You are cordially invited to attend...

**Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota’s 15th Annual Conference**  
*Cultivating Common Ground: Linking Sustainable Agriculture and Health*  
**Saturday, February 18, 2006**

By Mary Jo Forbord

Health, in a very broad sense, is what sustainable farming is all about...health that links our land, water, food, fiber, energy, people, communities and our world. SFA’s Central Chapter has chosen to focus on the connections, and we invite you to partake of the great line-up of events and learning opportunities in store for you at SFA’s 15th annual conference. All the details are inside this issue. The easiest way to register is online; the cheapest way is to make sure your membership is current and catch the early bird rate by January 31st.

**Conference Location**

SFA’s 2006 Conference will be held in Little Falls on the Saint Francis Campus, home of the Franciscan sisters. Founded in Little Falls in 1891, the sisterhood has developed ministries in health care, education, and social services throughout Minnesota and into Wisconsin. The life of a Franciscan is characterized by simplicity and a profound reverence for all created things. Gracious hospitality permeates the beautiful and comfortable on-campus setting.

**‘Linking Sustainable Agriculture and Health’ Keynote Speaker**

Dr. David Wallinga directs the Food and Health program at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). His work highlights the public health impacts of industrialized food production, including the increase in antibiotic resistance. He is a graduate of the University of Minnesota Medical School, and has earned a Masters in Public Affairs from Princeton University.

**SFA Awards and Musical Extravaganza**

Now is the time to nominate your Sustainable Farmer Emeritus and/or Distinguished Service Award winner! Mail the nomination form by January 31st, or nominate online to mforbord@sfa-mn.org. As the award-winning suspense builds, performing for your toe-tapping pleasure will be the duo SFA knows and loves, musicians Marienne Kreitlow and Jerry Ford from Living Song Farm.

**Children’s Activities!**

Children are invited to participate in fun and educational sustainable farming activities and recreation while parents attend Saturday’s conference.

(Annual Conference continued on page 19)
Become a CornerPost Sponsor

Are you interested in strengthening the development of sustainable agriculture in Minnesota? Supporting the Sustainable Farming Association’s quarterly newsletter is a way for you, your business or organization to become active in the cause. We will acknowledge your sponsorship in CornerPost by providing description and contact information unless you prefer that your sponsorship remain anonymous - we will honor your wishes. Please call Mary Jo Forbord at (320) 760-8732 to discuss your sponsorship opportunities. Thank you!

Silent Auction Donations Needed

The Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota is looking for individuals, farms, businesses, and SFA of MN chapters to donate items for the Silent Auction at its 15th Annual Conference on Saturday, February 18, 2006 in Little Falls, MN. We your to be creative with donations. Not only can you help the SFA, but you can also promote your business and region. You don’t have any ideas of what to donate? A couple of suggestions include a gift basket of foods that represent your region or your farm or a handcrafted piece of art. Do you want to promote tourism in your region or agro-tourism on your farm? Perhaps you could donate a home-cooked meal and a farm tour, a guided canoe trip down a local river, a night at a local bed and breakfast, or any number of unique experiences.

Please contact Anne at communications@sfa-mn.org or (320) 226-6318 if you decide to make a donation to the silent auction or indicate this on your conference registration form. The SFA also asks that you provide a suggested value for your donation. We thank you for your support.

More mileage per CornerPost

Before recycling the CornerPost, please leave your copy at your church, in a doctor’s waiting room, your workplace, your co-op, a place of business, or with a friend or relative. Be a part of spreading the good news about sustainable agriculture while helping to conserve our resources. Thank you!

Do you need to renew?

Membership in the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota entitles you to receive the CornerPost Newsletter. Use the form on page 12 or go to www.sfa-mn.org and join or renew your membership today!
Meet
Sister Ruth Lentner

I live in Little Falls, MN at St. Francis Convent, where I am currently the convent gardener. I take care of 1½-acre garden and small orchard, plus I’m involved in the landscaping and overall care of our convent grounds. All my gardening is done organically, but I’m not officially certified organic. The food I raise is mostly eaten fresh. All of it is eaten at the Convent. My job is intertwined with my life as a Franciscan Sister. What I do in the growing of the food is done out of my care for my community.

I grew up on a small family dairy farm near Gilman, MN. Here, I started my lifelong love for the earth and its creatures. My very first job was caring for the chickens. I quickly learned that these animals were to be cared for well, because they fed us with their own bodies. Almost everything we ate was grown on our farm; my parents only went to town about every six weeks to get essential dry goods. When I was in 11th grade, the FFA opened its doors to girls for the first time. I was the first girl to join. I loved learning about animals and earth related subjects. My family is very unique in that all but one is involved with agriculture in some significant way and four members are still small family dairy farmers.

I first got involved in the SFA of MN upon my return from missionary work in Nicaragua. While living there, I became very aware of how a few wealthy people had bought up nearly all the good farming ground in Central America. I realized that this too was happening in the U.S. under what we call corporate farming. I hoped to help bring alternative ways of farming to small farmers that were good for the land, people, and its animals, in order to aid them in being competitive. SFA sounded like a very good organization to get involved in to do this. I’ve continued being involved in the SFA because I’ve found so many people who are so excited about farming sustainably. My hope is that the SFA will continue to grow and attract small farmers to the organization. I hope that these farmers will be able see that they can be successful farmers while using alternative methods of production. I also want to promote a way of living that is so worthwhile and healthy, especially in comparison to the direction of corporate farming in America.

(VanDerPol continued from page 14)
their predicament with so many dollars at such risk and we will shrug our shoulders and let it happen.

So their predicament is ours and the questions that surround this need to be grounded, as ethical questions always are, in the real world rather than a technological never-never land. Those questions have to do with use of land, use of animals, and our vision for the people involved. Remember that the narrow neck at the center of the hourglass figure is there because we have no faith in people and that the agriculture we see around us is as it is because of our fifty year attempt to take people out of it, in large part by making sure that the work that technology has not disposed of is menial minimum wage toil done without personal satisfaction and to the financial benefit of very few.

The link between methamphetamine and modern agriculture is perhaps not so fanciful as it seemed when I first said it to the county board. What we propose to do with the people is the most pressing of all the ethical issues connected with modern agriculture.

(Annual Conference continued from page 1)
Farmer’s Market, Exhibits, and Silent Auction
All popular last year, with even more to see and choose from this year. Market your products, donate to SFA, have some fun, get creative. This is the place to do it all.

Conference Eve Sustainable Food and Tunes Celebration
An array of special treats await those arriving the evening before the conference. First, great sustainable food, followed by a presentation/discussion led by Jamie Harvie, Director of Health Care Without Harm’s Healthy Food in Health Care (HFHC) Project, geared toward providing nutritionally improved food in health care settings. Home-grown sustainable music by Kristen Blann and friends will lead us into the Conference Eve tradition of SFA members reconnecting with gusto…it’s certain to be memorable!

