SFA MISSION

The Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota supports the development and enhancement of sustainable farming systems through innovation, demonstration, education, and farmer-to-farmer networking.

INSIDE:

SFA’S 20TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Routes of Sustainability: Farming, Food & Fellowship

Friday & Saturday, February 18-19, 2011

College of St. Benedict
St. Joseph, MN

SFA 2010 Year in Review, Looking Ahead to 2011

By John Mesko

As impossible as it seems, 2010 is drawing to a close. And as the snow and cold begin to blanket the countryside, time spent reflecting on the past and looking ahead is well-spent.

As the largest organization of sustainable and organic farmers in Minnesota, SFA had an excellent year in 2010. Our 19th Annual Conference in February 2010 was again a highlight in sustainable agriculture in Minnesota. When speaking of the many issues that face Minnesota’s economy and society in the future, keynote speaker, Secretary of State Mark Ritchie said that the solutions for those issues will most likely be found in the model of SFA.

That model is one where those who do the work at the “ground” level: farmers, and the many client groups they serve, come together to address educational, logistic and opportunity needs in Minnesota’s sustainable food network. SFA truly is a solutions-based group of real life do’ers who want to make a difference.

During the summer our annual GrazeFest Minnesota at Mill City Farmers Market drew a large crowd and was a great opportunity for

SFA 2010 to 2011 continued on page 32
SUSTAINABLE FARMING ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA .....THERE’S A CHAPTER NEAR YOU!

SFA chapters are active in many interesting events year round. Call or email the chapter contact for more information, or visit www.sfa-mn.org.

MORE MILEAGE PER CORNERPOST

Before recycling the CornerPost, please leave your copy at your place of worship, 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.

2010 FUNDRAISING HIGHLIGHTS:

- During our 2010 Fundraising Drive, SFA raised nearly $14,000 in donations from members and people who see SFA as an effective organization for advancing agricultural sustainability.
- The Otto Bremer Foundation has recognized SFA’s effectiveness with a $40,000 grant for use in expanding our fundraising activities in 2010.
- Our 2011 Fundraising Drive started off with a bang during the Give to the Max Day, during which SFA raised over $5,500. Our goal for 2011 is $16,500 in contributions.

Make your sustaining contribution to SFA by visiting www.sfa-mn.org or use the form on page 19.
CHAPTER COORDINATORS

CANNON RIVER
Kathy Zeman
9800 155th St E
Nerstrand, MN  55053
507-664-9446
kzeman@kmwb.net

CENTRAL
Jim Chamberlin
23111 State Hwy 18
Deerwood, MN  56444
218-831-0528
islandlakefarm@brainerd.net

COTEAU RIDGE
Don DeWeerd
1826 70th Ave
Pipestone, MN  56164
507-825-2077
don@deweerd.com

CROW RIVER
Jerry Ford
7616 25th St SW
Howard Lake, MN
320-543-3394
jerry@sfa-mn.org

LAKE AGASSIZ
Jamie DeRosier
13923 240th St SE
Red Lake Falls, MN  56750
218-253-2861
derosier@gvtel.com

LAKE SUPERIOR
Nicole Wilde
PO Box 307
Carlton, MN 55178
218-393-3276
nicole@wildegrowth.com

South Central
Jim Tjepkema
Box 128
Clarks Grove, MN  56016
507-256-4876
jimkt@frontier.net

SOUTHEAST
Lonny Dietz
17485 Calico Hill Rd
Altura, MN  55910
507-932-5225
londietz@aol.com

WESTERN
Jim Van Der Pol
4077 110th Ave NEt
Kerkhoven, MN  56252
320-367-2061
gooda@pasturesaplenty.com

STATE BOARD

CHAIR
Chris Kudrna
At Large
St. Cloud, MN
320-202-1708
ckudrna@charter.net

VICE CHAIR
John Ostgarden
Cannon River
Medford, MN
507-446-8045
farmerjohn@clintonfallsfarm.com

SECRETARY
Mary Hanks
At Large
Northfield, MN
651-201-6277
Mary.Hanks@state.mn.us

TREASURER
Chris Barnier
Central
Little Falls, MN
320-632-4691
cbarnier@wildblue.net

Barth Anderson
At Large
Minneapolis, MN
612-296-1867
barthanderson@earthlink.net

Karola Dalen
Lake Superior
Wrenshall, MN
218-384-9779
karoladalene@earthlink.net

Jamie DeRosier
Lake Agassiz
Red Lake Falls, MN
218-253-2861
derosier@gvtel.com

Cathy Rose
Crow River Chapter
Montrose, MN
763-972-6891
cathy@naturesnestfarm.com

Kelly Firkins
South Central
Delvan, MN
715-961-3629
contact@delablufarms.com

Bruce Johnson
Coteau Ridge
Walnut Grove, MN
507-859-2139
evergreen@redred.com

Andy Olson
Southeast
Utica, MN
507-523-2047
olsol703@umn.edu

John Sluss
Western
Brooten, MN
320-346-2538
jsluss@tds.net

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
John Mesko
Box 192
Princeton, MN  55371
763-260-0209
john@sfa-mn.org
Cannon River Chapter

By Mary Ellen Frame

Over the past few years, we’ve all witnessed and been involved in an amazing awareness of the value of growing and eating food locally. In 2010 it was a surge like grass after a spring rain. This was true all over the country, and even more so in Minnesota. Our chapter has gained a lot of members, many of them being new farmers who have settled in our territory. Even though we haven’t had any formal meeting since July, there’s a lot of communication and cooperation among many of our members.

In the early part of the summer, our chapter spent a lot of time and energy preparing for the Festival of Farms, which was a great success. Over the year, member farmers have had a presence in local events, which included a table at the Northfield Earth Day celebration, several members participating in the Just Food Co-op Harvest Festival, and three of us attended the SFA Branding meeting in Northfield.

Members are vendors at a number of farmers’ markets in the region—St. Paul, Prior Lake, the Northfield Farmers’ Market, and the new Riverwalk Market Fair in Northfield, which combines artists, fine crafts, musicians, and food producers—all this besides selling direct to consumers, co-ops and other wholesale venues.

One local restaurant owner has committed to using local foods as much as possible. A licensed kitchen is now available for rent for people who want to prepare foods for retail outlets, and for holding cooking classes. Hillside Farmers Co-op, a network of primarily Latina/o poultry producers is becoming established in southeast Minnesota. Both colleges in Northfield have student-run vegetable farms and serve some locally-produced food in their cafeterias. Also St. Olaf College started a small farm staffed by students, called SEEDS, located on fifty acres close to town. The plan is to also have a Latina/o poultry enterprise and community gardens on that acreage.

Members of our chapter are also teaching others about farming. Land Stewardship Project held a field day on vegetable growing at Open Hands Farm. Gardens of Eagan had on-farm workshops and Linda Halley and Jennifer Nelson taught classes at the Wedge Co-op. Martin and Atina Diffley are teaching and writing in several venues.

The Cannon River Chapter is co-sponsoring, along with Just Food Co-op and the University of Minnesota Small Farms Team, a workshop on Poultry Health Management for pasture and back yard producers on January 8, 2011 at the Just Food Community Room in Northfield.

In early December the Cannon River Chapter board met to plan our annual meeting for this winter.

I believe that if there’s to be a peaceful transition to a sustainable economy in the aftermath of Peak Oil, diverse, small-scale and local farming will be key. SFA has been in the forefront of such a transition for the last twenty years.

Crow River Chapter

By Greg Reynolds

A lot has happened since the last update. The Minnesota Garlic Festival was a huge success. The estimate was that we had just under 3000 people come through the gate. That’s not bad for a one-day event on the edge of nowhere. The Great ‘Scape Café did all right, but not nearly as well as last year. We will have to up our game to get back on top of the fund raising heap.

Rumor has it that next year the AG Society wants to kick us out of the Agribition Building so they can start setting up for the County Fair. Most of the exhibits and the wine tasting would move over to the cavernous Commercial Building. None of that is a problem, but the Café is in a corner of the Agribition Building. Staying there would put us even farther from the major traffic streams. There wouldn’t be any existing kitchen if we were to move it outside. The logistics of cooking and serving 700-800 meals outdoors could be a little tricky.

Our Fall Social was a big hit. We had a tour of the new food co-op in Long Lake, Harvest Moon. It is a nice store. Nick said that his dad had never been in a co-op grocery store before and was very impressed. He also said that his dad only ever gets into any grocery store about three times a year.
After the tour we watched the film *Farming Forward*. The film features many SFA members talking about why sustainable agriculture is important. After the film Jerry wouldn’t let us eat supper until he droned on and on with announcements and who knows what all. The potluck was excellent and the dessert table was spectacular. Of the forty some people who showed up, several SFA members came from as far away as Austin. You won’t want to miss the next one.

