Using Shape Files in COMET-Farm™
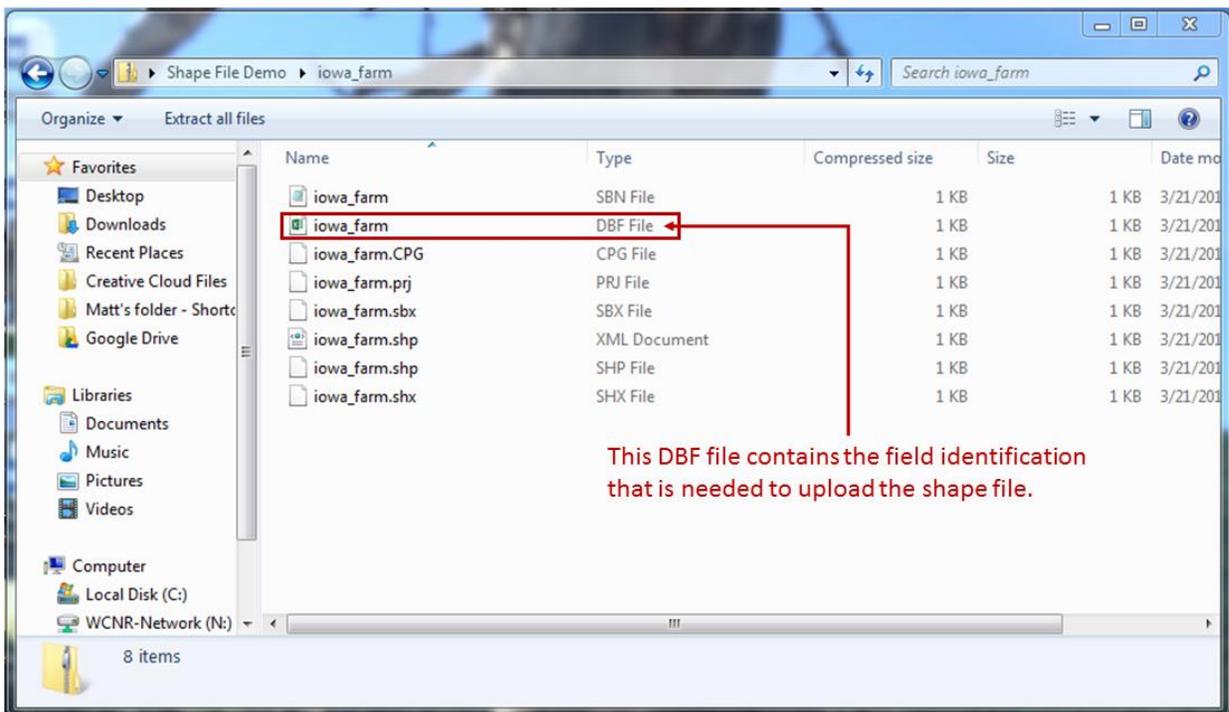
Step 1: Preparing Files for Upload

