

2024 FRIEND OF CONSERVATION AWARD
NOMINATION INFORMATION

Mark Shepard email: forestag@mwt.net

New Forest Farm <https://newforestfarm.us/>

RAD Restoration Agriculture Development <https://www.restorationag.com/>

30+ In Restoration Agriculture

Nominator: Mary Henry

mary.henry@vernoncounty.org

Vernon County Board Supervisor #12

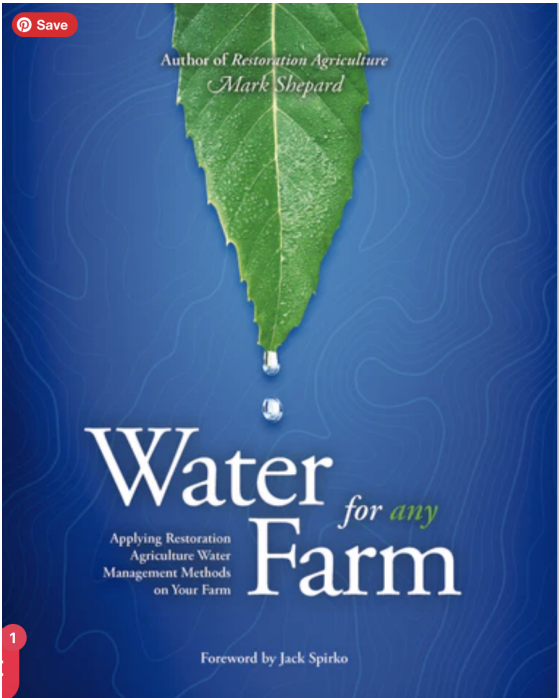
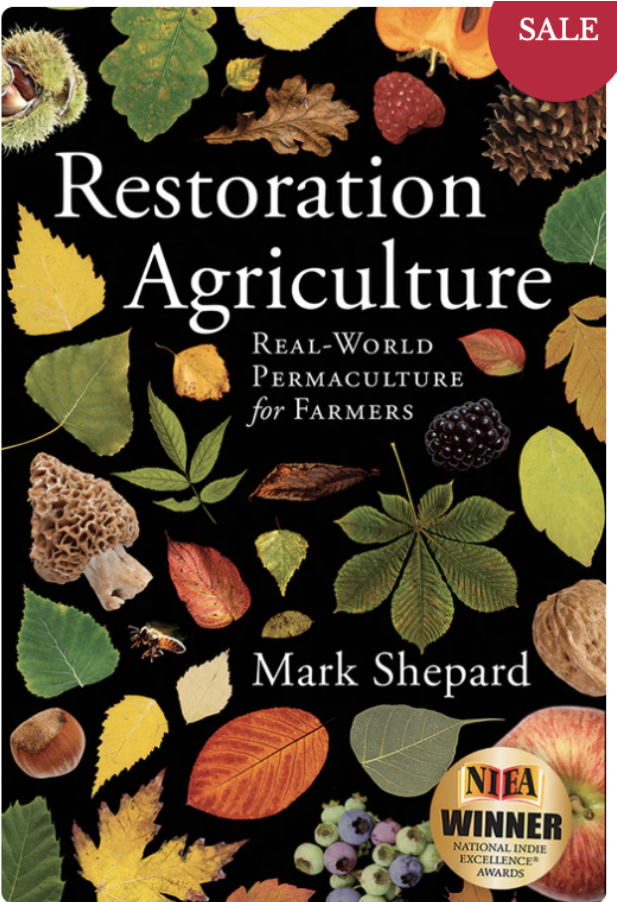
Mark Shepard heads Restoration Agriculture Development and Forest Agriculture Nursery, but is most widely known as the author of the award-winning book, *Restoration Agriculture: Real-World Permaculture for Farmers*. Restoration Agriculture is based off his experiences at New Forest Farm, and represents his belief in the ability of sustainably grown perennial food crops to feed us into “our resource-compromised future”.

[New Forest Farm](#), located in Viola, Wisconsin, was once a worn-out row crop farm and has since become a 106-acre showcase commercial-scale perennial agricultural operation. It is considered by many to be one of the most ambitious sustainable agriculture projects in the United States. The farming system layout was founded on his innovations in engineering the runoff distribution, retention and control of water throughout the property. Next he implemented his take on adaptive mass-selection breeding with use of select perennial crops based off plant families abundant amongst the oak savanna, successional brushland, and eastern woodlands ecotypes that constituted the region prior to commercial agriculture. With the water management infrastructure in place, trees, shrubs, vines, canes, grasses, forbs and fungi were planted in likeness to their respective ecological niches, and organized to optimize efficiency in harvesting and management. Hazelnuts, chestnuts, walnuts, and apples are the primary woody crops. Various ongoing tree crops research sites are nested about the farm as well, and are an important feature in his adaptive, resilient restoration agriculture system.

Trained in mechanical engineering and ecology, Mark has combined these two passions to develop equipment and processes for the cultivation, harvesting and processing of forest-derived agricultural products. He is a certified permaculture designer and teaches agroforestry, permaculture, and his innovative systems of water management around the world.

