

# MEADOWLARK ORGANICS

Iowa County, WI

## SIZE

700 acres of certified organic farmland

## FARMERS

Paul Bickford, John & Halee Wepking



## FARM VISION

Paul, John & Halee are committed to farming their land organically, and growing crops that have superior nutrition for people and animals.

## ABOUT THE FARM

Paul Bickford And John & Halee Wepking farm as a team in Ridgeway, Wisconsin. Paul has been farming here since 1978, first raising dairy, then transitioning to organic grains & legumes. Thinking about the future of his farm, Paul placed an ad looking for a young couple to join him as partners. John & Halee, who returned to farming after working in local foods restaurants, answered the ad. The three have been farming together ever since.

## FARMING PRACTICES

John & Halee were instrumental in diversifying the operation by bringing their enthusiasm for specialty ingredients. Their current rotation includes corn, soybeans, oats, alfalfa hay, milling wheat, spelt, rye, buckwheat, open-pollinated milling corn, and dry edible beans. Their crops grow atop ridges in ancient, glacial soils and are interseeded with cover crops.

Meadowlark Organics focuses on specialty, milling grains and sells them locally to bakeries, groceries, and directly at farmers markets. They are building a mill that will allow them to process their grains in-house, in addition to serving their community.

## HOW WE HELPED

Iroquois Valley financed the purchase of a 120-acre parcel that Paul had been renting for 30 years. When the landowner of that parcel passed, she left Paul the first right to buy the land. By providing mortgage financing to enable the purchase, Iroquois Valley is keeping organic farmers on the land, as well as supporting the long-term farmland transfer plans between Paul, John, and Halee.