Sponsorship Opportunities
Do you like what SFA is doing? Would you like to be a catalyst for our work? Become a conference sponsor—call Mary Jo Forbord for details.
See you at the 15th Annual Conference in Little Falls!
Resolving to support sustainable agriculture

By Anne Borgendale

The New Year is upon us again and we’ve all made a couple of resolutions. Maybe you want to get your finances in order. Maybe you want to lose a few pounds. Maybe you want to spend more time with your family. But did you forget a resolution? Why not resolve to support sustainable agriculture too! There are many different ways for you to do this, but one of the easiest ways is for you to become a new or renewing member of the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota.

As you may have noticed on the last few CornerPosts, your SFA of MN membership renewal date is now indicated above your name on the CornerPost address label. Inside this CornerPost you’ll find a membership renewal form on page 12. Or for yet another option, you can join or renew online at www.sfa-mn.org. This makes it even easier for you to support what you believe. And it’s not just you, do you have neighbors or friends who would like to know more about sustainable agriculture? Share your CornerPost with them or direct them to the SFA of MN website.

Membership in the SFA of MN entitles you to many things. First of all, you will receive the best registration rates for the SFA of MN Annual Conference in February and GrazeFest Minnesota in August. Each quarter you will also continue to receive the CornerPost. You will have the option of getting a bi-weekly events email listing sustainable living and sustainable agriculture events across Minnesota and the mid-west. And, you will also receive notifications about outreach and education events hosted by SFA of MN Chapters in your area and across the state.

Finally, if the time comes when the NAIS (or a state equivalent) is about to go into effect as presently planned, and you feel your rights are being violated, you can contact groups that may provide legal representation without cost. Some sources of information to try are: (1) Farmers’ Legal Action Group, www.flaginc.org, 651-223-5400; (2) the American Civil Liberties Union, www.aclu.org; for the ACLU in your state, see the pull-down menu on the bottom of that page, under “your local ACLU”; and (3) www.abanet.org/legalservices/findlegalhelp/home.cfm, the American Bar Association’s guide to legal services.

*******************************

SFA has more info on this topic on our discussion board at: http://www.sfa-mn.org/forum/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=98. Another informative website is: www.stopanimalid.org
Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota
Chapters .... there’s one near you!

Chapters are active in many interesting events year round. Call the chapter contact for more information, or visit our website at www.sfa-mn.org.

cannon river/hiawatha valley
Kathy Zeman
11539 E. 200th St.
Kenyon, MN  55946
Phone: (507) 789-6375
kzman@cannon.net

central
Kristin Blann
40234 Hwy 10
Cushing, MN  56443
Phone: (218) 330-9612
kblann@umn.edu

coteau ridge
Bob Schelhaas
358 180th Ave
Edgerton, MN  56128
Phone: (507) 442-8493
bolisch1@frontiernet.net

crow river
Greg Reynolds
5405 Calder Ave SE
Delano, MN  55328
Phone: (763) 972-3295
riverbend@usinternet.com

lake agassiz
Bill Langlois
16330 260th St SW
Crookston, MN  56716
Phone: (218) 281-6881

northeast
Jean Sramek
PO Box 307
Carlton, MN  55718
Phone: (218) 393-3276
farming@charter.net

south central
Julie Ackland
26154 State Hwy 13
Albert Lea, MN  56007
Phone: (507) 826-3358
ackland@deskmedia.com

southeast
Edgar Hansgen
18158 Co Rd 39
St. Charles, MN  55972
Phone: (507) 932-4219
ejhansgen@hotmail.com

western
Kelly Lanctot
17734 335th St
Sunberg, MN  56289
Phone: (320) 278-2000
kellylanctot@directway.com

districtwide
Lonny Dietz
State Board Chairman
17485 Calico Hill Road
Altura, MN  55910
Phone: (507) 932-5225
londietz@aol.com

Mary Jo Forbord
Executive Director
29731 302nd St
Starbuck, MN  56381
Phone: (320) 760-8732
(866) 760-8732 toll-free
sustainablefarming@hcinet.net

Cannon River/Hiawatha Valley Chapter
By Mary Ellen Frame

We started the field day at Ralph Lentz’s farm on October 22nd with a midday potluck meal featuring food some of us had grown, and a roast of Ralph’s excellent beef. A sunny day, it was mild enough to eat outdoors. Following a brief presentation by Ralph, explaining his grazing system,
(Cannon River/Hiwat Thermal Chapter continued from page 3) he showed us four research projects along a creek that runs through his farm. In section A, the cattle were grazed three days a month. In section B, he kept them there until it was really eaten down. The idea was to mimic the effect of buffalo on prairie creeks before the prairie was turned into farmland. Ralph pointed out the diversity of plants and their lush growth along the stream banks, and the gentled-down banks. Larry Gates, from the DNR, who has been consulting with Ralph on this project over a number of years, talked about the diversity of aquatic life in the stream, that’s promoted by the nutrients the cows deposit there, and the sunlight reaching the water.

After seeing the pastured part of the stream, we moved on to Section C, a stretch of stream that had been fenced off since 1967 so the cows couldn’t get near the stream. It was all grown up to trees. Because of the shade, there wasn’t much in the way of grass or annual forbs, which makes this section much more prone to erosion. The banks are steep, and during spring runoff, chunks of topsoil often fall in.

Section D is for a new research project. Ralph has cut down many of the thickets there leaving only a few trees, and re-seeded it. Joe Magner, a hydrologist with the Pollution Control Agency, will study it for ten years. They want to see whether cattle will improve the stream when it’s managed properly.

After this, the group went to see the cattle grazing on the hay field, eating what, for many farmers, would be third crop hay. Instead of expending human and machine energy to make third crop hay, Ralph lets the cattle do the harvesting. In the meantime, the untillable paddocks are growing and stockpiling, and the cattle will graze those paddocks in November. Ralph thinks this plan saves money, and is a lot more efficient. A final note, our chapter meeting will be on Saturday, February 11th in Northfield, MN.

Crow River Chapter
By Greg Reynolds

We spent the last couple of months gearing up for our best Winter Meeting ever. I think that our chapter president, Jerry Ford, called it something like the Crow River Sustainable Farming Association Conference. The meeting was on Saturday, January 7th at St. John’s Lutheran Church in Howard Lake. There were sessions on the Conservation Security Program (CSP), Herbs for Health, Compost Teas, Garlic, Essential Oils, and Alternative Weed Control. The Director of Environmental Sustainability from Aveda, Mary Tkach, gave the keynote address. There will be more details on it in the Spring CornerPost.

