



Productive Conservation on Working Lands

What are some innovative ways people market PCWL Crops?

- Sales to local energy producers utilizing biomass
- Landscape mulch
- Native prairie grass and forb seed
- Sales of potted native prairie plants
- Berries and nuts sold at farmers markets
- Woody floral sales to florists

One of the most challenging aspects of developing productive conservation crops as viable agricultural alternatives is not the production of, but the marketing of the crops. Since there is little infrastructure currently developed to harvest, store and market these crops, the innovative producers growing these crops are forced to come up with unconventional marketing channels for their crops.

When marketing a niche agricultural product it is important to understand the market potential for the product. Many of these niche markets can be easily flooded as production methods are improved. As a hedge against this, wise producers seem to be focusing on crops with multiple potential markets.

As an example, some PCWL producers are growing native grasses for seed, forage and biomass. Others are adding agro-tourism enterprise to their existing operation. By using agro-tourism as another possible on-farm enterprise, the farmer can increase revenue without purchasing or renting more acreage.

Innovation and creativity are common characteristics of PCWL producers. Producers of PCWL crops show a willingness to develop new and unconventional market opportunities for their crops. This is essential to maximizing returns. The key here is to remain open to new ideas and consider how and if they could be successfully integrated into your farm.

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" Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture This material is based upon work supported by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under number NRCS 68-3A75-6-117."