On December 2 we hosted a Farm to Cafeteria Conference in conjunction with Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA) at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), University of Minnesota Extension, the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP), Renewing the Countryside (RTC), and the University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships all pitched in to make the event a success. The USDA’s Risk Management Agency coughed up the money to put the thing on.

Attendance was pretty evenly divided between food service personnel, community members, and farmers. The farmers were a little bit out numbered which was a little surprising. Usually the farmer-chef networking events have a surplus of producers. There were a fair number of vegetable producers, some fruit growers, and only one turkey farmer.

No farmers were there to represent chicken, beef, pork, eggs, milk, or cheese. I know you’re out there. Farm to School is a growing local market, they buy a lot of food, and they pay a fair price. I pride myself on having the most expensive veggies going and charge the schools the same price as everyone else. No one complains. School food service staffs need to be a little on the ball to make it work, but it can be done. You should consider selling to your local schools.

The conference started with a panel that discussion about getting food from local farms into the cafeterias. Between lunch and the formal networking session there was 2.5 hours of conversation and networking between farmers and buyers. It was almost enough time to get it all done. I was pointing school districts that were farther away to farms that were close by even if they weren’t at the meeting.

The day finished up with breakout sessions in three tracks: Farmers, Food Service, and Community. All the sessions were well attended. The Farmer session had Jim Topie from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture talking about what’s legal; Michele Schermann from the University of Minnesota covered Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification, and I talked about the bidding and sales process. While no one dozed off, Bruce looked a little drowsy, but it could have been the turkey sandwich he had for lunch. The Food Service session had people hanging around talking until after we had everything packed up, and I heard that the Community track was also pretty good too.

Our next event is our Crow River Chapter Conference. It will be at Gale Woods on Saturday, January 22. The topic will be Sustainability for the Home and Farm. Rumor has it that there will be a beer and cheese tasting afterwards. We will probably require pre-registration to make sure that we don’t run out of, ah, food.

**Lake Superior Chapter**

By Nicole Wilde

The 17th Annual Harvest Festival and Energy Fair was held at Duluth’s Bayfront Park on Saturday, September 11. Although attendance was down this year, the sun broke out after some morning showers and attendees enjoyed a day of local food, crafts, education, music and catching up with old friends and making new ones.

John Ikerd, a prominent advocate for local foods, delivered the keynote address in the afternoon. For many, the most memorable and poignant moment was the presentation of the 2010 Farmer’s Voice Award to Loren Nelson. Surrounded by family and friends, he seemed energized by the surprise award despite his rapidly declining health. Loren was a tireless voice for our local farmers and served as Lake Superior chapter president for the past two years. Loren died at home on October 21, 2010. Remaining board members and others who were inspired by Loren will do their best to carry on his message.

The 7th Annual Farmers Take the Stove event was one of the great highlights of the fall for our chapter. On Tuesday, November 16, farmers, well-known professional chefs, and chapter members prepared a glorious local foods dinner to a sold out crowd of 200 supporters. A back-to-the-basics silent auction featuring experiences such as learning to tap maple trees, soil consultations, greenhouse experience, and orchard preparation were among the unique auction items. Long time Lake Superior Chapter (LS-SFA) volunteer and board member, Kelly Smith, was the recipient of the Volunteer Service Award. This year’s event raised an unprecedented $4,000 for our chapter.

The 2010-2011 Lake Superior Farm Beginnings program also commenced this October. The program moved to Ashland, WI and is being held at the Agriculture and Energy Resource Center in order to reach farmers in northwest Wisconsin. A total of 18 families, both beginning and experienced farmers, will embark on this
exceptional 12-month education and support program. The Lake Superior Farm Beginnings program works with over 25 experienced, innovative farmers from the Lake Superior region to provide education, direction and mentorship to this next generation of farmers.

Winter is a time for planning, and the Lake Superior Chapter will be rolling up our sleeves this December and January to venture down the all-important exercise of strategic planning. Our Chapter has grown in memberships, programs and interest. With demand for local foods increasing LS-SFA will be examining how best to move forward in these exciting times.

South Central Chapter
By Katy Wortel

The first South Central Chapter event in 2010 was a group discussion on soil fertility that followed a winter board meeting. The lively discussion was well attended and ended up covering a range of topics.

The annual meeting in early March featured a talk about agriculture and global warming by Jill Olmstead from the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. Tom Willette spoke about a wind powered electric generator that he recently put into use on his farm. One session of the day split attendees into two groups: one devoted to discussing local food production and the other centering on field crops and livestock. As in the past, the annual meeting included a delicious potluck meal featuring homemade soup and bread provided by chapter members. After lunch John Mesko, SFA’s Executive Director, led a discussion on the statewide efforts of SFA. A number of new members attended, including some who had attended the SFA’s 19th Annual Conference in February.

After the busy spring planting season, chapter members worked together to organize the South Central chapter entry in the statewide Festival of Farms. The public was invited to attend tours of Hope Creamery, the Sunopta specialty grain elevator in Hope, and the Wencl family organic dairy farm near Blooming Prairie. More than 40 people attended one, or more, of the tours and attendees included new people who had not previously joined in on any chapter activities.

During the summer, chapter members Jim Tjepkema and Archie Kluender spoke at a cover crop meeting in Fairmont organized by the non-profit group, Rural Advantage. In the fall Jim and Tracy Skaar spoke on sustainable farming at a meeting of the Albert Lea Chapter of the Audubon Society.

In September board member Jill Louters took the lead in organizing a meal to follow a presentation on the Weston Price approach to good nutrition. Al and Sheri Wagner, local organizers for Weston Price and South Central chapter members, showed a video on the Weston Price approach to nutrition, answered questions, and shared their experiences in making use of the information. South Central Chapter members provided food from their farms for a tasty meal enjoyed by close to 70 attendees.

Chapter officers this year were: Jim Tjepkema, board president; Dean Goette, board vice president; Katy Wortel, secretary; and Tracey Skaar, treasurer. Other board members were: Chris Byron, Richard Carroll, Jill Louters, and Wes Tennis. Pawel Buda was appointed to fill in for board member Wally Dunn who recently passed away. Members very much miss Wally who was a great supporter of the South Central chapter. Kelly Firkins has been the chapter representative to the state board, and does a great job keeping the chapter informed on issues that come up at state board meetings. She is also serving as the chair of the state youth and activities committee. The board, with Kelly included, has held regular meeting throughout the year to take care of chapter business.

2011 preliminary plans are to increase chapter activity by using some of the funds in the treasury to hire part-time help. Some of the items on the list include improving display materials, developing an email newsletter, improving the management of the mailing list, and increasing outreach on sustainable farming to people in the South Central area. Planning for the annual meeting in early or mid-March has also started.

The board is very interested in getting suggestions for activities that will interest chapter members and members of the public as well as suggestions for programming for the annual meeting. Those with ideas are asked to contact a board member.

Central Chapter
By Jim Chamberlin

The Central Chapter will be holding our Annual Meeting in conjunction with the Happy Dancing Turtle’s “Back to Basics” event in Pine River on Saturday, January 29. Winona LaDuke will be the keynote speaker starting at 9:15 a.m. We will have a chapter update and networking session at 11:45 a.m. with the Annual Meeting and elections at 1:00 p.m. Activities and displays will be going on all day. To register or for more information go to www.happydancingturtle.org.
Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota’s

20th Annual Conference
The Routes of Sustainability:
Farming, Food & Fellowship

February 18-19, 2011
College of St. Benedict
St. Joseph, MN

featuring:
Woody Tasch
founder of Slow Money

www.sfa-mn.org

Join SFA for Farming, Food & Fellowship!

By Anne Borgendale
with excerpts from www.slowmoney.org

Each farm and community is unique. They face different challenges as they strive to be ecologically and environmentally sound; profitable and economically robust; and beneficial to their inhabitants. In other words: sustainable. There are a variety of ways to work towards sustainability. For members of SFA, an organization based on the sharing of knowledge through connection and networking, the conference is a great forum to exchange ideas on different ways to have more sustainable farms and communities.

At SFA’s 20th Annual Conference on Friday & Saturday, February 18-19 at the College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN the days will revolve around: “The Routes of Sustainability: Food, Farming & Fellowship.” The conference will also feature a variety of breakout sessions, speakers, and exhibits on the different paths our farms and communities need to embrace to lead a more sustainable existence.