This document is intended to guide users through preparing GIS data (shape) files to be uploaded to the Map page of the Cropland, Agroforestry and/or Forestry Modules in COMET-Farm™.
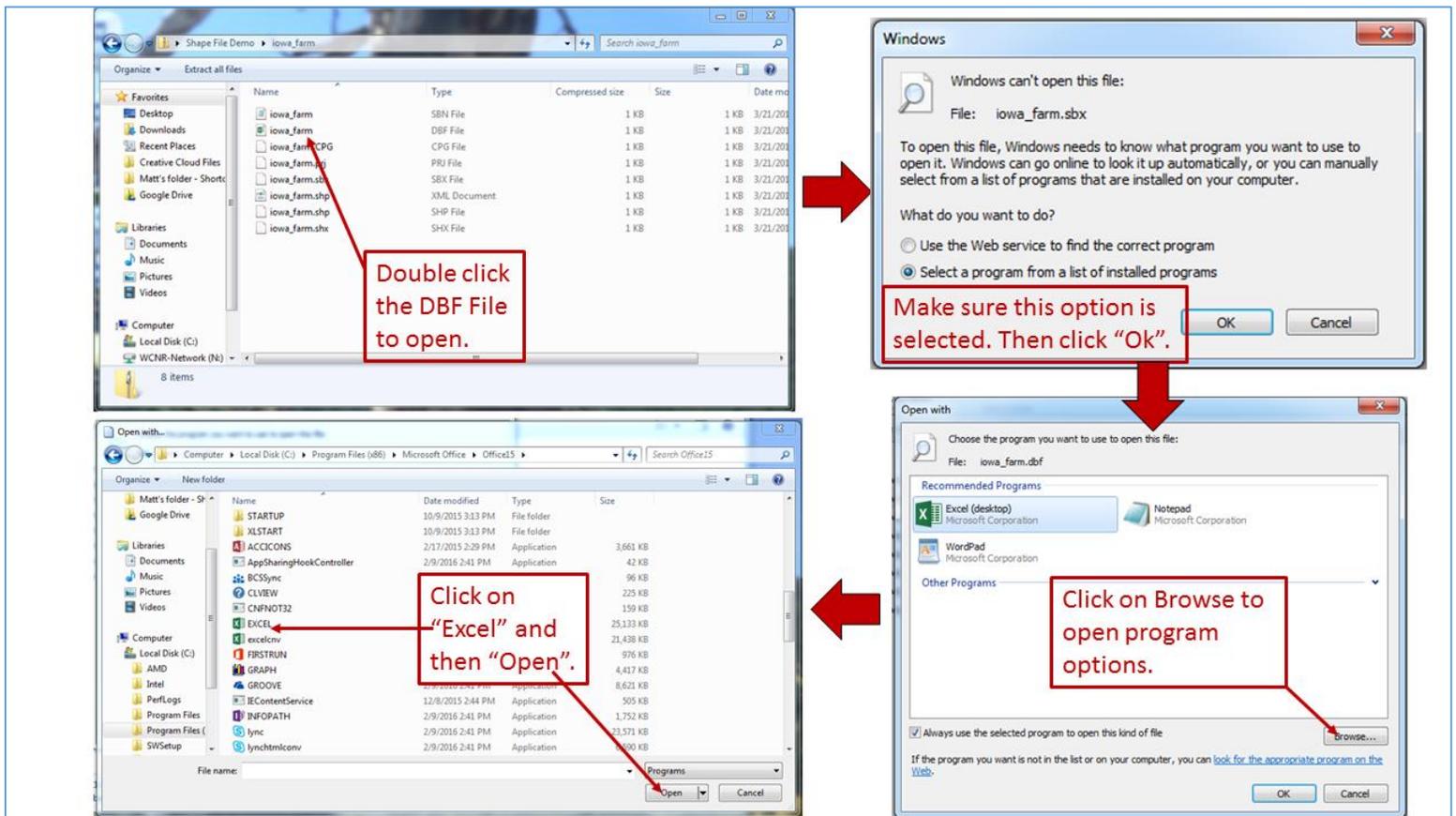
What resources will you need?

- GIS shape file in Compressed (zipped) Format.
- Software that will allow you to view the dBASE (.dbf) file within shape files. This includes ESRI® software products, Microsoft Excel®, or a freeware/shareware .dbf file viewer such as "DBFview" or "DBF-Viewer".

Prepare the shape file for upload.

