Blog Profiles Farm, Family of SFA Treasurer Josh Reinitz

SFA board treasurer Josh Reinitz and his family farm were recently profiled by Seedstock, a national blog focused on sustainable agriculture and farm-to-table issues.

Reinitz and his family were introduced to SFA’s Cannon River chapter shortly after they started farming in 2009, and Josh then joined the chapter board. He was elected to represent the chapter at the state in 2010, and also became the state board treasurer.

From the Seedstock story:

"Today, Josh and Sally Reinitz are fifth-generation farmers. The two bought a 26-acre portion of the family homestead from Josh’s father and started East Henderson Farm, LLC. Dad still lives in the original house and occasionally helps in the fields.

"A large portion of East Henderson Farm is devoted to certified organic vegetable production. On six acres of organic certified land, the Reinitzes grow a wide variety of crops including potatoes, cabbage, swiss chard, collard greens, dill, sugar snap peas, Brussels sprouts, and..."
They sell their produce through a 95-share CSA program as well as via wholesale to a local food cooperative, two area restaurants, and a nearby college. Soon they hope to start supplying local food to the public schools in the district.

To read the entire article, click [here](#). Way to go, Josh and Sally!

**Central Chapter Hosting Keyline/Agroforestry Field Day**

Keylines, a technique to capture, store and maximize the use of water and nutrients on farmland, will be discussed June 7 at a field day sponsored by the SFA Central Chapter. The event, which will also discuss integration of permaculture and agroforestry practices, is set from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Camphill Village, 15136 Celtic Drive, Sauk Centre.

The event will include:

- **Keyline Design Basics** – How the Yeomans keyline design works to prevent erosion and capture water. Working examples of installed keylines and associated practices will be presented.
- **Site tours**
- **Potluck lunch** – bring a dish to share and dinnerware. Beverage will be provided.
- **Field Exercises** – measuring tools: sight level, transit; determine keypoint; shoot keyline; plow and level keyline; seed and stabilize.
- **4:00 wrap up discussion**

Presenters include Dr. Sue Wika, Sustainable Food Production Program director at Minnesota State-Fergus Falls; Tyler Carlson, Farmer and Agroforestry Consultant; and SFA Board Vice President Jim Chamberlin, Farmer and Food and Water Security Coordinator at Happy Dancing Turtle.

For more information, contact Chamberlin at islandlakefarm@brainerd.net. The event is free; donations to the Central Chapter are encouraged.

Keyline/Agroforestry Field Day is sponsored by SFA Central Chapter, Camphill Village and Minnesota State-Fergus Falls Sustainable Food Production Program.

**Local Meat Survey for Northern Minnesota Now Online**

SFA and the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture are working on a project to expand availability of locally raised meat and poultry in Minnesota, particularly in the northern part of the state.

Please take a few moments to answer this consumer interest survey if you live in northern Minnesota – and if not, please circulate to any friends, family or colleagues who are northern Minnesota residents. For the purposes of this study and survey, "northern Minnesota" is essentially considered as north of Hwy 210 on a line from Fergus Falls to Wadena, Brainerd and finally Duluth.

To take the survey, click [here](#). These survey results will help us understand consumer interest and preferences for purchasing locally raised meat and poultry in Northern Minnesota.

Also, complete the survey and be entered into a drawing for great prizes. Three copies of the Minnesota Homegrown Cookbook and two SFA caps will be given away to survey respondents. Thanks for helping us take the crucial first steps in solving a problem facing the sustainable ag community.

**Executive Director's Note**
It seems like there is no lack of films chronicling the current state of affairs in sustainable agriculture relative to conventional/industrial agriculture. They all have their place, in my opinion, but some are more effective at moving us forward than others.

I just watched a pre-release version of a new sustainable ag-related film called *American Meat*. Director Graham Meriwether has put together a provocative, yet sensible film that may set the tone for films in this genre.

While I am as opposed to the assumptions, methods and outputs of conventional agriculture as anyone, I believe our movement will not ultimately succeed if we see ourselves in competition with conventional producers individually or the conventional food system as a whole. The conventional food system is not producing the results we like, but the answer is not to villify or to bash any individuals within that system.

If we are thoughtful about where we want to see agriculture and food production go in the future, all indicators point to the need for more sustainable farmers, now. That point is made clear in *American Meat*, and done so in a hope-filled, respectful way which I think will attract consumers and producers of all types to the film.

