



# Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems

University of Wisconsin-Madison  
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

**CIAS sets the table so that farmers, researchers and other citizens can together work toward sustainable agricultural and food systems that contribute to ecological, economic and social well-being. Since 1989, we've been addressing challenges in agriculture and food.**

## ■ healthy farms

The 21st century ushered in an era of environmental and economic uncertainty for farmers. If present trends continue, mid-sized family farms might disappear in the next few decades. **CIAS research helps farmers create resilient farms and food businesses that can withstand financial and environmental pressures. CIAS studies business models that help mid-size farms and food businesses succeed in an increasingly consolidated marketplace.**

## ■ wholesome food

Consumers are actively seeking out locally grown food at both farmers' markets and mainstream supermarkets. They are also interested in organic food and food produced with limited synthetic chemical inputs. **CIAS is working to establish and expand markets for unique Wisconsin foods, and to increase access to this food through innovations in transportation, aggregation and distribution. We work with farmers using a range of sustainable systems to raise and market high-quality, wholesome food.**

**“CIAS has helped us move our farm into a sustainable, profitable business.”**

**CIAS is breaking new ground in research, education and outreach for sustainable, profitable farms and food businesses, resilient landscapes and healthy communities across Wisconsin, and beyond.**

## ■ innovative people

Farmers are retiring at a much higher rate than new farmers are entering the business. UW faculty and students are looking for research and outreach opportunities in sustainable agriculture. **CIAS provides beginning livestock and specialty crop farmers with the training they need to start and succeed in pasture-based, organic and sustainable farming. We create opportunities for faculty and students to engage in exciting, cutting edge research and outreach that will promote a sustainable, strong, diverse agriculture.**



**“I have wanted to be a dairy farmer since I could walk. I am excited to learn how to begin a successful dairy farm.”**  
*- Beginning dairy/ livestock school graduate*



## Our partners make us unique

The work of CIAS is guided by two advisory groups. Our Citizens Advisory Council is a unique body made up of farmers, members of the business community and representatives of sustainable agriculture organizations. Our Faculty Associates are widely recognized experts in both the physical and social sciences. When you combine their academic prowess with the hands-on, real-world expertise offered by our Citizens Advisory Council, you get a cutting-edge vision for the future of agriculture and food.

## Our approach is working

- In 2011, more than 70 apple growers in our Eco Fruit project participated in seven grower networks. These growers **reduced pesticide risk** by 46 percent and raised reliance on alternative pest control strategies by 54 percent.
- The Wisconsin School for Beginning Dairy and Livestock Farmers has helped over 400 students earn certificates in **pasture-based dairy and livestock farming**; about 75 percent of the graduates are actively engaged in farming. Our School for Beginning Market Growers has reached more than 500 students.
- CIAS is working with farmers, processors, and distributors to provide **1.3 million servings of Wisconsin vegetables** in our public schools in 2014.
- Our current research on **organic cropping systems** includes studies of organic no-till production, improved organic vegetable varieties, and development of a business management tool for organic vegetable growers.
- CIAS research on strategic partnerships between farms and their supply chain partners is drawing attention to **innovative business models** that support mid-sized farm and food enterprises.

## Giving to CIAS

**A gift to CIAS is the seed that bears fruit on the landscape for generations.** CIAS is uniquely positioned to tackle the challenges faced by small and medium farms and food businesses because our programs span the entire food system, from farm to fork. With gifts from our supporters, we can expand our capacity to create profitable enterprises on resilient landscapes that provide people with healthy food.

**We would love to engage with you in a conversation about our programs and look forward to meeting with you.**

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