At the meeting, we also announced our summer schedule of tours and events, including the 1st Annual Minnesota Garlic Festival. Jerry does not believe that there is enough to do in August. I already have August 12th, the date of the Garlic Festival, blocked out on my calendar. It will be at the Wright County Fairgrounds in Howard Lake. Look for more details soon.

Other than that, we had our Fall Social back in October. About 20 people showed up at the Three Crows in Delano and watched the documentary “Voices of Minnesota Farm Women.” Our own Jean Peterson was one of the women featured. There was a discussion afterwards. Everyone was so sociable that we will do it again.

Southeast Chapter
By Edgar Hansgen

Greetings from Sunny southeast Minnesota! I hope that you all had a very Merry and Heart Warming Christmas and wish you a Happy and Rewarding New Year! Thanks to our own Lonny Dietz for serving as state president for the past year. GOOD JOB, LONNY!!

We are busy with the final stages of planning our annual meeting to be held on Saturday, February 4th. Our program starts with SFA’s very own Mary Jo Forbord. She will be followed by Erin Tegtmeier, who is with the Minnesota Experiment in Rural Cooperation. We will also have a short video entitled “The Impact of Fresh, Healthy Food on Learning and Behavior 2004” from Natural Ovens Bakery.

Fred Kirschenmann, formerly with the Leopold Center in Ames, Iowa, will be our featured speaker. He is going speak on one of his favorite subjects, the building of rural communities and economies through value-added process.

In the coming year we will be working with Erin Tegtmeier through the Minnesota Experiment in Rural Cooperation and with a civic engagement grant. Through this process, we look forward to a very exciting and enlightening time. See you at the state annual meeting.

Western Chapter
By Jeremy Lanctot

The Western Chapter of the SFA of MN hosted a farm tour at Jim and LeeAnn VanDerPol’s and Josh and Cindy VanDerPol’s Pastures A’ Plenty Farm between Kerkhoven and Clara City, MN on October 8, 2005. Several dozen attendees came from as far away as Iowa, southeastern and north central Minnesota, to observe integrated livestock systems. Hogs, dairy heifers, and chickens are pastured there, as well as sold on-farm, and delivered to various customers as far away as the Twin Cities.

Researchers from the West Central Research and Outreach Center in Morris, MN were present to help answer technical questions and to give presentations on what the latest research is showing concerning pasture-based production. At this time the Western Chapter board has not decided on a date for our 2006 annual meeting.
(MDI continued from page 5) tive livestock producers looking for help. Historically, MDI excluded goat and sheep dairy producers from receiving MDI grants and services. Over the last few years, MDI has finally recognized that goats and sheep are becoming a serious percentage of the dairy industry in Minnesota. Organic dairying took many years to get established as a persistent force; now health-conscious and ethnic communities have brought goat and sheep farms from obscurity to prosperity almost overnight. We’re seeing beginning farmers setting up small-scale goat dairies and even some existing cow dairies adding goats to their offerings. What may have started as a son or daughter’s 4-H project gone ‘awry’ has become a viable enterprise for a small family farm.

Farm Business Management 80% cost-share

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has secured federal grant dollars to provide an 80% cost-share of Farm Business Management (FBM) tuition for organic farm producers in Minnesota. An electronic version of the brochure explaining this program is available on their website at www.mda.state.mn.us/esap/organic. If you’re an existing organic producer, you should have received a hardcopy of this brochure in the mail by now. Annual FBM tuition can exceed $1,000 for fulltime enrollment. An organic farm can expect 80% cost-sharing of whatever their tuition ends up costing. This will depend on the region of the state in which they farm, how many FBM college credits they, and how many credits their FBM instructor agree they need.

For more information, consult the FBM brochure and your local MnSCU institution. FBM instructors are available throughout the state. Many of these instructors have their own farming operations and some even have organic acreage. You can even choose your instructor, making it easier to find one who is understanding of your goals and vision.

Several major benefits can result from more organic farms enrolling in FBM. First, the FBM system needs to have enough organic producers to provide statistically significant numbers for organic farming in this region. Secondly, the FBM system needs to learn how to accommodate organic farms and their unique needs. Finally, organic farms may gain insights into their operations. This may make it easier to identify losing enterprises that should be changed and/or winning enterprises that should be kept and possibly expanded.

Historically, the FBM system and many government organizations have not understood sustainable or organic systems. Most times, they only see agriculture from a ‘single bottom line’ view. Sustainable farmers often farm the way they do because of their ‘triple bottom line’ approach. Namely, balancing economics with lifestyle and the environment. They may be willing to make less gross income to have a more enjoyable lifestyle and/or protect their farm ecology. Generally, FBM does not look at a holistic system. Potentially, this can be changed by having more organic producers involved who can move beyond the ‘what’ and ‘how’ and start explaining ‘why’.

Farm Transfer

MDI is moving on several fronts. In Fall 2005, SFA developed a prototype farm transfer internet listing with the support of MDI and MDA personnel and funding. SFA submitted a proposal for 2006 to further develop this internet listing and begin marketing it to the public. MDI agreed to fund this Phase I project for $3800. Presently, one can view this listing at www.sfa-mn.org/farm_tran/ftsummary.htm. Eventually, it will be hosted on the www.mndairyinitiative.org website. Check both locations to see how it is progressing.

If you would like to sell, rent, share-milk or partner your dairy farm, or, you are a beginning dairy farmer looking for just the right farm, contact David Weinand of MDA at (651) 201-6646 or via email at David.Weinand@state.mn.us. Not all of the farms listed here will be ‘sustainable’ farms. This is the beginning of a project which will most likely include any farm of any type within a few years.

Discussion Board

Last winter, SFA unveiled our updated website. We were hoping to have the new graphic design completed, but sometimes projects like this take a while! Our discussion board has been in use since last winter and is expanding quite nicely. Every week, there are new topics and new postings from users. We expect the traffic on this site to steadily increase over several years. It is a service to farmers who desire to share ideas and advice with one another. The discussion board moves beyond a phone call or email by benefiting everyone who view the board, instead of just two people.

If you’re sharing ideas and advice that would help many people beyond just the person you’re talking with today, post it on the board. Internet search engines pick this up and it becomes visible to the whole planet. Why answer the same question one hundred times? Send people to the board for an answer(s). Producers are posting useful info about marketing, production info and hot topics. I recently added some info about organic dairy transition helps and processors who handle goat and sheep milk for Minnesota producers. As I come across info that many would find useful, I try to post it on the discussion board. Anyone can do this.

Organic Network

A new website corner is being cleaned and prepared for info concerning the Organic Network (ON). The ON is a loose collaboration of individuals from many organizations who work with various aspects of the organic industry. Certifiers, government organizations, sustainable organizations, marketing organizations and especially producers touch base with each other via a monthly conference call. Group responsibilities are rotated among members, so no one organization gets stuck with the majority of the burden.