SLOW MONEY
Slow Money is a newly formed NGO and social movement that is a pioneer in merging investing and philanthropy. It’s mission is to build local and national networks, and develop new financial products and services, dedicated to: investing in small food enterprises and local food systems; connecting investors to their local economies; and building the nurture capital industry. Soil fertility, carrying capacity, sense of place, care of the commons, cultural, ecological and economic health and diversity, nonviolence -- these are the fundamentals of nurture capital, a new financial sector.
supporting the emergence of a restorative economy. And these are the fundamentals of the Slow Money Principles. Woody Tasch is president of Slow Money and Chairman Emeritus of Investor’s Circle, a nonprofit network of angel investors, venture capitalists, foundations, and family offices that, since 1992, has facilitated the flow of $130 million to 200 early-stage companies and venture funds dedicated to sustainability. He is also the author of the recent book, *Inquiries into the Nature of Slow Money: Investing as if Food, Farms, and Fertility Mattered*. He lives in northern New Mexico.

**BREAKOUT SESSIONS**
The breakout sessions address a variety of issues related to “The Routes of Sustainability: Farming, Food & Fellowship.” These sessions include the topics of slow money, farm business management, a seed swap, health and nutrition, internships, agritourism, and more. These sessions will feature a variety of expert speakers from farmers and students to researchers and community organizers. See further descriptions of these sessions and a conference schedule on pages 9-13.

**CONFERENCE LOCATION**
The College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN will play host to SFA’s 2011 annual conference. St. Ben’s is a liberal arts college in the Catholic and Benedictine tradition, which is located in the heart of Minnesota, minutes from St. Cloud and 70-miles northwest of the Twin Cities. The College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University, its brother institution, have dedicated the 2010-2011 year as the Year of Sustainability. The colleges will spend the year integrating sustainability into the curriculum and across all departments and offices. Their goals are to become carbon neutral by 2035, save money, and do it in a socially just manner. SFA is honored to be part of the St. Ben’s Year of Sustainability.

The conference will take place in the center of the St. Ben’s campus at the Gorecki Dining & Conference Center. The meal and snacks will be through the St. Ben’s dining service, which incorporates local foods into its menu throughout the year.

**TASTE OF SUSTAINABILITY**
On the evening of Friday, February 18, join SFA members, St. Joseph community members, and College of St. Benedict and St. John’s University students for The Taste of Sustainability. There will be cooking demos, good food, good music and good company. See page 11 for more information.

**SFA AWARDS**
SFA will present its annual Sustainable Farmer Emeritus and Distinguished Service Awards at the conference. The Sustainable Farmer Emeritus Award is given to a Farmer or Farm Family, currently farming or retired, that has dedicated many years of their life to the advancement of sustainable farming in Minnesota. The SFA Distigusished Service Award is for a Farmer or non-Farmer who has shown a high level of dedication, commitment, service and perseverance in supporting sustainable farming in Minnesota.

Have you nominated your favorite farmer or person 2011 Conference continued on page 11
## SCHEDULE: SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2011

### SFA’S 20TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE: THE ROUTES OF SUSTAINABILITY: FARMING, FOOD & FELLOWSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>SESSIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 A.M.</td>
<td>Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 A.M.</td>
<td>Registration and Early Bird Bonus Sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 A.M.</td>
<td><strong>Keynote Session:</strong> SLOW MONEY PRESENTED BY WOODY TASCH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 A.M.</td>
<td>Woody Tasch Q &amp; A follow up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 A.M.</td>
<td>Internship Networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 P.M.</td>
<td>Lunch – A DELICIOUS LOCALLY GROWN &amp; SEASONAL MEAL THROUGH THE COLLEGE OF ST. BENEDICT FOOD SERVICE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 P.M.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 P.M.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 P.M.</td>
<td>American Society of Asset Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 P.M.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 P.M.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 P.M.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 P.M.</td>
<td>Minnesota Wine and Artisan Cheese Tasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 P.M.</td>
<td>THE END - SEE YOU ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2012 FOR SFA’S 21ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A 15-minute Break is included at the end of each session.*
AGRITOURISM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP
(see description on page 12)

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ASSET PROTECTION
Your farm is valuable, as is your farm business. Protecting that through insurance, farm planning and estate planning is essential. Learn more about the importance of preserving your valuable life’s work.

CONSERVING ENERGY ON THE FARM
Presented by The Minnesota Project

CULINARY CENTER
The food and nutrition department at the College of St. Benedict is opening its doors to a collection of culinary crafters. Short courses will be offered all afternoon in an intimate classroom setting. Interact with the featured artisan teacher while you learn. Some of the lessons are: home brewing of beer and wine using local and organic ingredients with presenters from Northern Brewer, home cheese making with Jodi Olsen Read of Shepherd’s Way Farms with support from Midwest Supply, old world sausage making, and artisanal bread. Mary Jane Miller, will be on hand to facilitate the classes

DO YOU KNOW YOUR BOTTOM LINE?
ASSESSING YOUR TRUE COST OF PRODUCTION
When you get to the farmers’ market or when you are selling your livestock or produce to a customer is you income greater than your cost of production? This session will focus on how to determine your true cost of production on your farm. We will look at what you should include, look at different cost of production numbers, and how enterprise analysis can be used to help you determine what it will or does cost you to produce your livestock or crops. Presented by Mike Mastey, Farm Business Management Education, Ridgewater College

EVENT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT FOR CHAPTERS
This session is for members who want to create great events in their chapters. Jerry Ford, Director of Minnesota Garlic Festival, and Karola Dalen, who has worked with numerous events in the Lake Superior Chapter including Harvest Festival, will cover issues surrounding a wide variety of events: farm tours, festivals, food events, concerts and more. Find out about the 2011 Festival of Farms, and how your chapter can benefit from and participate in this statewide day of farm tours.

FARMER TO CONSUMER LEGAL DEFENSE FUND
What you need to know about protecting your farm business. Presented by Tim Wrightman, Farmer to Consumer Legal Defense Fund

INTERNSHIP NETWORKING
(see description on page 13)

KEYS TO A GOOD RECORD KEEPING SYSTEM: QUICKBOOKS FOR FARMERS
Keeping an accurate set of records can give you a lot more information than a printout for the end of the year. During the session we will look at how a program like QuickBooks can be used to turn your records into a system that will give you information that you can use to help make management decisions for your farm operation. Presented by Mike Mastey, Farm Business Management Education, Ridgewater College

LEGALITIES OF INTERNSHIPS
(see description on page 13)

SEED SWAP
(see description on page 12)

SFA DESIGN IDENTITY INTRODUCTION
SFA will have an official introduction to the new SFA logo. You’ll learn from the designers and SFA Branding team more about the design identity and how you can use the entire SFA design package in your chapters. Presented by Anne Borgendal, SFA’s Communications Coordinator; Colleen Borgendal, Project Management Consultant; and Sole Lander, Graphic Designer

STRESS, DIET AND HEALTH
Farming is a stressful, dangerous occupation. The additional stressors of a full or part-time job and family obligations make for rushed meals and a potentially

Sessions continued on page 11
The Taste of Sustainability – February 18

By Jerry Ford

Imagine sweet apple and cheddar quesadillas with a caramel drizzle and cinnamon whipped cream. The chef in charge of this live action, teaching/demo food station talks of the locally produced dough tortillas he’s using, sautéing the Minnesota orchard apples with skins on, whipping grass-fed heavy cream, while the farmer who made the cheese speaks of her techniques and the animals that produced the milk. Then you get to eat it!

Now imagine that there are several of these chef demo stations around the room, plus a buffet table laden with local delights.

Sound good? Come to The Taste of Sustainability, a companion event to SFA’s Annual Conference, produced in collaboration with the Central Chapter of SFA, the chefs and cooks of College of St. Benedict, and SFA’s own Mary Jane Miller. You may remember Mary Jane as the Chef Wrangler from Minnesota Garlic Festival who produces the series of acclaimed cooking demos on the main stage.

Leslie Kruempel of SFA’s Events & Youth Outreach Committee is putting together a program of live acoustic music from some of our finest farmer/musicians that will be performed throughout the evening. And, Anne Borgendale is assembling a video montage of photos and scenes from SFA’s film projects, including the Farming Forward documentary.

So, come on out to St. Joseph the night before the 20th Annual Conference, and enjoy the Taste of Sustainability!

ATTENTION FARMERS!
Got produce available in February? Contact Mary Jane, we would love to purchase some for this event—call her at 763-684-0635.

TASTE OF SUSTAINABILITY
Date: Friday, February 18, 2011
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: Alumni Hall, College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN
Price: $5 non-students with conference registration
$10 non-students without conference registration
CSB/SJU students may use their meal tickets.
Tickets: Online at www.sfa-mn.org/registration.php or use the registration form on page 17, and on a first come basis at the door.

