Thank you for your SFA membership and your support of our organization during 2012. I hope you enjoy this year’s CornerPost Newsletter, as we are excited to let you know about our first-ever two-day Annual Conference, Feb. 15-16, 2013, at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in Chaska. You can find lots of details in this newsletter, but one thing is for sure: SFA pulls people together.

In June, SFA was awarded a grant from the Wallace Center to fund our GrazeFest series of educational events. Our fall grass-fed beef workshops were a result, as well as our Advanced Grazing Workshop at the upcoming 2013 Annual Conference. Our goal here is to unite grass-fed beef producers for learning, networking, and marketing opportunities.

In October, we kicked off one of our more significant projects, Adjust 2015. This long-term project will explore the reasons why beginning farms often don’t meet their own expectations and will help people avoid some of those difficulties. We’ll be bringing farmers together for conversation, discussion, and more learning.

Also, in 2013 we’ll be making unprecedented investments in our nine regional chapters. Through an innovative approach, we’ll be able to offer chapters resources far beyond what has occurred to date. We think the results will be stronger chapters, stronger leaders, and a stronger sustainable-agriculture system.

Again, we at SFA are all about pulling together our members, our chapters, and our community.

We are glad you are a part of that community. Your involvement with SFA means that we are able to advance a healthy food system, one that preserves our environment, strengthens our collective health, and grows rural communities. In 2013, we will have our most active, most engaged year ever.

We invite you to learn more about us and find a place where you can plug in. You’ll be able to make a difference for food, farming, and our culture as a whole.

As always, if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to email me at john@sfa-mn.org, or call 763.260.0209. See you in February!
SFA: There’s a chapter near you!
SFA chapters are active in interesting events year-round. Call or email the chapter contact (page 3) for more information, or visit www.sfa-mn.org.

ABOUT
CornerPost is published yearly. Information, articles, and ideas, published in the CornerPost do not indicate consensus among Sustainable Farming Association members. For editorial submissions, questions and comments, please contact:

Jason Walker
Communications Coordinator
4924 Upton Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55410
612.605.9269
jason@sfa-mn.org

MORE MILEAGE PER CORNERPOST
Before recycling CornerPost, leave your copy at your workplace, coffee shop, place of worship or a doctor’s office, or simply pass on to a friend, neighbor or relative. Help spread the good word about sustainable agriculture.

LEARN MORE
www.sfa-mn.org
facebook.com/SFA.MN
twitter.com/sfamn
STATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIR
John Ostgarden
At Large
Medford
507.446.8045
farmerjohn@clintonfallsfarm.com

VICE CHAIR
Jim Chamberlin
Central Chapter
Deerwood
218.763.3020
islandlakefarm@brainerd.net

SECRETARY
Kelly Firkins
South Central Chapter
Delavan
715.896.5629
contact@delablufarms.com

TREASURER
Josh Reinitz
Cannon River Chapter
Henderson
612.756.3971
josh@easthendersonfarm.com

COTEAU RIDGE
Don DeWeerd
Pipestone
507.825.2077
dondeweerd@earthlink.net

LAKE AGASSIZ
Lee Narum
McIntosh
218.563.4027
ottoman1957@yahoo.com

SOUTHEAST
Edgar Hansgen
St. Charles
507.932.4219
ejhansgen@hotmail.com

LAKE SUPERIOR
Michelle Cartier
Hermantown
218.428.1731
mcartier22@gmail.com

WESTERN
Richard Handeen
Montevideo
320.269.8971
rhandeen@hotmail.com

CROW RIVER
Mark Lilja
Dayton
763.712.5506
mlilja@usinternet.com

SOUTH CENTRAL
Wes Tennis
507.256.4888
alchrist@frontiernet.net

LAKE AGASSIZ
Mike Lilja
Dayton
763.712.5506
mlilja@usinternet.com

SHERRY Jansen
320.269.8971
rhandeen@hotmail.com

SOUTHEAST
Edgar Hansgen
St. Charles
507.932.4219
ejhansgen@hotmail.com

CENTRAL
Robert Bauer
314.662.3281
bauer321@umn.edu

LAKE SUPERIOR
Jean Sramek
218.393.3276
ottoman1957@yahoo.com

LAKE SUPERIOR
Jean Sramek
218.393.3276
info@lakesuperiorfarming.org

CROW RIVER
Jerry Ford
Howard Lake
320.543.3394
jerry@sfa-mn.org

SOUTHEAST
LeeAnn VanDerPol
Kerkhoven
320.367.2061
grassroots@pasturesaplenty.com

WESTERN
Richard Handeen
Montevideo
320.269.8971
rhandeen@hotmail.com

STATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CANNON RIVER
Kathy Zeman
Nerstrand
507.446.8045
kzeman@kmwb.net

