SFA Returning to Mill City Farmers Market on June 6

SFA is making our yearly trip to the beautiful and bountiful Mill City Farmers Market, and this year we’re bringing ketchup.
On June 6 – this Saturday – SFA will be the featured guest at Mill City and along with Mary Jane Miller’s cooking expertise (above) and our usual booth of goodies and conversation we’ll be making the Minneapolis debut of Crow River Ketchup (right with spokesmodel Dan Zetah). Bottles will be available for purchase, Crow River farmers will be on hand, and Mary Jane will be cooking creative recipes that include the ketchup or go well with it.

We’ll have SFA t-shirts for sale as well – including the return of our “Back End of a Cow” shirts that sold out during our winter conferences.

The vibrant Mill City Farmers Market is held from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays in the courtyard of the Mill City Museum overlooking the Mississippi River and Stone Arch Bridge, and is next door to the architectural marvel that is Minneapolis’ Guthrie Theater. The Market was founded by chef and restaurateur Brenda Langton and is next door to her popular farm-to-table restaurant, Spoonriver. SFA has been a regular at Mill City for many years, and we’re thankful to the Market for all its support.

If you can’t make the market but are hankering for Crow River Ketchup, it will soon be available for sale at all three Lakewinds Co-op locations.

**Executive Director’s Note**

Our family recently returned from an all-too-rare family vacation, where we took in both Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia. With the exception of running (yes, we all made it) up the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, à la Rocky Balboa circa 1976, we spent the majority of our time steeped in U.S. history.

One cannot travel the path we did and not be struck with the amazing stories of the men and women who founded our country. Diverse, brilliant, flawed, aristocratic, humble, proud. The personalities are as far-ranging as their accomplishments. At monument after memorial after museum, we were confronted by a nation’s gratefulness, tribute and honor to its leaders, risk-takers, hard-workers and outspoken citizens. There are so many examples of people who set forth a country and a citizenship that has, despite many ups and downs, done much good in the world.

A walk through a museum is one thing, a week of history 24/7 is quite another. I have many takeaways from the trip, but one theme that has been solidly on my mind is the notion of the individual, everyday person in our land. Taken as a steady stream, the memorials to famous founders and leaders in our country is overwhelming. However, the number of great people who

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**SFA EVENTS**

July 11, 2015: FESTIVAL OF FARMS

Aug. 15, 2015: MINNESOTA GARLIC FESTIVAL, McLeod County Fairgrounds, Hutchinson, Minn.

Sept. 2015: HARVEST FESTIVAL, Bayfront Park, Duluth
are recognized by the National Parks Service or the Smithsonian Institution is just a tiny fraction of the great people who have contributed to our nation and will contribute to it in the future.

I enjoy very much learning about greatness. After being surrounded by so much, I was left with the sense that each of us has a chance in our lives, and in fact every day, to do great things and live great lives. We cannot all get recognized for greatness. And some people might be “over-recognized.” However, our potential, dare I say our duty, to be great is no less.

So for those of you who are toiling daily to make a difference, to grow healthy food, to teach someone else to grow healthy food, to teach someone how to eat better, to make food available from your farm, your co-op, your buyers club, thank you. For everyone who contributes time, energy, brain power, money, prayers, blood, sweat, tears and their whole heart to the cause of making people better, healthier, kinder, smarter, more peaceful, thank you.

You might not be memorialized by a statue or in a museum. But you are engaged in a great work, and I’m proud to be numbered among you.

### Next SFA Deep Winter Production Class Announced


During the class, Paradox Farm owners Sue Wika and Tom Prieve will provide a detailed overview of the construction and operation of their deep-winter greenhouse, which utilizes passive solar energy with underground heat storage. The greenhouse provides greens for local consumers. In addition, the structure is utilized to produce fodder for the farm livestock.

Students will be in the greenhouse to see how greens and fodder are planted and harvested. This is a hands-on workshop. Students should be prepared to get their hands in the soil.

Registrants: Don’t forget to bring a sack lunch. Cost is $100. Farm Skills 101 graduates may register for $30.

[Click here to register.](#)

Paradox Farm is at 11643 State Hwy 78, Ashby, MN 56309 (Directions: 7 miles north of Ashby; 10 miles south of Battle Lake). For more information, contact sue@sfa-mn.org.

### Crow River Again Plants Governor's Garden

For the fourth year in a row, the Crow River Chapter has planted a vegetable and herb garden at the Governor's residence in St. Paul. Led by Mary Jane Miller and supported by the Crow River SFA board and volunteers, this year’s garden features many plants and seeds from Minnesota farms, including a new variety of non-GMO organic sweet corn called “Who Gets Kissed?”

Miller and her crew assembled on an unusually chilly May morning and filled two plots and several larger planters that now contain everything from tomatoes, eggplants and peppers to basil, zucchini, onions and Governor Dayton’s favorite, green beans, all of which will be used in meals at the residence.

Tours of the vegetable garden spaces take place from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on select Tuesdays all summer and will be led by Mary Jane Miller and her crew. Make plans to stop in this summer!

Tour Dates: June 9, 23; July 14, 28; Aug. 4, 18. Governor’s Residence is at 1006 Summit Hill,
New SFA Chapter Forming in Driftless Area

SFA is all about grassroots organizing and responding to the needs of local communities. There's been a groundswell of interest in the Driftless Area of Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin in starting a new SFA chapter that focuses on the issues of this unique environmental region and its farmers.