Sessions continued from page 10
unhealthy diet. This session will focus on ways that you can reduce your stress level and improve your overall health by making changes in your schedule and diet. We all want you in farming for the long haul; invest in you! Presented by Dr. Tatiana Riabokin

VISIT WWW.SFA-MN.ORG FOR UP-TO-DATE AND IN-DEPTH INFORMATION.

Sessions are subject to change.

2011 Conference continued from page 8

dedicated to the advancement of sustainable farming? You still can by visiting www.sfa-mn.org/discussion, look for the “SFA Awards” category. You can also email your nomination to Mary Hanks (Mary.Hanks@state.mn.us) or mail in your nomination form by Friday, February 4.

EXHIBITS & SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
The array of exhibits is likely to catch your attention between thought-provoking sessions and delicious food. Are you a farmer or organization that would like to exhibit? Do you like what SFA is doing? Would you like to be a catalyst for our work? Become an exhibitor or sponsor – please use the sponsorship form on page 15 or contact John Mesko at 763-389-2316 or john@sfa-mn.org for more information!
Agritourism Business Development Workshops

By Jonathan Beutler, Renewing the Countryside

Renewing the Countryside and SFA, non-profits advocating for sustainable rural development and agricultural systems, are hosting two courses for aspiring agritourism entrepreneurs or farmers who otherwise want to develop or expand agritourism businesses on their farms. Agritourism is a unique and creative way for small to mid-sized family farmers to add value to their land and business and diversify their revenue stream. By utilizing the scenic, recreational, cultural, and heritage-based values of agricultural land, farmers can market tourism as a new type of agricultural service by inviting paying guests to their farm for a wide variety of activities ranging simple farm stands, to elaborate overnight accommodations.

The courses will be held Tuesday, January 18 in Winona, MN and Saturday, February 19 in St. Joseph, MN. They will include expert lecturers and panelists from various perspectives, both successful farmers and agritourism operators, as well as professionals in the tourism industry, regulatory agencies, and insurance specialists. Topics covered will include an overview of current trends in Minnesota Tourism, pertinent state and county regulations, liability considerations and coverage options, designing a positive and memorable guest experience, finances and capital management, scenario building, feasibility analysis, and general business planning and structuring for agritourism businesses. After each course, participants will have the opportunity to opt-in to receive ongoing technical assistance and ten hours of one-on-one consulting mentoring with an experienced farmer and agritourism operator.

The Winona course will be a freestanding event held at the Tau Center at Winona State University. The St. Joseph course will be held in conjunction with the SFA Annual Conference held at the College of St. Benedict. A $15 materials fee will be assessed for each course, and the St. Joseph course will also require regular registration for the SFA Annual Conference. To receive further information or register for a course, call Renewing the Countryside at 612-871-1541 or email jonathan@rtcinfo.org.

SFA Seed Swap

By Jim Tjepkema

A seed swap will be held during the SFA’s 20th Annual Conference. Jim Tjepkema, who is member of the Seed Saver’s Exchange, is the organizer of this first time activity at the conference. Albert Lea Seed House will be the primary sponsor of this event. Jim and several other seed savers will have garden seeds available from their collections to exchange with other seed savers and to give out to anyone who would like a free seed sample of any of the seeds being offered. The Seed Savers Exchange (SSE), a non-profit group that promotes seed saving, will participate in the seed swap by sending a person from their staff to help with this activity and by making some seeds available from the SSE collection.

The seeds available at the swap will include many kinds of heirloom seeds, some of which are rare, old varieties maintained in family gardens for many years. All are welcome to stop by the seed swap area at any time during the conference. One or more of the people offering seeds will be available to answer questions about seed saving as well as other questions about gardening. It is hoped that the seed swap will be a place where there be a lively exchange of information on gardening and seed saving as well as a place to obtain some interesting seeds.

Anyone who has seeds they would like to have included in the seed swap can bring them to the seed swap area on the day of the conference or call Jim to give advance notice that they wish to make seeds available at the seed swap. For information about the seed swap contact Jim Tjepkema at 507-256-4876.
Everything you ever wanted to know about interns, apprentices, and seasonal employees

By Jerry Ford

What if you could line up all your interns, face-to-face, in one day? Or meet just the right person to work on your farm, at your non-profit, or in your sustainability-related company?

Come to SFA’s 20th Annual Conference on Saturday, February 19, take in the Interns, Apprentices, and Seasonal Employees track and be a part of these informative and highly-interactive sessions.

**INTERN, APPRENTICE, AND EMPLOYMENT CONNECTIONS**

This extended session begins with an interactive panel discussion featuring farmers, a farmers market and a couple of non-profits. Gary Brever of Ploughshare Farm has hosted over 30 interns at his CSA farm near Alexandria over the past eight years, and Audrey Arner is recognized statewide for her work with young people at Moonstone Farm near Montevideo. They will be joined by Aaron Reser, Market Manager at Mill City Farmers Market, and representatives from Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture and Land Stewardship Project–plus a room full of potential workers, sustainable farmers, and other organizations—all moderated by Jerry Ford, SFA’s Events & Youth Outreach Coordinator.

Then the session kicks into high gear with “Popcorn Networking,” a great method of rapidly identify the people you will want to talk to and potentially work with. This moves right into open social time, with snacks and beverages, where connections are made and relationships started.

**KNOW THE LAW**

A session specifically for those who use interns, apprentices, and seasonal labor, this will be a frank and open discussion of the legal and liability issues surrounding farm labor, compensation, workman’s comp, and other issues. Our presenter is Jennifer Jambor-Delgado, attorney with the Farmers’ Legal Action Group (FLAG), a non-profit law center dedicated to providing legal services to family farmers and their rural communities, in order to help keep family farmers on the land.

---

**WANT TO PARTICIPATE?**

*IF YOUR NON-PROFIT, COMPANY, OR FARM WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE ACTIVITIES, OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT: JERRY FORD, JERRY@SFA-MN.ORG, 320-543-3394*

---

Do you want to be an intern or host interns? Find out how in the “Legalities of Internships” and “Internship Networking” breakout sessions.

*Photo from Farming Forward.*
2011 SFA EVENTS
If you think SFA’s Annual Conference is great you should consider attending our other great events throughout the year as well:

CROW RIVER CHAPTER OF SFA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Saturday, January 22, 2011
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Gale Woods Farm, Minnetrista, MN
http://www.sfa-mn.org/chapters/

CANNON RIVER CHAPTER OF SFA ANNUAL MEETING
Saturday, January 29, 2011
11:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
For more info contact Kathy Zeman (see page 3)

CENTRAL CHAPTER OF SFA - ANNUAL MEETING
Saturday, January 29, 2011
8:00 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.
Pine River, MN
www.happydancingturtle.org

GRAZEFEST MINNESOTA AT THE MILL CITY FARMERS MARKET
Saturday, June 4, 2011
8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Mill City Farmers Market, Minneapolis, MN
www.sfa-mn.org

6TH ANNUAL MINNESOTA GARLIC FESTIVAL
Saturday, August 13, 2011
10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
McLeod County Fairgrounds, Hutchinson, MN
www.mngarlicfest.com

18TH ANNUAL HARVEST FESTIVAL & ENERGY FAIR
Presented by the Lake Superior Chapter of SFA
September 2011
www.lssfa.org

THE FESTIVAL OF FARMS - Summer 2011
GRAZEFEST MINNESOTA - Summer 2011

Visit www.sfa-mn.org throughout 2011 to learn more.

Sponsors

GOLD
LAND STEWARDSHIP PROJECT
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
MINNESOTA GROWN

BRONZE
MIDWEST ORGANIC SERVICES ASSOCIATION (MOSA)

OTHER SPONSORS:
ALBERT LEA SEED HOUSE
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ASSET PROTECTION
FARMER TO CONSUMER LEGAL DEFENSE FUND
SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE
THE MINNESOTA PROJECT

Is your organization, business, or farm not listed here? Use the form on page 15 to become a sponsor of SFA’s 20th Annual Conference.
## Sponsor & Exhibitor Policy

### 20th Annual Conference

**The Routes of Sustainability: Farming, Food & Fellowship**
February 18-19, 2011  * College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN

**Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota**
www.sfa-mn.org

### SFA Conference Sponsor

Assist SFA in a most significant way by selecting the Gold, Silver or Bronze sponsorship level on the accompanying registration form. Sponsors will be featured in publicity and promotional materials, and in the SFA conference program, distributed to all conference attendees. All sponsor levels include an exhibit space, publicity, and complimentary conference registrations.

