

PHOTO: ISAAC HALE



Left: Miguel Hahn, NFP co-coordinator.  
Below: Jan Broeders with his son, Malcolm, two farmers who've received assistance from NFP.



**AS PART OF** what it calls the New Farm Project (NFP), Local 316 of Canada's National Farmers Union offers training, tools and other forms of assistance to producers, but with a twist—it's free. The only "charge" is a requirement that those on the receiving end "pass on the gift."

NFP, which operates in the area near Kingston, Ontario, and offers most of its aid to beginning farmers, provides assistance in a variety of ways. For instance, the 3-year-old program offers training sessions on finances, fence building, organic farming and other sustainable practices. It also provides no-interest micro-financing for various necessities on the farm, such as electric fencing, seed or a greenhouse.

In return, says NFP Co-coordinator Miguel Hahn, the beneficiaries are expected to "pass on what they've

learned or a reasonable approximation of that gift to someone in the community. Our slogan is 'building farm capacity, building farm community,' and that passing on has a lot of impact. It not only helps the next person and increases our ability to produce more food locally, but it also builds connections." That networking, explains Hahn, puts producers in a better position over the long term to help each other become successful.

Because of that, Hahn continues, "It's more likely we'll start building up critical mass and we'll have more reliable sources here for processors to set up. Things like that are starting to happen as the system is growing." Hahn notes that, as a result of this recent increase in capacity, both a new meat processor and an organic creamery are planned for the area and should help

*A Canadian organization applies an innovative approach to helping farmers.*

producers—both established and new—get their products to market.

Still, much of the project's focus is to help new farmers, according to Gordon Enns, country director and acting executive director of Heifer International Canada, the agricultural aid organization that provides much of the project's funding. "The number of young people in farming is declining," he says. "This project transfers knowledge and support to young people.

"We have to ask, 'Where is the next generation of farmers coming from?' We have huge challenges finding that answer." NFP, he continues, "is a training program that works."

■ For more information, visit New Farm Project online at [www.newfarmproject.ca](http://www.newfarmproject.ca)

## Farm Show Calendar

See the full calendar and links to show websites at [go.myfarmlife.com/farmshows](http://go.myfarmlife.com/farmshows).

### September

**13-15**

**Big Iron Farm Show**  
West Fargo, N.D.

**13-15**

**Canada's Outdoor Farm Show**  
Woodstock, Ont.

**13-15**

**Husker Harvest Days**  
Grand Island, Neb.

### October

**18-20**

**Sunbelt Ag Expo**  
Moultrie, Ga.

**4-8**

**World Dairy Expo**  
Madison, Wis.

### November

**21-26**

**Canadian Western Agribition**  
Regina, Sask.