



## SFA MISSION

The Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota supports the development and enhancement of sustainable farming systems through innovation, demonstration, education, and farmer-to-farmer networking.

## INSIDE: SFA'S 21ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

"Keeping the  
'Family' in  
Family Farming"

Saturday,  
February 18, 2012

College of  
Saint Benedict

St. Joseph, MN

[WWW.SFA-MN.ORG](http://WWW.SFA-MN.ORG)

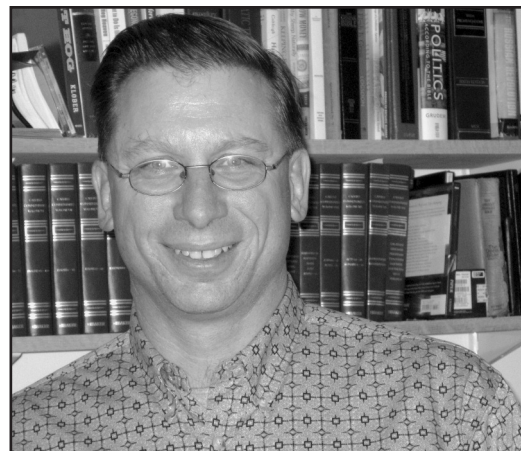
# What SFA is All About

By John Mesko

Another year is about to close, and with that comes the opportunity (and possibly the obligation) to assess what we are doing as an organization to advance our mission, to support and enhance sustainability and sustainable agriculture in Minnesota. The past year has been a whirlwind of activity along these lines, and SFA has been front and center, addressing the issues and needs of our members in a variety of ways.

Our role is unique among many organizations that serve in this genre of agriculture. SFA is farmer-led, farmer-focused. Who better to understand and respond to the needs of sustainable and organic producers? Our Board of Directors is made up of people from all corners of the state, sent by their local chapters and committed to our mission.

We have the flexibility to respond to important issues, without cumbersome overhead expenses commonly found in larger organizations. Finally, we provide a place where farmers of all types, ages, and levels of experience can network, contribute, and grow. Thank you for your commitment to SFA!



John Mesko

## What is Sustainable Agriculture?

■ Over the long term, Sustainable Agriculture improves productive land and the surrounding ecosystem.

■ Sustainable Agriculture provides an economically viable business for the producer and his/her family, while attaching all the costs associated with food production.

■ Sustainable Agriculture by its adoption and growth restores rural communities and provides healthy food locally and regionally.

How does the Sustainable Farming Association support sustainable agriculture in these areas with our programs? See Page 19.



# cornerpost

sustainable farming association of minnesota

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The CornerPost newsletter is published yearly. Articles, ideas, and information published in the CornerPost do not indicate a consensus among the members of the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota.

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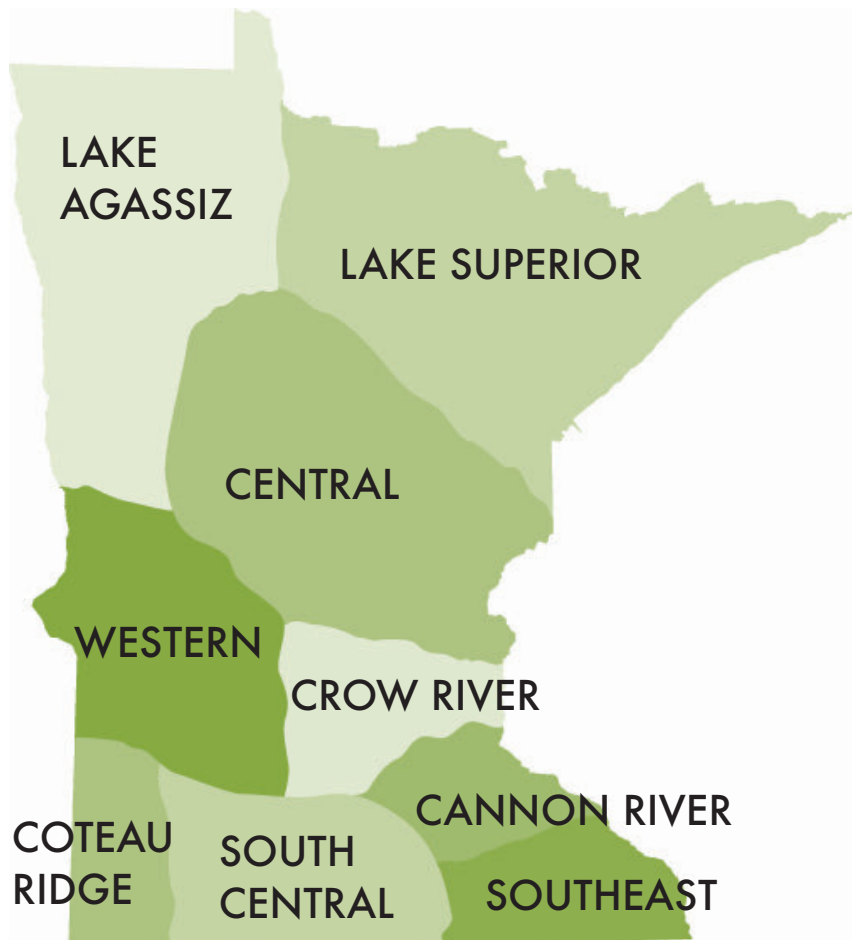
## More mileage per CornerPost

Before recycling CornerPost, leave your copy at your workplace, coffee shop, place of worship or a doctor's office, or simply pass on to a friend, neighbor or relative. Help spread the good word about sustainable agriculture while helping to conserve our resources.

[www.sfa-mn.org](http://www.sfa-mn.org)

## SFA of Minnesota: There's a chapter near you!

SFA chapters are active in interesting events year-round. Call or email the chapter contact (page 3) for more information, or visit [www.sfa-mn.org](http://www.sfa-mn.org).



## 2011 HIGHLIGHTS:

- New Crops Assessment (funded by Lakewinds Co-op) : Phase one complete (see report), seeking funding for Phase 2-3. More information at [sfa-mn.org](http://sfa-mn.org).
- Public Policy Initiative (funded by McKnight Foundation): Set up to determine the awareness and interest of SFA members in addressing public policy issues.
- Farm Transitions (Risk Management Agency) Joint Project with RTC: This project is designed to help identify successful strategies for matching exiting farmers and incoming farmers to provide access to land.
- Meat Processing Facilities in Northern MN (USDA-Ag Marketing Service): Expanding the access to inspected processing facilities in Northern Minnesota.
- Developing Beginning Farmer Curriculum: (SARE) joint project with University of Minnesota: Curriculum Development and educator training for small farms on small flock poultry management, soils, pastures and vegetable production.