COTEAU RIDGE
Don DeWeerd
Pipestone
507.825.2077
dondeweerd@earthlink.net

SOUTHEAST
Edgar Hansgen
St. Charles
507.932.4219
ejhansgen@hotmail.com

LAKE AGASSIZ
Lee Narum
McIntosh
218.563.4027
ottoman1957@yahoo.com

WESTERN
Richard Handeen
Montevideo
320.269.8971
rhandeen@hotmail.com

CROW RIVER
Mike Lilja
Dayton
763.712.5506
mlilja@usinternet.com

SOUTH CENTRAL
Wes Tennis
507.256.4888
alchrist@frontiernet.net

LAKE AGASSIZ
Lee Narum
McIntosh
218.563.4027
ottoman1957@yahoo.com

SHERRY Jansen
320.269.8971
rhandeen@hotmail.com

SOUTHEAST
Edgar Hansgen
St. Charles
507.932.4219
ejhansgen@hotmail.com

CENTRAL
Robert Bauer
314.662.3281
bauer321@umn.edu

LAKE SUPERIOR
Michelle Cartier
Hermantown
218.428.1731
mcartier22@gmail.com

WESTERN
LeeAnn VanDerPol
Kerkhoven
320.367.2061
grassroots@pasturesaplenty.com

LAKE AGASSIZ
Diane Narum
McIntosh
218.563.4027
ottoman1957@yahoo.com

SOUTHEAST
Edgar Hansgen
St. Charles
507.932.4219
ejhansgen@hotmail.com

CENTRAL
Robert Bauer
314.662.3281
bauer321@umn.edu

LAKE SUPERIOR
Jean Sramek
218.393.3276
info@lakesuperiorfarming.org

LAKE SUPERIOR
Jean Sramek
218.393.3276
info@lakesuperiorfarming.org

STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
John Mesko
Box 192
Princeton
762.260.0209
john@sfa-mn.org

NEW CROPS COORDINATOR
Bobby Wenner
2400 Meeting St
Wayzata
952.250.0065
bobby@sfa-mn.org

EVENTS COORDINATOR
Jerry Ford
Howard Lake
320.543.3394
jerry@sfa-mn.org

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR
Jason Walker
4924 Upton Ave S
Minneapolis
612.605.9269
jason@sfa-mn.org

LIVESTOCK & GRAZING SPECIALIST
Kent Solberg
Verndale
218.445.7580
kent@sfa-mn.org

WEBMASTER
Laura Borgendale
Minneapolis
laura@sfa-mn.org
Hanks for the Memories

The longest-tenured member of SFA’s Board of Directors is stepping down. Mary Hanks, who joined SFA’s Cannon River Chapter in 1991 and our state board in the mid-90s, has decided to retire from her post. Mary, who is director of marketing and development at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, was the longtime board secretary and has been a dedicated leader for our organization – her intelligent, reasonable attitude will certainly be missed on the board.

“Mary Hanks has had such an influence on our organization,” said SFA Executive Director John Mesko. “Knowing her, I’m sure she never set out to leave her ‘mark,’ but there’s no doubt SFA would not be the organization it is today without her steady hand of organization and wise counsel. As we continue to work towards a sustainable food and farming system, I hope SFA will honor her commitment by doing good things for a long, long time. Thank you, Mary, for all your help and support. You’ve set a great example.”

At SFA’s most recent board meeting, Communications Coordinator Jason Walker sat down with Mary to talk about her upcoming departure from the board as well as to reflect on her time with SFA. The interview is as follows.

Q: How did you first get involved with SFA?

A: I started at the Minnesota Dept of Agriculture back in 1990, and I hadn’t been there very long when Kirby Zicafoose, who was the Cannon River chapter coordinator, invited me to one of the early organizational meetings for that chapter. I got hooked. This was probably 1991, and I was so impressed with the farmers who were part of that initial group – sharing information and ideas, as well as their commitment. Many of them were zealots about improving the sustainability of agriculture. It was inspiring and something that I felt like I wanted to be a part of, because I don’t come from a farming background and these were men and women I could learn from and be influenced by in my job. And they have influenced my job over the past 20 years.

Q: So it’s impacted your career?

A: Yes, and I think that all farmers agree there are things they could do to improve their impact on the environment. There are things that can be done to improve animal agriculture. All farmers are trying to move into that direction, and they have their communities and natural resources in mind when they make choices. I think what SFA and farmers who are direct-marketing and reading and incorporating resistance to disease and insects into crops. Most of the people I worked with at the time in the 80s were conventional farmers – and I hate to use the “conventional vs. sustainable” angle because I think every farm has sustainable practices incorporated into it – but it opened my eyes to other ways of farming that actually took the environment, the profitability, and the quality of life of the farmer and the community into account. These people were so independent in thinking that, and my role at the department was coordinating the sustainable agriculture program for many years, so why wouldn’t I be involved with farmers who were actually crafting developing what that meant? It had a huge influence on what I did at the department and what the department did over the last 20 years.

Q: SFA then has really changed from that description – from mostly zealots to more people like you and I who are not necessarily farmers but who care about these issues.

A: I don’t want it to sound funny, but I think initially it was an “us-against-them” mentality. The members felt like they were so different from what was going on around them that they needed to be aggressive, and it’s changed. I think the conversation has changed. Initially it was among the farmers, “we need to do something different, the system is broken.” What’s changed is that more and more non-farm consumers are part of the conversation. We’re being pulled rather than as pushing. The consumers want healthy food, they want water to be clean, they want connection with farmers. So consumers are pulling us, and I think that’s why we’ve advanced further in the past 10 years than in the previous 10 – the people who are buying from us and drinking the water are supporting us.

Q: So we’re not only telling people that sustainability is important, they’re demanding it?

