Festival of Farms - July 16, 2011

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.

Currently, 2 SFA chapters are planning to put on Festival of Farms events.

Central Chapter’s will start at 9:00 at Acorn Ridge Farm north of Staples, MN. There will be a delicious “local foods” lunch catered by chef Derek Olson of the Harvest Thyme Bistro in Wadena. There also will be hay rides, a petting zoo, educational demonstrations, shopping stands, and guided bus tours of three near-by farms.

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. The three farms are: Sogn Valley CSA and Market Farm, Cannon Falls; L & R Poultry & Produce, Kenyon; and Seven Songs Organic Farm, Kenyon.
Reservations are needed for the bus and can be made by calling Just Food at (507) 650-0106. The bus will depart from Just Food’s parking lot at 12:30 p.m., then continuing to Sogn Valley, L & R and Seven Songs; arriving back at Just Food about 5:15 p.m.

For more details on the Cannon River SFA Festival of Farms, [click here](#).

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.

### Executive Director's Note

Thank you to all who responded to last week's fundraising note that was sent on Friday. We are off to a modest start toward our goal of $5,000 by the end of June, but it can be done. We did this in one day with "Give to The Max" day back in November. I will be sending updates throughout the rest of this month.

For those who may have missed Friday's appeal, the bottom line is that SFA's fiscal year ends June 30. We are in need of $5,000 to finish our year strongly. SFA enjoys a very broad and heart-felt appeal throughout the state and region. People all over are excited to hear about us and the work we do, and we have more to do. I'd love to see that excitement turn into [financial support](#).

We'd like to offer a couple of thank you gifts:

1. Every person donating $25 or more will receive a GrazeFest T-Shirt (while supplies last, sizes L and XL only)!!
2. Also all donations of $100 or more will receive the T-shirt and a Farming Forward DVD, as a small token of our appreciation.
3. Finally, anyone who donates $1,000 or more will be awarded a LIFETIME SFA MEMBERSHIP!

Everywhere I go, I hear good things about SFA, our members, and our work. If you feel good about us, please [send in $25](#) today. Thank you very much!

[Click Here to Donate to SFA](#)

### Chapter Update

**Central Chapter**

The Central Chapter of the Sustainable Farming Association is sponsoring the Staples area Festival of Farms, on Saturday, July 16. Mel and Lorna Wiens of Staples will be hosting this annual event, which is designed to connect community members with area farmers in a celebration of local foods.

The day-long event, held at Wiens’ Acorn Ridge Farm on the north side of Staples, is just one of several “festivals” that will be taking place on July 16 across Minnesota. The Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota is spearheading the events, each of which is being organized by a local SFA chapter.

The event will feature a delicious “local foods” lunch catered by chef Derek Olson of the Harvest Thyme Bistro in Wadena. There also will be hay rides, a petting zoo, educational demonstrations, shopping stands, and guided bus tours of three nearby farms.

The Festival runs from 9 am – 5 pm. Parking will be available at the host site (Wiens’ Acorn Ridge Farm), located at 11862 261st Avenue in Staples. Bus tours of neighboring farms will depart at 10 am, 1:30 and 3:30. Lunch will be served at 11:30 am.

Tickets and details are available [here](#). The price is $10 for adults ($8 for SFA members) and $5 for children ages 5 - 18. A family pass is also available for $25. Children under 5 are free.
**Other News**

*Crop Insurance Conservation Issues Loom as Spring Planting Proceeds*

The 2008 Farm Bill included a measure that would allow governors in states in the Prairie Pothole National Priority Area to opt into a limitation on federal crop insurance or Non Insured Disaster Assistance Program coverage that would help protect native prairie. If a governor opted in, USDA would not offer crop insurance or disaster assistance coverage for “native sod” for 5 years after the land was broken out for crop production.

The intent of the measure was to reduce publicly-funded incentives for farmers to cultivate remaining native prairie, which is a unique and fragile plant ecosystem that sustains many threatened and endangered grassland birds and other wildlife. Sadly, none of the governors in the Priority Area have exercised the option to end the subsidization of prairie destruction.

USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) has nonetheless continued to consider administrative changes to the crop insurance program that could limit the use of crop insurance on newly broken native sod. On June 9, RMA issued a crop insurance program bulletin with new limitations on insurance for crops produced on newly broken native sod. These limitations will take effect for the 2012 crop year for all crops with a contract change date on or after June 30, 2011 that are the region affected by the bulletin.

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**Out & About**

*Ziebarth Celebration*

The 2010 Farmer Emeritus Carl & Betty Ziebarth invite sustainable farming friends to an open house for Carl’s 95th birthday and their 60th wedding anniversary. The event will be Sunday July 17, 2011 from noon until dark at their farmstead-- 21876 Davis Ave. Faribault, MN. A pig roast picnic will be from 12:30-2:30 pm. Please RSVP to Ann Ziebarth by phone at 651-645-0953 or by email at aziebart@umn.edu

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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)*

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