1. To begin, open the folder location of the shape file that will be uploaded with your file manager or file browsing tool.
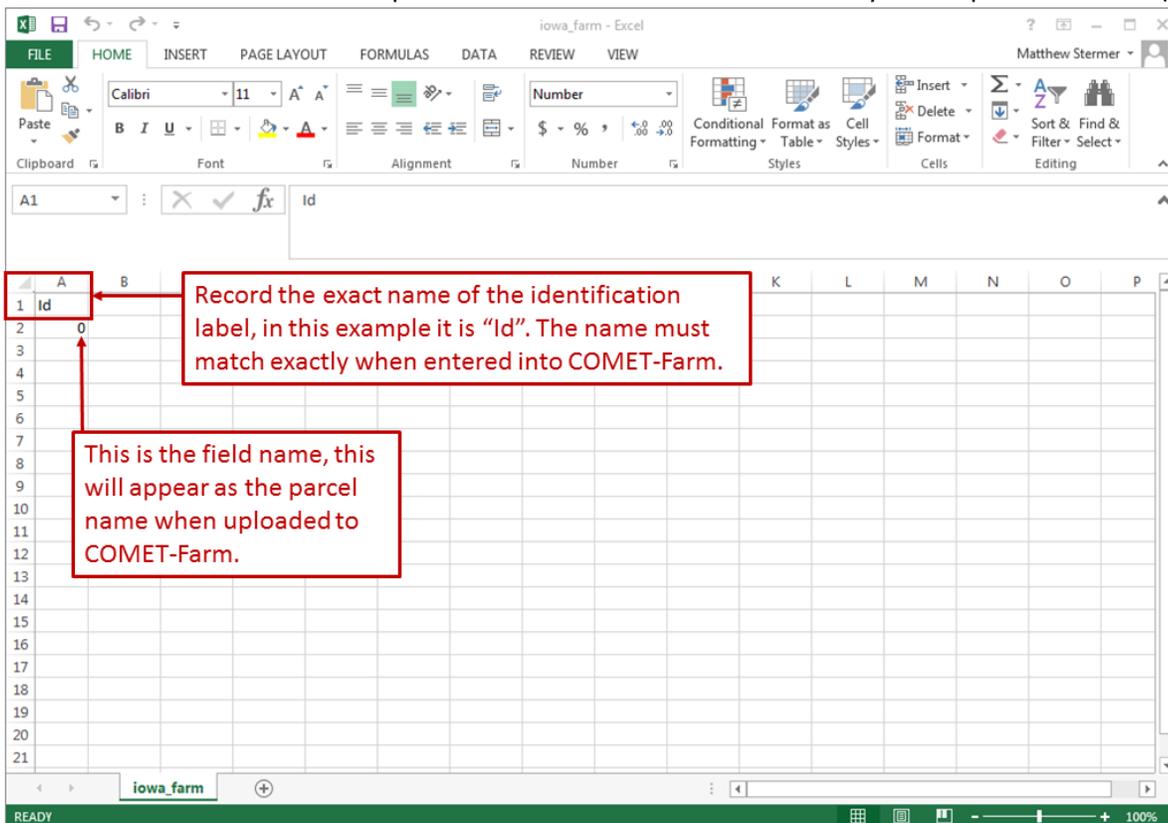2. If the folder is zipped up, extract the contents.

3. Locate the dBASE file (.dbf), it may also be listed as a "DBF File" type.
4. The field location information is found in the .dbf file. You will need to open the file and view its contents in order to record the name of the column containing the field location information.
5. To open the file you will need to select a program to open it. To select a program to open the .dbf file, double click on the name of the .dbf file.
   a. If you have no software that is already assigned on your computer to open and view .dbf files, your computer will likely open a window indicating that it cannot open this file.
   b. To open the file click on the radio button to the left of "Select a program from a list of installed programs".
   c. Click on "Browse" and navigate to "Microsoft Excel®". If you don't already have Microsoft Excel® installed on your computer, you may wish to work with a colleague who has Excel® installed on his or her computer. You may also wish to download and install freeware or shareware such as "DBFview" or "DBF-Viewer". Click "open" and the file will open.

Once this has been complete, you should not need to repeat these steps in the future with other shape files. In the event that all .dbf files do open in Excel when clicked on, you will need to repeat steps 1 through 6.

6. When the file opens you will need to locate the column name for the left-most (first) column in the file. This is the field identification label. In this example, the field identification label is "Id".

7. Record the field identification column label exactly as it appears in the column header. When entering the field identification column label into COMET-Farm™ during the file upload process, it needs to be exact and match what is in the first column of the .dbf file. Failure to do so will cause an error and the shape file will not be uploaded.

   *It is very important that the field identification label be input into COMET-Farm™ as it appears in the .dbf file. The input must match the case and contain any other special character(s).

❖ **Helpful tips**
- Uploading shape files can save time, by allowing you to add many unique parcels to a project quickly.
- Many other tools use shape files and can be exported into COMET-Farm™.