The Minnesota premier of American Meat will be at 7 PM Thursday July 12th at Edina Cinema. Following the film, I'll be on a panel for discussion of the film and the movement. Stay tuned for more information.

**Annual Conference Photo Feature**

Thanks to [Heavy Table](http://www.heavytable.com) photographer Crystal Liepa, we have a stockpile of awesome photos from our 2012 Annual Conference, held Feb 18 at the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph. Look for a new photo in each SFA Connect, and read Heavy Table writer Tricia Cornell's story about the conference [here](http://www.heavytable.com/)

**Dinner on the Farm at Bruce Bacon's Crandall Garden Farme**

Spend the evening of June 10th at SFA member Bruce Bacon's 95-acre Crandall Garden Farme in Ramsey for an installment of the Dinner on the Farm series. In the family since 1913, Garden Farme supplies wildflower honey, specialty greens and vegetables to many Twin Cities restaurants. Bacon (right) practices permaculture and uses a hand tool system in lieu of tractors, resulting in quality, flavorful, beautiful produce.

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**SFA WORK**

**Minnesota Dairy Initiative**

Attend an upcoming Dairy Labor Management Workshop conducted by the U of M Extension conducted by the U of M Extension at the following locations:

- Pipestone, May 31
- Worthington, June 1
- Glencoe, June 7
- Rochester, June 21
- St. Cloud, June 26

More information to follow through regular Extension media channels. For more information contact Chuch Schwartau at cschwart@umn.edu.

**Meat Processing**

Our meat processing survey is now live. Anyone living in northern Minnesota can benefit from this project, and the first step is gathering your feedback. Help us expand access to local meat and poultry in our state. [Take the survey here.](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2A5M55V)

**Farm Transitions**

Our Browerville and Clearwater workshops are behind us. Next stop: Northfield, probably in June. There's already been plenty of interest in a Northfield workshop, so we'll keep you posted when there's an official date and site set. Meanwhile, visit our Farm Transitions homepage.

The Farm Transitions project is in conjunction with [Renewing the](http://www.heaveninthehighlands.com)
For the dinner, Aaron Uban will use the skills he’s been perfecting over the years at local favorites The Strip Club, Heartland Market and Muffulella to create an early summer spread for us. We'll enjoy locally brewed beer from Harriet Brewing, and a portion of your ticket price will support Eureka Recycling's backyard composting program. Tickets are available [here](#).

Bacon's background and interest in permaculture have led him to grow diverse products including leafy greens, Asian mustards, edible flowers, basil, other culinary herbs, rhubarb, garlic, horseradish, plums, crabapples and pie cherries. The farm produces five-gallon bulk wildflower honey for select restaurants, Seward Co-op and The Wedge Co-op.

The [Garden Farme](#) is also developing as a host site for agri-tourism: private parties, picnics, painting, photography, workshops, seminars and non-profit retreats.

**U of M Field Day: Diversifying Organic Cropping Systems**

The University of Minnesota Southwest Research and Outreach Center's annual Organic Field Day will be 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. July 11 at Lamberton. Attendees will take field tours to present ongoing organic research, including a visit to the SWROC’s high tunnel season extension facilities. Field tour stops will focus on edible beans; forage management to suppress weeds and build fertility; alfalfa mulch; popcorn variety trials; and high tunnels for season extension to produce organic vegetables.

Educational programs will feature a brief presentation by Minnesota Commissioner of Agriculture Dave Frederickson; Organic Popcorn Production by Gene Mealhow, Tiny But Mighty Popcorn; DriftWatch - Minnesota’s New Sensitive Crops Registry by Meg Moynihan, MDA; Crop Rotation Impacts on Soils by Dr. Jeff Strock, SWROC; Adding Edible Beans to Your Rotation by Dr. Tom Michaels, UMN; and Camelina Oil Production and Processing by Kathleen Batalden Smith, Omega Maiden Oils.

The Organic Field Day is free and open to the public. An $8 fee will be charged for lunch. If you plan to attend, or would like to have an exhibit, please register in advance by contacting the SWROC at 507-752-7372 or [werne022@umn.edu](mailto:werne022@umn.edu).

**SFA Farmers: Obtain Free Animal Welfare Approved Status**

Animal Welfare Approved is a free third-party certification and food label that audits and certifies family farms that utilize high-welfare methods of farming, outdoors on pasture or range. Certified farms use the AWA label as a way to add value and to assure customers of high-welfare farming practices, and have access to free expert technical and marketing support.