SFA has shared the web portion of the group activity by starting a ‘website’ for the ON where info about the members and the discussions will be posted. Anyone can check-in on the activity and review minutes from the monthly conference calls. Check out the latest at www.sfa-mn.org/organicnet/index.html.
Ka-chiiing – organic farming for profit, not just for fun

Starting in 2006, a new program will offer an 80% tuition discount to certified organic Minnesota farmers who enroll in Farm Business Management. SFA is teaming up with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, USDA Risk Management Agency, University of Minnesota and the Organic Crop Improvement Association to make this program happen.

Farm Business Management provides education and skills to farm owners and operators to help them meet their business and personal goals. Students learn to maintain and use quality records and make sound business decisions. Effective financial management in the business is the best way for the business to maintain that competitive edge. Farm Business Management education programs in Minnesota are available through the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) at 85 different sites across the state. There are a total of 105 Farm Business Management instructors in Minnesota.

Thousands of farmers use FBM. Give it a try! Enroll early in the year for maximum benefit. For more info about this offer, or for assistance in connecting with an instructor, call Meg Moynihan at the MDA (651) 201-6616, or call SFA at 320-760-8732.

(NAIS continued from page 15)


July 2006 – the Draft Strategic Plan (p. 10) gives July 2006 as the target date for the USDA to issue a proposed rule setting forth the requirements for NAIS premises registration, animal identification, and animal tracking. This will be a crucial juncture for action by those who will be harmed by the NAIS, because there will be a limited public comment period after the publication of the rule, and objections expressed in the public comments may persuade the USDA to modify or abandon some requirements of the rule.

Fall 2007 – the USDA plans to publish a “final rule” to establish the requirements of the mandatory NAIS. (Plan, p. 10.)

January 2008 – this is the most crucial date in the USDA’s present timetable, the date when premises identification and animal identification would become mandatory. (Plan, pp. 2, 10.)

January 2009 – “animal tracking” would become mandatory, including “enforcement” of the reporting of animal movements. (Plan, p. 17.)

How to Oppose the NAIS

There is still time to oppose mandatory premises and animal identification. Small-scale keepers of livestock can take action to create an effective movement in opposition to the USDA/agricorporate plan. First, small-scale livestock owners should not participate in any so-called “voluntary” state or federal program to register farms or animals. The USDA is using farmers’ supposed willingness to enter a “voluntary” program as a justification for making the program mandatory. (See Plan, “Executive Summary” and pp. 7-8.) If a state or extension official urges registration of your premises or livestock, question them about whether the registration is mandatory or voluntary and about any deadline for registration; and ask them for a copy of the legislation or rule establishing any claimed authority to require such registration.

Small farmers and livestock owners can also help inform and organize others. The USDA presently does not plan to finalize its rules to establish mandatory ID until the summer of 2006. (As stated above, individual states, such as Wisconsin, may be planning earlier implementation, but even in such states, widespread objection by animal owners can still affect whether plans become permanent and whether reasonable exceptions may be established.) Animal owners should contact breed associations, organic and sustainable farming organizations, or general farming interest groups.
South Central Chapter

By Mark Ackland

The South Central Chapter of the SFA of MN will be having their annual meeting on March 11th at the First Baptist Church in Clarks Grove, MN. Registration starts at 9:30 am and also there will have a potluck dinner at noon. In the morning we will have Eldon Gilbertson, a grape grower, tell us about grape production. Eldon grows grapes for a winery in Stillwater, MN. After lunch we are going to have a panel discussion about the future of farming and the fate of the mid-sized farmer.

We know that small farms can stay in business because the people running them can get outside employment to keep them going. Our questions are, what if your farm is so large you cannot support it with off-farm employment, what is the future of the mid-sized farm, what will happen with agricultural subsidies, and can this country keep on the path of deficit spending?

This panel will consist of Dan French, a grassed based dairy farmer from Dodge Center, Kent D. Olson, an agricultural professor from the University of Minnesota, and Jim Van DerPol, a hog farmer who practices sustainable agriculture.

Another important issue is government agricultural payments. In the United States from 1995 to 2003, the top 10% agricultural producers received 72% of the payments, for an average of $309,823.00 each. This is not right. It is said these payments are needed to save the family farm. This is not true. They are increasing the rate of disappearance of the family farm. Bigger farms are taking over the smaller farms. There was a proposal to cap this subsidy at $250,000. This was called the Grassley-Dorgan amendment. Senator Grassley should be commended for trying to act fiscally responsible. This was a major effort to save the small and mid-sized farms. The proposal was voted down on November 3, 2005. $250,000 should be enough for anybody. Loopholes should be closed so producers cannot get around the spending cap. This is more evidence of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer in this country.

Ralph Lentz, Larry Gates, and Mary Hanks at the CR/HV field day on Lentz’s farm near Lake City, MN.

Minnesota Dairy Initiative Update Winter 2006

By Jeremy Lanctot

Overview

The Minnesota Dairy Initiative (MDI) has been in operation in one form or another for about ten years. The Minnesota Legislature provides the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) with approximately one million dollars in funding annually to aide and to promote dairying in Minnesota. A portion of this funding gets dispersed as Dairy Planning Grants, another portion gets used for administration of the funding, and the remaining amount gets divided amongst six geographical regions plus the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota (SFA). Each of the six regions has Minnesota divided by county groupings.

SFA is the seventh ‘region’ and gets the privilege of covering the whole state. Our portion of the million dollar pie is a mere $42,000 per year (the smallest portion, by the way). This is budgeted by SFA to cover coordination of the funds, farm grants, workshop funding, mileage and communication costs, etc. A portion of this money was used to establish our updated website and pay for dairy-related speakers at various SFA events across the state. Any SFA chapter may request funds from our MDI pool for events they plan that outreach to dairy farms. We would rather see this money used at the farm and chapter level than be used up by our coordinator’s (my) travel expenses trying to cover the whole region. If you do require, or desire, a personal visit from me to size up your ideas in person, I am more than willing to drive to your farm and look things over. Promise!

For example, in 2005 the SFA cost-shared events in southeast, southwest, west central, and northeast Minnesota. If you have an idea for a dairy farm tour or workshop in your chapter, please ask and we’ll do our best to help make it a reality by sharing event costs and advertising. If you start a grazing group or roundtable discussion group related to dairy in any way, we would be exceedingly willing to help cover food and/or guest speaker costs. Just ask! We want this grant money to be spent locally (by you) and wisely (according to your wishes and needs).

Outreach

In 2006, we will be performing more outreach to farms that may not know there are resources to help them make changes and improvements to their operations. We are “making our lists and checking them twice”, so we can mail written information to producers explaining what’s new for Minnesota dairy farmers. One new target group is goat and sheep producers.