A: Yes, and I think that all farmers agree there are things they could do to improve their impact on the environment. There are things that can be done to improve animal agriculture. All farmers are trying to move into that direction, and they have their communities and natural resources in mind when they make choices. I think what SFA and farmers who are direct-marketing and

Longtime secretary Mary Hanks stepping down from state board

organic need to figure out is, as the demand continues to grow, how is SFA going to help our members meet that demand? It’s gotten past direct marketing – how do we help people aggregate, improve processing, expand operations and meet institutional demand? It’s almost like success has its downsides. Farmers are going to have to band together, and as individuals we can provide some of the demand, but if we want to have a huge impact then we have to work together. Take the Farm to School program, what if we want 20 percent of the food served in schools produced locally, sustainably and organically? How are we going to do that? As individuals, I don’t think we can do that. I think farmers need to act together.

Q: That may sound like a small thing, but even five percent would be massive because so many people eat institutional foods daily.

A: We want sustainable agriculture to be more than a niche, and right now it’s growing but is still a small percentage of overall production. If we want to grow that niche, then SFA has to find more ways for farmers to collaborate and work together. We’ve always been that way, and I think information sharing is a form of collaboration, but the marketing piece now has to be looked at.

Q: Do you have a favorite memory of your time on the board? A funny story that epitomizes what SFA is all about from a personal perspective?

A: Over the years I’ve seen heated arguments and discussion on direction and how we approach things and whether we’re involved in policy or not, but at the end there’s always been a consensus of yes, we’re doing the right things and we need to work back together. People argue and fight, but in the end we’re all still moving in the same direction and I’ve seen that over the whole time. What I remember from early chapter board meetings is that we’d have a meeting that started at 7 p.m. and the meeting itself would end at 9 and we’d sit in the meeting room or street and talk for four or five more hours, until 2 a.m., talking about where things are going, how do we engage people, holism. It was so energizing, and I’d like to see more of that. I haven’t been involved in the chapter so I don’t know if it still happens, but it was like the beginning of a movement where everybody is energized and committed and thinking and discussing and there’s just energy. I’m seeing that come back here, a bit, and I think we have a good board right now and the energy is coming back. I don’t want to sound like the boards in the past have been bad, but I think there’s a lot of energy around this, so I’m feeling good about leaving at this point.
Adjust 2015 Project Aims to Improve New-Farmer Education

By John Mesko

In early October, we kicked off our Adjust 2015 project. I first mentioned this project in SFA Connect back in April 2012 when we were notified that we had received the NCR-SARE grant. Now that the funding is actually available, we can begin our work on this important project.

You will be hearing much more about Adjust 2015 going forward, but I’d like to share a little bit now about the project and its scope.

The full title of the project is: "Adjust 2015, When Farming Reality Doesn’t Match the Business Plan.” Let’s be honest, while some new farms and farming enterprises come together smoothly and are a success from the start, many new farms struggle in the early years to find a successful groove. This struggle is not a reflection of the farmer(s) as much as it is a reflection of how difficult farming can be. With that in mind, the goals of Adjust 2015 are very straightforward:

- Increase the knowledge and awareness that adding new farmers have of potential difficulties they may face.
- Build into the beginning farmer educational system an emphasis on realistic, nimble and flexible business plans.
- Develop the skills of beginning farmers to recognize risks looming on the horizon early enough to make adjustments before those risks threaten the business or the farm family.
- Help aspiring farmers develop a proper exit strategy as a part of their original business plan.

SFA will accomplish these goals by engaging our Farmer-to-Farmer Network™ through surveys and interviews. We will summarize the stories of farms and farmers who have had less than desired success, or have had to make changes to their operations and plans in order to survive. These summaries will be the basis for our New Farm Reality Check™ educational materials, which we will make available to beginning farmer training courses throughout the North Central Region, as well as our own workshops in Minnesota and other NCR states.

Adjust 2015 is NOT a new beginning farmer training program. Rather, it is designed to support and collaborate with existing beginning farmer training programs throughout the country. In a nutshell: Adjust 2015 will collect real stories from real farms about difficulties they faced getting started, and then help others to avoid some of those difficulties.

If you have a farm start-up story you think would be helpful to this project, please let me know as we are currently collecting the names of people who would like to share their story. You can email me at: john@sfa-mn.org.

I’m Talking to You: The Future of Our Sustainable Farms

By Jan Joannides

Renewing the Countryside

“Do you want your neighbor, or your neighbor’s farm?” This famous quote is from Dick Thompson, one of the founders of Practical Farmers of Iowa. It was included in the Renewable the Countryside—Iowa book, which I had the pleasure of editing, and it has stuck with me for over a decade. Interestingly, it seems as relevant now as ever.

According to the USDA, close to 70 percent of the nation’s farmland will change hands in the next two decades. In Minnesota that adds up to approximately 8 million acres! Yet studies indicate that 86 percent of farmers do not have a farm transition plan in place and 69 percent do not have a current estate plan. Now, I’d like to think that this is not the case within the sustainable agriculture community, but if you’re like me, planning for the later years is something that, well, should come later!

I’m trying to own up to my own avoidance, and hope that you will too. Thanks to USDA Risk Management Agency, Renewing the Countryside and the Sustainable Farming Association have a cornucopia of interesting things we are developing to help you navigate this complex issue. We’re starting a bi-monthly newsletter, a radio program, and partnering with the Land Stewardship Project, MISA, U of M Extension and others to create an online clearinghouse of information and resources in this area.

An exciting part of this work, for me, is that we are able to bring farm transitions guru (my words, not his) John Baker to Minnesota to conduct a multi-day workshop. John is an attorney by trade and has 30 years of experience in helping families plan for and execute farm transitions. He helped form the Beginning Farmer Center at Iowa State and helped found the International Farm Transition Network.