Here is a quick summary of the free resources Animal Welfare Approved offers farmers:

- **Free AWA marketing materials** including brochures, signs, pens, magnets, note pads, post-it notes, banners and metal gate signs.
- **Technical Advice Fact Sheets** and access to direct guidance from our expert technical staff.
- **Good Husbandry Grants**, available exclusively to AWA certified farmers (and applied farms) to help improve farm animal welfare (look out for new application details in summer of 2012).
- **Farm-to-Farm sales** between AWA farmers.
- Listings for farms, retailers, restaurants, and more offering AWA products in our [online directory](#).

AWA also has resources for consumers, including comprehensive and regularly updated guides.
Jaycees Seek Nominations of Outstanding Young Farmers

Since 1954, the Minnesota Jaycees have been recognizing the importance of strong young leaders in the Minnesota agricultural industry through the Outstanding Young Farmers award. Nominees submit information about their farm, background, and knowledge of the industry and are judged on the following criteria: progress in agricultural career; extent of soil and water conservation practices; and contributions to the well-being of the community, state, and nation.

The winner of the Minnesota Outstanding Young Farmer program will go on to compete in the national OYF program against OYF winners from other states, in which four will be named National Outstanding Young Farmers.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Nominee must be age 18 through 40, not becoming 41 prior to January 1, 2013.
- Nominee must be an actual farm operator, deriving a minimum of two-thirds of their income from their farming.

Nomination forms are available here; and deadline for submissions is July 1, 2012. For questions or more information contact Katie Hunt at katie@mnjaycees.org or 952.890.8000.

Sign Up for LSP's Farm Beginnings Course

The Land Stewardship Project (LSP) is now taking applications for the 2012-2013 Farm Beginnings courses, which will begin this fall and provide two options for getting involved in one of the most successful beginning farmer training initiatives in the country. Classes will be offered in Morris, Minn., and River Falls, Wis. The application deadline for the 2012-2013 Farm Beginnings course is Aug. 1. For application materials or for more information, see www.farmbeginnings.org or contact Karen Benson at 507-523-3366 or lspse@landstewardshipproject.org.

Join the Conversation at Healthy Eating Minnesota Network

At the intersection of food and health is community, the Healthy Eating Minnesota Network is based on the idea that in-person and online collaboration can catalyze knowledge exchange, networking, and coalition building around healthy eating and healthy food access in Minnesota. Explore the network, share your ideas, and connect with others across the state who are working to create healthier food systems by taking the following steps:

1. **Create a profile.** Go to www.healthyeatingmn.org. On the left side of the screen is a box asking you to sign up. Click on it, answer the questions, and create your profile. Having a profile lets you take part in the best parts of the network—as asking questions, commenting on posts, building networks, and more.

2. **Join a community.** Communities are places to ask questions, seek feedback, and connect with other Minnesotans who care about healthier food systems. Right now, the network features communities focused on healthy kids, urban agriculture, food policy, food justice, and farmers markets.

3. **Share content.** Have an event you'd like to publicize? Want to share a great news story? What about some pictures from your urban farm, community garden or healthy food-related event?

4. **Spread the word.** Invite your friends and colleagues to join the network. Send an email, share a link to our Facebook page, and post to listservs.

The Healthy Eating Minnesota Network will also feature original writing from network members,
Women Caring for the Land Hosting Cloquet Event

Women who own or manage farmland in Carlton, St. Louis and surrounding counties are invited to a free conservation discussion and field tour June 18 in Cloquet. The program, sponsored by Women, Food and Agriculture Network, is called Women Caring for the LandSM.

The meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. in the Stine Room at the Cloquet Forestry Center, 175 University Road, Cloquet. A lunch will be provided, and an afternoon field tour will allow participants to view farmland conservation practices in the area. The program will end with wrap-up and dessert no later than 3 p.m.

Women Caring for the LandSM offers a peer-to-peer, informal discussion format to allow women landowners to talk about their individual land stewardship goals, facilitated by women conservationists who can share resources available such as state and federal cost share programs, low-interest loans, and other tools.

RSVP by 5 p.m. June 14 to Julie Miedtke at 218-327-7486 or email her at Julie.Miedtke@co.itasca.mn.us.