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## Cannon River Chapter

By Mary Ellen Frame

It's not news that there are tremendous potential markets for locally grown food in institutions such as schools, hospitals and nursing homes. Over a number of years, farmers and farmer organizations have been trying to overcome the obstacles to realizing that potential. The obstacles include a need for a reliable quantity of product, the price difference between industrial food and food produced by small and medium-sized farms, the cost of transport, etc. At our annual meeting last January, we invited JoAnne Birkenkamp to talk about the Farm to School program of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). That was followed by a panel of farmers who have had experience supplying local schools.

Other events our chapter sponsored in 2011 include a Poultry Health Workshop in January in Northfield.

In June we had a field day at the SEEDS Farm near Northfield. This is a farm sponsored by St. Olaf college, run by student interns, which combines education and community building with growing food for sale and for the local food shelf.

In July, as part of the Festival of Farms, we had a tour of three farms in the Sogn Valley area. Just Food Co-op provided a bus to the farms. In the tour were Sogn Valley CSA (Tim and Leslie Mahle), Seven Songs Farm (Melissa Driscoll and Jay Hambridge) who raise heirloom vegetables and layers, and L& R Poultry and Produce (Rae and Leo Rusnak.) In spite of the miserable heat and humidity, people enjoyed seeing and learning about the farms.

In August we had a field day at Thorn Crest Farm (Gary and Maureen Vosejпка), a vegetable CSA which also has eggs, meat chicken and turkeys.

Two of our members this past year had a chance to talk to policy makers from Washington, D.C. Early in the summer, Josh Reinitz met Sen. Al Franken at the St. Peter co-op and talked with him. Josh said Sen. Franken was very receptive to what Josh had to say about farming. In July, when President Obama visited Cannon Falls, Rae Rusnak had a ticket to his speech, was introduced to him, and had a chance to talk to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. I find it encouraging that such people are paying attention to the issues around family farms. We're being heard!

Also encouraging is the growing interest in sources of food on the part of young people. In September, Carleton and St. Olaf colleges jointly sponsored an evening called "Weaving a Sustainable Food System." All sorts of local organizations were represented, such as Food Truth (a student organization), SFA, Healthy Communities Initiative, and many more. All these organizations put up posters telling about their involvement in food issues. I was amazed at the number of organizations which participated. The focus of this meeting was to initiate collaboration among these organizations. Collaboration is key to what we in SFA are trying to accomplish. We have a lot of collaboration, farmer to farmer, on the individual level.

Now we need to take advantage of the concern of eaters in order to widen our influence.

## Central Chapter

By Amanda Whittemore

From a busy year preparing for an outstanding Festival of Farms in July, to building Farm to School programs in the region, to preparing for the Central Chapter and Statewide annual meetings and touring the MState Sustainable Food Production Program, the Central Chapter has been very busy!

The Central Chapter is very lucky indeed to have MState Sustainable Food Production Program's Course Instructor, Sue Wika, Ph.D., on our board of directors. The Central Chapter, as a board, has voted to fully support the sustainment of this program. Recently, the Central Chapter held its monthly board meeting at MState with a meet and greet and Q&A with students. This was an invaluable opportunity for students to network, build relationships and hopefully continue working with SFA members while they meet the internship requirements of the program. We will see many of the students at the Statewide SFA annual meeting in February.

Save the date! The Central Chapter Annual Meeting will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sat., Jan. 7, 2012, at the Browerville Community Center. Featured topics will include beginning farmers, Farm Bill 2012 and agricultural landscapes. A potluck local foods meal will be served. Election of board members and a review of Central's mission, along with building priorities for the chapter in 2012 will take place at the annual meeting.

Farm to School initiatives are gaining momentum nationally, and this can also be seen in the central region. Recently, Wadena Deer-Creek and their Farm to School work was featured in the U of M Extension Magazine. Work on the new school with grand opening for 2012-2013 school year is on target. In fortuitous fashion, design of the school includes high tunnels for both an educational component and also as a vehicle for local foods into the district. Members of the Central Chapter are also working with a large network of community members on grant writing and relationship building for a local foods distribution center/growers' cooperative in the Brainerd Lakes Area. If funded, this facility will provide the capital infusion necessary for scaling up our local foods movement to build capacity by adding growers, and will support schools, hospitals, local units of governments, restaurants and other institutions interested in providing locally grown, wholesome and nutritious foods to students, patrons, patients and clients. Additionally, we are actively working with local food service directors and SHIP Coordinators in a competitive grant cycle. We hope to obtain additional funding for educational opportunities for farmers on marketing local foods, to get local chefs into school kitchens for educational opportunities on using whole foods and herbs and more. This is truly an exciting time!

Members of the Central Chapter also participate as advisory board members for Happy Dancing Turtle's Food and Water Security. We invite you to the Back to Basics being held in our region on Saturday, January 28, 2012. This year's theme is "From Me to We." Central Chapter members will be featured speakers. Join us. Additional information at <http://www.happydancingturtle.org/>.



Farmer Don DeWeerd gives the Coteau Ridge Chapter a tour of his farm north of Pipestone during Festival of Farms on July 16.

## Coteau Ridge Chapter

By Bruce Johnson

The Coteau Ridge SFA Chapter celebrated Festival of Farms on July 16 with a tour of Don DeWeerd's organic grain farm north of Pipestone viewing fields of oats, corn and soybeans as we rode a trailer behind Don's tractor. We later gathered for dinner, including a beef tasting featuring beef from several members farms along with roast goose and goat. We had an increased attendance from the previous year including a number of new members and prospects. We finished the Festival listening to a talk about mycorrhizal fungus and its important relation to soil health.

A new Food Coop for Southwest MN has been a major project for the Coteau Ridge Chapter in 2011, and efforts will continue as 2012 arrives. Chapter President Sunny Ruthchild and a large group of members and interested citizens have been meeting and planning to lay the groundwork for a coop to serve Marshall and the wider area. They have engaged with the Southwest Marketing Advisory Center at SMSU in Marshall to do marketing research, visited the Food Coop project in Brookings, SD run by Dakota Rural Action several times and started a Facebook page (Friends of a Southwest Minnesota Food Coop) to promote the initiative. The group has applied for a grant to help develop a producer list and has been discussing starting a Community Kitchen to help bridge the gap between locally grown food and the customer.

In 2012 Coteau Ridge Chapter will continue to have the popular meetings at many of our members' farms. Farmers can show us what they are doing and our experienced and new members can offer comments and questions, as always. Many of our newer members are joining as consumers who want to support and source local food. They are bringing new energy to our group. See you at Festival of Farms 2012!