This workshop is not for the mildly curious. It involves four days (split into two segments) where John will walk you through a process for making your transition and estate plan a reality. It will be ... fun? ... exhilarating? (OK, I might be stretching it), but it will be a very useful workshop that can help you and your family/transitions partners take practical steps towards getting your ducks in a row.

So save the date for March 4, 5 and 25, 26. And if you are only mildly curious, we also have workshops scheduled at the Minnesota Organic Farming Conference (Jan. 11-12 in St. Cloud) and at the SFA Annual Conference (Feb. 15-16 in Chaska).

More information will be available through the SFA online newsletter, or email robyn@rtcinfo.org to get on the list. And if you want to get a jump start on your planning, contact Robyn at the email above. Robyn is an experienced attorney and can provide you with free (at least while we have this grant) coaching and advice on transition and estate planning (and if you don’t know the difference, you really should contact Robyn!).
Chapter Updates

Cannon River
By Mary Ellen Frame

Now that harvest is over, the board of the Cannon River chapter will be meeting soon to plan our Annual Meeting and activities for next year.

One recent event that several of our members participated in was a tour to Viroqua, Wis., to see and hear about the workings of Fifth Season Co-op, which consolidates products from many small farmers and processors to fill orders from various food service buyers, such as restaurants, schools, hospitals and nursing homes. They have set up “mini-food hubs” where big trucks from Reinhart pick up pallets of food aggregated from local producers and deliver it to customers in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Each mini-food hub needs a cooler and a loading dock. One such mini food hub is located on an Amish farm! The major food hub and the office of the co-op are housed in a converted printing plant now owned by Vernon Economic Development Association, a non-profit which rents space to various food-related businesses – Keewaydin Farms/Just Local Foods does consolidation from small farms and has a kitchen so value can be added to less perfect vegetables by peeling and chopping.

Another large commercial kitchen is available for rent to small businesses which can use their recipes and sell to retailers – a kind of small-business incubator. Fifth season co-op started two years ago in August. In the bus on the return trip, there was a lively discussion of the possibility of starting a forum where possible strategies can be discussed and compared. When experienced farmers and people who have a fresh outlook come together the kernels of ideas get the airing and light they need to grow into something similar in our area. A follow-up meeting is planned for Nov. 19.

I don’t need to tell you that it’s been a rough growing season for the entire Midwest, what with a hot spell last March which brought on early fruit bloom that was then killed by a frost in April, then devastating floods in June, hail in various places, withering heat in July, and it all finished with a drought from August until the present. In our immediate region we felt fortunate, at least, not to be ruined by the summer-long drought they had further south. It’s become clear that, though all of these extreme weather events have occurred at one time or another in the past, what has changed is that farmers can no longer count on an overall weather pattern; “normal” is history. And we can expect extreme weather events to be more frequent and more severe in the future. How are farmers going to be able to continue feeding the world and remain solvent when faced with these challenges? Older farmers have accumulated experience and knowledge, have learned to save for a rainy day – or a rainy year – or no rain. Beginning farmers need to not only learn from those who are more experienced, but also develop fresh ideas and figure out new patterns of preparedness.

It seems obvious that farmers need to be nimble in adapting their practices – learning to be ready for what hasn’t happened yet. Diversification helps. Each farm plan should anticipate the worst and figure out how to survive that. If you raise row crops, what can you do in future to alleviate erosion when five to ten inches of rain pours down in the course of 24 hours? What can grazers do when pastures and hay fields dry up in a drought? How do you deal with previously unknown diseases and bugs? It seems to me that SFA is a forum where possible strategies can be discussed and compared. When experienced farmers and people who have a fresh outlook come together the kernels of ideas get the moisture and light they need to grow into solutions we can call share in.

Central
By Robert Bauer

The SFA of Central Minnesota (SFA-CM) Chapter was busy in 2012 with events, plans for the annual meeting, and the search for a new chapter coordinator.

The SFA-CM Chapter ANNUAL MEETING will be 9 a.m., Sat., Feb. 2, 2013, at Minnesota State Community College in Fergus Falls. A catered local-foods meal will be served. The agenda includes presentations by chefs Lucia Watson and Matt Annand, hands-on workshops, discussion of chapter priorities for 2013, MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL, and election of board members. Watch the chapter website for more details; contact the coordinator at bauer321@umn.edu to be involved in the carpool.

Our board for this year included Arlene Jones, Mel Wiens, Jim Chamberlin, Vickie Kettlewell, Sue Wika, Mike Stine, Del Moen, Kathy Connel, and Larry Skougland.

Nominations for the five open positions are due at the annual meeting.

Our chapter members continue to lead in our local communities. For example, Bob and Arlene Jones were named Agribusiness Persons of the Year for 2012 by the Brainerd Jaycees this November.

Food-hub work in the Central region continued in 2012 with the leadership of SFA-CM members. Read the recently released feasibility study “Central Minnesota Food Hub” in full at resilientregion.org/cms/files/Central_Minnesota_Food_Hub_final.pdf. The results of the feasibility study provide strong evidence supporting the development of a food hub in Central Minnesota. A food hub would address a gap in the current food supply chain and offer an array of economic, social, and environmental benefits for the area.

Chapter members are also involved in this critical work with the formation of SPROUT MN LLC, an organization to develop the distribution system and value chain networks within Central Minnesota.