### SFA Conference Exhibitor

Display and promote your mission, message, products and information, and interact with the most innovative farmers and sustainable agriculture ‘movers and shakers’ in Minnesota. The exhibit set up time runs from 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. on themorning of Saturday, February 19. Exhibits may be taken down after 5:00 p.m. All exhibit spaces are assigned and will include a 6-ft table with a table cloth, skirting, and one chair per exhibit.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Participation</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Number of registrations included</th>
<th>Benefits of Sponsorship Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exhibitor Member</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Booth/Display Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibitor Non-Member</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Booth/Display Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze Sponsor</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Complimentary booth/display table. Will receive mention in conference materials and website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Sponsor</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Complimentary booth/display table. Will receive mention in conference materials and website, and will be recognized by a donor board at the conference. Will have a chance to address the conference in a breakout session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Sponsor</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Complimentary booth/display table. Will receive mention in conference materials and website, and will be recognized by a donor board at the conference. Will have a chance to address the conference in a breakout session. Logo will be on the SFA website, and any SFA promotional mailings, or advertisements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Session Sponsor</td>
<td>$150 - $1000</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Fees/Benefits vary - contact John Mesko for more details at 763-260-02029.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement in Conference Program</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Ads must be designed to specifications detailed by SFA. Anne Borgendale (<a href="mailto:communications@sfa-mn.org">communications@sfa-mn.org</a> or 320-226-6318) will contact you with these details.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information contact John Mesko at john@sfa-mn.org or 763-260-0209.
Please complete this form and submit payment online at www.sfa-mn.org (Click on the piggy bank and pay fee through the "Membership and Sustaining Contributions" page) or mail this form and check payable to SFA of MN (c/o John Mesko, SFA Executive Director), Box 192, Princeton, MN 55371. Deadline: Friday, January 28, 2011.

The information below will be used to contact your organization, business or farm about conference details and will be printed in the conference program.

Organization or Business Name
Contact Person
Address ___________________________ City ___________________________ Zip ______________
Phone ___________________________ Email ___________________________
Website ___________________________

Short description of organization, business or farm:
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________

For Gold, Silver and Bronze Sponsors, will you have an exhibit? ....................  ❑ Yes  ❑ No
Does your exhibit require electricity? ..............................................................  ❑ Yes  ❑ No  ❑ N/A
*Advertisement in Conference Program? ($75 fee) .........................  ❑ Yes  ❑ No

Total: $___________________

**Name(s) of organization, business or farm representative(s) attending the SFA Conference: __________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________

*If your organization, farm or business purchases an advertisement in the conference program Anne with SFA will contact you with specific ad information.
**SFA will contact you prior to the conference to find out who will be attending on behalf of your organization, farm or business if not listed above. You may also send this information to Anne with SFA at communications@sfa-mn.org or call her at 320-226-6318.

Thank you for your support of sustainable agriculture in Minnesota!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Category</th>
<th>Per Person</th>
<th>Number Attending</th>
<th>Line Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 • Early Bird Discount Registration • SFA MEMBER® (Postmarked by February 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;)</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 • Early Bird Discount Registration • Non-Member (Postmarked by February 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;)</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 • Regular Registration • SFA MEMBER® (Postmarked after February 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;)</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 • Regular Registration • Non-Member (Postmarked after February 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;)</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 • College** Rate (18+) • SFA MEMBER®</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 • College** Rate (18+) • Non-Member</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 • Teen*** Rate (15-18)</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 • Children’s Programming (For kids 5-12 years old and potty trained). Your children will join you for the noon meal with the large group; this is included in the registration fee. Please list your children and ages on the back of this page. Family maximum of $32.)</td>
<td>$8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 • Agritourism Workshop by Renewing the Countryside (Special registration is required in addition to general conference registration to cover materials fees)</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 • “The Taste of Sustainability” Event Ticket - Friday, February 18&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; • With Conference Registration</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 • “The Taste of Sustainability” Event Ticket - Friday, February 18&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; • Without Conference Registration</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 • “The Taste of Sustainability” Event Ticket - Friday, February 18&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; • “Free” registration with use of CSB/SJU meal ticket/plan</td>
<td>No cost for CSB/SJU students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 • SFA Membership Fees and Sustaining Contribution Gifts® (total from membership form)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED (Sum of rows 1-13)
Contact Information

Name(s) of conference attendees ____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

Address _______________________________  City __________________________  State _____  Zip ___________

Phone ___________________________________  Email _________________________________________________

Please send a check payable to SFA of MN, attn: Wendy Neupauer, 2921 Toledo Ave S, St. Louis Park, MN  55416

Children’s Programming  (list all children who will be participating)

Name ________________________________   Age ____   Name ________________________________   Age ____

Name ________________________________   Age ____   Name ________________________________   Age ____

Name ________________________________   Age ____   Name ________________________________   Age ____

--SFA membership current/renewed for 2011 (use corresponding form)
**College means anyone who is registered in a degree-seeking program, part or full-time.
***Teen rate is intended for High School Students. Teens 18+ but not enrolled in high school, college, or post-secondary
education are charged regular registration.
• SFA does not offer a “non-meal” registration option.
• There are no partial registrations. The registration fee is for a full-day program on Saturday, February 19, 2011. The
  fee is the same regardless of what time the registrants shows up on the day of the conference.
• Scholarships and reduced fees for volunteers are available. For more information on these options contact John Mesko,
  SFA Executive Director, at 763-260-0209 or john@sfa-mn.org.
## Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota

### Membership Form

**www.sfa-mn.org**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Type</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Not Tax Deductible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SFA Annual Membership (for an individual or couple)</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFA Annual Membership (for a farm)</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFA Annual Youth/Student Membership (for one student)</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>(Not Tax Deductible)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sustaining Contribution (optional):

(Tax Deductible)  

- $25
- $50
- $100
- $250
- Other: ____________

**Name 1:** First Last  

**Name 2:** First Last  

**Farm/Business/Organization:**

**Address:**

**Address Line 2:**

**City:**  

**State:**  

**Zip:**

**Country:**

**Home Phone:**  

**Work Phone:**

**Mobile Phone:**

**Email:**  

**Website:**

**Chapter:**

- Central
- Cannon River
- Lake Agassiz
- South Central
- Coteau Ridge
- Lake Superior
- Southeast
- Crow River
- Western
- Unspecified
- Other

**Would you like to receive SFA's biweekly Events Email?**  

- Yes
- No

**Please make your check payable to:** SFA of MN. **Mail form & check to:**  

SFA of MN, attn: Wendy Neupauer, 2921 Toledo Ave S, St. Louis Park, MN 55416. **Thank you!**

---

### Member Interests (Optional):

- Chef/Cooking
- Consumer
- Crafts
- Distribution
- Education
- Energy Production
- Entrepreneur
- Environment
- Events
- Exhibitor
- Farmer
- Food Production
- Garlic Festival
- Grazefest
- Health
- Marketing
- Other
- Policy
- Processing
- Sponsor
- Youth
2011 SUSTAINABLE FARMING ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA AWARDS

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)
This Award will be given to a Farmer or Farm Family, currently farming or retired, that has dedicated many years of their life to the advancement of sustainable farming in Minnesota.

___ SFA Distinguished Service Award (may be a non-farmer)
This award is for a Farmer or non-Farmer who has shown a high level of dedication, commitment, service and perseverance in supporting sustainable farming in Minnesota.

To be announced at the 2011 SFA Annual Conference on Saturday, February 19 at College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, 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 Friday, February 4, 2011 to: SFA of MN, c/o Mary Hanks, 10500 295th Steet W, Northfield, MN 55057 or submit your form electronically to: Mary.Hanks@state.mn.us or post your nomination on the SFA of MN website discussion board: www.sfa-mn.org/discussion.
Lodging & Directions

For more detailed lodging information, directions, and maps visit www.sfa-mn.org.

**Lodging**

The following facilities have blocks of rooms on hold for the night of Friday, February 18 for SFA’s Annual Conference attendees:

**Super 8 Motel**
1825 E. Minnesota Street
St. Joseph, MN
320-363-7711
2 Beds Regular price, $86; SFA Price: $70
1 Bed Regular Price: $71; SFA Price: $60
Reserve before 1/18/11

**Holiday Inn**
75 S. 37th Ave,
St. Cloud, MN
320-253-9000
Single Queen Bed: $84.95 + Tax
2 Double Beds: $109.95 + Tax
Reserve Before 1/18/11

**Country Inn and Suites**
235 Park Ave. So.
St. Cloud, MN 56301
320-259-8999
King Suite: Regular price, $154, Conference Price: $99
2 Queen Beds: Regular price, $129, Conference Price: $89
Hot Continental Breakfast
24 hour pool and workout area.
Reserve before 1/18/11

**Directions**

**From the Minneapolis/St. Paul**
Take I-94 West (from the 494/694 split in Maple Grove) to St. Joseph, approximately 57 miles.