## Crow River Chapter

By Jerry Ford

Taking this in reverse chronological order, we're pleased to announce:

The CROW RIVER ANNUAL CHAPTER MEETING  
"Rotations: Animal, Vegetable, Partnership"

10 a.m. Sat., Jan. 7th, 2012

Gale Woods Farm, Minnetrista, MN

Here's the chance to participate in some great workshops, meet old friends and new, enjoy local foods, and RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP! We'll send something in the mail and to the email list soon, and will set up online registration as well. Keep checking at [sfa-mn.org/crow-river](http://sfa-mn.org/crow-river).

Halloween weekend, we had our umpteenth annual Fall Social, this time at Crow River Winery near Hutchinson ([crowriverwinery.com](http://crowriverwinery.com)).

Crow River members Mike and Val McBrady gave us an inspiring presentation on the vineyards, winery and garlic operation, and treated us to a delightful wine tasting, including garlic wine! Of course, there was excellent food from Mary Jane Miller and potlucks brought in by members, and, as the event name suggests, lots of social time. The costume contest was won by Adam

Culip and Laura Freriech's baby, dressed as an ear of sweetcorn.

August brought around the 6th Annual MINNESOTA GARLIC FESTIVAL, and it was the best yet. Over 3,500 patrons, vendors and volunteers made it a marvelous day of great food, chef demos and entertainment. Regional member farmers sold vast amounts of garlic and other farm products, local arts were well represented, and our ongoing zero-waste program was a success. The Seventh Annual Festival will be Aug. 11th, 2012, at the McLeod County Fairgrounds - and we're adding a garlic growers and gardeners contest! ([mngarlicfest.com](http://mngarlicfest.com))

In July, we participated in Festival of Farms with tours at two growers near the northwest metro. Mike Lilja of Nature's Folly Farm and Bruce Bacon of Crandall Garden Farm showed us their permaculture-based market operations.

We're looking forward to 2012 and hoping for a great season!



## South Central Chapter

By Jim Tjepkema

In 2011, our chapter continued to serve our members and friends located primarily in Mower, Freeborn, Faribault, Steel, Waseca, and Blue Earth counties. We sponsored two meetings for our members and supporters, held an annual meeting open to the public, and sponsored a farm tour as part of the SFA Festival of Farms. In an effort to reach out to more of the people in our area we contracted with two of our members to develop promotional material and improve our mailing list. Recently we have started planning for our 2012 annual meeting to be held March 10, 2012. In addition, we are putting together a newsletter and looking into establishing ways of spreading information over the internet.

Our annual meeting featured a talk by Paula Westmoreland and Lansing Shepard based on their book, "This Perennial Land," which contains many suggestions for improving conservation practices in the Blue Earth River Basin and across Minnesota. After enjoying a delicious meal of homemade soup, bread, and other items, Mike Cotter entertained us with several very interesting and entertaining stories about rural life. The meeting ended with two discussion groups, one on local foods and the other on conservation. Early in the year we held a showing of the film "Farming Forward," and in the early fall we held a potluck to give our members and friends a chance to socialize.

Our biggest event this year was a tour of three organic farms

near Wells, MN, which was a part of the Festival of Farms organized by SFA. This tour started at the Lutteke organic dairy farm where lunch was served. After lunch the tour continued to Gary and Leona Yokiel's organic grain and livestock farm. The tour ended at Archie and Denise Kleunder's organic grain farm. Comments from some the more than 70 people who attended the tour indicated that it was well received. The effort of the three farms that hosted the tour and the volunteers from our chapter who helped with the tour played a big role in making this event successful.

Our board for this year included Dean Goette, Tracy Skaar, Jill Louters, Kelly Firkins, Pawel Buda, Wes Tennis, Chris Byron, Dick Carroll, and Jim Tjepkema. Sherry Jansen has been appointed to fill in for Dick Carroll, who retired from the board after many years as a much appreciated board member. The board is looking forward to our next annual meeting, where we plan to have a program on farm policy led by John Mesko as well as several talks by chapter members covering details of their commercial enterprises.

Kelly Firkins and Pawel Buda have completed the work they did under contract on developing new promotional materials and on improving our mailing list. Sherry Jansen is taking the lead in developing a newsletter and checking into ways to reach our members over the internet. In our last board meeting we decided to send out a request for input on planning programs for 2012 and would appreciate receiving your suggestions for new and improved programs.



Coteau Ridge Chapter members hang out during Festival of Farms on July 16.

You are invited to attend  
the 21st edition of SFA's



College of Saint Benedict  
Feb. 18, 2012 • St. Joseph

# Annual Conference

“Keeping the ‘Family’ in Family Farming”

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## Join SFA for farming, food and fellowship

The keynote speaker at this year's conference is Dr. Val Farmer, a clinical psychologist who established himself as a pioneer leader in the field of rural mental health. He actively practiced clinical psychology in South Dakota for 22 years and in North Dakota for nine. He currently resides in Wildwood, Mo.

Farmer's writing career began in 1982 when he began writing a monthly column on rural mental health topics for Farm Wife News. In 1984, he began a newspaper column that was syndicated into farm papers in the Midwest and Canada as well as daily and weekly newspapers in agricultural communities and trade centers. Monthly, he writes two columns on rural mental topics and several more on mental health and cultural/social issues.

Dr. Farmer has been a popular speaker and workshop presenter for farm audiences and conventions on topics on rural stress, marriage and family life, parenting, communication skills, retirement, family farm and ranch business relationships, and succession and leadership issues in inter-generational and multi-family farms. He has authored three books and several booklets and was a regular weekly guest for eight years discussing rural mental health topics on AgriTalk, a nationally syndicated rural radio program.

### CONFERENCE LOCATION

The College of Saint Benedict, in St. Joseph, Minn., will again play host to the 2012 SFA Annual Conference. The Conference will take place in the center of the St. Ben's campus at the Gorecki Dining & Conference Center. Lunch will be through

the St. Ben's dining service, which incorporates local foods into its menu throughout the year.

### SFA AWARDS

SFA will present its annual Sustainable Farmer Emeritus and Distinguished Service Awards at the Leaders Breakfast on the morning of the Annual Conference.

The Sustainable Farmer Emeritus Award is given to a farmer or farm family, currently farming or retired, that has dedicated many years to the advancement of sustainable farming in Minnesota.

The SFA Distinguished Service Award is for anyone – farmer or non-farmer – who has shown a high level of dedication, commitment, service and perseverance in supporting sustainable farming in Minnesota.

