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Festival of Farms Tours on the 10th of July to be Held In and Near Hope, MN

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The South Central chapter's celebration of the Sustainable Farming Association's Festival of Farms will be centered in Hope, MN. This festival, to be held on July 10, 2010, will feature farms from 5 chapters from across the state that are finding ways to become more sustainable. Hope is a small town which is making a large contribution to a more sustainable approach to agriculture. The Hope Creamery and the Sunopta Elevator in Hope will be open to the public as part of Festival of Farms. Information about the festival will be available from 12:30pm to 5:00pm at the Snowmobile Club building across from the Hope Creamery at the North end of the main street in Hope. There will be tours at Sunopta and the Creamery starting at 1:00pm and then repeating at 2:00pm. The tour of the Wencil organic dairy farm will start at 3:30pm.

Production of food to sell locally has become a major focus of SFA and its chapters. By producing and selling locally, farmers can build a relationship with consumers which provides support for their efforts to protect farmland and produce high quality products. In the small historic Hope Creamery, cream produced in our state is turned into butter of high quality that is preferred by some of the best chefs in Minnesota and by many consumers. The Wencils are welcoming people to their farm who buy their organic milk and anyone else interested in learning about organic milk production. The Wencils market their milk through Organic Valley, a farmer owned cooperative. The Sunopta elevator buys, processes, and ships specialty grains from farms in our area and region. The specialty grains they deal in include organic grains, non-GMO grains, and soybeans for soy milk production.

In Hope you will also find Krause Feed and Supply which provides services to local farmers and the office of Envirosense where Dean Goette offers consulting services to farmers involved in sustainable farming. Many small rural towns are in decline because the smaller farms that supported them are dying out, but Hope has a concentration of operations that support local farms which helps keep this town alive. Hope also has a locally run antique store offering many interesting items. More information on the festival is available at www.festivaloffarms.org or by calling Jim Tjepkema at 507 256-4876. The S. Central chapter has additional information available at <http://sfasouthcentral.blogspot.com/>.