



January 2009

**FROM THE DIRECTOR:** I am very pleased to announce our newest winner of the Spencer Award for Sustainable Agriculture: Steve Reinart of Glidden. I have known Steve for many years and he is an innovative and passionate advocate for grassland agriculture. He always is willing to share his experiences with others, and shows that it is possible to manage the land for future generations while having a successful operation. He owns and operates Reinart's Prairie Reds, a 500-acre grass-finished organic beef and seed stock operation in Carroll County. He will receive the award January 9 in Marshalltown, during the annual winter conference of Practical Farmers of Iowa. More about the award, [www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/newsreleases/2008/121708\\_spencer.html](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/newsreleases/2008/121708_spencer.html) Join me in congratulating Steve! -- *Jerry DeWitt*

**FLOOD LESSONS:** What did we learn from last summer's flooding in Iowa? Plenty! View the presentations and read other resources from our December 8 workshop, "Learning from the Floods of 2008: Practical Strategies for Resilience." We plan to have a list of recommendations ready by February. Here's a recap of the workshop, [www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/newsreleases/2008/121008\\_flood.html](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/newsreleases/2008/121008_flood.html) or check the conference web site, [www.flood.leopold.iastate.edu](http://www.flood.leopold.iastate.edu)

**LOCAL FOOD EFFORTS:** Two more regions in Iowa launch local food efforts, supported by the Value Chain Partnerships project coordinated by the Leopold Center. The Regional Food Systems Working Group (RFSWG) is providing \$10,000 grants to help get local food efforts off the ground in Marshall County in central Iowa and Black Hawk and surrounding counties in northeast Iowa. RFSWG-supported efforts are now working in 40 of Iowa's 99 counties. Details at: [www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/newsreleases/2008/120108\\_groups.html](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/newsreleases/2008/120108_groups.html)

**FARMSCAPE:** Grinnell College is the next stop for this readers' theater that documents the changing rural landscape in Iowa. The Leopold Center (and others) have provided small grants for Iowa State Distinguished Professor of English Mary Swander to bring this performance to Iowa communities. The play was a 2007 ISU environmental writing class project, and features people from local theatrical groups reading each character's roles with minimal costumes and sets. Performance dates and details on the Leopold Center calendar of events web page at: [www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/events.htm](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/events.htm)

**R&D GRANTS:** The Grass-Based Livestock Working Group (GBLWG) has funds from the Leopold Center for Research and Demonstration Grants in 2009. The group is accepting proposals for projects in four focus areas: profitable grazing management; grazing, wildlife and the environment; grass-based branding and supply chains; and grazing policy and education. Project leaders must be active members of the GBLWG, and proposals are due February 2. Details and forms are at: [www.leopold.iastate.edu/research/grantees.htm](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/research/grantees.htm)

**KIDS, NATURE AND THE NEW YEAR:** The benefits to children of time spent outdoors are endless. Spending time in natural settings is beneficial for physical and mental health, improving behavior, and faster learning. What fundamental experiences do you believe children in Iowa should have in order to develop a healthy, active lifestyle? The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is conducting a survey on this topic, with the results to guide creation of an "Iowa Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights." This document will list the activities that Iowans recognize as invaluable experiences for our young people to have while growing up, along with a mission statement and goals for its use. If you don't see an activity listed that you would like to see included, please add your item under "other." Start out the new year by casting your vote at: [www.iowadnr.gov/education/index.html](http://www.iowadnr.gov/education/index.html)

**THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN:** The entire staff at the Leopold Center sends good wishes for the New Year. For many Iowans, it will be a relief to say good-bye to 2008 and begin looking forward to the many possibilities that 2009 could bring. Happy New Year!

This issue marks the Leopold Center's 29th monthly e-newsletter since it was created in 2006. Here's something you can resolve to do in 2009: Forward this newsletter to your family and friends, or better yet, send them this link to sign up for our mailing list: [www.leopold.iastate.edu/forms/mailing.php](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/forms/mailing.php)