Nominations may be made using the form on Page 14 of this CornerPost or by emailing Mary Hanks at [Mary.Hanks@state.mn.us](mailto:Mary.Hanks@state.mn.us).

### EXHIBITS AND SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

An eye-catching array of exhibits will be on hand for attendees to peruse between thought-provoking sessions and delicious food. Are you a farmer or organization that would like to exhibit? Do you like what SFA is doing? Would you like to be a catalyst for our work? Become an exhibitor or sponsor: register at [www.sfa-mn.org/conference](http://www.sfa-mn.org/conference) or use the sponsorship form on page 10. For more information, contact John Mesko at 763.260.0209 or [john@sfa-mn.org](mailto:john@sfa-mn.org).

# Session Schedule

Subject to change

**Note:** Registration, volunteer sign-in and exhibit setup begins at 6:30 a.m. in Gorecki Lobbies. Conference ends at 5 p.m. More sessions to be added; keep track at [www.sfa-mn.org/conference](http://www.sfa-mn.org/conference).

ROOM	204A	204B	204C	120A	120B	Gorecki Lobbies	Ardolf Science Center Room 143: Food Science Lab	
7 a.m.								
7:30 a.m.	Setup for keynote speaker		Organic Valley Leaders Breakfast 7:30-8:30			Registration opens at 6:30 a.m.		
8 a.m.			Change to keynote					
8:30 a.m.						Exhibits open at 8 a.m.		
9 a.m.	Opening comments: John Mesko, SFA Executive Director							
9:30 a.m.	Keynote Session: Dr. Val Farmer							
10 a.m.	General instructions: Jerry Ford 9-10:30							
10:30 a.m.	BREAK							CULINARY SESSIONS
11 a.m.	Farm Transitions 11-noon	Dr. Val Farmer Q&A 10:45-11:45	Meat Processing Facilities in MN 11-noon	Set up for next session			Session 1 45 minutes 10:45-11:30	
11:30 a.m.							LUNCH 11:30 A.M.-12:30 P.M.	
Noon	LUNCH: A delicious, locally grown and seasonal meal from the College of Saint Benedict food service							
12:30 p.m.				Beginning Farmer Curriculum Update & Workshop 12:45-2:15			Session 2 45 minutes 12:30-1:15	
1 p.m.	Farm Bill 2012 Update 1-2:15		Diet, Stress & Health 1-2:15					Session 3 45 minutes 1:30-2:15
1:30 p.m.								
2 p.m.	BREAK							
2:30 p.m.	Vegetable & Meat Quality 2:30-3:35	Set up for wine tasting	The ABCs of the NOP (description on page 9) 2:30-3:35				Session 4 45 minutes 2:30-3:15	
3 p.m.								
3:30 p.m.	BREAK					Exhibits close at 4 p.m.		
4 p.m.	Local Wine & Cheese Tasting							
4:30 p.m.								
5 p.m.	THANKS FOR ATTENDING THE 2012 SFA ANNUAL CONFERENCE • WE'LL SEE YOU IN 2013!							

## Session Descriptions

### THE ABC'S OF THE NOP or ORGANIC PAPERWORK: IT'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK!

Becoming Certified Organic is not easy, but knowing the potential pitfalls and having a plan can make everything easier. Presented by MOSA (Midwest Organic Services Association), attendees will gain insight into choosing a certifier, the certification process and maintaining a good farmer-certifier relationship. This workshop is intended to assist farmers ready to take the certification plunge as well as those currently in transition and recently certified. We will provide you with educational and technical resources to assist you along the way. After this workshop you should be prepared to confidently take the plunge into certifying your farm and changing your life forever!

Also, most organic farmers think of certification paperwork as a necessary evil, but some farmers have found a better way. This workshop provides insights about how to develop and maintain paperwork that is simple, easy to use, and – most of all – an invaluable tool in managing your operation.

*Presented by Jackie Von Ruden, who has worked for MOSA since 2005. Jackie is Farm Certification Manager, Certification Review Manager, and an organic farm and processing inspector.*

### DIET, STRESS AND HEALTH

Back by popular demand! Farming is a stressful, dangerous occupation. The additional stressors of a full- or part-time job and

family obligations make for rushed meals and a potentially unhealthy diet. This session will focus on ways that you can reduce your stress level and improve your overall health by making changes in your schedule and diet. We all want you in farming for the long haul; invest in you!

*Presented by Dr. Tatiana Riabokin*

### VEGETABLE/MEAT QUALITY

You've raised a great product on your farm. What does it take to ensure your product is still that great quality by the time it reaches your customer? We'll discuss packaging, storage, transportation and other issues related to direct marketing success.

### FARM BILL UPDATE

What's going on in Congress? Well, we won't be able to answer that, but we can give you the latest on what's happening with the 2012 Farm Bill and how you can be involved.

### MEAT PROCESSING IN MINNESOTA

Do you have to travel great distances to get your animals processed for sale? Are you having difficulties finding inspected slaughter in your area? Come find out what's going on with this issue and what SFA is doing to help make more inspected processing available in Minnesota.

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## Annual Conference Sponsors (as of Dec. 14)

### PLATINUM

Organic Valley  
Renewing the Countryside



### GOLD

Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture  
Minnesota Department of Agriculture/Minnesota Grown



# Sponsor & Exhibitor Policy

Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota

21st Annual Conference • "Keeping the 'Family' in Family Farming"  
Feb. 18, 2012 • College of Saint Benedict, St. Joseph

[www.sfa-mn.org](http://www.sfa-mn.org)

## SFA Conference Sponsor

Partner with SFA in a most significant way by selecting the Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze sponsorship level on the accompanying registration form. Sponsors will be featured in publicity and promotional materials and in the SFA conference program, distributed to all conference attendees. All sponsor levels include an exhibit space, publicity and complimentary conference registrations. For more information, contact John Mesko at [john@sfa-mn.org](mailto:john@sfa-mn.org) or 763-260-0209.

## SFA Conference Exhibitor

Display and promote your mission, message, products and information while interacting with the most innovative farmers and sustainable agriculture "movers and shakers" in Minnesota. Exhibit setup time runs from 7-8 a.m. on the morning of Sat., Feb. 18. Exhibits may be taken down after 5 p.m. All exhibit spaces are assigned and will include a 6-foot table with tablecloth, skirting, and one chair per exhibit. For more information, contact Jerry Ford at [jerry@sfa-mn.org](mailto:jerry@sfa-mn.org) or 320-543-3394.

