

**Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota 2008 Strategic Plan**

**MISSION:**

We support the development and enhancement of sustainable farming systems through innovation, demonstration, education, and farmer-to-farmer networking.

**VISION (draft) :**

Rural communities and economies are rebuilt and flourish through farm family employment and an ambitious locally grown food distribution network. Minnesota citizens demand and purchase sustainably-produced food, fiber and energy. Eating more healthful foods will decrease disease, health care costs, and improve the quality of life for all citizens. Sustainable agriculture is valued and supported locally, statewide, nationally, and globally in both policy and in the marketplace.

**GOAL 1: Mentor and encourage farmers, especially the next generation.**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
1.1 Design and implement internships for SFA projects, farms and organizations. Develop framework of internship programs, identify specific internships, research colleges for interns and internships, conduct exit interviews, and evaluate internships for continuous improvement.	Events & Youth Outreach Committee and E&YO Coord.	Bush Foundation	
1.2 Hire a youth director/events coordinator	ED	Bush Foundation - need \$ to sustain	
1.3 Partner/work w/other organizations to mentor and support beginning farmers	Events & Youth Outreach Committee and E&YO Coord. and ED		
1.4 Match farmer mentors with beginning and aspiring farmers and pay them to mentor	Finance & Fundraising Comm. And E&YO Comm.	Chapter members Bush Found. plus	
1.5 Expand MDI work with organic/grazing--hold strategy session to organize work to support expansion of organic dairying in Minnesota	MDI Coordinator, Communications Director and ED		
1.6 Actively recruit younger and next generation board members	Nominations, Recruitment & Succession Comm	.	
1.7 Serve as a "matchmaker" for on-farm internships and apprenticeships	E&YO Coord.- dev. Survey with partners		
1.8 Bring out inner city and suburban youth for farm tours and demonstration	Finance & Fundraising Comm w ED and E&YO Comm.		

**GOAL 2: Enhance and expand SFA's communication, education, and information network.**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
2.1 Revise and augment SFA's on-line function	ED and contractors		
2.1.1 Recruit paid mentors to moderate and advise on specialized online topics	ED and contractors	Bush	
2.1.2 Online "webinars" (off of growing season) on cheese-making, bee-keeping, rotational grazing, etc...	ED and contractors	Bush	
2.2 Improve information flow throughout the organization including both chapters and members	Training and Chapter Development; board delegates Need whole board input on		

NOTE: Clarify responsibility of the delegate to communicate with chapter; delegate should have place on chapter board meetings	solutions to communication problems		
2.3 Centralize SFA membership database	Training and chapter development committee		Collect data at events; train chapter coordinators on use of Databank
2.4 More press releases and editorials	Communication contractor and chapters; ED represents our policies; board develops written policies on current issues; policy resolutions to board		Need a committee to look at policy on process for developing issue statements supporting our vision statement
2.5 Refine on-farm educational experiences, field days, etc... into the "SFA brand" preferred for authentic balanced information	E&YO, ED, Training and chapter development		
2.6 Design and use effective evaluation tools for events and programs.	Communications coordinator		

**GOAL 3: Research, market, and promote sustainable agriculture practices and products**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
3.1 Seek effective ways to create partnerships with other organizations for sustainable agriculture. Create a unified voice for sustainable agriculture in Minnesota by working with other groups, emphasizing SFA as the only state organization of farmers working on sustainable agriculture, i.e. State ag officials, SAWG, Sustainer's Coalition, other nonprofits, age organizations in other states, faith communities, partner with Farmers Union on more things;	ED, board members, and SFA members with connections to other organizations		We will increase collaboration with Farm Beginnings
3.2 Construct a database of resources within our membership about farming practices, market techniques, etc... that our members do or know about; put on internet and have paper versions	Training and Chapter Dev. Committee; chapters; staff		We will develop and get forms to chapters to use for member renewals so that we can gather info that matches what we want in the database.

<p>3.3 Establish a marketable version of the farming system we envision, such as "The truly modern farm" (to stop the criticism that we are nostalgic, non-scientific, etc...)</p>	<p>Exec. Comm., Youth/events/ communications staff</p>	<p>\$ to provide honoraria for participating farmers; as necessary, find partners</p>	<p>The Exec Com. will develop a description of a program to designate farms in each chapter as sustainable demonstration farms and to hold a "Tour of Farms Day" next Sept. This plan to include what info is needed about farms to be nominated by the chapters. The chapters would nominate and describe farms. Tours publicized jointly to raise awareness of SFA and chapters</p>
<p>3.4 Encourage members to participate in formulation of research that is relevant to sustainable agriculture. Farmer based research network to test farming practices and research new practices</p>		<p>SARE MISA MDA UMN</p>	<p>We will publicize opportunities for members to serve in positions that guide research programs. We will maintain that farmers be properly compensated for this service. We will publicize and assist members in applying for SARE and MDA grants.</p>
<p>3.5 Support major events including Grazeffest Minnesota, Minnesota Garlic Festival, SFA Annual Conference</p>	<p>ED; Events Coord.; Events Com.</p>		<p>We will assist chapters in their efforts to hold events such as Agriculture and Energy Fairs.</p>
<p>3.6 Hold field days and tours, and other opportunities to positively connect and communicate with farmers using different farming practices than SFA</p>	<p>ED; Events Coord.; Events Com.; Training and Chapter Dev. Comm.; chapters and chapter director</p>	<p>Provide funds beyond chapter capability.</p>	<p>We will provide resources for chapter farm tours, for joint events such as expanding Grazeffest to more locations, and events specifically directed to the general public and consumer interests.</p>

