

Women, Land & Legacy



Fall 2020 Meetings with WLL Local Teams

For several months this fall, NRCS Outreach Coordinator and Women Land and Legacy (WLL) Coordinator Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen met with the leads for each WLL Local Team. Each meeting provided the opportunity to get to know each other while also allowing Tanya to understand what each county has done in the past and plans for the future. Likewise, it was a great opportunity for local teams to share successes, concerns and needs.

It is no secret that the pandemic has changed almost all plans for 2020. Not unique to WLL, plans seemed to be on hold from the end of March through much of the fall. Tanya was inspired to hear the majority of the WLL teams share that they are ready to begin planning events again, knowing they will be virtual for the foreseeable future. Because of this, every team requested training to enable them to develop and conduct virtual events. Training has now begun with tips shared through the weekly WLL emails, leading up to a Zoom webinar training entitled **“WLL Virtual Events: How to be Successful” coming in early 2021**. It will be exciting to see the WLL events that are available as a result of the training!

The foundation of WLL is to meet with women, have a conversation and LISTEN, then take action based on the input provided.



Tanya is following that foundation and has heard that local teams would like to be provided with ideas and input from her and the WLL

State Team on such things as topics for Learning Sessions, potential presenters, and steps to take for successful events. That information is currently being shared based on past experience and successful virtual events this fall and will continue to be a priority to share with local teams as they jump back into planning events for the women in their counties. Local teams are also still encouraged to follow the framework of WLL and continue to ask women in the counties what they want to learn more about.

WLL local teams have also asked for training on use of social media to effectively communicate and gain increased participation. The pandemic has placed even more emphasis on the importance of social media. A



Zoom webinar will be planned to address that need as well. Some teams have requested guidance on such things as WLL financial management (donations),

reigniting teams that have been involved with WLL for many years, and development of a standard reporting tool. Tanya and the state team appreciate the vast amount of input and look forward to developing information and tools to address the requests shared.

The value of WLL was also shared by local teams, which is really invigorating. **Some of the values shared include:**

- **“Provides opportunity to connect with women and be in a positive environment”**
- **“Builds confidence for new landowners”**
- **“Helps women know their local agencies, increasing confidence to seek assistance”**
- **“Connects women to serve as resources to each other”**
- **“Gives women the knowledge they want in a different atmosphere of all women”**

WLL Learning Sessions Renewed

Several WLL counties held successful virtual Learning Sessions this fall. These WLL Local Teams were innovators as they were the first to plan and conduct virtual sessions! They learned from the experience and other teams can learn from them.

Prior to the pandemic, the Cedar/Muscatine/Scott WLL team held monthly late lunch events at a local restaurant, which included time for networking and learning from presenters on pertinent topics. The team held a similar virtual event on November 6 entitled, **“Grow and Share: Update on Programs and Resources”**. The event included presenters from Farm Service Agency, Rural Development, NRCS, Trees Forever, Extension, and Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. The event was enjoyed by six participants. The team is reworking their virtual presentation and will continue the monthly format soon.

The SW Iowa WLL team which includes Fremont, Mills, Montgomery, Page and Pottawattamie counties conducted a session on November 12 entitled **“Honeybee Education Workshop”**. The event highlighted Bountiful Blossoms Bee Company, LLC and included an education on honeybees, the population decrease and what can be done to aid the bee population. The event also included a virtual tour of the farm and shop. Sixteen women attended the evening event.

On December 9 and 10, the Buchanan WLL team conducted the **Connecting Women in Ag Virtual Seminar**. The event took place from 12-1pm both days

and included two presenters each day. Thirty-six attendees enjoyed learning about Mary Faber’s experience as she began her Illinois flower farm business in 2019. Participants also heard about New Day Dairy near Clarksville, IA and how Lynn Bolen has added a guest barn experience to the dairy farm. On December 10, attendees heard from Derrick Perkins with One Root and how his passion led to a local food business venture. And the event wrapped up with Julie Kenney, Iowa’s Deputy Secretary of Agriculture. Julie spoke about the COVID-19 Agricultural Response. Stay tuned for more WLL virtual events coming in 2021!!!