Level of Participation	Fee	Registrations Included	Benefits of Sponsorship Level
Platinum Sponsor	\$1,500	4	Logo on the conference website and promotional mailings or ads. At the conference, you will be recognized by a donor board as well as receiving mention in conference materials and website, and a booth and display table. Additional recognition may be available.
Gold Sponsor	\$1,200	3	Logo on the conference website and any promotional mailings or ads. At the conference, you will be recognized by a donor board as well as receiving mention in conference materials and website and booth and display table.
Silver Sponsor	\$650	2	Be recognized by a donor board as well as mention in conference materials and website, booth and display table
Bronze Sponsor	\$400	1	Mention in conference materials and website, booth and display table
Exhibitor Non-Member	\$300	1	Booth and display table
Exhibitor Member	\$200	1	Booth and display table
Purchase Paid Ad in Conference Program	\$100		Ad must be designed to SFA specifics. Jason Walker ( <a href="mailto:jason@sfa-mn.org">jason@sfa-mn.org</a> ) will contact you.

# Sponsor & Exhibitor Form

Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota

21st Annual Conference • "Keeping the 'Family' in Family Farming"  
Feb. 18, 2012 • College of Saint Benedict, St. Joseph

[www.sfa-mn.org](http://www.sfa-mn.org)

Please complete this form and mail with check payable to SFA of MN (c/o John Mesko, SFA Executive Director), Box 192, Princeton, MN 55371. **Deadline: Feb. 1, 2012.**  
You may also register and pay online at [www.sfa-mn.org/conference](http://www.sfa-mn.org/conference).

Sponsor/Exhibitor Level \_\_\_\_\_

The information below will be used to contact your organization, business or farm about conference details and will be printed in the conference program.

Organization or Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_

Short description of organization, business or farm: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

For Gold, Silver and Bronze Sponsors, will you have an exhibit? .....  Yes  No

Does your exhibit require electricity? .....  Yes  No

\* Advertisement in Conference Program? (\$75 fee) .....  Yes  No

Fees are nonrefundable

Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* Name(s) of organization, business or farm representative(s) attending the SFA Conference: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*\* If your organization, farm or business purchases an advertisement in the conference program, Jason Walker ([jason@sfa-mn.org](mailto:jason@sfa-mn.org)) will contact you with specific ad information.*

*\*\* SFA will contact you prior to the conference to find out who will be attending on behalf of your organization, farm or business if not listed above. You may also send this information to Jason Walker ([jason@sfa-mn.org](mailto:jason@sfa-mn.org)) or call him at 612.605.9269.*

Thank you for supporting sustainable agriculture in Minnesota

# Registration Form

Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota

21st Annual Conference • "Keeping the 'Family' in Family Farming"  
Feb. 18, 2012 • College of Saint Benedict, St. Joseph

[www.sfa-mn.org](http://www.sfa-mn.org)

- You may also register online until Feb. 15, 2012
- For more information, visit [www.sfa-mn.org](http://www.sfa-mn.org) or contact John Mesko at [john@sfa-mn.org](mailto:john@sfa-mn.org) or 763-260-0209

	Registration Category	Per Person	Number Attending	Line Total
1	Early Bird Discount Registration for SFA Members* • Valid through Jan. 31	\$60		
2	Early Bird Discount Registration Includes SFA membership until 4/1/2013 Price valid through Jan. 31	\$85		
3	Regular Registration (after Jan. 31) Includes SFA membership until 4/1/2013	\$95		
4	College Rate ** (18+) SFA Member*	\$20		
5	College Rate ** (18+) Non-Member	\$45		
6	Teen Rate*** (13-18)	\$10		
7	SFA Leaders Breakfast Sponsored by Organic Valley	\$12.50		

**TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED (SUM OF ROWS 1-7):**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send a check payable to SFA of MN, attn: John Mesko, Box 192, Princeton, MN 55371

Fees are nonrefundable

OVER 

# Registration Form

Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota

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Feb. 18, 2012 • College of Saint Benedict, St. Joseph

[www.sfa-mn.org](http://www.sfa-mn.org)

## Contact Information

Name(s) of conference attendees \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please send a check payable to SFA of MN, attn: John Mesko, Box 192, Princeton, MN 55371

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- \* SFA Membership current/renewed for 2012 (use corresponding form)
- \*\* College means anyone who is registered in a degree-seeking program, full- or part-time
- \*\*\* Teen rate is intended for high school students. Teens 18+ not enrolled in high school, college, or post-secondary education are charged regular registration

## Notes

- SFA does not offer a "non-meal" registration option
- There are no partial registrations. The registration fee is for a full-day program on Saturday, Feb. 18, 2012. The fee is the same regardless of what time the registrant(s) shows up on the day of the conference. **There are no member discounts for day-of-conference registration.**
- Scholarships and reduced fees for volunteers area available. For more information on these options, contact John Mesko, SFA Executive Director, at 763.260.0209 or [john@sfa-mn.org](mailto:john@sfa-mn.org).

# Awards Nominations

Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota

21st Annual Conference • "Keeping the 'Family' in Family Farming"  
Feb. 18, 2012 • College of Saint Benedict, St. Joseph

[www.sfa-mn.org](http://www.sfa-mn.org)

## 2012 Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota Awards

Based on qualifications of a high level of dedication, commitment, service, perseverance, achievement and contributions to the advancement of sustainable farming in Minnesota, I nominate the following person(s) for the (choose one):

### **Sustainable Farmer Emeritus Award (farmer or retired farmer only)**

This award will be given to a farmer or farm family, currently farming or retired, that has dedicated many years to the advancement of sustainable farming in Minnesota.

Nominee: \_\_\_\_\_

### **SFA Distinguished Service Award (may be a non-farmer)**

This award is for a farmer or non-farmer who has shown a high level of dedication, commitment, service and perseverance to supporting sustainable agriculture in Minnesota.

Nominee: \_\_\_\_\_

My name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain why your nominee(s) deserve the award: \_\_\_\_\_

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Your signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Honorees will be announced at the Leaders Breakfast at the 2012 SFA Annual Conference on Sat., Feb. 18, at College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, MN. Mail your nomination form by Fri., Feb. 4, 2012, to: SFA of MN, c/o Mary Hanks, 10500 295th Street W, Northfield, MN 55057, or email your nomination to [Mary.Hanks@state.mn.us](mailto:Mary.Hanks@state.mn.us).

## Hotels offering special conference rates

### SUPER 8

1825 E Minnesota St, St. Joseph • 320-363-7711

Ask for the Sustainable Farming Association block.

Room with one Queen size bed: \$58.00 plus tax.

Room with two Queen size beds: \$66.00 plus tax; for two persons, each additional person is \$5.00 extra.

*This block will be held until Feb. 2, 2012. After that, no special rates will be offered.*

### MOTEL 6

815 First St S, Waite Park • 800-466-8356

Ask for the Sustainable Farming Association block.