Mark’s reach is wide spread in our county, state, country and abroad. He is a sought after speaker for tradeshow and conferences. He offers online courses and has

published two books and numerous articles. He freely gives of his time and talents to local farmers.

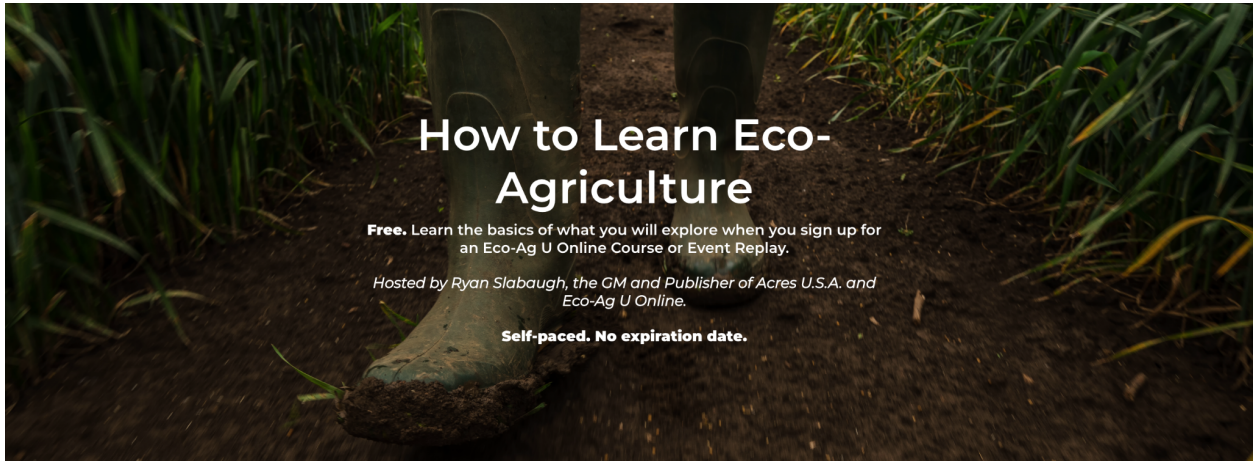




Practical Permaculture and Agroforestry for Farmers

Learn how to pivot your farm into a diversified, resilient polyculture with tree crops, livestock, fruits and vegetables, and more, from restoration agriculture specialist Mark Shepard. Students should be able to complete this course in 12 to 16 hours, can start and end lessons on your own schedule, and will have access to course materials for years to come.

Self-paced. No expiration date.

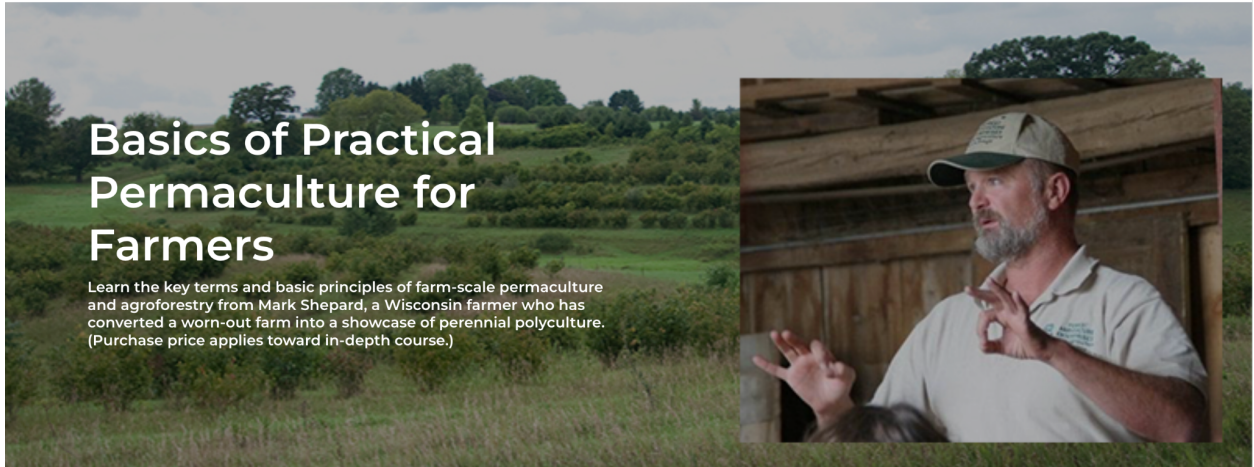


How to Learn Eco-Agriculture

Free. Learn the basics of what you will explore when you sign up for an Eco-Ag U Online Course or Event Replay.

Hosted by Ryan Slabaugh, the GM and Publisher of Acres U.S.A. and Eco-Ag U Online.

Self-paced. No expiration date.



Basics of Practical Permaculture for Farmers

Learn the key terms and basic principles of farm-scale permaculture and agroforestry from Mark Shepard, a Wisconsin farmer who has converted a worn-out farm into a showcase of perennial polyculture. (Purchase price applies toward in-depth course.)