**From I-94**
Take exit #160, County Road 2.
Turn right on County Road 2 St. Joseph.
Turn right on 3rd Ave NW.
Drive to the center of campus (to the Gorecki Dining & Conference Center).
Park in Lot #2 or Lot #4

**From St. Cloud**
Take Division Street (County Road 75) west to St. Joseph.
Turn left on 3rd Ave NW.
Drive to the center of campus (to the Gorecki Dining & Conference Center).
Park in Lot #2 or Lot #4.

**From Willmar**
Take Minnesota Hwy 23 about 45 miles to Cold Spring.
In Cold Spring turn left on County Road 2.
Drive approximately 10 miles to St. Joseph.
Turn right on 3rd Ave NW.
Drive to the center of campus (to the Gorecki Dining & Conference Center).
Park in Lot #2 or Lot #4.
Hello from your state Executive Committee! We are getting increasingly excited about SFA’s 20th Annual Conference at the College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN on Friday and Saturday, February 18-19. There are many reasons for this, but two stand out.

First, this conference will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota. We believe our organization has had a significant impact over these two decades on promoting sustainability and healthy use of the land. And we know of no other organization with a larger membership of small scale, sustainably focused food producers. We plan to have displays at the conference celebrating our history and hope every chapter can be represented with a table display. If you know something of your chapter’s history and can share that, please contact your chapter leadership so it can be included at our annual conference.

Our early roots come from the Southeast Chapter organizing and meeting for the first time on March 23, 1988 with the leadership and help of the Land Stewardship Project (LSP). The idea of a statewide organization began with the first meeting (a teleconference!) of representatives and staff from six chapters – Southeast, Western, Central, Cannon River, South Central and East Central on August 29, 1991.

Bob Goss was quoted at that meeting describing the original intended purpose, “A state organization is being developed to make it easier for new local groups to develop without having to duplicate efforts of the Southeast and Western Chapters when incorporating and applying for tax exempt status. The state board is envisioned as a group to whom local chapters will be accountable, especially when they use the tax exempt status for funding.”

The first annual meeting was held March 2, 1992 and over 100 people elected two members from each chapter to serve on the first state-wide board. Congratulations and a debt of gratitude should definitely go to John Sluss – one of the original members and still on our state board today.

Responding to the interest expressed in getting chapters together and learning from both leaders and members, we are excited there will be time and space at the annual conference for that to happen. Chris Kudrna, state board chair, has volunteered to organize this effort and will be contacting chapter leadership in December to identify key topics and themes. We know our organization lives and thrives at the chapter level and look forward to an opportunity for chapter’s to share what they have learned to help each other grow and prosper.

We look forward to our 20th Annual Conference. See you there!

The SFA Executive Committee:
Chris Kudrna, Chair
John Ostgarden, Vice Chair
Mary Hanks, Secretary
Chris Barnier, Treasurer

---

**A New Dawn of Farming**

*The Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota’s Formation & Growth*

---

**COKATO FARM FOR SALE**

Scenic 3BR hobby farm with 10 acres, hasn't been sprayed for over 10 years. Ready for organic and specialty farming, nice location, pond and barn.

Shoreline Realty
612-508-1100
SFA Branding, CornerPost and Communications

By John Mesko

SFA is changing the way we communicate. As we have stated here in the CornerPost before, the expense of a quarterly paper newsletter is more than our organization can bear at this time. We’d love to continue the quarterly publication of CornerPost, and would be happy to return that publication schedule if proceeds from memberships and advertising can begin to cover those costs.

What we’ve decided to do is publish CornerPost annually, with the following goals for that publication:

- Year in review
- Look ahead to future years
- Annual Conference promotional piece

In addition to an annual paper CornerPost, SFA will begin producing an enhanced version of our events email, which will really be an e-newsletter with current and more frequent news about what’s happening in SFA and around Minnesota.

Finally, a revamped website, consistent with what SFA has become in recent years will be unveiled at the Annual Conference in February. This website will have much more current and useful information than our current site, and we hope to achieve more of our communication goals than we have in the past.

Thank you for your interest in the CornerPost and other communications from SFA. I welcome your thoughts and comments about what you would like to hear from us. Also, please remember that if our member revenue picture improves we could publish a paper CornerPost more frequently. For this, we will need members at the chapter level to increase the state portion of membership dues.

---

moon fields

I run like dog over snow covered fields
smiling I fall, pick myself up
heart pumping
beet red blood
hid by night
white on white
fog on snow
plowed earth draping hills
crust then sinking
I suck in light
starving for blue

at the edge of fields ghosts gather
wrap into tree trunks
wait for my passing
coyotes croon from river beds
how frail how strong each step I am thrusting
how tender the wild night

Marienne Kreitlow
Minnesota Dairy Initiative Update:

Who is Wade Gustafson and why you should know who he is!

By Jeremy Lanctot

After the retirement of Brant Groen as the primary instructor from the Ridgewater College Dairy Program, Wade Gustafson took over the reins of this wildly successful college technical program. Who is Wade? Where did he come from?

Wade grew up on a 40 cow dairy farm east of Willmar. In 1993, his family converted their operation from milking into buying and selling heifers. They had been dealing with heifers since 1972 and had the option of either expanding their dairy herd or doing more heifers. “We felt we had more promise in the heifers,” according to Wade.

Wade graduated from Willmar Senior High School in 1995 and enrolled in the Farm Operations and Management Program at Willmar Technical College, now named Ridgewater College. Eventually, Wade obtained his AAS in Ag Business from Ridgewater in 1998 and a BS degree in General Ag from SDSU in Brookings, SD in 2000.

“I returned to the farm after I graduated and worked with my dad and brother,” he adds.

In 2007, Wade did a stint as the Ag and Renewable Energy Specialist for the Economic Development Commission of Kandiyohi County.

“Here I worked on many projects including the Strategic Animal Conference and other opportunities the county had,” Gustafson continues, “but I’m still involved in the farm today helping with the crop farming, nutrition and financial segments of the farm.”

SFA asked Wade some questions concerning the future of dairy in Minnesota and his thoughts pertaining to sustainability.

SFA: Would you expound in more detail what you were involved with as a Renewable Energy Specialist?

Wade: I was involved in many different projects and activities. We had two wind energy groups that we assisted although I didn’t get a lot of time to work with them first hand I researched information for them on laws and land availability when need. I was also really involved in months of researching background information, interest, and writing a business plan for an anhydrous ammonia plant in our area. The idea at the time was to locate it next to the wind farms. I talked to someone the other day and they said that this idea has really taken off again the last few months.

I believe that this is an area that our economy needs to grow in if the US is going to get out of this recession. The opportunities are endless and profitable businesses could sprout up in many areas.

SFA: What type of trends do you see in dairy that are positive? Negative?

Wade: I see two main trends. The first is that in order to succeed you either need to get bigger or you need to specialize. I don’t think that either one is right or wrong, but I know that you have to be excited and go all in or you won’t be successful. It all depends upon what you want your farm to look like and be.

The second trend I see is a growing separation between the large farms and the smaller ones, almost like a resentment. I am really afraid of this. The dairy industry needs to keep everyone on the same page but having this going on scares me. How can we unite and defend our occupations against those who don’t want us farming if we can’t get along ourselves. Like I said before, we need organic dairies, small to mid-range dairies, and the larger dairies to meet the needs of the people. If one area shuts down how will we meet the demands of the public?

SFA: What are your biggest challenges in educating dairy people?

Wade: My biggest problem in the classroom is that I have so many different backgrounds to work with. I have from a 26 cow dairy up to 600+. I also have students that see the need for the education and others that are only there because mom and dad said they had too. Learning is not important to them. I worry about the success they will have with this closed-mind attitude. Even if they don’t think I can teach them, how receptive will they be if their vet or nutritionist suggests changes they
MDI updated continued from page 25

should consider? I think that the same is true outside the classroom as well.

SFA: Sustainable farming involves more than grass dairies and organics. What are your thoughts concerning quality of life in dairy and economic stability?

Wade: I think that whatever type of farming you do, you need to make a profit. The standard of living in the US is roughly $60,000+ per year for a family of four and you need to do whatever it takes to support that these days. I have been on farms that should do more sustainable farming because they could make more money, but I have also been on farms that are making money by conventional means as well. Quality of life has so many definitions it is almost become an opinion rather than a statement of fact. I always go back to: What does the person who is running the farm believe their farm should look like and how much money do they need to live on? At the end of the day that is what makes farms successful or a disaster.