A Chapter Organizing Committee has formed, and they will soon schedule a meeting to work on the process of officially forming a chapter.

If you would like to be involved in this at the ground level, please contact: Devon Ballinger at driftless@sfa-mn.org or 612.716.1706.

Minnesota Garlic Festival Seeks Kites Coordinator

Since the mid-50's, Minnesota Garlic Festival has included "Kite Making and Flying" as a feature of our fabulous festival, and now we are, once again, looking to fill the position of Kites Coordinator. (The previous Kites Coordinators have gone on to even greater positions like Beer & Wine Tasting Coordinator, Sponsor Coordinator, and retirement, with only a minimal amount of interim therapy.)

The Garlic Festival is produced by the Sustainable Farming Association, and presents the Kites feature in collaboration with the deposed King of the MN Kite Flying Association (the title of "King" is made up, but there really is a MN Kite Flying Association, and this guy was their president).

Kites Coordinator will supervise, with the help of volunteers, the Kite Making and Flying event on the day of the festival (Aug. 15, 2015), among other duties. Mileage and expenses will be reimbursed.

Info: Jerry Ford, Festival Director, 763-244-6659, jerry@sfa-mn.org.

Exhibitor Registration Open for 2016 SFA Conferences

SFA has opened registration for Sponsors and Exhibitors for both the 2016 SFA Annual Conference and 2016 Midwest Soil Health Summit. The Annual Conference will be Feb. 13 at the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, Minn. The MSHS will be Feb. 17-18 at Arrowwood Resort in Alexandria, Minn.

To download the appropriate forms, visit our Annual Conference and Midwest Soil Health Summit homepages.

Western Chapter Dinner, Tour & Bonfire June 6

SFA Western Chapter will host an open get-together at 5 p.m. Sat., June 6, at Prairie Horizons Farm, 31008 State Hwy 29, north of Benson. The event is free and all are welcome to attend for an evening of food, farms, fire, and friends!
RTC Hosting Inaugural Slow Money Minnesota Gathering

Slow Money Minnesota is an emerging network led by Renewing the Countryside that connects people interested in building a better local food system. Together, we intend to increase the flow of knowledge and capital in support of local food makers and farming. The first Slow Money Minnesota event is set for 5-8 p.m. June 17 at Como Park Pavilion, 1360 N Lexington Pkwy, St. Paul and will feature presentations by innovators in local investing as well as exciting food and farm businesses. There will be a lively dialogue about Slow Money in Minnesota, great local food, and ample time for networking. The cost for the event is $30. Pre-registration is required and space is limited, so register soon! (There will also be a cash bar.)

Click here to register.

Slow Money Minnesota is being organized through a task force convened by Renewing the Countryside in cooperation with Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, Sustainable Farming Association, Northcountry Cooperative Development Fund, the FEAST Local Food Network, and is supported through a grant from North Central SARE.

Duluth Young Farmers Hosting Farm Tour Series

On the last Sunday of every month, the Duluth Young Farmers are hosting a tour of a local farm that showcases its enterprise. The goal of the Farm Tour Series is to enable young farmers to see and experience the multitude of farming operations, big and small, that are present in the Lake Superior Basin. It will be so interesting to witness the creativity and hard work of farmers in our community - sharing different business plans, niche products, distribution circuits, growing methods, and more.

Farms on the tour schedule include:

- June 28 - Clover Valley Farm in Duluth
- July 26 - Sustainable Agriculture Project at UMD farm in Duluth
- Aug. 30 - Fairhaven Farm in Duluth
- Sept. 27 - Shubats Fruits in Duluth

Each tour begins at noon and ends with a potluck. To RSVP or for more information, email duluthyoungfarmers@gmail.com. These events are planned with support from the SFA Lake Superior Chapter.

'Beyond Beauty' Imperfect Produce Results Published

Many fruits and vegetables never make it off the farm because they are too big, small, etc to meet commercial standards. Through its “Beyond Beauty” initiative, Tomorrow’s Table and the Real Food Challenge conducted an electronic survey with Minnesota farmers to document rates of imperfection, current uses for these products and barriers to sale. Terry Nennich, recently retired from UM Extension, has also been key to our research with growers.

This is the first report in a series exploring the realities of imperfect produce through the eyes of farmers, distributors and foodservice in Minnesota, and testing the collegiate market for imperfect produce.

Click here to view the results of the survey.
Soil Health Field Day is June 16 in Brookings

The Eastern South Dakota Soil and Water Research Farm is hosting its 21st annual field day at 9:30 a.m. Tues., June 16, at 3714 Western Ave, Brookings, S.D. A walking tour and lunch are included in this free event, and pre-registration is not required.

The field day, “Measuring Success: Beyond Another Bushel,” will include presentations by Dr. Mike Lehman, Dr. Shannon Osbourne, Bryan Jorgensen, and other farmers and researchers. Topics include:

- Value of Soil Health and Increasing Biology
- Developing Resilient Crop Production Systems
- Value of Including Pollinator-Friendly Crops
- Managing Weed Resistance

For more information, contact USDA-ARS at 605.693.3241.

Annual Conference Photo Feature

Photographer extraordinaire Crystal Liepa once again documented our 2015 Annual Conference, held Feb. 14, 2015, at the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, Minn. To learn more about Crystal, visit her website.
The Sustainable Farming Association 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
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