On Give to the Max Day, donate to SFA first

Give to the Max Day is Nov. 16, and just as in the past, SFA has a chance to win several extra prizes based on the level of support our donors show.

There are some fun ways members can structure their giving to help SFA to receive some additional money. Give to the Max Day hands out more cash by choosing donors at random and giving a prize grant to the organization that received that donor's first donation. If you make SFA your first donation of the day and then, if you're chosen as a random donor, SFA gets more cash.

Hungry? Give $500 or more and receive an invitation to a "Leaders Breakfast" on Sat., Feb. 18, at the SFA Annual Conference.

Give to the Max also awards extra cash every hour to one participating organization. So, if you're up at 4 a.m. to do chores, go ahead and make a donation, any size donation will count – because there's a good chance SFA could win the bonus for that hour. Spread out your donation over as many hours as you wish and SFA will have that many more chances to receive a prize grant.

Also, last year, SFA nearly cracked the Top 10 in donations received among small nonprofits. This year, with your help, SFA can nudge even higher and compete for additional grants for the highest-grossing groups. Help from SFA members could result in an additional grant.

The SFA page for Give to the Max is up, but we'll be making lots of improvements between now and November 16. If you just can't wait to donate, please feel free to do so, but by donating on Nov. 16, you could help SFA win more.

Lake Superior chapter hosting 'Farmers' dinner

The Lake Superior SFA is hosting its eighth "Farmers Take the Stove" dinner from 5:30-8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 18, at Peace United Church of Christ, 11th Ave E. and 11th St., Duluth.

The dinner features local farmers using fresh ingredients to cook for attendees. The event will also feature dishes made with local ingredients by Twin Ports chefs, and Duluth duo Four Mile Portage will be playing old-fashioned Appalachian fiddle and banjo music during the event.

If you are a grower or chef wanting to donate food items or a dish, contact Joel Rosen at 218.389.3306 or email plfarm@q.com.
Also this year is a silent auction featuring local items and farm products. To donate, contact Jamie Zak at 218.728.2687 or jamienels@yahoo.com.

Buy tickets [here](#) or call 218.393.3276 or email info@lakesuperiorfarming.org. Tickets are $12 for adults, $5 for children 6-10 and free for under 6.

**Minnesota Organic Conference is Jan. 13-14**

The [Minnesota Department of Agriculture's](#) Organic Conference returns to the River's Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud on Jan. 13-14, 2012. Enjoy dozens of practical workshops, a trade show, organic meals and ample opportunities to meet other organic farmers. Featured speakers include:

- Charles Benbrook, chief scientist at The Organic Center
- Jim Goodman, journalist and Wisconsin organic beef/dairy farmer
- Elaine Ingham, president and director of research at Soil Foodweb Inc.
- John Mesko, Executive Director of The Sustainable Farming Association

Also, three preconference workshops are slated for Jan. 12: "Practical GAP's Implementation on Your Diversified Vegetable Farm," "All About Selling Meat – What You Need to Know" and "Introduction to Beekeeping."

To learn more about the conference, call 651.201.6012 or email Meg.Moynihan@state.mn.us.

**Last chance to help shape Farm Bill 2012**

Congress is writing the 2012 Farm Bill proposal Nov. 1, so today is the last chance to contact your Minnesota congressional leaders to ensure job creation, health and resiliency in the future.

The Organic Farming Research Foundation encourages taking action to influence the primary legislative tool that ensures the viability of organic farming in America.

Senator Amy Klobuchar and congressman Collin Peterson are each on congressional agriculture committees. Klobuchar's office can be reached at 202.224.3244; Peterson's at 202.225.2165. You may talk to a person or leave a message when calling these numbers.

Some sample points to make, suggested by OFRF:

- As your constituent, I want you to support the fastest growing form of agriculture in America: organic farming. Increase funding for critical organic programs in the Farm Bill proposal to the Super Committee.

- Organic programs ensure job creation and economic growth.

- Please vote to maintain funding for: the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative, the Organic Data Initiative, the National Organic Certification Cost-Share program, the National Organic program, and conservation programs.

**A note from Executive Director John Mesko**

November is almost here, and with it comes ... (no we are not even going to mention the likelihood of winter) Give to the Max Day! Yes, we've come all the way 'round the calendar and we are ready to launch a new year at SFA. On Give to the Max Day, Nov. 16th, we will kick off our fall fundraising drive, of course, but we will also begin our membership renewal campaign as well as open registration for the 21st SFA Annual Conference, Feb. 18, 2012.

New this year, we'd like to show our appreciation for your support. If you donate $500 or more on Give to the Max Day, Nov. 16, you'll automatically be registered for our signature
event, the SFA Annual Conference, AND you'll receive an invitation to our Leaders Breakfast the morning of the conference!

More details will be following, including other gifts, but please know your support of SFA is greatly appreciated and you'll be advancing sustainable agriculture in Minnesota and the upper Midwest.

These are exciting days at SFA. We've weathered a challenging storm, labored through some fairly lean funding cycles, and have begun to emerge stronger, more focused and capable of delivering on our mission. Over the next few issues of SFA Connect, I'll be sharing with you the path we are on, and also how you can be involved.

**Kirschenmann lecture planned in St. Paul**

Fred Kirschenmann, a national leader in organic farming, will deliver a free public lecture at 7 p.m. Thurs., Nov. 10, in St. Paul. Kirschenmann, a distinguished fellow at Iowa State University's Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, will speak on "Water and the Challenges Facing U.S. and World Agriculture in the 21st Century." His talk is sponsored by the Freshwater Society and the University of Minnesota College of Biological Sciences. The lecture will be in the Student Center Theater on the university's St. Paul campus. For information, go to [www.freshwater.org](http://www.freshwater.org).

**Mark Your Calendars**

SFA Annual Conference - February 18, 2012

College of Saint Benedict, St. Joseph, MN

Also, don't forget to check out the [Event Calendar on our Website](http://www.sfa-mn.org) for more Sustainable Ag Events.