SFA: Startup dairies and farms transitioning pose difficult obstacles to sustainability in dairying. What can Ridgewater College and Farm Business Management (FBM) do to help these farms face the tough hurdles and keep people on the dairy farm?

Wade: The students get a lot of this type of information from the farm management classes while attending Ridgewater and the FBM instructors assist them in any way they can after they leave here in they choose to enroll. I can’t speak much more than that on it. I think that it is vital to success and the first thing is always communication and we can only teach the students. Sometimes the parents are the ones who need the teaching.

SFA: What does the Ridgewater Dairy Program do to reach out to new students and help alumni? How can you market yourself and the program to a broader audience?

Facebook? Twitter?

Wade: I try to do whatever I can to answer questions, find jobs for present and former students, as well and even help them find a farm to buy. I haven’t thought about online that much only because a lot of the classes are so hands on that online processes would cut back on the effectiveness of the program. Ridgewater itself has those things already, but I have not taken a lot of time yet to investigate.

SFA: Do you have many students that have a background in grazing/organic/other non-standard practices or livestock? What would students like this hope to gain from your programs if they were to attend?

Wade: I do have students currently that are from these backgrounds and I would hope that they could take away many of the same principles that the other students take. Reproduction and breeding processes and goals will be the same no matter which type of farm you have. Evaluating the health of the animal will be the same, nutritionally the function of the cow is still the same and even the goals for milk production and nutritional standards will have the same processes. I think that there is a lot that they can learn if they apply it to their specific farm. I try to tailor activities so that the student is using their home farm for as many of the assignments as possible.

SFA: What’s being done about farm internships? Any cross-pollination? Namely, students with a large farm background do an internship on a grazing farm or vice-versa? Exposure to different parlor types, breeds, seasonal milking, on-farm processing, sheep and goat dairy, complimentary enterprises, etc…

Wade: The students have the choice of where they want to go. Most want to go home and apply what they have learned at home. I don’t require them to go elsewhere at this time. I think that it would be a good experience but a nightmare to coordinate at times. Like I said before, we travel a lot as a class and actually have a class called Dairy Evaluation where we see different types of farms and talk about the styles and how the student can use things they see on their farms. We will also talk about likes and dislikes of what they see as well.

If you have an interest in the Ridgewater College Dairy Program, feel free to contact Wade Gustafson, 320-222-5269, wade.gustafson@ridgewater.edu or look at the Dairy Program online at www.ridgewater.edu/programs/dairymanagement.
Loren Nelson was a Passionate Man

By John Fisher-Merrit

Loren Nelson was a passionate man. I experienced his passion in the form of conversation as we worked together harvesting and packing Food Farm share deliveries. Loren liked to talk about a wide range of issues while he worked, so we touched on all kinds of ideas: religion, politics, human rights, social justice, and local, national, and worldwide food issues.

Loren was passionate about representing a form of Christianity that Jesus unabashedly espoused: the friend of the less fortunate, including outcasts, prostitutes, and beggars. In Loren’s world, Christianity is dedicated to equal rights and equal treatment for everyone, regardless of color, nationality, sex, age, religious affiliation, or sexual orientation.

A very close second to a sensible Christianity in Loren’s list of passionate causes was his dedication to a local, sensible, sustainable food system. And he figured that his efforts in that direction should start as close to home as possible. He grew much of his own food, made his food purchases as close to home as he could, and put his shoulder to the wheel by volunteering his Thursdays during the delivery season at Food Farm. In doing so, he was making it possible for other local eaters to make the same kinds of food choices he was proud to make.

Loren’s passion for a local sustainable food system went far beyond his work at Food Farm. As President of the Lake Superior Chapter of the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota, he inspired us with new ideas and made us stick to business during meetings so we could cover our agenda and end meetings on time.

I would call Loren’s leadership style one of idealistic practicality.

In addition to all of the above, I just liked Loren. He was fun to be around; he laughed easily and often. He officiated at the weddings of two of my boys. We will all miss him.

Loren Nelson died at home on Thursday, October 21 after a courageous battle with cancer. Loren received the Farmer’s Voice Award on Saturday, September 11 at the 17th Annual Harvest Festival and Energy Fair. Our sympathies go out to his wife Candace and children and grandchildren. He touched many lives, and he will be missed by all.

Travelogue continued from page 31

As I inevitably prepared to move on, with a preliminary knowledge of rotational grazing, I was relieved that my concept of sustainable farming had widened. It seems natural now that true sustainability is not the goal. The goal as I see it, and the goal that I wish to incorporate into my life when I am once again still, is to have as minimal an impact as possible on the environment while still maintaining the economic, physical, and emotional quality of life that I require to be content.

DO YOU RECEIVE SFA’S E-NEWSLETTER?

No, then you are missing out on the who, what, when, where, and why of the sustainable farming world. Sign up today to stay informed. Don’t miss out on any great events! To subscribe: email info@sfa-mn.org with “Subscribe to SFA e-newsletter” in the subject line.
Do your students know where their lunch comes from?

The Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota is now offering farm tours for urban and suburban school groups.

Let us know
Where you are located
The grade and subject of the class
What kind of farm you are interested in touring (vegetable growers, dairies, pasture raised meat, orchards...etc.)
When you would like to take the tour
What size your group is

Your students
Will be better informed in how to make healthy and sustainable food choices
Will gain a greater understanding of sustainable agriculture
Will better understand their role in our complex food system

We will match you with the ideal sustainable farmer in your area and then arrange for a tour of the farm.

Interested? ... please contact SFA-MN Events and Youth Outreach Committee, Jerry Ford, at kreitlow@cmgate.com or (320) 543-3394.
The Fifth Annual Minnesota Garlic Festival was a Stinking Success!

By Jerry Ford

WHAT HAPPENED?
Over 3,000 people participated in one or more of the following:

- Bought hundreds of pounds of garlic to eat right there or take home - which means the thirteen garlic farmers SOLD hundred of pounds;
- Ate plate after plate of delicious local foods;
- Took copious notes at the chef’s cooking demonstrations;
- Enjoyed the live entertainment at The Wedge Co-op Local Foods/Local Arts Stage;
- Viewed and purchased dozens of local artisans’ creations, including pottery, prints, and paintings;
- Bought farm products from Minnesota growers like ice cream (chocolate, strawberry, and of course garlic flavored), alpaca socks, greens, tomatoes, lamb burgers, salads, honey, maple syrup, herbs, and more;
- Learned all about sustainable farming in the Youth/Farmer/Agricurious Village;
- Built and flew kites;
- Paraded in the Peculiar Pragmatic Promenade;
- Soaked in the wisdom of the sages at the Ask The Expert Stage;
- Tasted wines from Minnesota vineyards;
- and had a great time supporting Minnesota’s sustainable farms, local foods, environmental stewardship, and vital rural communities.

ZERO WASTE
Working with their Zero Waste program partners, the Adult Training & Rehabilitation Center and Creekside Soils, the festival generated only four 55-gallon containers of trash, while gathering 780 pounds of compostable materials and 384 gallons of recyclable materials.

OUTREACH PROGRAM
Thanks to all this support, the festival made a “profit” this year, and is busy using those funds to support farm-to-school programs in Minnesota. Crow River Chapter, the host chapter of the festival, co-sponsored a well-attended and highly productive Farm to School Workshop at the Landscape Arboretum in December, and will continue working with schools, farmers and non-profits to further this cause.

LET’S DO IT AGAIN!
The date is set for the 6th Annual Minnesota Garlic Festival: Saturday, August 13, 2011 at the McLeod County Fairgrounds, Hutchinson, MN. The hours are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and we hope to see you there!

WWW.MNGARLICFEST.COM
From Farm to Farm: A Travelogue

By Isabel Gregersen, Grazefest Intern 2010

PART I

From June to August, for two and a half months, I was moving. I love to travel—to feel the rhythm of new places and new voices. I am especially grateful for the shock of new perspectives that shake me up when I have forgotten the scale of my own ignorance and self-absorption. But there are compromises. To be shaken up is unsettling and requires a counter-force, reassurance that although my world-view is immensely limited, it has its own inherent worth. I think of that counter-force as a reliable, constant factor amidst a journey’s shifting variables. A constant that says to me: yes, I know you well. You are not drifting, and you are not alone. On my journey this past summer, the only constant I had was myself, and I learned that I was not enough. I needed something to weigh myself against, a companion to support or one to support me. I yearned for time to slow down and for the days and hours to space themselves out, making room for deeper connections. But time kept its pace and I remained my only constant. Thankfully, the lessons I learned, recounted in the following pages, redeemed my fast-paced and sometimes isolating journey. Among them is one overarching, yet paradoxical realization: moving has given me a better idea of how I want to be still.