Goats and Sheep

I’ve received an increasing number of calls from alterna

(MDI continued on page 17)
The “National Animal Identification System”: A New Threat to Rural Freedom

By Mary Zanoni
(Reprinted with the permission of Mary Zanoni, P.O. Box 501, Canton, New York 13617, phone: 315-386-3199 email: mlz@slic.com)

Small farmers and homesteaders have chosen their way of life because they love their freedom - - the freedom from urban noise and congestion, the independence from government and corporate interference, the self-reliance of providing one’s own shelter, water, food. Now the USDA’s NAIS – National Animal Identification System – threatens the traditional freedoms of the rural way of life.

The Genesis of the NAIS

The NAIS is the brainchild of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA). Who is the NIAA? Primarily two groups – (1) the biggest corporate players in U.S. meat production (for example, the National Pork Producers, Monsanto, Cargill Meat); and (2) the makers and marketers of high-tech animal ID equipment (for example, Digital Angel, Inc., EZ-ID/AVID ID Systems, Micro Beef Technologies, Ltd.). Beginning in 2002, the NIAA used 9/11 and subsequently the BSE scares to lobby the USDA for a nationwide, all-livestock registration and tracking system. The result is the USDA’s proposed NAIS, set forth in a Draft Strategic Plan (Plan) and Draft Program Standards (Standards) released on April 25, 2005. The Plan and Standards can be downloaded from www.usda.gov/nais.

Main Requirements of the NAIS

The NAIS would require two types of mandatory registration. First, premises registration would require every person who owns even one horse, cow, pig, chicken, sheep, pigeon, or virtually any livestock animal, to register their home, including owner’s name, address, and telephone number, and keyed to Global Positioning System coordinates (for satellite-assisted location of homes and farms), in a federal database under a 7-digit “premises ID number.” (Standards, pp. 3-4, 10-12; Plan, p. 5.) Second, individual animal identification will require owners to obtain a 15-digit ID number, also to be kept in the federal database, for any animal that ever leaves the premises of its birth. Thus, even if you are raising animals only for your own food, you will have to obtain an individual ID to send animals to a slaughterhouse, to sell or buy animals, to obtain stud service. (Large-scale producers will be allowed to identify, e.g., large groups of pigs or broilers raised and processed together by a single group ID number. However, owners raising single animals or a small number, under most circumstances will have to identify each animal individually for purposes of slaughter, sale, or breeding.) If you own a non-food animal such as a horse, you would need individual ID if you ever left your property for shows or trail rides. The form of ID will most likely be a tag or microchip containing a Radio Frequency Identification Device, designed to be read from a distance. (Plan, p. 10; Standards, pp. 6, 12, 20, 27-28.) In addition to this “electronic identification,” the USDA will allow “industry” to decide whether to require the use of “retinal scan” and “DNA” identification for all animals. (Plan, p.13.)

Within this system, for animals subject to individual animal identification, the animal owner would be required to report: the birthdate of an animal, the application of every animal’s ID tag, every time an animal leaves or enters the property, every time an animal loses a tag, every time a tag is replaced, the slaughter or death of an animal, or if any animal is missing. Such events must be reported within 24 hours. (Standards, pp. 12-13, 17-21.) The USDA plans “enforcement” to ensure compliance with the NAIS. (Standards, p. 7; Plan, p. 17.) The USDA has not yet specified the nature of this “enforcement,” but presumably it would include fines and/or seizure of animals.

A more recent development is a movement, spearheaded by the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, to “privatize” the database which will contain all the premises and animal identification information and tracking information. As reported in Lancaster Farming, Aug. 6, 2005, p. E 22, the NCBA has lobbied the House Agriculture Committee to urge the USDA to put the NAIS database administration into the control of the NCBA itself. As explained below, such “privatization” will only worsen the prospects for invasion of privacy and economic pressures on small farmers and homesteaders.

Any “Benefits” of the NAIS Are Illusory

The NIAA and USDA claim two principal benefits of the NAIS: first, enhancing export markets for U.S. livestock products; and second, allowing traceback to farms of animals’ origin when animal diseases (such as BSE) are found. These “benefits” are of no use to most small farmers and homesteaders. Small farmers and homesteaders sell to their neighbors or consume their animal products themselves – they don’t profit from “export markets.” Small farmers and homesteaders raise their animals in natural and healthy conditions -- usually on pasture, with minimal home-raised or organic grain, with plenty of space for exercise and dispersal of waste -- to assure that problems like BSE and bacterial contamination won’t occur in the home-raised animals destined for their own tables.

Indeed, the NAIS “traceback” system would be much
food supply “secure” against diseases or terrorism. However, most people instinctively understand that real food security comes from raising food yourself or buying from a local farmer you actually know. The USDA plan will only stifle local sources of production through over-regulation and additional costs. Ultimately, if the NAIS goes into effect, more consumers will have to buy food produced by the large-scale industrial methods which multiply the effects of any food safety and disease problems. Moreover, the NAIS system will create opportunities for havoc, such as the deliberate introduction of diseased animals into premises containing large numbers of a given species.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of the NAIS is its proponents’ lack of concern for individual privacy and religious freedom. Consider that the NAIS plan is a compulsory registration with the government of all people who want to raise their own animal foods. Concededly, the Bill of Rights does not contain a constitutional amendment specifically to protect one’s right to produce one’s own food. But that is only because the generation of the Founders could never have imagined that American government could evolve into a system that would compel citizens to in effect ask for government permission to produce their own food.

Further, consider that livestock animals are legally a form of personal property. It is unprecedented for the United States government to conduct large-scale computer-aided surveillance of its citizens simply because they own a common type of property. (The only exceptions are registration of motor vehicles and guns, due to their clear inherent dangers – but they are registered at the state level, not by the federal government. Moreover, those registration systems predate the widespread use of personal computers and the development of the Internet, so even the car and gun registration systems were never intended as the widespread threat to privacy and freedom that they have become today.) Surveillance of small-scale livestock owners is like the government subjecting people to surveillance for owning a couch, a tv, a lawnmower, or any item of personal property. Moreover, privatization of the NAIS will surely result in the same gross abuses already evident in private databases of financial information – the sale of citizens’ most personal data, without their knowledge, to the highest bidder; and the vulnerability of citizens’ information to hackers and thieves, because the President and Congress have utterly failed to subject the powerful private data industry to long-needed protections for citizens’ privacy.

The NAIS also violates America’s tradition of respect for the religious freedom of members of minority faith communities. Many adherents of plain (and other) faiths raise their own food animals and use animals in farming and transportation because their beliefs require them to live this way. Such people obviously cannot comply with the USDA’s computerized, technology-dependent system; and many of them also believe that scriptural teachings or other religious tenets prohibit the marking of animals or homes with high-tech numbering systems. The NAIS will force these people to violate their religious beliefs, by compelling them to make an impossible choice between abandoning the livestock ownership necessary to their religious way of life, or accepting the government’s imposition of practices abhorrent to their faith.