Each room has two full-size beds. Rates per night: One person, \$37.99; two people, \$43.99; three people, \$46.99; four people, \$49.99

*The block will be held until until Jan. 18, 2012.*

### HOLIDAY INN

75 S 37th Ave, St. Cloud • 320-253-9000

Ask for the Sustainable Farming Association block.

\$94.95 per night for either a room with two double beds or a room with one queen-sized bed.

## Other accommodations

#### Saint John's Abbey

##### Guest House

31802 County Road 159

Collegeville, MN 56321

320-363-2011

saintjohnsabbey.org

#### Heritage House B&B

402 6th Ave S, St. Cloud

320-656-5818

888-547-4422

innkeepers@heritagehouse-

bbmn.com

#### Victorian Oaks B&B

404 Ninth Ave S, St. Cloud

320-202-1404

866-842-6257

louis@vicoaks.com

#### Edelbrock House B&B

216 14th Ave N, St Cloud

320-259-0071

## Directions

### FROM TWIN CITIES

Take Interstate 94 West (from the 494/694 split in Maple Grove) to St. Joseph, approximately 57 miles.

### FROM INTERSTATE 94

Take Exit 160, County Road 2, toward St. Joseph.

Turn right on 3rd Ave NW.

Drive to the center of campus (to the Gorecki Dining and Conference Center).

Best lots to park in: #2 or #4

### FROM ST. CLOUD

Take Division St (County Road 75) west to St. Joseph.

Turn left on College Ave.

Turn right on W Minnesota St/County Road 2.

Turn left on 3rd Ave NW.

Drive to the center of campus (to the Gorecki Dining and Conference Center).

Best lots to park in: #2 or #4.

### FROM WILLMAR

Take Minnesota Hwy 23 about 45 miles to Cold Spring.

In Cold Spring, turn left on County Road 2.

Drive approximately 10 miles to St. Joseph.

Turn right on 3rd Ave NW.

Drive to the center of campus (to the Gorecki Dining and Conference Center).

Best lots to park in: #2 or #4.

### FROM DULUTH

Take Interstate 35 South and exit onto Minnesota Hwy 23 toward Mora. Keep on Hwy 23 all the way into St. Cloud.

Cross Minnesota Hwy 15 and continue onto County Road 75 (Do not turn to continue on Minnesota Hwy 23).

Take Division St (County Road 75) west to St. Joseph.

Turn left on College Ave.

Turn right on W Minnesota St/County Road 2.

Turn left on 3rd Ave NW.

Drive to the center of campus (to the Gorecki Dining and Conference Center).

Best lots to park in: #2 or #4.

# Campus Guide

**A Main Building**

Teresa Reception Center,  
South Lawn

**B Sacred Heart Chapel (Monastery)**

**C Main Convent (Monastery)**

**D Regina Hall**

**E Mary Hall Commons**

Bookstore, Post Office,  
Campus Security

**F Aurora Hall**

**G Corona Hall**

**H West Apartments**

Dominica, Gable, Girgen,  
Schumacher, Smith, Sohler

**I Brian Hall**

**J Margretta Hall**

**K Lottie & Frank J. Ardolf Jr. Hall**

**L Health Center**

**M Gorecki Dining & Conference Center**

**N Clemens Library**

**O Ardolf Science Center**

**P Academic Services Building**

**Q Henrita Academic Building**

**R East Apartments**

Luetmer, McDonald, Wirth,  
Zierden

**S Benedicta Arts Center**

Colman Theater, Escher  
Auditorium, Gallery Lounge,  
Gorecki Family Theater,  
Gorecki Gallery, Sandra &  
Steven's Courtyard Garden

**T Murray Hall & Pool**

**U Richarda Hall**

**V Haehn Campus Center**

Claire Lynch Hall,  
Clemens Field House,  
Alumnae Hall, McGlynn's,  
O'Connell's

**W Idzerda House**

**X Renner House**

The President's Residence

**Y College Avenue Apartments**

**PARKING**

**Guests:** Lots 1, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 16

**Student Parking:** Lots 2, 4, 6, 7,  
9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16

**Employees:** Lots 1, 3, 8, 10,  
12, 14, 16

**PARKING**

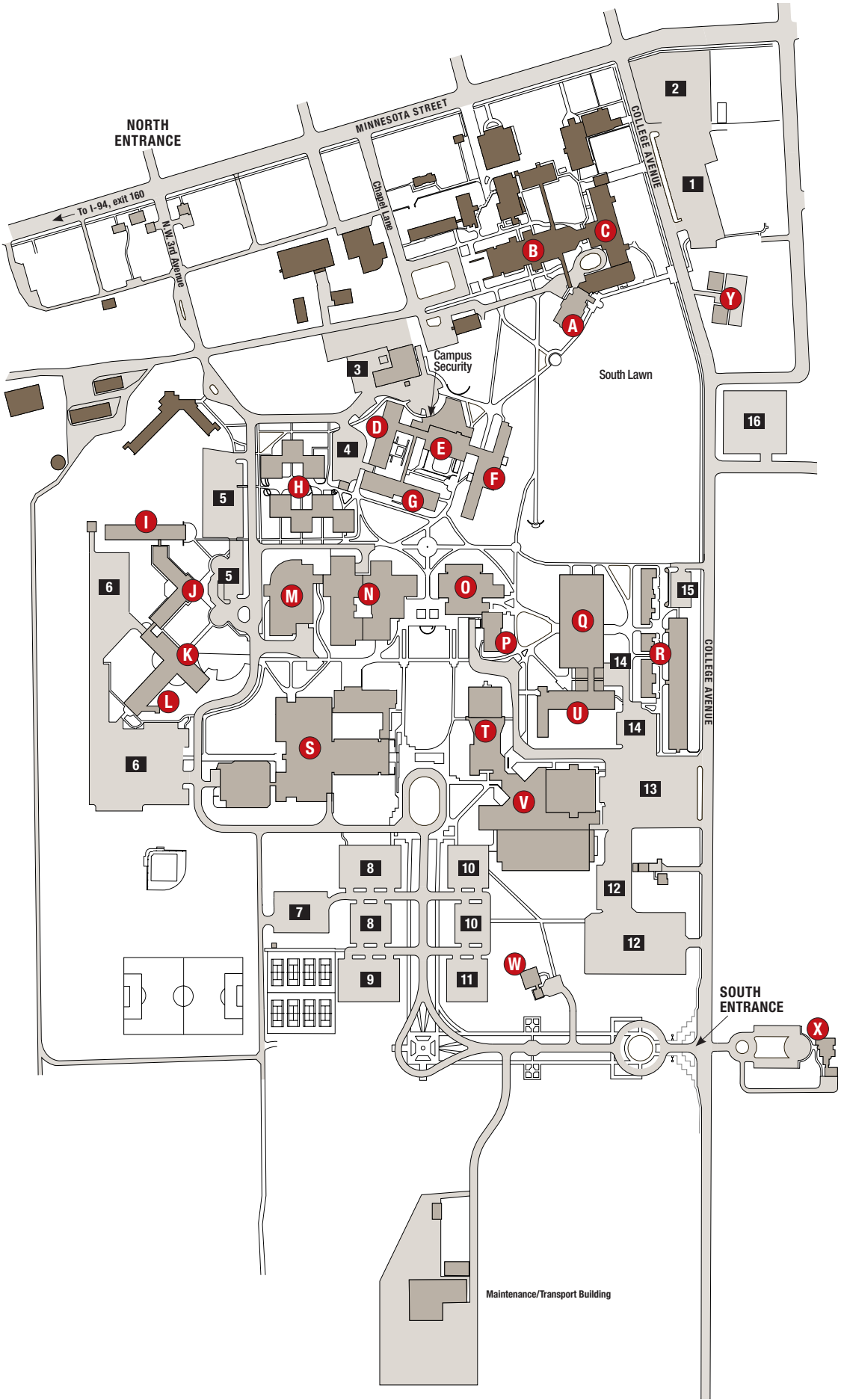
**Guests:** Lots 1, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 16

