Festival of Farms™ is an opportunity to learn about sustainable agriculture, network within the community, and have fun at various farms across the state. The Festival is unique to each chapter, but the goal is the same—to build a unified sense of SFA's presence in communities across Minnesota and tighten connections within the local food community.

Five SFA chapters are planning to put on Festival of Farms events.

**Festival of Farms Public Farm Tour Slated for Saturday, July 16 at Morning View Farm**

Lake Superior Sustainable Farming Association (LSSFA) in partnership with Gayle Gonsior and Larry Fickbohn invites the public to Morning View Farm for a tour on Saturday, July 16 from 1:30 to 4:30 pm in Port Wing, WI. The farm tour, “Lives in the Balance” will walk and talk with participants about operations management of a highly diversified family farm, while still having time for personal, family, community and a professional life.

While at Morning View Farm, participants will be exposed to a myriad array of enterprises to include grass-fed, sustainably-grown or raised lamb, pork, beef, eggs, turkeys, and vegetables. In addition, Gayle and Larry utilize high tunnels for production, raise much of their own animal feed and fertilizer, participate in University of WI Extension's hazelnut production trials with 1500 hazelnut trees planted, and are one of two agricultural areas participating in a biomass tree planting experiment in conjunction with Excel Energy and...
Bayfield County. They have put 100 acres of woodland into a 50-year conservation protection plan and have the capacity to make their own biodiesel from waste oil for use in their tractors.

Directions from the West:  Head towards Port Wing by exiting highway 2/53, going east on Highway 13 about 30 miles. You will see a wayside on the left. About 1.5 miles after the wayside is Evergreen Road. Go left for 3 miles to the farm at 79730 Evergreen Road.

Directions from the South:  Take Highway 2 to Iron River. Head north on Highway A almost 12 miles. Take a left on Port Wing Line Road (found at the top of the hill). Travel 2 miles to a T-intersection which is Evergreen Road. Take a right for .75 miles to the farm at 79730 Evergreen Road.

Directions from the East:  Take highway 13 to Port Wing. Travel 2 miles past Port Wing to Evergreen Road. Take a left and travel 3 miles to the farm at 79730 Evergreen Road.

The farm is on the east side.

As a neat side-note, July 16 is also Lake Superior Days with many activities planned in Port Wing and other nearby WI communities. Come to the area for the day! Visit www.portwingwi.com and click on 'events' for more information.

Central Chapter's  will start at 9:00 at Acorn Ridge Farm north of Staples, MN.

For more details on the SFA Central Chapter Festival of Farms and to buy tickets, click here.

Cannon River SFA (Northfield Area) is partnering once again with Just Food Co-op of Northfield, who will be providing the bus. Just Food will also provide maps to the three farms for those not able to ride the bus.

For more details on the Cannon River SFA Festival of Farms, click here

South Central Chapter of SFA is planning to tour 3 farms in the Wells, MN area. For more information click here.

Crow River Chapter will host their event in the North Metro area with two farms on the tour.

If your chapter is planning an event for Festival of Farms, and would like assistance in promoting the event, please let John Mesko know ASAP.

*** Late Breaking News***

From The 920 Blog:

Governor Dayton, at the recommendation of the Sustainable Farming Association, has set aside July 16, 2011, as Sustainable Agriculture Day in Minnesota!

Here's the complete text of the proclamation:

Whereas: Minnesota's identity, established over 150 years ago, is founded upon many hardworking, family farms that have sustained our great state since its inception; and

Whereas: Minnesota's natural resources, topography, and climate have combined to make it one of the most productive agricultural states in the union; and,

Whereas: Minnesota is a nationally recognized leader in the establishment of sustainable family farms supplying fresh, locally-produced food to farmer's markets, schools, colleges, universities, hospitals and grocery stores; and,
Whereas: Minnesota is poised to continue to grow in the number of farms producing food for direct consumption by Minnesotans:

Now therefore: I, Mark Dayton, Governor of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim July 16, 2011 Sustainable Agriculture Day in the State of Minnesota.

How cool is that? Even the Governor loves SFA and sustainable farming! Check out this an more events on our online calendar.