The USDA’s Planned NAIS Timetable

The following is the USDA’s timetable, as set forth in the Draft Strategic Plan and Draft Program Standards on April 25, 2005, for implementing the mandatory NAIS. Essentially, the USDA timetable would make premises identification and individual animal identification mandatory as of January 1, 2008. Please note that there can be no assurance that the USDA will not advance (or delay) the previously announced timetable. In addition, the USDA timetable may differ from that of individual states, which have had the incentive of grant money from the USDA to establish pilot projects of premises and animal identification. (For example, Wisconsin is attempting to compel premises and animal identification by late 2005 or during 2006.)
MY SIDE OF THE FENCE: 
When ‘Big Pig’ Moves In

By Jim VanDerPol

Big Pig is moving in just down the road in the form of a facility for 5500 sows, housed in three buildings tucked between two state wildlife refuges. It is, as nearly as I can tell, all legal, with county required setbacks observed and all assurances against manure spills and other misfortunes in place.

I will write a comment to the recently published environmental assessment worksheet, be politely “answered” or ignored, as it suits the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency whose worksheet it is, and the world will keep turning. What I want to say about this does not conform with what anyone involved is expecting or even equipped to hear. Because what comes to my mind is all the violations of a decent agricultural ethic there are in the attempt to put 5500 sows on several acres. But the discovery of ethical violations, as our recent politics should teach us, is generally not the cause of change for the better. I anticipate the kind of look I got when I suggested in passing to my county board of commissioners that our current epidemic of methamphetamine manufacture and abuse might be linked to the complete lack of opportunity for any but a very few wealthy in our very rural county.

Another of these 5500 sow establishments has just recently been put on hold in the county south of here because the residents of the township got an interim ordinance and moratorium passed. The action bought them a year in which to get an ordinance in place. I was involved in the early stages via a telephone conversation with some of the folks who brought that about, and did suggest to them that they needed to learn about the connections between their food purchases and the kind of agriculture being encouraged by those purchases. No 5500 sow hog houses or 6000 cow dairies would ever be built if the products could not be sold. This is a core issue in the ethics involved.

Land use is central too. We have an agricultural idea firmly in place now that could well be illustrated with the image of an hourglass imposed on the land. Our farming collects large quantities of feed grains, generally corn and soybeans from a large area of land, then funnels them down through the narrow neck at the center which represents the confinement livestock operations. The fertility thus sent off the farm is then replaced with commercial fertilizer. However, these confinement operations generate manure which is then planned, or at least promised, to be hauled out to another large area, though never quite as large as the area that grew the grain. In these last proposals, there seems to be some plan to use the manure to replace the commercial product on crop land by some of the people proposing the project. And this is a good step in itself, though I doubt that proper attention has been given to the costs of hauling that much water that far. Liquid hog manure, as bad as it smells, is still very dilute as a fertilizer product. However, the careless promises connected with the carrying out of this operation are truly breathtaking in scope.

The “proposer’s” experience suggests, writes the state, that inclement weather does not necessarily inhibit the land application of manure. The proposer plans to use only state certified manure handlers and thinks the manure application should be done in nine days each fall. This in an area that features only three crops, all of them full season, i.e. sugar beets, corn and soybeans. Just last year, some of that corn was harvested over the frost later in the season.

Meanwhile, back here in the real world of livestock farming, stuff does happen. Our manure has sometimes not been hauled out in a timely fashion on our more diversified farm, a farm which does provide some opportunity for other than last-thing-in-the-fall manure work. And what happens then is that the manure, always mixed with straw or corn stalks in our system, is stacked and stockpiled until it can be hauled. These stockpiles are on our yard, which is on high ground surrounded by at least 700 feet of pasture grass in any possible direction toward the farm’s drainage. This is in part our planning since we know perfectly well that things will go wrong. But it is also in part because we live and farm within some decent boundaries, boundaries that recognize some possibility of weather variation and human failure and allow for those things. Since we are not trying to farm the entire world our successes may be limited in modern terms, but so will be our disasters. This is a possibility that a working agricultural ethic would honor.

Rain sometimes starts here in western Minnesota on Halloween or thereabouts and for the entire month of November the land becomes a sea of muddy clay. Crops are then harvested over the frost after freeze up. It is true that we have not had a great deal of this in the last decade, but it is also true that muddy weather was the rule rather than the exception for much of the eighties and early nineties.

When this happens again, and it is when, not if, we will hear something like a whine coming out of all our shiny new confinement operations. They will wish to be let out of all the rules concerning manure application, rules such as sweep injection of manure and application by soil test on many acres. They have manure storage for one year, it will need to be emptied, no matter how, so that they can operate another year, and we as a people will take a look at (VanDerPol continued on page 19)
**sfa of mn winter events calendar**

For more details on sustainable farming and living events visit: www.sfa-mn.org/calendar

If you would like to add an event to the SFA of MN calendar contact Anne at communications@sfa-mn.org

---

Jan 9 – Feb 10  **Family Farms Art Show, the Arts Guild Gallery, Northfield, MN**, Through this exhibit, a group of 14 artists from around the state have come together to give us a glimpse into the rural landscape as they see it--the farm families, the livestock, the fields of grain, the small towns and their main streets.

Jan 13-14  **Practical Farmers of Iowa Annual Conference, Des Moines, IA, The** conference will focus on the needs of a new generation of farmers committed to sustainable agriculture whether they are starting out fresh or transitioning to new practices and markets.

Jan 17  **Minnesota Dairy Days –Edgerton, MN**, This is an opportunity for dairy producers and dairy advisors to hear the latest research-based info. More info at www.extension.umn.edu/dairy.

Jan 18  **Minnesota Dairy Days –New Ulm, MN**, This is an opportunity for dairy producers and dairy advisors to hear the latest info. More info at www.extension.umn.edu/dairy.

Jan 19  **Minnesota Dairy Days –Eyota, MN**, This is an opportunity for dairy producers and dairy advisors to hear the latest info. More info at www.extension.umn.edu/dairy.

Jan 20  **Minnesota Dairy Days –Cannon Falls, MN**, This is an opportunity for dairy producers and dairy advisors to hear the latest info. More info at www.extension.umn.edu/dairy.

Jan 20-21  **Minnesota Organic Conference and Trade Show, St. Cloud, MN**, For info and registration forms call 651-201-6686.

Jan 20-22  **Wisconsin School for Beginning Market Growers - University of Wisconsin-Madison**, For more info call 608-262-5200


Jan 28  **2006 MN Meat Goat Producer Informational Events! – Bagley, MN**, For more info about these or other MMGP events please contact: Brenda Postels, U of MN Extension, post0060@umn.edu or visit www.misa.umn.edu/Meat_Goats.html.