**Student Parking:** Lots 2, 4, 6, 7,  
9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16

**Employees:** Lots 1, 3, 8, 10,  
12, 14, 16



COLLEGE OF  
Saint Benedict



## Sixth annual Garlic Festival attracts largest-ever crowd

By Jerry Ford

In August, 3,550 patrons, vendors and volunteers attended the sixth annual Minnesota Garlic Festival, making it the best yet – a marvelous day of great food, chef demos and entertainment. Regional member farmers sold vast amounts of garlic and other farm products, local arts were well represented, and our ongoing zero-waste program was a success.

The Seventh Minnesota Garlic Festival will be Aug. 11th, 2012, at the McLeod County Fairgrounds – and we're adding a garlic growers and gardeners contest! ([mngarlicfest.com](http://mngarlicfest.com)).

The festival is always seeking new vendors, especially farmers and food vendors who want to try selling their products in a high-volume festival situation; watch the website for the 2012 vendor applications.

### GARLIC FESTIVAL POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Be a part of the team that puts together the Garlic Festival! The following volunteer coordinator positions are currently open:

- ADMISSIONS COORDINATOR
- WINE TASTING COORDINATOR
- HOSPITALITY COORDINATOR

Please contact Jerry Ford, Festival Director, at 320-543-3394 or [jerry@sfa-mn.org](mailto:jerry@sfa-mn.org)

## Minnesota Dairy Initiative Update

By Kent Solberg

This year, the Minnesota Dairy Initiative had several program highlights.

On Oct. 1, we co-sponsored an energized fence workshop for grazers with the Minnesota Sustainable Food Production program in Fergus Falls. Approximately 30 participants and several potential dairy grazers participated.

We worked with four families who were examining dairy startups. One family recently purchased a farm to pursue dairy, and we'll be working with them over the next year on parlor design and a grazing system. Two other families have access to land/facilities but are currently not in dairy, and we're exploring the feasibility of organic dairy production with them.

We worked with two farms to explore their direct-marketing options.

Also, we've worked to market development for value-added dairy products, tried to improve access to affordable land, and worked to ease farm transitions and help start dairies with low capital investment.

Looking forward, we will continue to assist new dairy startups and value-added market options. I also plan to attend several conferences this winter to promote MDI, and we'll be working with Renewing the Countryside on a dairy-focused project to implement farm transitions.

## Want to get involved in SFA? Volunteer at the Annual Conference!

**Two Volunteer Team Coordinator positions are available for the 2012 Annual Conference.** These positions offer half-price conference registration plus a coupon for a half-price SFA T-shirt. Areas needed:

**PARKING TEAM:** Requires a hardy soul to work outside in the cold! Set up parking signs the day before the conference in the late afternoon/early evening, or assure that College of Saint Benedict staff has done this. Work with three volunteers from 7 to 9 a.m. Feb. 18 to direct foot traffic from parking lots to registration, and set up overflow parking signs.

**CLEAN UP AND CLOSE DOWN TEAM:** Work with four volunteers from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. Feb. 18 to disassemble nametags, collect evaluations, take down and collect signage, pick up rubbish, etc.

If you are interested, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Karen Couné at: 612.202.7201 or [karen.coune@gmail.com](mailto:karen.coune@gmail.com).

### FARM FOR SALE

Heartsease Farm is a 6.9-acre site with 1,300 row feet of raspberries, 100 row feet of asparagus, and 1.9 acres of pasture grass planted to heal the soil. Managed organically for two years. Site includes a three-bedroom, two-bath, 2,020-square-foot home; detached, two-car garage; and older outbuildings. Located in rural Bird Island.

Visit [YouTube.com](http://YouTube.com) and search for "Heartsease Farm" to see photos.

Offered for \$105,000 through Remax Today's Properties.  
Call Linda Johnson at 320-221-3639 to schedule a showing.

# Survey: More Minnesota consumers seek locally grown specialty foods

By John Mesko

The number of consumers seeking specific specialty local food items is growing. Grains such as quinoa and spelt, native fruits such as currants and sea buckthorn, and herbs such as nettle and burdock are growing in popularity among health conscious, local food advocates. Other types of local foods that lack availability are 100% grass-fed dairy products (including sheep and goat products), local bee pollen and royal jelly, rare grass fed meat products such as broths and marrow bones, and fermented foods such as kim chi, kombucha and local beer/wine.

Many people would like to obtain locally produced/processed versions of these foods, but cannot, either because production expertise is lacking among MN farmers or the perceived demand is too low to entice producers to try new crops.

In surveys and discussions with SFA farmer-members, we've learned that finding a market for unique crops that have a higher-than-average return is a real need among Minnesota's sustainable farmers.

The New Crops Assessment Project by Sustainable Farming Association (SFA) was conducted to assess the demand for and interest in hard-to-find crops among Minnesota's growing local, sustainable and organic food consumer base. The majority of the funding for the New Crops Assessment was provided through the Lakewinds Cooperative Community Share Program.

## Customer conclusions from SFA Survey

- The affordability of organics is a concern for most customers, and many customers always purchase organic over conventional options when available.

