#### **Program specifics:**

**Who:** Prospective farmers, beginners with experience on their own farm, experienced farmers wishing to make a "new beginning" with sustainable farming methods.

**When:** \*Bi-monthly seminars October thru March  
\*Internships, employment, mentorships, field day workshops, April thru October

**Where:** \*Bi-monthly seminars will be held in the Illinois -Wisconsin Stateline area and central Illinois  
\*Fee includes seminar materials; speakers; field day workshop fees, seminar refreshments; 1 yr. Prospective farmer membership in CRAFT

#### **For more info or to sign up:**

Angelic Organics Learning Center  
1547 Rockton Road, Caledonia, IL 61011  
**CALL:** 815-389-8455 or  
Email: CRAFT@CSALearningCenter.org

for central Illinois Farm Beginnings classes  
contact: Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant  
217-968-5512  
Email: cvnghgrn@uiuc.edu

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