**GOAL 4: Increase farmer participation and profitability in developing and expanding community-based food systems.**

Strategy	Who	Resources	Outcome
4.1 Serve local food meals for government agencies and university staff at all functions where SFA has influence or control over the food served.	ED; Outreach and events coordinator and committee; chapter events coordinators		This has become symbolic of our organization and we will continue to do this.
4.2 Promote local food consumption and sales in health care, schools, businesses, and faith communities.	ED; Outreach and events coordinator and committee	Partners	Note: From Goal 5 include meeting with health care professionals with possible joint seminars.

**GOAL 5: Inform and educate consumers about healthy food and farming practices that yield a diverse array of sustainably produced food, fiber, and energy.**

Strategy	Who	Resources	Outcome
5.1 Develop and present high profile, successful statewide events that will educate and excite consumers.	ED; Events and Youth Outreach coordinator and committee; communications coordinator; chapter hosts		Note: Chapter priority for this whole goal may vary
5.2 Encourage and assist chapters to publicize farm tours to food customers (see 3.6)	Communications coordinator; chapter development committee; Events and Youth Outreach Coordinator and committee		

**Internal GOAL 6: SFA will become financially sustainable with adequate funding for staff and programs.**

Strategy	Who	Resources	Outcome
6.1 Acquire and retain Locate private donors both small and large	Finance and Fundraising Committee		Fundraising committee is actively pursuing donors.
6.2 State board will continue to responsibility to appoint and oversee a fundraising committee	directors		Fundraising committee is actively pursuing donors.
6.3 Recruit an at-large board member or advisor with experience in fundraising	Nominations Committee		Tommy Bonner has been serving as an advisor on fundraising.
6.4 Investigate obtaining the services of a professional fundraiser and/or grant writer – pro bono preferred. Investigate hiring professional fundraiser on a % basis	Finance and fundraising committee		
6.5 Develop a budget and plan for disbursement of	Treasurer and Finance and		Note: Budget that

funds	Fundraising committee; ED		includes items for exhibiting, sponsoring
6.6 7.2 Develop sustainable funding method for staff and programs.			Note: Review ED's responsibilities and compensation review
6.7 Executive Director to Cultivate relationships with the philanthropic community	ED; directors; Finance and Fundraising Committee		Currently do not have funding for ED work - is now more a program director. Should review position description and determine where ED's time can be directed to this.

**Internal GOAL 7: Organize for optimum function, efficiency and effectiveness.**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
7.1 7.11 Review the strategic plan annually and update the strategic plan at least every three years. THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE WAS INCORPORATED INTO THE NEW 7.1 7.1 Develop a clear direction and organizational alignment to achieve our mission and goals. 7.4 Finalize, refine and endorse the strategic plan. 7.1.1 7.3 Base policy and operating decisions on the strategic plan. 7.1.2 7.4 Link the strategic plan to other planning documents, including budget grant applications, fundraising initiatives, annual reports, and programs of work.	Executive Committee does yearly review to present to full board; Full board does three year updates.		Continuing work on strategic plan and agreement on clear goals and strategies
7.2 Develop a strong and strategic partnership between the staff, board, chapters, and organizational members.	Steering Committee; Training and Chapter Development Committee; need an "ambassador" to work as liaison between state and chapters		Steering Committee is addressing this through proposed by-law and policy changes. Note: develop guidelines for choosing delegates to the state through a clear statement of duties and description of state to chapter relationship.
7.3 Improve structure so that state and chapters can	Training and Chapter		Note: This

communicate needs and requests so that appropriate responses can occur. State board responds to needs/requests	Development; Exec. Committee; directors		strategy may need some work on wording.
7.4 Establish an effective nomination and succession process. 7.4.1 7.13 Bring state board up to full capacity - at-large members with specific talents, based on identified activities	Nominating Committee		
7.5 Conduct director orientation and training annually to begin after elections 2007	Training and Chapter Development; outgoing delegate should train new		
7.6 Review and maintain written position descriptions for officers, directors and staff	Board for ED; ED for contractors; board for board		
7.7 Define, refine, re-invent and/or otherwise make our chapter structure more effective	Training and chapter development		