Being the Grazefest intern meant that every two weeks I faced a new farm in a new part of the state with a new family who had a new way of thinking and a new way of eating dinner. There were puzzling personalities to make sense of, startling family dynamics to observe with discretion, and strange aesthetic taste to compare to the aesthetics with which I grew up. Of course, the internship was primarily about agriculture, not psychology or sociology. But staying with only farmers delivered no constancy—for not only are there infinite ways of living but there are infinite ways of farming, of interacting with land and animals and food and eating. On my journey I had brief encounters with four of these ways, four out of the infinite. I learned how strangers—people I had never met and may never meet again—have constructed their ways of life, their ways of being still. After my ten weeks of movement I returned to school, to my own stillness and the continuous pleasure (and angst) of constructing my own relationship with food. I can already sense the change. My stillness has a richer texture and my relationship with food a new kind of clarity.

I had plenty of clarity pre-journey when it came to my reasons for immersing myself in a variety of grass-based farms. At the end of my first week I had written in my travel journal:

Why would an English major from Carleton College who grew up in the suburbs of New York City want to spend ten weeks as an intern on livestock farms if she isn’t planning on being a livestock farmer? I’ve said it’s because of curiosity and knowledge and experience and personal interest, but those are all vague words that don’t really get to the root of why I’m doing this… is it too trite to say that I want to be a thoughtful, knowledgeable, and responsible person in this world, and part of that is knowing the implications of what I eat? Of course, I could stay at home and read books about it. But being at farms, participating in work, asking questions, and trying to understand the obstacles that farmers confront will give me a different kind of knowledge. This will all hopefully contextualize our country’s food problems for me and make my life richer and my choices more meaningful. I want to learn something, and I want an adventure.

Those reasons still resonate with me. My values have been further defined and internally organized, and I have gained the kind of knowledge that I had hoped to gain. Where I mistakenly thought I had clarity was in my beliefs about food and farming. They were too simple. Among my preconceptions were: 1) 100% sustainability is the goal of sustainable farming 2) grass is always good and corn is always bad and 3) grass-based farming is not environmentally necessary or even environmentally beneficial in its own right but simply far preferable to factory farming. On my travels, I learned that 1) these preconceptions are incorrect and 2) much, much more.

PART II

The first stop on my whirlwind internship was the Benruds’ dairy farm in Goodhue, forty-five minutes east of Northfield, my hometown for the last two years. Familiarity was temptingly close but so very far away, and recognizing the dangers of dwelling on distant comforts, I concentrated on fully experiencing and understanding the workings of the first dairy farm I had ever set eyes on. I knew absolutely nothing about grass-based dairy farming. Hence, my two-week-long taste of raw milk was not only educational but it did, as I had hoped, begin to contextualize my food choices.
Roger and Michelle Benrud are members of the Pastureland Co-op, a group of four dairy farms in southeast Minnesota that produce milk for butter and cheese and are committed to raising their cows on 100% grass. At the time of my stay the Benruds had about ninety-five cows on pasture and were milking and moving them twice a day. Their pastures were beautifully vast, rising up from the county road and the house and then dipping and rising from paddock to paddock. A dirt lane ran from the milking barn, around the corner, and straight up through fields of alfalfa, brome grass, orchard grass, reed canary grass, timothy, and many others. Lining the lane were currant and black raspberry bushes, which I could pause to pick on my way up in the John Deere gator. At the top of the lane the view was glorious—rolling fields and farmhouses in the distance. I would often drive the gator up to the pastures in the silent sunlit mid-mornings to do odd jobs such as digging up thistles, re-painting the chicken coop, or weed-whacking along fence lines. My consistent daily responsibilities were to help with milking the cows and then moving them to new pasture in the evening.

My most important responsibility that I placed on myself and never lifted was to ask questions. I felt that if I wasn't trying to understand everything I possibly could about the Benruds’ reasons for farming the way they did, then I wasn't doing my job. The first thing I realized during our conversations was that when it came to my understanding of sustainable farming, I was living in a very small, very black-and-white world.

“So you’re sustainable,” I said. “Since you don’t feed your cows grain, you have no inputs and you use what’s available to you responsibly. You’re spending less money, and you have healthy animals and a healthy product. Right?”

Wrong.

“No,” Roger stepped in immediately. “First of all, we’d make far more money if we fed our cows even eight pounds of corn a day, which we used to do. The increased yield would make up for the increased cost of buying the grain, and at that low amount, we wouldn’t be jeopardizing our cows’ health. But we wanted to prove that it’s possible to raise dairy cows on 100% grass, and we also believe in producing the healthiest product that we can. In terms of sustainability, it’s true we’re using fewer inputs and having less of an impact than a dairy farm that feeds 40% grain, but it’s impossible for anyone to be completely sustainable. Feeding grain is predictable. You bring the cows their food every day and every day it’s the same. Grazing cows on pasture is unpredictable. Our grasses are entirely dependent on the nutrients in the soil, the weather, the season. We have to add fertilizer to the pasture because our soil simply doesn’t contain enough nutrients to produce the high-quality grasses we want.”

Wait. What? I had read The Omnivore’s Dilemma, I had seen Food, Inc. I thought that the whole beauty of raising animals on grass was that you didn’t have to add anything. It was just Nature. The plants convert sunlight to cellulose, the bacteria and yeast in the cow’s rumen ferment the cellulose, the cow eats the bacteria, and we eat the nutritious protein and fat that results. So neat, so logical.

But in this new place this new voice was adamant, and my ignorance came crashing up against Roger’s experience. My head hurt from the collision, and it only got more complicated. I learned that putting the cows on grass that was too lush and too young would stuff them with too much protein, and bloating would be a risk, as it is if they eat too much alfalfa (a legume). But if cows are put on grasses that are too mature and fibrous, they won’t find them palatable nor receive enough nutrients to produce healthy milk (and enough of it). It’s a precarious balancing act, and not only does it apply to the growing stages of the grasses, but also to the amount of time that cows are out on a particular section of pasture. If Michelle gives the cows too much room in a paddock or doesn’t allow them enough time there, they will only eat what is most palatable, and the other grasses will not receive the benefits of being bitten and having their roots fall off to create new organic matter in the soil and grow back even stronger with stronger grasses above ground. Conversely, if she grazes them on a paddock that is too small or leaves them on any piece of pasture for too long, they will overgraze it. The cows will violate the law of the second bite, chomping on the same piece of grass too soon after it received its first bite, and the root reserves will be weakened, leading to the elimination of desirable grasses. As I made sense of it for myself, it is the grass farmer’s job to take care of both the

Travelogue continued on page 27
SFA 2010 to 2011 continued from page 1
SFA member farmers to connect with local food consumers. In the fall, the farmer-oriented component of GrazeFest met accomplished its goals of education and exposure for farmers looking to expand their grazing operation.

The Festival of Farms, held in July, was a great showcase of real Minnesota agriculture, and an even better event is planned for 2011.

As always, the Minnesota Garlic Festival was a huge success in August. This is fast becoming one of the key festivals in Minnesota, and as it grows will likely become a tourist destination for much of the upper Midwest. SFA’s kudos to Jerry Ford and the Crow River Chapter for hosting this great event that emphasizes sustainable agriculture’s impact on local economies and food.

All the while, we’ve been working on making SFA more recognizable and noteworthy. Our Branding Project has yielded some great conversations about the formation, history and purpose of SFA. It has been personally rewarding for me to hear the stories of SFA veterans and newcomers alike who see us as THE grassroots organization for farmers and would-be farmers to build local sustainable ag communities.

As we look ahead to 2011, we see multiple opportunities for SFA members to learn, grow, and lend expertise and experience to this very strong movement in Minnesota.

Kicking off the New Year will be our 20th Annual Conference, held February 18-19, in St. Joseph. See page 7 for more details on the Conference.

Our New Crops Assessment grant from Lakewinds Co-op is just one way that SFA is seeking to broaden the market for sustainable farmers to produce and expand earning opportunities. Look for details at the Annual Conference in February. In 2011 we will again produce GrazeFest, Festival of Farms, Garlic Festival and other key events.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who donated time and money to SFA in 2010. As you have no doubt heard, SFA’s funding in the future will need to be a mix of grants, event proceeds and individual contributions. This balance is healthy and important. SFA is unique among the many non-profits working on sustainability in Minnesota: we are of farmers and for farmers. We address the issues real farmers face daily, and we are dedicated to the growth of sustainable agriculture in Minnesota. Thank you for your support of SFA.