

## NEWS RELEASE

August 7, 2018

Photos available – see download link & sample captions at end of release

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### **Upcoming Farm Field Day show farmers how to serve food on their farms: Aug. 13 (Oronoco, MN)**

Oronoco, MN – An innovative field day coming up on August 13 at Squash Blossom Farm in Oronoco, Minnesota, will help farmers interested in hosting pizza farms, farm dinners and other culinary events on their farm. Riding a growing wave of public enthusiasm for agritourism, these events offer an attractive way for farmers to diversify their income and forge a closer connection with their customers. However, the logistics of starting up and licensing such an operation can be challenging and few resources exist to support farmers.

The field days are part of Come & Get It!, a project led by the Minnesota-based nonprofit, Renewing the Countryside, to provide low-cost training and resources to support farmers in launching farm-based food businesses in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Each day will include a Q&A session, farm and food operation tour, as well as informational sessions on business start-ups issues.

“The reality is that state regulations regarding food service, particularly when you take something to a farm setting, can get complicated and confusing quickly,” said Jan Joannides, the Executive Director at Renewing the Countryside, a non-profit offering various educational resources for farmers and rural entrepreneurs. “The key is to thoroughly research and understand your options and ask questions and determine what may be best for your farm business before investing money. This program uniquely supports such an approach.”

The Minnesota field day (Aug. 13) will be held at Squash Blossom Farm in Oronoco, Minnesota, a vegetable farm that offers Sunday afternoon pizza from May through October.

“We are looking forward to host the Come & Get It workshop at our farm in August and share our experiences starting pizza nights here,” explained Susan Waughtal, co-owner of Squash Blossom Farm with her husband, Roger Nelson. “We launched our farm in our 50’s without any farming experience and really appreciated the many resources and mentors that helped us when we started and we are delighted to now complete the circle, helping support other farmers interested in bringing people to eat on their farms.”

Attendees will also receive a printed, detailed on-farm food service start-up manual with specific information on Wisconsin and Minnesota regulations. This project is funded by the North

central Sustainable Agriculture Research Education (SARE) and involves seven farm partners in Minnesota and Wisconsin including Together Farms (Mondovi, WI), Suncrest Gardens Farm (Cochrane, WI), Borner Farm Project (Prescott, WI), Dream Acres Farm (Spring Valley, MN) and Moonstone Farm (Montevideo, MN). An additional, separate, component of this project is to conduct a research analysis of attendees coming to these types of events to better help farmers in their marketing and understand questions such as what type of target market is coming and how far are they traveling. This data will be available via Renewing the Countryside in the fall of 2018.

The Come & Get It Field Days runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and include lunch, full tour and printed materials. Cost is \$35 and \$15 for an additional person from the same business. Space is limited and pre-registration required. To register, see [renewingthecountryside.org/on\\_farm\\_food\\_service](http://renewingthecountryside.org/on_farm_food_service). Or contact Eli Goodwell at [eli@rtcinfo.org](mailto:eli@rtcinfo.org) or 612-208-8354.

Renewing the Countryside is a nonprofit organization that works to strengthen rural areas by championing and supporting rural communities, farmers, artists, entrepreneurs, educators, activists and other people who are renewing the countryside through sustainable and innovative initiatives, businesses, and projects. For more information, see [renewingthecountryside.org](http://renewingthecountryside.org).

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Note to Editors: Please list this event in your Community Calendar.

August 13 - Oronoco, MN (Squash Blossom Farm)

Cost is \$35 and \$15 for an additional person from the same business. Includes lunch, full tour and printed materials. Workshop runs 10 am - 2pm and pre-registration is required. See [http://www.renewingthecountryside.org/on\\_farm\\_food\\_service](http://www.renewingthecountryside.org/on_farm_food_service) for registration information.

Photos & sample captions:

Pizza close up:

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1HUuk4NY\\_4R6DLiaPuE8stRQcl41caI6](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1HUuk4NY_4R6DLiaPuE8stRQcl41caI6)

Sample caption:

“Farmers will be offering advice on starting pizza farms and other ways to serve food on the farm during a Field Day workshop on August 13 at Squash Blossom Farm (Oronoco, MN).

Squash Blossom:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1iE7biJTJpXpbCnhWuZdVndmwrQjzVmZn>

Sample caption:

“Susan Waughtal of Squash Blossom Farm in Oronoco, Minnesota will be sharing her experience, advice and insight with farmers looking to serve food on their farms during a Field Day on her farm on August 13, 2018.”