Renewing the Countryside farm succession and estate planning workshop set for Feb. 17

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 for details. Workshop will be in the St. Joseph area near the SFA conference at the College of Saint Benedict.) This vital workshop includes issues and information that must be dealt with by every farmer and farm family.

In the workshop, participants get a greater understanding of crucial issues like transfer strategies, tax issues related to the transfer process, discuss methods for treatment of heirs in the transfer process, as well as learn how to go about developing a written transfer plan. 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.

Executive Director's Note

We're starting something new in this issue of Connect: reader feedback. When you enjoy something and want to tell us, simply click on the "thumbs-up" button. This does not post anything to your Facebook page (which has a similar "like" feature) but does tell us what you find useful in our newsletter. Thanks for your continued support of SFA!

Moving on ...
Grant Project Coordinator Position Open at SFA

Background/Introduction: SFA is seeking a part-time Project Coordinator for our Expanded Meat Processing Project. This project is a one-year project, in conjunction with Renewing the Countryside. The project will start as soon as a suitable project coordinator is hired, and will be completed no later than March 1, 2013. While this work has statewide applicability, the primary focus of project tasks are in Northern Minnesota, specifically Beltrami County. (Bemidji area). An understanding and appreciation for SFA's mission, role and capacity within the broader sustainable ag community will benefit successful applicants for this position.

Duties:
- Work with SFA Executive Director and partner organizations to develop a comprehensive workplan for accomplishing project deliverables.
- Survey farmers and consumers about local meat production, sale, distribution and preparation.
- Meet with slaughterhouses and butchers regarding state and federal meat inspections.
- Develop educational materials for meat processors and consumers.
- Deliver educational workshops and presentations.
- Interact with Minnesota Department of Agriculture personnel regarding meat inspection requirements, policies and funding.

Skills/Qualifications/Expectations:
- BS in meat science, agricultural economics or related field preferred. Nonprofit experience preferred.
- Must be able to work independently, and deliver comprehensive results without the benefit of a detailed daily schedule provided.
- Must be capable of developing and presenting educational presentations to varied audiences.
- Excellent writing and communication skills a must.
- Travel throughout Northern Minnesota with occasional trips to St. Cloud area and Twin Cities will be expected. Mileage will be reimbursed.
- Proficiency in MS Office software expected.

More information on the grant project can be found here.

View the full job description here.

Chapter Update

South Central Chapter Update • Jim Tjepkema

It has been dry in our area, which created good conditions for harvesting field crops. We had a low turnout for our fall gathering and we need suggestions on what we could do to get a better turnout for this meeting. Also, we plan on having a winter gathering and we are looking ideas for a program for that meeting that would bring in a good crowd.

March 17th has been set as the date for our annual meeting, and SFA Executive Director John Mesko has accepted our invitation to present a program on farm policy at this meeting. We are also inviting members of our chapter to make presentations about the services and/or products that they are offering to farmers on a commercial basis.

Our chapter has sent out a newsletter by mail and email asking our members and supporters for program suggestions. A summary of our activities for 2011 has been turned in for the upcoming CornerPost and includes more details about our recent activities.
Get Involved: 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 Coundé at: 612.202.7201 or karen.coune@gmail.com.

Lake Superior Chapter Seeks Coordinator

The Lake Superior Sustainable Farming Association is seeking someone dedicated to our mission to help coordinate the activities of our member organization.

Coordinator of LSSFA is a paid contract position with two components: organizational work for LSSFA and organizing the Lake Superior Harvest Festival. The main responsibilities include maintaining and recruitment of membership, fundraising, promotion of LSSFA events, maintain LSSFA website, and edit the quarterly newsletter. This position requires the coordinator to use their own computer (PC) with internet connection; be competent in use of Excel, website management, and email marketing software. Must have reliable automotive transportation and flexible schedule. Experience in communications and fundraising is desired.

The Lake Superior Harvest Festival is LSSFA's premier, visionary annual event that showcases agriculture and promotes local food production as a key component of healthy community, economy and the environment. The coordinator is responsible for all aspects of the festival including sponsorships, publicity, plan site layout and equipment needs, and management of vendors and exhibitors. The coordinator is assisted by the Harvest Festival Committee and the LSSFA board.

Contract pay for 2012 is $9,000. For a detailed job description and information on how to apply, please contact Jamie Zak at jamienels@yahoo.com or call 218-728-2687. This is an excellent opportunity for those seeking to make positive change in our local food system. See www.lssfa.org for more information on this organization.

**Job search timeline**

Post date - 12/20/11
Resume and Cover Letters due - 1/15/12
Interview Period - 1/17-19
Start Date - 2/1/12

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*SFA Connect is your bi-weekly link to the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota*

The Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota is a chapter-based, statewide non-profit organization that supports the development and enhancement of sustainable farming systems through innovation, demonstration, education, and farmer-to-farmer networking. If you, your farm or organization has any upcoming events that you would like posted on the SFA Community Calendar, email info@sfa-mn.org.

**Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota (SFA)**  
Box 192, Princeton, MN 55371  
763-260-0209 • info@sfa-mn.org