Intensive Permaculture Design Course Slated in Montrose

Join teachers from Mindful Generations for an eye-opening Permaculture Design Course June 9-16 at Nature's Nest Farm in Montrose. The seven-day intensive course covers the principles of permaculture so participants may receive the internationally recognized Permaculture Design Certificate.

Permaculture is organized around principles that model human activities on ecological systems. Its creation was a reaction to the industrial and reductionist view that human systems are separate from natural systems and can function in isolation from them. Permaculture Design Courses (PDC) illustrate ways to align and integrate our self, our home, our communities, and our agriculture practices with the natural processes that dictate the world around us.

For more information, visit www.naturesnestfarm.com.

Grazing Workshop, Pasture Walk Planned in Gibbon

An introductory workshop and pasture walk featuring the basics of grazing will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. June 2 in Gibbon. This event, which is sponsored by the Land Stewardship Project's Farm Beginnings program, is free to LSP members and the public for $35.

The morning session will include a grazing management workshop at Saint Peter's Lutheran Church in rural Gibbon led by grazing specialist Howard Moechnig. The afternoon session will consist of a pasture walk on the Loretta and Martin Jaus farm so participants can view firsthand how the concepts discussed at the morning workshop can be put into practice on the land. The Jauses have an organic dairy farm and rotationally graze their Holstein cattle.

Pre-register by May 31 with LSP's Richard Ness at rness@landstewardshipproject.org or 320.269.2105. Bring a sack lunch and your own beverages.

U. of Minnesota Offers Sheep Management Workshop

In response to increased interest, the Small Farms U Program at the University of Minnesota is offering a workshop on basic sheep management practices from 5-9 p.m. June 4 at the Beef Cattle Barn on the St. Paul Campus, located on the corner of Buford and Gortner Avenues.

This workshop is designed for the person who has little experience raising sheep, but is thinking about starting a flock, or already has a sheep but feels that more management skills would be a worthy investment. It will be taught by Kyle Rozeboom, Livestock Specialist in the Animal
Science Department. Sheep are a great animal to raise on farms both large and small, and large numbers aren’t necessary to make it worthwhile. Of all sheep operations in the U.S., 94 percent are comprised of flocks in the range of 1-99 head.

The workshop starts with a dinner of roasted lamb, prepared by the University of Minnesota Meat Science on the St Paul Campus. Dinner will last from 5:00-5:30, then we’ll begin covering the topics listed. Students will observe, and depending on the number of participants in the class, may have the opportunity to practice the processes as well.

Pre-registration is strongly suggested. Cost of the workshop is $25/adult, $30/couple or business partners, and $10/student. Information/registration: Wayne Martin, marti067@umn.edu or 612.625.6224.

Fruit Pests and Diseases Class Set in St. Paul

Come learn how to control the most serious and damaging pests on your fruit trees and shrubs in a class from 6:30 to 8 p.m. May 29 at Greater Frogtown CDC, 533 Dale St N. This class, from the Minnesota Project’s Fruits of the City Program, will cover basics of pest control on apples, pears, apricots, raspberries, blueberries, grapes, strawberries and currants.

About the Presenter: Jeffrey Johnson is a Landscape Gardener with the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, University of Minnesota. He is a woody plants specialist maintaining the trees and shrubs collections throughout the public cultivated areas in the Arboretum’s 1125 acres.

Cost is $10 and advance registration is required by clicking here or by contacting Fruits of the City at fruits@mnproject.org or 651.789.3321.

Pollinator Conservation Planning Course Set in Duluth

The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, the Sustainable Agriculture Project at the University of Minnesota Duluth and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service will host a Pollinator Conservation Planning Short Course, teaching the latest science-based approaches to reversing the trend of pollinator declines, and equip attendees with the recipes necessary to protect and manage habitat for these vital insects.

Workshop is 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 13 at the UMD Library, 416 Library Drive, Duluth. Cost is $45 per person; bring a sack lunch. Registration is required for this course. Click here to register or for more information.

Minnesota Organic Advisory Task Force Seeks Members

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is seeking members to fill eight scheduled vacancies on the Minnesota Organic Advisory Task Force. The OATF advises the Commissioner of Agriculture and the University of Minnesota about policies and programs that will improve organic agriculture in the state.

Minnesota is a leader in organic farming in the U.S, with more than 700 certified organic farms and more than 200 organic processors, according to MDA estimates. Minnesota Agriculture Commissioner Dave Frederickson says this growing agriculture and food sector needs and deserves support from public institutions like the Department of Agriculture and the University.