The Chapter continued to serve our members with innovative programming in 2012. In April, members Kent Scher and Vicki Chepulis of Green Island Preserve of Wadena hosted the Sky Dance Plant Swap. The event featured presentations by author Paula Westmoreland of This Perennial Land, Linda Meschke of Rural Advantage on “third crops” and multifunctional landscapes, and area naturalist Christian Brezinski on the natural history of the American Woodcock. The guest list filled up early with 30 people in attendance for the magical night presentation and sky dance ceremony.

In November, the SFA-CM board joined students and alumni of the Sustainable Food Production diploma program at Minnesota State Community College in Fergus Falls.
Hosted by board member and M State instructor Sue Wika, Ph.D., the board met with a class of current students, joined in a barter swap and potluck, and wrote letters of support to prevent termination of the Sustainable Food Production program in 2013.

Also in November, the board voted unanimously to enlist me as Coordinator of SFA of Central Minnesota. With youthful skill and abundant spirit I will draw on my professional background in Natural Resources and video production to serve chapter members. My ambitious goals for the coming year include: to increase involvement of young people in SFA-CM; to know the names of all current members; to connect SFA members around diverse farming skills and interests; to focus on existing farming resources to benefit our members; to improve publicity of SFA-CM; and to organize a Festival of Farms in July. You can contact me by email at bauer321@umn.edu.

Crow River
By Jerry Ford, Mike Lilja, Greg Reynolds and Mary Jane Miller

Taking this in reverse chronological order, we’re pleased to announce:

The CROW RIVER ANNUAL CHAPTER MEETING – 10 a.m. Sat., Jan. 5th, 2013, Gale Woods Farm, Minnetrista.

With sessions on Seed Saving, Farm Equipment, Appropriately Scaling your Farm, and Mary Jane Miller’s Culinary Workshops, here’s a chance to meet old friends and new, enjoy local foods, and RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP! Following the post-lunch sessions, we’ll have a showing of “Dirty Work: The Story of Elsie’s Farm,” with organic popcorn and local beer. Expect something in the mail and on the email list. Online registration is available at: sfa-mn.com/crow-river.

HALLOWEEN with the GOVERNOR: All Hallows Eve at the Governor’s Mansion was accentuated by the presence of Crow River Chapter members who helped the trick-or-treaters decorate over 500 pumpkins supplied by Peterson Produce, Untiedt’s, and Missy’s Farm Stand. Gov. Mark Dayton greeted a host of ghosts, goblins and superheroes, while chef Micah Pace warmed the hungry and chilled volunteers with homemade chile, corn bread and brownies.

This year, Crow River Chapter was able to more than double the size of the vegetable garden they planted and tended the previous year at the Governor’s Residence. The yield from the gardens is used at the governor’s table, both for small, personal meals and when dignitaries visit. Mary Jane Miller, Residence Menu Consultant and Crow River Board member, took both Gov. Dayton’s personal tastes and the chef’s culinary needs into consideration when planning what to plant. The gardens are open to the public occasionally throughout the summer, which was an excellent opportunity to reach out to educate visitors and further the mission of the SFA.

More than 2,000 people toured the grounds this summer and they all wanted to talk about the veggies. Parents played “name that plant” with their children, the elderly reminisced about their own childhood gardens, young hipsters were hungry to know everything about planting and cooking the vegetables. Crow River Chapter had docents on hand to answer questions, hand out materials, and offer taste tests. Amanda Simpson, Residence Manager, said, “this is the single most talked-about feature at the home.”

7th ANNUAL MN GARLIC FESTIVAL was a SMASHING SUCCESS: It was the second Saturday in August, and once again Hutchinson became the smelly capital of Minnesota as the 7th Annual Garlic Festival set up camp and welcomed 3,700 lovers of the king of herbs. This record-breaking crowd was treated to a day of quirky entertainment, mouth-watering cooking demonstrations, local wine and craft beers, chef-prepared delicacies that featured the finest in Minnesota grown food from SFA member farmers, and, as the festival director, Jerry Ford, likes to say, “they got tricked into learning more about sustainable farming.

Chapter Updates: To Next Page
environmental stewardship and strengthening our rural communities."

Along with all the fun, frivolity and fantastic food came the opportunity for the festival to educate growers and the public about some serious problems affecting our state’s garlic crop (see sidebar, page 12, “A Tale of Two Bugs”).

In addition to some new food vendors, including the festival’s first mobile food cart, and a couple of first-time garlic vendors, the festival presented the premiere of The Garlic Growing Contest. With competition categories for eleven different varieties, “best-in-show,” and even a prize for the ugliest garlic, this contest drew 47 entries and was judged by Dr. Carl Rosen, Head of the Department of Soil, Water, and Climate at the University of Minnesota.

On top of the ongoing activities like kite flying, the Peculiar Pragmatic Promenade (a showstopping parade around the grounds), and country picnic games, a new sight at the festival was bowlers playing bocce, often with a glass of Minnesota wine or beer in their other hand. This bucolic scene was made possible by Crow River Chapter members who ran the bocce court and developed a whole new approach to the wine tasting feature: the festival expanded its previous support of local wineries to include select craft breweries, and now has a permit to allow patrons to carry their libation with them around the grounds. And, if that wasn’t enough, the beverages were served in attractive commemorative glasses with the festival logo.

The festival’s own cafe, “The Great Scape,” the finest ephemeral restaurant in Minnesota, featured chefs and workers from The Birchwood Cafe, Common Roots Cafe, Lucia’s, Restaurant Alma, Brasa and Sen Yai Sen Lek, serving up garlicky delicacies. Chef cooking demos filled the main stage each hour, framed by entertainment that ranged from Japanese taiko drumming to Spanish flamenco.

