

On the road again...

with University of Illinois Extension

August 15, 2009 – Saturday
Mackinaw Valley Elk Farm
Blue Schoolhouse Farm
Congerville

Nestled within the rolling hills of the Mackinaw River Valley in Woodford County, are two successful small farms. The Mackinaw Valley Elk Farm and the Blue Schoolhouse Farm will be toured on Saturday, August 15 as part of the 2009 Sustainable Agriculture Tour sponsored by University of Illinois Extension.

Beginning at 10:00 a.m., visitors will meet at the Mackinaw Valley Elk Farm owned by Gary and Judy Robenstein. The Rubenstein's began their venture in 1994 with 10 head. They currently raise about 30 head on 35 fenced acres. The Rubenstein's will discuss the history of their farm, raising elk, and the current market for elk meat and antlers. A hay rack ride tour of the elk pastures will be included.

A lunch will be served at the Mackinaw Valley Elk Farm featuring grilled elk patties and brats, Blue Schoolhouse Farm vegetables, and a dessert selection.

Following lunch, visitors will travel to the nearby Blue Schoolhouse Farm. Bill and Mercy Davison own and operate the 16-acre chemical-free farm. They grow a wide diversity of crops such as heirloom tomatoes, peppers, beets, cucumbers, melons, sweet corn, carrots, potatoes, and more unusual varieties like arugula, Japanese turnips, and Asian greens. The tour will include a discussion of a variety of topics pertaining to chemical-free farming and a tour of one of his fields.

DIRECTIONS TO MACKINAW VALLEY ELK FARM (Directions to Blue Schoolhouse Farm will be distributed the day of the event).

From BLOOMINGTON: Exit I-74 West at Carlock. Travel into Carlock to the stop sign. Turn left onto US-150. Travel west about 5.5 miles on US-150 to eastern edge of Congerville. Turn north onto County Road 1775 at gas station. Travel north about 2.8 miles. Entrance will be the second driveway to the right after passing Wood Tree Farm (at deer crossing sign).

FROM PEORIA: Exit I-74 East at Goodfield. Travel north to four-way stop and turn right onto US-150. Travel 4.3 miles to eastern edge of Congerville. Turn left at gas station onto County Road 1775. Travel north about 2.9 miles. Entrance will be the second driveway to the right after passing Wood Tree Farm (at deer crossing sign).

A fee of \$20 per person will be charged for each tour, which includes lunch. Registration at least one week in advance is required. Visit www.extension.uiuc.edu/smallfarm/ to register and for more details about each of the tours, including a map and agenda. To register by phone, contact Donna Cray at 217-241-4644. For more information, contact Deborah Cavanaugh-Grant, 217-968-5512; cvnghgrn@illinois.edu.



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University of Illinois - U.S. Department of Agriculture - Local Extension Councils Cooperating. University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this program, please contact Donna Cray at 217-241-4644.

The tour is sponsored by the University of Illinois Extension Small Farm Program, University of Illinois Extension Woodford County Unit Office, North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Professional Development Program, Agriculture and Tourism Partners of Illinois (ATPI), Agroecology/Sustainable Agriculture Program (ASAP) at the University of Illinois, and Peoria Chapter of the Initiative for the Development for Entrepreneurs in Agriculture (IDEA).