Chapter Update

A BUSY SUMMER IN CROW RIVER CHAPTER

Like most of the rest of the state, the members of Crow River Chapter are dealing with the late Spring, flooding, storms and crop losses, but we keep at it. We co-produced two events back in May - the Natures Nest Festival in Montrose and the Herb Walk near Hutchinson - with the second day of Natures Nest having to cancel due to flooding.

Up next are our Festival of Farms tours in the Dayton/Ramsey area on July 16th (declared "Sustainable Agriculture Day" by the Governor) at a couple of great vegetable and permaculture farms. See the website for more info:

http://www.sfa-mn.org/crow-river/

August brings "the best stinking festival in Minnesota", the MN Garlic Festival, on August 13th in Hutchinson. It's a day of fantastic local food, celebrity chefs, homegrown entertainment, kite flying, and quirky fun, all in support of our sustainable farmers, rural communities and a healthy environment (it's a "Zero Waste" event!).

Find out more on the festival website:

www.mngarlcfest.com

As a special "thank you" to SFA Connect readers, here's a 2-for-1 ticket coupon to the festival that you can print, bring to the front gate, and get two tickets for the price of one!

Executive Director's Note

Thank you to everyone who participated in our fiscal year-end fundraising drive! We raised just over $1600, most of it from first-time donors! Thanks so much!

Ingrid Bey, Jerry Ford, Tiffany Haag, Carla Smith, Lang Hongyuan, John Mesko, Andrew Hayner, Richard Siemers, Tony Lourey, Paula Fitzgerald, Clarence Bischoff, Jan Joannides, Jeremy Lanctot, Gwendolyn Keith, Joanne Kellner

The T-shirts have been sent as promised, and if you donated, you should be getting yours soon. If you missed out on the opportunity, we can always accept donations at the following link:

Click Here to Donate to SFA

If you haven't had enough fundraising yet, we also have a unique opportunity coming up at the end of July. A Joint Fundraiser with our friends at Renewing the Countryside. See below for more information.
Out and About

SFA and Renewing the Countryside Plan Joint Fundraiser

SFA has enjoyed a strong relationship with Renewing the Countryside recently, and we've joined forces once again to host the first ever, SFA/RTC Joint Fundraiser, July 31, 2011 at Alexis Bailly Vineyard in Hastings!

Renewing the Countryside and the Sustainable Farming Association invite you to a beautiful evening at the Alexis Bailly Vineyards in Hastings on July 31, 2011. Just 45 minutes from the 280/94 interchange and you are turning up the gravel road to the winery, flanked on both sides by rows of grape vines heavy with fruit. Alexis Bailly Vineyard is the oldest in Minnesota and has been producing some amazing wines for over 40 years.

We will be featuring some of Minnesota's best "local foods" restaurants and artisan and farmstead cheeses. Alexis Bailly Vineyards will be pouring their legendary Sangria. You will also have the opportunity to try some of their award winning red, white and dessert wines.

Music will be provided by "I Like You."

Tickets:

$100 Sustainer (includes a SWAG bag, full flight of wine tasting, and winery tour)

$50 Supporter

Even if you unable to attend we would like to invite you to make a tax deductable donation.

We could not do our work to protect family farms and vibrant rural communities without you.

Call 612.871.1541 or 612.910.7601 for additional information.

Thank you.

Schedule

5:30 Special VIP-only activities

6:30-9:00 Wine and Food Tasting

This is shaping up to be a fun event, but we need your help. To pull this off, we are looking for food and help!

1. We are seeking donations of produce from SFA member farms. Meat, cheese, eggs, veggies, fruit. If you would like to participate in this way, contact John Mesko at 763-260-0209 or john@sfa-mn.org
2. We need a food coordinator. Someone who can talk with the chefs and make sure we have what they are looking for to make their delicious offerings.
3. We are asking sustainable ag-related business to consider donating some items to be included in a "SWAG" bag (Sustainable and Wonderful Agricultural Gear).
4. We'll need 5-10 people to help with set up and take down. More on that later.

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)