Jan 28-29  **Midwest Value Added Conference: Enhancing Profit on the Farm, Eau Claire, WI**, For more info contact: Heather Flashinski, 715-834-9672 or visit: www.rivercountryrcd.org/valad.htm.

Jan 30  **What is the Future for Family Farms” Panel, Arts Guild Gallery, Northfield, MN**, For more info, contact Stephanie Henriksen at 507-645-7086 or dkamis@rcnnect.com.

Feb 2-3  **Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference, St. Cloud, MN**, For info contact 763-434-0400 or visit www.mfvga.org.

Feb 4  **Southeastern Chapter of the SFA of MN Annual Meeting**

Feb 4  **Central Chapter of the SFA of MN Annual Meeting - Browerville, MN**


Feb 9-11  **Wisconsin Grazing Conference, Stevens Point, WI**, For graziers from across the region, For more info call 715-261-6009.

Feb 10-11  **Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society 27th Annual Winter Conference – Fargo, ND**, Keynote Speaker: Winona LaDuke

Feb 11  **Cannon River/Hiawatha Valley Annual Meeting – Northfield, MN**

Feb 11  **2006 MN Meat Goat Producer Informational**

(Events continued on page 8)
(Events continued from page 7)

*Events! – Buffalo, MN, For more info: Brenda Postels, U of MN Extension, post0060@umn.edu or visit www.misa.umn.edu/Meat_Goats.html*

Feb 11 Coteau Ridge Chapter Annual Meeting, Pizza Ranch, Tyler, MN

Feb 11-12 Wisconsin Cut Flower Growers School - University of Wisconsin-Madison, This 2-day workshop is designed to help new growers learn the ins & outs of producing & marketing cut flowers. Contact John Henderickson at 608-265-3704 or jhendric@wisc.edu.

Feb 18 15th Annual Conference of the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota: “Cultivating Common Ground: Linking Sustainable Agriculture and Health” – St. Francis Center, Little Falls, MN. For more info and to register visit: www.sfa-mn.org.


Feb 23 Organic University - La Crosse, WI, In depth full day courses on a variety of organic farming topics. Contact MOSES for more information www.mosesorganic.org or 715-772-3153.

Feb 24-24 17th Annual Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference - La Crosse, WI, Contact MOSES for more information info@mosesorganic.org or 715-772-3153 or visit: www.mosesorganic.org.

Mar 4 2006 MN Meat Goat Producer Informational Events! – St. Charles, MN, For more info about these or other MMGP events please contact: Brenda Postels, U of MN Extension, post0060@umn.edu or visit www.misa.umn.edu/Meat_Goats.html.

Mar 7-8 Windustry’s Community Wind Energy 2006, Des Moines, IA, For more info contact: Cole McVey at (612)870-3461 or info@windustry.org. Or visit www.windustry.org.


Mar 11 South Central Chapter of the SFA of MN 2006 Annual Meeting

Mar 11 The Prairie Enthusiasts 2006 Conference, Lanesboro, MN

Mar 11 Crow River Chapter Spring Social, Three Crows Restaurant, Delano

Mar 14-15 55th Annual Grass Seed Institute – Roseau, MN, For more info contact Nathan Johnson Nathan Johnson Extension Regional Director, Roseau 888-241-4546 or email: johns854@umn.edu

Mar 16 Pride of the Prairie 7th Annual Spring Community Food Expo and Farmer’s Market, Location: University of Minnesota, Morris - Oyate Hall, Student Center. Time: 2:00pm - 4:30pm.

Mar 16 UMM’s Pride of the Prairie Spring Local Foods Meal “Breakfast at Dinner”, Location: Food Service Building, University of Minnesota, Morris. Serving from 4:45pm-7:00pm.

Mar 22-23 The 6th Annual Central Plains Dairy Expo - Sioux Falls, SD, For more info contact: Kathy Tonneson 218-236-8420 or visit centralplainsdairyexpo.com/.

“I am only one, but still, I am one. I cannot do everything but I can do something. And, because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do what I can.”

~ Edward Everett Hale, American clergyman and writer (1822-1909)
Our Children’s Food, Our Children’s Landscape

By Mary Jo Forbord

The Otto Bremer Foundation recently funded SFA’s proposal entitled Our Children’s Food, Our Children’s Landscape: Civic Engagement for Agricultural Sustainability. Throughout the next 2 years, SFA will be implementing a civic engagement process committed to active, informed, constructive participation in the public life of communities, with a focus on the common good. The proposal builds around, and into, well-established and well-attended SFA events to initiate, enhance and expand a statewide network of citizens, farm families and rural communities that are educated and connected around issues of food, agriculture and rural development. SFA believes that all stakeholders in our multi-faceted and complex food system must be included as we discern the most positive and sustainable vision for food and agriculture in Minnesota. Our policy decisions now will have a profound and far-reaching effect on farmers, rural communities, and our Minnesota landscape. Ultimately, our decisions now will shape the quality, diversity and source of our food supply for generations to come.

The project will also expand SFA leadership and membership knowledge about our role in public policy, encourage citizens to develop relationships with public officials, provide education about rural issues, and develop organizational infrastructure for public policy work. SFA will be assisted in civic engagement process development and implementation by the University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships. The Partnerships bring a wealth of experience and resources, a strong dedication to citizen involvement, and a geographic distribution that closely mirrors that of SFA chapters. For more information about SFA’s civic engagement project, contact Mary Jo Forbord, SFA Executive Director at 866-760-8732 or mforbord@sfa-mn.org.

(NAIS continued from page 6)
SFA of Minnesota 2006 Membership and Sustaining Contribution Form

Become a member...or renew your membership! If you join or renew now, your membership will be current until 2007! Your Sustaining Contribution will accelerate our progress toward a more sustainable food and farming system. Whether or not you choose to join us as a member, you will receive the CornerPost quarterly newsletter to “keep you posted” of interesting events and happenings in sustainable agriculture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support SFA in 2006!</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual SFA membership or renewal*</td>
<td>Tax Deductible</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustaining Contribution</td>
<td>Tax Deductible</td>
<td>$100 (or amount of your choice $30+)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total SFA Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*You may designate that your membership fees go to the ________________________________ Chapter.

Combining your selections of Annual Conference Registration(s), Farmers Market, Exhibitor, Membership, Renewal, and and/or Sustaining Contribution, the Grand Total Enclosed is:  $___________

Please send a check payable to SFA of MN, 29731 302 Street, Starbuck, MN 56381

Thank you for your support!