Expansion Plans for WLL

Even in the midst of a global pandemic, there are discussions of WLL expansion! Several counties are very interested in beginning WLL efforts, with hopes of Listening Sessions in 2021. The concern is that most people would agree Listening Sessions will be most effective in person. There is hope, the first COVID vaccinations in Iowa took place today!

Tanya Meyer-Dideriksen has been meeting with partner organizations and sharing about WLL. There are several partners across the state interested in assisting in expansion efforts by communicating with women in non-WLL counties and spreading the word about how helpful WLL has been for thousands of farm women.

Some partners had never heard of WLL and others shared that they were aware of WLL but didn’t know how it worked. It’s so important to share the story and successes of WLL with as many people and organizations that we can, so many want to be a part of it! One partner is so excited to develop articles about women that have been involved in WLL! The articles

will share how the women have made decisions based on their WLL experience and/or made real changes on their land. As this information is shared, the expansion to more counties in Iowa will become even more possible!

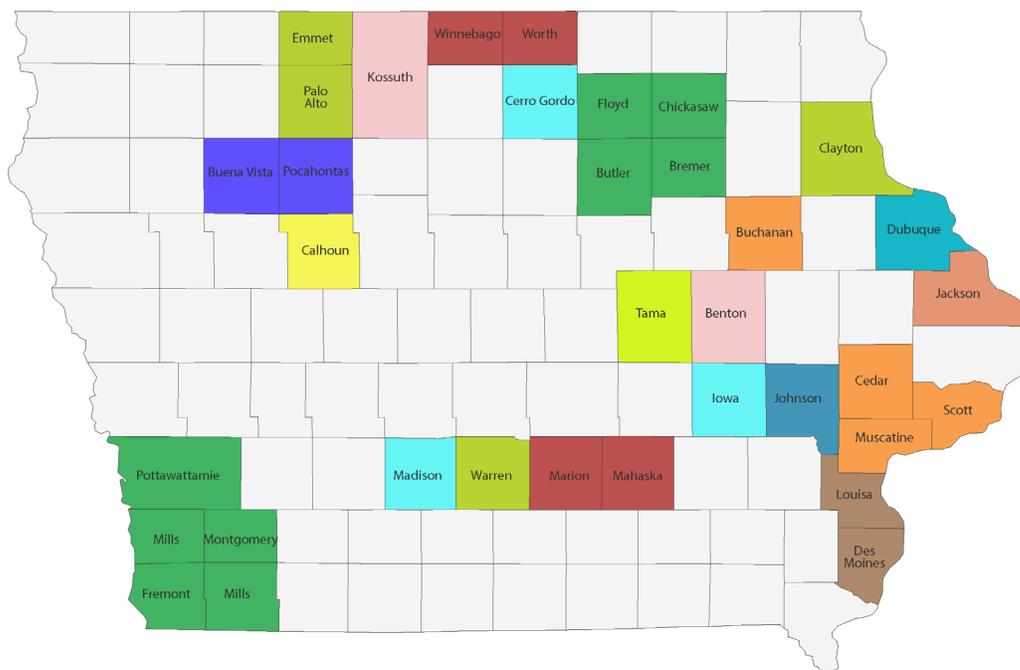
Take a look at the WLL County Map in this newsletter. If you live and/or work in a county that does not currently have an active WLL project and you are interested but don't know who to contact, check out the "Want to Start WLL in Your County?" section below!

OPPORTUNITIES

Stay tuned for Women Land and Legacy events coming in 2021!!!

Events early in the year will be virtual. It is our hope that the summer will provide opportunity for some in-person outdoor events!!

Iowa Counties with WLL Teams



About Women, Land and Legacy

Women, Land & Legacy (WLL) is a USDA-sponsored education and outreach program impacting thousands of Iowa women connected to agriculture. Working at the county level and utilizing dialogue, learning sessions and networking opportunities, WLL empowers women and provides resources for decision-making that impacts women's land, families and community.



Connect With Us

www.womenlandandlegacy.org
stateteam@womenlandandlegacy.org
facebook.com/womenlandandlegacy

Want to Start WLL in Your County?

Contact your local NRCS, FSA, SWCD or Extension Office. Or Contact Tanya Meyer Dideriksen, NRCS Outreach Coordinator, at tanya.meyer@usda.gov.