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FARM MANAGEMENT

The

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October 2019

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Considering Land Options

Jon Larson, Sunderman Farm Management Company

This time of year is undoubtedly the time to think about harvest and begin planning for next year's crop. It's also a good time to think about your plans for the land itself.

Here at Sunderman Farm Management, we love to keep families and generations on the farm. We also know that sometimes families want or need to sell farm ground, but it's uncharted territory, so they need expert guidance to secure the appraisals and handle intricacies of the sale to the family's best benefit.

At the same time, some farm families are considering adding to their land holdings. They may be planning to expand operations or have a member of the family who really wants to return to the farm where they can raise their children as they were raised, with the sense of being part of the land and learning the lessons that only hands-on experience and responsibility can teach.

Either way, Sunderman Farm Management is here to help you make smart moves when it comes to land sales and acquisitions. We keep a close eye on the properties that are up for sale and monitor the fair market value for land in the areas in which you may want to sell or buy. We'll walk you through

your best choices for tax incentives like depreciation for underground drainage tile while you still have time to make decisions in the current tax year.

As a landowner, it makes sense to evaluate your property in relation to your business, personal, and family goals. Are you happy with the status quo? Do you want to make your operation grow? Are you ready to retire and want to let it go?

We love working with multi-generational families to put plans together that will provide a pathway to success on the farm. Whether that means beginning a new life raising crops, livestock, and well-adjusted children, or stepping away from landownership altogether to concentrate on other exciting endeavors.

Call us today to share your future land ownership objectives. Sell, buy, or stay the course, we'll help you chart the path of greatest success. 🌱

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Weinstein's Partnership with Sunderman Brings Peace-of-Mind

Hopkinton, Massachusetts, happens to not only be where Iowa native and Sunderman Farm Management client, Mary Weinstein, resides, but also the home of the starting line for the Boston Marathon since 1924. Living in a town with such a rich history in health and wellness, it's no surprise Mary would want her family farm ground in Orient, Iowa, to follow suit.

"When I began to look for a new farm management agency in 2016, I really wanted to make sure whomever my brothers and I chose was not only knowledgeable about managing agricultural property, but also open-minded to new concepts and ideas about sustainability and organic farming," she says.

In 2016, Mary selected Sunderman as her farm management partner and has been pleased with the ease of the relationship since. She said the choice was easy to make after she spoke to current Sunderman clients.

"There was a common theme each person was telling me: Sunderman is flexible, on top of things, and they really make you feel like you're a priority," she says.

Mary and her Sunderman farm manager, Mark Thompson, have since talked at length about making the switch to organic farming practices. To start out, Sunderman already uses no-till farming practices on her family's land, a first step toward topsoil conservation that lends itself well to a future switch to organic farming practices.

Mary says Mark has gone above and beyond her expectations, having helped with everything from attending a land auction on her behalf, to assisting and advising in the sale of land she has owned for quite some time.

"Mark's partnership since the beginning has been essential," she says. "Knowing someone is working to further my interests and goals allows me to have peace-of-mind, and that's something I cherish." 🌱



Pictured: Far Left, Mark Thompson; in the back, 5th person from the left is Brent Larson in the green shirt

Master Conservationists in our Midst

For many Iowans, a satisfying corn and soybean yield indicates strong farm production, but for long-time Sunderman Farm Management (SFM) farm managers, Brent Larson and Mark Thompson, that's not enough. At SFM, we emphasize taking the overall health of your land a step further.

This spring and summer, Brent and Mark took their expertise to the next level. Each earned a certification as a Master Conservationist through an Iowa State Extension and Outreach program, providing education on current conservation techniques across many types of land uses.

"We are very excited about how the Master Conservationist certification will further enable us to assist our clients with looking at the entirety of their land use conservation practices," says Mark.

SFM knows there is so much more that goes into land ownership and conservation than managing crops alone. Mark adds, "Each plot of land is a unique mix of tillable land, pasture, forest, watersheds, aquatic environments and more, all of which must work together to achieve the best results for the land and the landowners."

Offered at ISU Extension and Outreach locations across Iowa, the SFM team was able to learn and tour sites across Hamilton, Humboldt, Webster, and Wright counties in Iowa.

"The program teaches participants of all levels of expertise about Iowa's natural ecosystems and the diversity of conservation challenges and opportunities within the region," says Linda Cline, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach County Program Director. "Participants learn to make informed choices for leading and educating others to improve conservation in Iowa."

The participants of the program included people who were interested in conservation, but not necessarily agriculture - but we think this is a good thing. Mark says, "It provided a great opportunity to share how conservation practices are implemented on our farms and in our farm management practice."

Tours included prairies, forests, and aquatic environments, with the class structured into four modules combining technical information presented and originated by Iowa State University researchers and educators, as well as in-person sessions led by local conservation leaders, practitioners, and experts.

Since the class, SFM has been busy putting the information to work out in the community by installing filter strips, encouraging conversations about better erosion control and soil health, as well as working with our clients who are interested in other types of conservation. 🌱