GrazeFest at Mill City

Are you interested in Grass Fed, pasture-based meat? At the 2011 GrazeFest at Mill City Event, you'll learn more about Grass Fed meats, and the farmers who raise it.

Saturday, June 4th is the day and you'll want to be at the Mill City Farmer’s Market for another exciting event.

As usual, we've asked Minneapolis Mayor RT Rybak, a sustainable food supporter, to kick off the event, and who knows what he'll toss this year! But once we get rolling, you'll find information at the SFA Tent which will be located at the entrance to the market.

Also, we'll be having chef demo's at 10:00, 10:45 and 11:30, featuring products from SFA farmers. This year's featured farms are Sweet M's Farm and Bull Brook Keep.

We'll also have SFA T-shirts, hats, mugs and other items for sale!

Come on out, it won't cost anything to say hello.

Executive Director's Note

Got rain? I don't know about you, but we've got plenty in East Central MN. I'm always afraid to complain about the rain, because a drought (as in 2006, 2007, 2008) is much worse. Hopefully, this will all balance out soon and we can get on with a great summer.

Your SFA isn't held back by the rain, however. SFA's summer events are in full swing! We've got the GrazeFest event at Mill City Farmer’s Market this weekend, and then we’ve got the Festival of Farms coming up on July 16.

This year, we are conducting a fundraising event on July 31 with Renewing the Countryside. More on that later.
Of course the MN Garlic Festival is becoming a staple event in Minnesota every year on the second Saturday in August, this year on August 13th.

So, there's plenty of opportunity to be involved this summer. I hope to see you at one of these events.

Chapter Update

Cannon River Plans an Active Summer

The Cannon River SFA Chapter is planning to have a field day each month during the growing season (except for July, when we'll be participating in the Festival of Farms.) In June, SEEDS (Social Entrepreneurship, Environmental Design and Stewardship) will host the first field day. Seeds is a project of St. Olaf college, staffed by student interns whose goals are to give students an opportunity to learn about sustainable farming, community building and marketing, among other things. This is their second year of operation. They have a vegetable CSÀ, as well as selling produce at the Riverwalk Market Fair in Northfield and raising pigs and chickens. Donating to the local food shelf and teaching kids about farming are also big components.

SEEDS Farm field day: Sunday, June 26, 2011. Tour starts at 3:00 PM followed by a pot-luck supper. Bring your own eating utensils and a dish to pass. Directions: From Northfield, go East on Hwy 246 about 1 mile to Hwy 22; bear RIGHT on CR 22, then LEFT on 115th St. It's right there: 7375 115th St.

Cannon River Festival of Farms

Three Goodhue County farms are featured this year during SFA's 2nd Annual Festival of Farms™ on Saturday, July 16th. Cannon River SFA 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.

Sogn Valley CSA and Market Farm

Tim, Leslie and Isaac Mahle have owned and operated Sogn Valley CSA & Market Farm for 5 years. It is a small, family-owned farm just south of Cannon Falls in the beautiful Sogn Valley. They do a CSA for local pickup and off-site delivery, offering a weekly share, a bi-weekly share and a singles share. They also offer a "salsa share," a one-time box of tomatoes, peppers, onions, garlic & cilantro.

L & R Poultry & Produce

Rae Rusnak and her son Leo have been producing food for the local foodshed for several years. L & R Poultry & Produce is a family owned and operated 72-acre woodland farm, featuring rolling hills, streams, and mixed hardwood trees.

They produce eggs, chickens and turkeys as well as maple syrup and a market garden. Their poultry are free range and their produce is grown without the use of chemical pesticides or fertilizers.

Seven Songs Organic Farm

Melissa Driscoll and husband Jay Hambidge spent 2.5 years searching for their ideal farm before buying one outside of Kenyon in January 2010. They're transitioning their farm to organic food production, with organic certification scheduled for the fall of 2012. Seven Songs specializes in gourmet garlic, raspberries, humanely-produced eggs, and heirloom vegetables. A hoop house will be built this summer to extend the season for raspberries and cold-hearty greens. They are also building an Eggmobile so they can move their chickens around the farm where they will do the most good for the whole farm. Driscoll and Hambidge sell food to individuals and restaurants and are actively looking for more local customers for the 2012 season.
Other News

FSA Reminder: June 1 Deadline for 2011 DCP/ACRE Sign Up

SAINT PAUL, MINN., May 17, 2011 – USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Minnesota Executive Director Linda Hennen reminds producers that June 1, 2011, is the enrollment deadline for the 2011 Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program or the traditional Direct and Counter-cyclical Program (DCP).

"Farmers in Minnesota who are interested in enrolling in these programs need to add this important deadline to their list of 'must do' jobs," Hennen said. "Producers should contact their local county office right now to set up appointments before the June 1 deadline."

Annual contracts are required to be signed to receive program benefits. All signatures of producers receiving a share in DCP and ACRE payments are required by the June 1, 2011 deadline.

For the farm and ranch calendar, here’s a schedule of FSA program deadlines coming up in the next several months:

- **May 31, 2011** - 2010 Crop Year Final Loan Availability Date for Corn, Soybeans, Grain Sorghum, Sunflowers, and Pulse Crops

- **June 1, 2011** - Deadline for 2011 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) Enrollment and for 2011 Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program Election

- **July 15, 2011** - 2011 Crop Year Acreage Reporting Deadline for most crops and deadline to file 2010 Production Reports for most Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) crops

- **July 29, 2011** - 2009 Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE) Program Signup Deadline

- **August 1, 2011** - Deadline to Request a 2011 Farm Reconstitution

- **September 1, 2011** – Deadline to file 2010 Production Reports for ACRE. This
deadline was extended from July 15, 2011 for 2010 production only.

For more information about DCP and ACRE programs or other FSA programs, contact your county FSA office and visit the state FSA website at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

Out & About

Organic Farming Training

Getting Started in Market Gardening and High & Low Tunnel for Extended Season Vegetables are all-day intensive trainings that will include classroom time and hands-on farm tours. Click the links below to register online. Space is limited, so register soon!

To register for the Getting Started in Organic Market Gardening field day, click here: Getting Started in Organic Market Gardening

To register for the High & Low Tunnels for Extended Season Vegetables field day, click here: High & Low Tunnels

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Angie at 715-778-5775 or angie@mosesorganic.org.

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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