2006 SFA of MN Award Nomination Form

Based on qualifications of a high level of dedication, commitment, service, perseverance, achievement, and contributions to the advancement of Sustainable Farming in Minnesota, I nominate the following person[s] for the:

(choose one):

___ Sustainable Farmer Emeritus Award (farmer or retired farmer only),

___ SFA Distinguished Service Award (may be a non-farmer)

to be announced at the 2006 SFA Annual Conference on Saturday, February 18, 2006 in Little Falls, MN.

Name: ___________________________________________________________________________________

Address: _________________________________________________________________________________

Phone: ___________________ Email: ________________________________

Please write a brief rationale of why your nominee[s] deserves the Farmer Emeritus Award or the Distinguished Service Award:

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

Your signature: _________________________________________________________________

Mail your nomination form by January 31st to: SFA of MN, 29731 302 Street Starbuck, MN 56381 or submit your form electronically to: mforbord@sfa-mn.org
Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota’s 15th Annual Conference!

Cultivating Common Ground:
Linking Health and Sustainable Agriculture

Saturday, February 18th, 2006
At the St. Francis Center - Little, Falls, MN

8:30 Registration, Fair Trade Coffee and a home-grown snack
9:00 Welcome SFA Chairperson, Ruth Lentner, Franciscan Sister and Mary Jo Forbord, Executive Director of the SFA of MN
9:30 Cultivating the Common Ground of Sustainable Agriculture and Health
Dr. David Wallinga, Director of the Food and Health Program at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy [IATP].

10:30 Second Annual Sustainable Farmer Emeritus Award and Distinguished Service Award
Featured musicians: Jerry Ford and Marienne Kreitlow, Living Song Farm

10:45–11:00 Break for Exhibits and Farmer’s Market

11:00 Breakout Session I
• Health: Health Care Without Harm - Jamie Harvie, Health Care Without Harm
• Farming: Strengthening the Immune Systems of Animals on Grass - Jeremy Lanctot, SFA Dairy Initiative Coordinator, Joe Molitor, Farmer, Dennis Johnson, West Central Research and Outreach Center, and Jeff Winkelman, DVM
• The Connection: Food for Folk and Community Supported Agriculture - Gary Brever, Food for Folk and Plough-share Farm and Al Jabs, Farmer

12:00-1:30 A Delectable Local Foods Luncheon Celebration!

1:30 Breakout Session II
• Health: {of the Organizational Kind): SFA ‘s Annual Check-up. Get the lowdown on what’s been happening and what’s about to happen, ask questions, give advice, become involved. Mary Jo Forbord, RD, SFA Executive Director
• Farming: Plant Communities Database and Diversifying Agro-Forestry Practices - Paula Westmoreland, Ecological Gardens and Tim Gieske, Farmer and the Minnesota Project
• The Connection: Meeting the Eat Local Challenge on the White Earth Reservation

2:30-3:00 Break for Farmer’s Market and Exhibits

3:00 Breakout Session III
• Health: Avian Flu in Birds and Humans: The Cause, The Threat, and The Future - Jacquie Jacobs, U of M
• Farming: Goats for Meat and Dairy - Rebecca Jacks, Farmer and Interim President of the Minnesota Meat Goat Association, Wayne Martin, MISA - Integrated Livestock Production Systems, and Brenda Postels, U of M Extension
• The Connection: Farm to School Initiative: Connecting Local Foods to Children and Civic Engagement for Community Health and Prosperity - Lynn Mader, RD and Nick Jordan, Ph.D. agronomy, U of M

4:00 Soil: The Real Dirt on where Health Begins, Glen Borgerding, speaker and moderator and... The Conservation Security Program (CSP), Tim Gieske, Farmer and the Minnesota Project

***Register today for “early bird” rates...See you at the conference!
Map and Directions

St. Francis Health and Recreation Center
116 8th Avenue SE
Little Falls, Minnesota 56345
Phone: 320-632-0627

From 10 (south):
Take the Co. Rd. 76 exit and go north. At 8th Avenue SE turn right. Use the west parking lot of the St. Francis Center. The parking lot is the first entrance on the right.

From 27 (east, west, or north):
Take the Co. Rd. 76 and go south. At 8th Avenue SE turn left. Use the west parking lot of the St. Francis Center. The parking lot is the first entrance on the right.

Housing/Motel Information

St. Francis Center Dormitories: Limited rooms with 2-3 single beds per room and a shared dormitory style bathroom. Shared room rate: $20/person/night; Private room rate: $32/person/night. Morning breakfast available for $5. Contact Anne at (320) 226-6318 or communications@sfa-mn.org about reserving a room for Friday, February 17 to Saturday, February 18. First come first serve.

Americinn: 306 Lemieur St, Little Falls, MN 56345 - (320) 632-1964
Clifwood Motel: 1201 Haven Road, Little Falls, MN 56345 - (320) 632-5488
Country Inn by Carlson: 209 16th Street NE, Little Falls, MN 56345 - (320) 632-1000
Super 8: 300 12th Street NE, Little Falls, MN 56345 - (320) 632-2351
The Goodnight Inc: 13402 Haven Road, Little Falls, MN 56345 - (320) 632-2989
### Annual Conference Registration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status Registration</th>
<th>per person</th>
<th># attending</th>
<th>Line Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SFA Member**</td>
<td>$35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-member</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFA Member**</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Member</td>
<td>$55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under 18</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Children’s Programming*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td>$5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Join or renew your membership in the SFA of MN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exhibitor***</th>
<th>Need electricity</th>
<th>Organization/Business</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>$30 per family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farmers Market Participant ****</th>
<th>SFA Member**</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free Will at Event</td>
<td>$25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RSVP for Friday evening Local Foods and Tunes Celebration</th>
<th>SFA Member**</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free Will at Event</td>
<td>$25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donating item to silent auction</th>
<th>Item:</th>
<th>Suggest Value:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Conference-related Fees enclosed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

---

*Children’s programming is for kids 3 years old (and potty trained) and up. It will be a day full of games and activities with a farm centered theme. A noon meal with the large group is included in the registration fee. Remember your swimsuit and towel. The St. Francis Recreation center has a swimming pool!

**SFA membership must be current to register at the reduced rate.

***Exhibitors will receive a complimentary registration, a meal and breaks for one person, publicity, exhibit space, a table and one chair.

****Farmer’s Market participants must be SFA members. We invite you to offer products for sale that you have produced. You must also register for the conference. We will contact you for specifics so we can publicize your products and provide you with exhibit information. Resolve in 2006 to “Buy from Each Other”!

**Name(s)________________________________________________________________________________________
**Address ________________________________City  ____________________  State _______   Zip _____________
**Phone  ______________________   Email  ___________________________

Please send a check payable to SFA of MN, 29731 302 Street, Starbuck, MN  56381 Thank you!
Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota

29731 302nd Street
Starbuck, MN 56381
Return Service Requested

mission: we support the development and enhancement of sustainable farming systems through farmer-to-farmer networking, innovation, demonstration, and education.