Garlic Festival is a “Zero Waste” event, with the vast majority of the expendables going into recycling and composting. Festival operations and all vendors are required to use plates, flatware, and temporary packaging that can be recycled or composted, and all scrap food is also composted. Wright County 4H provided “bin monitors” who educated patrons and guided those items that would usually go to the landfill into the appropriate containers.

Here are some other numbers of note:

- Official attendance: 3,700
- Vendors: 81
- Garlic Vendors: 14
- Kites flown: 100
- Number of Promenade Grand Marshals who were over the age of 86 and still farming: 3
- Volunteers: 90
- Coordinators: 26
- Sponsors: 23
- 2-for-1 Ticket Coupons redeemed: 952
- Percentage of participants who went home smelling quite different: 100

SUMMER KITCHEN for SCHOOLS PROGRAM: MN Garlic Festival supports sustainable farming education, including Festival of Farms and farm-to-school programming like Crow River Chapter’s Summer Kitchen for schools. The farming season and the school seasons don’t overlap very well, so this program is exploring ways to have schools process local produce in the summer for use in the winter. Two trial projects were a resounding success. The first was making pickles out of some of the surplus cucumbers. Hopkins schools made several batches of pickles to see how the process worked, if the students would eat them, and to gauge how many pickles they would have to make to carry them through February.

The process was quite straightforward and the students ate the ones that were yellow. They recognized yellow pickles from their dining experiences at McDonald’s.

The second Summer Kitchen project was making a roasted tomato sauce. The goals were the same, with the added step of freezing the sauce to get some experience with storing it. The students were excited to find out the sauce was made in house with local tomatoes, and ate it readily.

With the experience gained this summer Hopkins schools are planning to expand the program next summer.

Lake Superior

By Jean Sramek

What started as a whim in 2004 (“We’ve got an event called Farmers Take the Stage; what about a Farmers Take the STOVE?”) has turned into a tradition. LS-SFA’s dinner, open to the public, is cooked and served by chapter members using ingredients grown by chapter producers and farmers. It’s a fundraiser for our chapter, but it’s also a way to connect with the community and show them what a locally grown, seasonal meal looks and tastes like. Our silent auction is lively and full of local items, but what sets it apart is that it’s made up of...
“sustainable” and virtual items. Guests bid on farm experiences like a fruit tree-grafting lesson, a locavore dinner for four, a workshop on using soil blocks for seedlings, or woodland management consultation. Locally produced products included a gift basket from Max’s Organics Garlic, beautiful and delicious vegan and gluten-free cakes, therapeutic massage, holiday balsam wreaths, and more.

This year’s event featured music by local bluegrass combo Riverside Bog Stompers. Veteran menu mastermind and SFA member Joel Rosen, along with sous chef and SFA member Ron Salveson, made sure the kitchen and serving ran smoothly. Joel and Ron also created and cooked quite a few of the dishes, as did locavore restaurants Duluth Grill, Chester Creek Cafe, and New Scenic Cafe. A crack team of volunteers made people feel comfortable and made things go well.

2013 might be the year of milestones for the LS-SFA chapter. Next year will be our 10th annual Farmers Take the Stove (and our 20th annual Lake Superior Harvest Festival). It’s all going to be kicked off with our annual meeting Jan. 26. The specific agenda is still being fine-tuned, but the theme will be seed saving, and the importance of seed “legacy.” Workshops on this topic will be offered. We’ll also have a “Farming Lake Superior 2012” slideshow of images from this growing year.

South Central
By Sherry Jansen

South Central SFA Chapter’s Annual Meeting was held in Clarks Grove and hosted three key speakers. Dean Goette from EnviroSense talked about soil restoration importance and tactics for reducing the time on converting soils back to natural production. Linda Meschke from Rural Advantage gave a demonstration on using marginal lands for fuel production. Super Fresh owners Jim and Merlene Stiles gave an open discussion on how they find vendors from local growers. Finally, John Mesko gave us an open discussion on what sustainable farming’s vision is. A traditional potluck of hearty soups was enjoyed by all.

The South Central’s Festival of Farms had overwhelming media response as Cedar River Horse Logging (Tim and Doreen Carroll of Lyle) gave a primer on horse training with a majestic Percheron named Mataa and then showed how wood processing can efficiently heat homes and buildings, preserve food, build furniture, and more. Next, Larry Aden, the leading U.S. authority on commercial red claw crayfish production, gave a demonstration on the crayfish as a viable product and valuable addition to any food program. Giant red claw crayfish are small-lobster-sized freshwater crayfish and were introduced to the US from Australia in the mid-1990s. Because of the ease in raising them, they have become an icon for the hydroponics’ hobbyist as well as commercial freshwater seafood production. The event ended with Sherry Jansen from MyBackAchers demonstrating sprouting grains as food for livestock and the benefits of better health as well as reducing livestock feed costs.

Super Fresh from Austin served a local-food lunch.

In August, the South Central Chapter maintained a booth at the Freeborn County Fair with prizes of fruit trees. The door prizes of fruit trees and plants were a generous donation by Albert Lea Seed House and Hill Top Greenhouses of Blooming Prairie. Brochures and information were handed out to prospective SFA members.

