

Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture

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NEWS RELEASE

Release date: March 11, 2016

Panel of Iowa farmers to discuss farming for the future April 5

AMES, Iowa — “How can we farm for the long-term?” A panel of three Iowa farmers will offer their perspectives on this question at the Shivvers Memorial Lecture on Tuesday, April 5, at 7 p.m. in the Iowa State University Memorial Union Sun Room, Ames.

The Shivvers Memorial Lecture has brought distinguished speakers to campus since 1969 to discuss the sustainability of agriculture and the protection of natural resources. The annual lecture this year departs from tradition to host the panel.

Panelists Nathan Anderson, Mike DeCook, and Laura Krouse are all Iowa farmers and each run different operations, but they all are connected through concern for the future of their land. They each work to keep their farms productive for them and for those who will make a living from it in the future. Leopold Center Director Mark Rasmussen will serve as moderator.

A 2010 graduate of ISU, Nathan Anderson and his wife, Sarah, have an integrated crop and livestock farm in Cherokee County. Nathan is an advocate for natural resources, serving as a Cherokee County Soil and Water Conservation District commissioner and was recently elected to the Board of Directors for Practical Farmers of Iowa.

Mike DeCook operates a ranch near Lovilla in southern Iowa, where he custom grazes cattle and raises grass-fed bison. He is committed to restoring biodiversity of native species and donated 200 acres of land to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation to be permanently protected by a conservation easement.

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Laura Krouse is the owner of Abbe Hills Farm near Mt. Vernon. In addition to operating a 200-member CSA and selling vegetables and eggs locally, she markets Abbe Hill Open Pollinated Seed Corn, an heirloom yellow dent corn grown on the farm since 1903. Krouse taught biology at Cornell College and is a longtime commissioner for the Linn County Soil and Water Conservation District.

The annual lecture series is sponsored by the Leopold Center, the ISU Chapter of Gamma Sigma Delta Honorary Society for Agriculture, and the ISU Committee on Lectures (funded by Student Government).

The Shivvers Lecture is named in honor of L.C. (John) Shivvers. He was born in 1894 near Knoxville, Iowa, and became a pioneer of sustainable agriculture. John was elected to the Iowa Senate in 1962, but passed away that December, before he could take office. In a special election, his wife, Vera, took his place for the next two years, becoming the third woman to serve in the Iowa Senate. In 1969 she coordinated with ISU to establish the Shivvers Lecture Series as a lasting memorial to her husband. The Shivvers family continues to farm in Iowa and oversee the lecture series.

The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture was established in 1987 through the Iowa Groundwater Protection Act. It is a research and education center at Iowa State University created to identify and reduce negative farming impacts and to develop new ways to farm profitably while conserving natural resources. The Center's competitive grants program awards funds to researchers and investigators across Iowa, extending more than 500 competitive grants since 1988. For more information about the Leopold Center, visit the website: www.leopold.iastate.edu.