Members from the following categories or sectors are needed: Two farmers using organic agriculture methods; one organic processor; one organic wholesaler and/or distributor of organic products; one member of the University of Minnesota faculty; one member representing a nonprofit producer organization; one member representing the interests of the public; and, one member representing the interests of consumers. All members must be residents of Minnesota willing to serve a one-year term. Half-day meetings are held three or four times per year; members receive reimbursement for travel.

The application form is available at www.sos.state.mn.us (click the Open Commissions/Appointments icon) or by calling the Secretary of State’s office at 877-551-6767. Applicants should specify the category/sector they represent and submit a cover letter with their
Join Minnesota Organic Network for Local Ag Updates

The Minnesota Organic Network connects people who want to share information about organic agriculture, kick around ideas, ask each other questions, and work together on projects. It includes farmers, researchers, extension people, and nonprofit organization representatives, along with people from public agencies who also work in organic agriculture.

Subscribe by emailing Meg Moynihan at meg.moynihan@state.mn.us or click here.

Organic Farm School 2012: Farming and Food Justice

Join the Women’s Environmental Institute for ten weeks of exciting lectures on organic food production and agriculture from environmental, social, and historical perspectives, connecting environmental justice with agriculture and food justice. Participants will also have the opportunity to develop practical skills in organic horticulture through hands-on workshops at the WEI alternative farm campus and farm field trips.

Held weekly from June 11 through Aug. 20, speakers include Atina Diffley of Gardens of Eagan, Prof. Bud Markhart of University of Minnesota School of Horticulture, Meg Moynihan of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin of the Rural Enterprise Center in Northfield.

Registration includes three Saturday field days. Classes start at 6 p.m. June 11th at the Midtown Global Market, 920 E Lake St, Minneapolis. Full class registration is $120; a drop-in class costs $20. Information: 651.583.0705 or register online at w-e-i.org.

Minnesota DNR Stream Habitat Program Hosting Workshop

Registration is open to farmers, landowners and other citizens for the following Minnesota DNR Stream Habitat Program workshop:

- The Science of Healthy Waters, The Ditching Dilemma: This workshop unpacks the science and implications of ditching in terms of: effects on hydrology, geomorphology, water quality, and aquatic habitat; societal and ecological implications of these practices; and alternative design concepts and approaches that work towards accomplishing sustainable agricultural goals while improving water quality and restoring channel stability and ecological health.

Class is July 16-18 in Fergus Falls. Cost is $300.


Driftwatch Registry Now Available to Organic Growers

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is making the Driftwatch sensitive crops registry available to certified organic growers in the state in an effort to reduce the risk of crop damage from pesticides and fertilizers that are applied nearby.

This new, voluntary program is offered by the MDA through a partnership with Purdue University. Farmers can identify the locations of their certified organic fields and pastures using Google Maps. Commercial fertilizer and pesticide applicators can then check the database and take special care to avoid affecting the certified organic land.

The registry is available to growers and applicators at www.driftwatch.org. In addition, the MDA offers metal “Organic Farm – Please Do Not Spray” signs. Click here to learn more.

Join Online Market for Sustainable Ag Buyers, Sellers

Have something to buy or sell? Post it to the "SustAgMarket" listserv. SustAgMarket was set up
Scholarships for Transitioning and Recently Certified Organic Farmers

While transitioning to organic farming can present financial uncertainty for farmers, there's a special program in Minnesota to help them accomplish their goals. The "Tools for Transition" program, led by the University of Minnesota (UMN), Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) and other partners, provides farm business management scholarships of up to 90 percent to qualifying farmers.

"Tools for Transition" is aimed at helping clarify the cost and process of transitioning to organic. Minnesota field crop or dairy farmers who have any acres in transition or who have been certified fewer than three years are eligible to apply, and project leaders are eager to expand the program to more farmers this year.

Farmers in "Tools" work directly with a farm business management instructor on a personally designed program to help them understand and better manage their own cost of production, profitability, and other financial measures. UMN agricultural economists analyze the data to look for patterns and trends, while carefully protecting the privacy of all participants' financial information.

Program participants get the chance to participate in special workshops and to receive a discount to attend the annual Minnesota Organic Conference. To learn more about the scholarships, call administrator Meg Moynihan at 651-201-6616.

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.

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