South Central Chapter will continue our goals of identifying obstacles to farmers and meeting those challenges by seeking out new information and solutions, then sharing that information. Winter projects include website development to assist in sharing information; a Winter Book of the Month Club to gather and share sustainable farm techniques and subjects of interest to sustainable farmers; and to continue to develop local leadership in sustainable agricultural endeavors.

Plans for 2013 include: soil and cover crop speakers at the Annual Spring Meeting in Clarks Grove, the Festival of Farms Tour – touring a beef operation and further development of the website and the Winter Book Club – Book and Beverage night. Meetings, all at 7 p.m., are Jan. 29, Feb. 26, and March 26 at the Alden Bar and Grill back room. Contact Jim Tjepkema at 507.210.2286 for details.
Last spring, I was appointed to the DNR/NRCS Grazing Lands Task Force. The purpose of the task force is to develop livestock grazing as a grassland management tool on Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in Minnesota. As this initiative develops, livestock producers interested and willing to work with the DNR should see new opportunities for grazing. If you have specific questions about this initiative, feel free to contact me.

In June, SFA began work with the Wallace Foundation Pasture Project. The project’s focus is in increasing grass finished beef producers in the Upper Midwest. SFA received one of five pilot project grants to encourage and expand grass based beef operations. As part of SFA’s continuing GrazeFest series, we developed a number of workshops targeting beef producers. Our first workshop related to the Pasture Project was held Sept. 29 in cooperation with the Central Chapter, at the Reinke farm near Wadena and the Bilek farm near Aldrich. Approximately 40 attended this event. Presentations included options for improving farm profitability, stockpiled forages, outwintering to reduce operational costs and improve pasture fertility, and integrating cover crops with livestock. Cooperators in developing this workshop included the Crow Wing River Conservation Association and NRCS.

On Oct. 6, the Coteau Ridge chapter co-hosted our second workshop at the Schelhaas farm (Valley View Natural Beef) near Edgerton. Bob Schelhaas discussed beef genetics selected for grass-based finishing. The workshop included a pasture walk and panel discussion with SFA Executive Director John Mesko and Bob Schelhaas on opportunities and challenges for direct marketing beef.

Also in June, John Mesko and I were part of a meeting with representatives from the NRCS, Veterans groups, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Community and Technical Colleges and other non-government organizations to develop beginning farmer resources for returning veterans. One outcome of that meeting included development of a brochure with information on beginning-farmer resources available in Minnesota. If you are interested in an electronic version of this brochure, please contact me. There was also a directive to organize a workshop for veterans in central Minnesota. That workshop was held Oct. 20 near Staples. This workshop was developed in cooperation with the NRCS, the Land Stewardship Project, the Farmer Veterans Coalition, and SFA. I represented Minnesota Dairy Initiative (MDI) and SFA as resources for beginning farmers. The workshop included a presentation by Mike Sams about his return to civilian life after a tour of duty with the Minnesota National Guard in Iraq, his farm, and the positive impact the farm had had on his life after returning from the war. A large part of Mike’s farming is accomplished with draft horses. Several draft teams where available for field work demonstrations. LSP conducted a session to help participants assess their farming aspirations.

MDI’s work with individual producers continues. I am working with several new dairy startups that intend to pursue grazing and possibly organic certification. I am also working with several producers who hope to value-add milk through various markets. My MDI work often entails networking and assisting producers find answers to specific operational questions, and serving as a resource for other MDI regional coordinators. In August, I attended the Organic Dairy Field Day at the University West Central Experiment and Outreach Center near Morris with several producers I have been working with. I also represented MDI and SFA with a trade-show booth in August at the Tri-State Grazing Conference in North Dakota. As part of the conference, I also made a presentation on fence design considerations.

The MDI statewide steering committee has began to wrestle with the issues around the number of farmers exiting the dairy industry, rising production costs and obstacles facing new dairy startups. MDI has been operating under the same model for over 20 years. MDI is assessing the old model of assistance to producers in light of recent issues surrounding Minnesota’s dairy producers. I also was appointed to the MDA Organic Conference Steering Committee. We met in June to brainstorm programming for the 2013 MN Organic Conference. SFA Connect will carry more details as the conference approaches.

I coordinated two Farm Transitions and Estate Planning workshops this past year – in March in Browerville and August in Fergus Falls. These workshops were part of a larger cooperative effort between SFA and Renewing the Countryside (RTC). We utilized U of M Extension Service materials and instructors in these workshops. Additional Farm Transition workshops will be offered through 2013. Watch SFA Connect for details.

On Oct. 13, MDI/SFA co-sponsored an energized fencing workshop with the Sustainable Food Production program at the community and technical college in Fergus Falls. Approximately 25 people attended.

Free T-shirt! Volunteers needed for Feb. 15-16 at the Annual Conference

By Kent Solberg
SFA Livestock & Grazing Specialist/ Minnesota Dairy Initiative Coordinator
sevenpinesfarmandfence@gmail.com

Free T-shirt! Volunteers needed for Feb. 15-16 at the Annual Conference.

Be a part of what makes the SFA Annual Conference great: Volunteer for a couple of hours on either or both days and contribute to the energy and excitement of the conference. All volunteers will get a way-cool T-shirt to wear and a couple of free passes to the world-famous MN Garlic Festival in August. This year we are asking people to be Ambassadors. Want to know who’s attending? Volunteer to be a friendly face as a Welcoming Ambassador! Like to be in the know? Volunteer to be an Information Table Ambassador! Want to ensure you hear a specific session? Volunteer to be a Room Monitor! Or, want to know what’s cooking? Be a Culinary Assistant! There are opportunities both days, all day long. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Karen Coune and let her know how you would like to participate. She can be reached at karen.coune@gmail.com or 612.202.7201.
Building Resources to Grow, Market New Crops

The past year has been nothing short of a whirlwind for the New Crops Project. With some increased funding, thanks in part to the generosity of the Lakewinds Organic Field Fund, the project has been able to dive headfirst into its second phase. We’ve seen great support from far and wide and cannot wait to see where this project will continue to grow.

