

Print Page

## Ladies: Let's talk conservation

PRINCETON — Women who own or manage farmland in Bureau, Lee and LaSalle counties can participate in a free conservation discussion and field tour Aug. 28 in Princeton. The program, "Women Caring for the Land," includes lunch and an optional field tour. The event runs from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Shoemake Hall at the Bureau County Metro Center, 837 Park Ave. West, Princeton. Check-in starts at 8 a.m. with a continental breakfast. Participants can network, share, learn conservation options and find help with resource-related issues.

Data confirms nearly half of Illinois farmland is currently owned or co-owned by women.

"More women now own farmland on their own, as they inherit it from spouses," said Theresa Chadwick, assistant state conservationist for Illinois' Natural Resources Conservation Service. "Many women wonder whether they are doing all they can to improve soil and water quality on the land, and many are unsure of exactly how to reach their conservation goals and what resources are available to help them. This event will help address these important issues."

According to Stacy James, water resources scientist for the Prairie Rivers Network, the event offers a peer-to-peer, informal discussion format which allows women landowners to talk about their individual land stewardship goals.

"The discussion includes and is facilitated by women conservationists who can share resources available such as USDA cost-share programs and other tools," James said.

The afternoon tour visits several stops to allow participants to get out and see conservation practices and water quality monitoring stations on farms within subwatersheds of Big Bureau Creek. The tour offers a chance for these landowners to see practices up close and get a better understanding of how they work.

The group will not stray far from the road, but tour coordinators encourage guests to bring sturdy shoes and sun protection. Air-conditioned bus transportation will be provided on the tour.

Space is limited for this opportunity, so RSVP by 5 p.m. Aug. 23 to Teresa Bullock, American Farmland Trust, by emailing her at [tbullock@niu.edu](mailto:tbullock@niu.edu) or calling 815-753-6365.

This session of "Women Caring for the Land" is sponsored by the Women, Food and Agriculture Network in partnership with American Farmland Trust, Prairie Rivers Network, and Friends of the Big Bureau Creek Watershed. Staff from these organizations as well as NRCS will be on hand to answer questions.

For more information, visit <http://www.farmland.org/programs/environment/solutions/Bureau-County-Workshop.asp>.

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