- The majority of customers surveyed strive to obtain as much of their food locally as possible, and the majority consider local food to be food that is grown in Minnesota.

- There is a strong market for locally produced quinoa: 54 percent would like a local source.

- There may be potential markets for spelt, teff, white wheat, amaranth, farro, white corn hominy and millet, but many consumers would like to learn more about them before purchasing.

- There could be a good local market for gluten free oats: 27 percent would like to find a local source, giving it the second highest demand in the category.

- There is a good market for locally produced currants.

- Many customers would like to learn more about sea buckthorn, nettle and burdock.

- There is strong market potential for both local grass-fed meat and local grass-fed milk: 67 percent of respondents either purchase grass-fed milk currently or would like to find a local source for it, and 73 percent purchase it once a month or more. For grass-fed meat, 73 percent of respondents either purchase grass-fed meat currently or would like to find a local source; 71 percent purchase it once a month or more. This is assuming to some extent that new farmers can penetrate the markets for local grass-fed meat and milk that currently exist.

- There is a reasonable market for locally produced sauerkraut.

- There is a good market for locally produced beer.

- There is a good market for locally produced wine.

- The vast majority of respondents would purchase the discussed foods at a food co-op.

- Many respondents would purchase the discussed foods at farmers markets as well.

- Few customers would purchase the discussed foods through CSA's (16.3 percent) or at regular grocery stores or specialty grocery stores. Some respondents would purchase the discussed foods directly from a farmer.

- Many respondents spend 50 percent or more of their total food budget at food co-ops.

- Most respondents purchase their food from a variety of different sources.

- Respondents, in general, shop at food co-ops more than any other source.

## Farmers' knowledge of hard-to-find foods

- The majority of farmers surveyed would be interested in learning more about millet and how to produce it.

- Many farmers would be interested in learning more about currants and how to produce them.

- Many farmers surveyed would be interested in learning more about bee pollen and how to produce it.

- Many farmers surveyed would be interested in learning more about royal jelly and how to produce it.

- For many crops, many farmers are familiar with the food but have no desire to produce it: quinoa, spelt, gluten-free oats, nettle, burdock, grass-fed milk, grass-fed goat milk, grass-fed marrow bones, bee pollen, royal jelly, kombucha, and kimchi. All of the above received 50 percent or more in the "I know what this it, but do not desire to produce it" category. Many farmers are not familiar with teff, faro or sea buckthorn.

# How does the SFA support sustainable agriculture?

By John Mesko

With our programs, SFA of Minnesota helps fulfill our mission in several ways. We believe this is done by:

## Improving productive land and the surrounding ecosystem

- **Grazefest:** designed to help educate farmers and consumers about the benefits of grass-based production practices.
- **University of Minnesota Curriculum Development:** on the cutting edge of developing tools for beginning farmers that will help them farm in more ecologically sound ways.
- **Farmer sharing with farmers at field days, chapter meetings and the SFA Annual**

Conference the tools and tips that are working.

## Providing an economically viable business for the producer and his/her family

- **New Crops Assessment:** helping to develop new markets for SFA members to grow and sell new crops.
- **Farm Beginnings:** Helping the next generation of farmers in NE Minnesota get off on the right foot.
- **Slow Money:** Highlighting the work of Woody Tasch, starting the conversation about alternative funding of agriculture.
- **Farm Transitions:** Helping future farmers and exiting farmers find each other to the benefit of both.

■ **Meat Processing in Northern MN:** Helping establish a market for individual cuts of meat in Northern Minnesota.

■ **Agritourism:** Partnering with Renewing the Countryside to help farmers find and enhance new revenue streams.

## Restoring rural communities and providing healthy food locally and regionally

- **Agritourism:** Bringing more dollars to rural Minnesota.
- **Local Foods:** At the chapter level SFA farmers are meeting local food demand.
- **MN Garlic Festival:** Putting Sustainable Farmers front and center to meet the growing demand for local food.

# Renewing the Countryside pre-conference workshop set

By Jan Joannides

Do you have a farm succession or estate plan? If not, your family could be saddled with unnecessary taxes and endless red tape upon your passing, if you retire, or if you become too ill to farm.

Gary Hachfeld and David Bau, of the University of Minnesota Extension, are partnering with Renewing the Countryside and the Sustainable Farming Association to present their highly

acclaimed workshop, "Farm Transition and Estate Planning: Create Your Farm Legacy," from 12-5 p.m. Feb. 17, the day before the SFA annual conference. (Note: Exact site is yet to be determined; check back at [www.sfa-mn.org](http://www.sfa-mn.org) for details. Workshop will be in the St. Joseph area near the SFA Annual Conference at the College of Saint Benedict.)

In the workshop, participants get a greater understanding of transfer strategies, tax issues related to the transfer process, discuss methods for treatment of heirs in the transfer process, as well as how to go about developing a written transfer plan. As part of the workshop, participants will be given time to complete worksheets related to the application of different transfer strategies as well as listing personal, family and farm business goals, culminating in the beginning of a farm business transfer plan.

Estate planning is also crucial to the transition process. The workshop will discuss wills and trusts, life insurance, power of attorney, long-term health care, and more – all issues that help complete a transfer plan.

The workshop costs \$25 for the first member of the family and just \$10 for each additional family member. The fee includes lunch. This workshop is made possible through a grant from the USDA Risk Management Agency.

*Jan Joannides is Executive Director of Renewing the Countryside*

## Ridgewater Farm Business Workshop

Wonder where your farm business is heading? Want to improve your business skills? Then attend "Putting It All Together," a workshop for small and specialty-crop farms. Presented by Ridgewater College's Farm Business Management Education Program, the event is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Feb. 4, 2012, at Ridgewater College's Hutchinson campus.



**RIDGEWATER**  
COLLEGE

creating opportunities. changing lives.

Fee is \$50 for your first registrant and \$25 for additional registrants. Cost includes all materials, breaks and lunch.

For workshop information, contact Steve Zenk at [steve.zenk@ridgewater.edu](mailto:steve.zenk@ridgewater.edu) or 320-523-5468. For registration, contact Kim Tensen at [kim.tensen@ridgewater.edu](mailto:kim.tensen@ridgewater.edu) or 320-222-7606

You are invited to attend  
the 21st edition of SFA's



College of Saint Benedict  
Feb. 18, 2012 • St. Joseph

# Annual Conference

“Keeping the ‘Family’ in Family Farming”

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DETAILS INSIDE THIS ISSUE OF CORNERPOST



**Sustainable Farming Association  
of Minnesota**  
Box 192  
Princeton, MN 55371  
[www.sfa-mn.org](http://www.sfa-mn.org)

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