For readers who may be hearing about the New Crops Project for the first time, here’s a brief overview of the project: In spring 2011, SFA began developing the idea of a new program that could help producers expand the breadth of their farm operations by including unique and hard-to-find crops that are not traditionally grown in Minnesota. Ideally, this program would integrate aspects of farmer and consumer education as well as supports throughout the production process to help ensure that the incorporation of these new crops would not be a burden to the farmer.

This ambitious concept began when John Mesko, SFA executive director, developed a survey which was distributed to farmers and consumers throughout Minnesota. The survey was designed to gauge consumer interest and buying habits as well as farmer interest and knowledge of the crops. By the end of the summer, the survey had garnered definitive results: Consumers were overwhelmingly interested in finding local sources for the crops in the survey. Farmers found the crops similarly appealing, many hoping to try their hand at growing something from the list. These results helped to provide New Crops with a great foundation from which to grow and move into its second phase.

Building on the support from the summer prior, the second phase of the New Crops Project began in June. This effort started with a campaign to raise awareness of the project throughout Minnesota. This involved not only taking New Crops on the road to a variety of events throughout the state, but also increasing the project’s web presence. This included an updated website and a new project blog to keep followers up to date, as well as create a repository for project developments and information relevant to the project. The most important developments, however, have taken place largely behind the scenes.

In the past several months, developments have been made to increase the ease for farmers to incorporate a New Crop onto their farm. Working closely with experts from the University of Minnesota and other stakeholders, from co-ops to farmers with experience growing crops from the list, SFA is putting together resources and information to help farmers not only grow a New Crop, but market them as well. Great strides have been made in formulating growing and informational materials for farmers interested in producing one of the New Crops, covering topics from seed sources to plot design to processing. SFA has also been working to make sure farmers will have a guaranteed market for their goods, working with purveyors and consumers to continue to gauge interest and raise awareness about the project.

In the coming months, New Crops will continue to play an important role in SFA’s statewide focus on building sustainability. Resources for farmers consumers with continue to be refined and put onto the SFA website, making access easy and convenient for those interested. Most importantly, however, the final details will be worked out for the next phase of the New Crops Project: a demonstration plot. Working closely with partner organizations, SFA has moved to secure a plot of land with which to grow many of the New Crops this coming spring and summer. The demonstration plot is a very exciting next step for the project and will provide a great venue for farmers to learn more about specific New Crops. This land will be utilized through workshops and other informational events to help farmers to see the crops in action. Producers will be provided with a great opportunity to learn more about what SFA is working with, and ideally get more New Crops grown throughout Minnesota in the future.

2013 looks to be another very exciting year for the New Crops Project, and we’re all very excited to see where we will be able to take the project. Stay tuned to the New Crops Project website and blog for continued updates about the project and more information.

New Crops Project

What’s included in SFA’s New Crops Project:

- Quinoa
- Spelt
- Teff
- White Wheat
- Amaranth
- Farro
- White Corn
- Hominy
- Millet
- Gluten Free Oats
- Currants
- Sea Buckthorn
- Nettle
- Burdock
- Grass-fed Meat Products
- Sauerkraut
- Kim Chi
- Kombucha
- Hops
- Wine Grapes
- Royal Jelly
- Field Beans

For updates on the New Crops Project, visit our homepage at www.sfa-mn.org/new-crops-project or Bobby Wenner’s blog at sfa-new-crops.tumblr.com.

Sign up for our biweekly e-newsletter, SFA Connect, and learn what’s happening at SFA. Visit sfa-mn.org/sfa-connect or email Communications Coordinator Jason Walker at jason@sfa-mn.org.
“A Tale of Two Bugs:” Garlic Bloat Nematode and Aster Yellows Phytoplasma

By Jerry Ford

Part of the educational outreach of this year’s Garlic Festival came from the growers themselves, who got to talk a lot about two new garlic pathogens that impacted the crop.

Garlic Festival has helped to lead the way in the control of Garlic Bloat Nematode (GBN) in our state. Working with the University of Minnesota Plant Disease Clinic and Dr. Carl Rosen, Head of the Department of Soil, Water, and Climate at the University of Minnesota, festival growers developed a testing procedure for this destructive bug that has been wiping out garlic fields in other states. This nematode only travels on soil and seed, so the festival first implemented a testing procedure through the Plant Disease Clinic - growers had to pass to qualify to sell at the festival - and then started an education program to convince growers of all sizes to only buy seed that has been tested. The goal is to minimize the amount of infected seed that comes in to the state, especially since such seed also infects the soil, which will continue to destroy garlic planted there for years. So far, the impact from this pathogen in Minnesota has been small, but for the farmers who have it, the effect is devastating.

If there’s one thing you can predict about farming, it’s that it’s unpredictable.

8th Annual Minnesota Garlic Festival

Saturday, August 10th, 2013 • McLeod County Fairgrounds in Hutchinson • Vendor inquiries welcome! New application available Feb. 15, 2013 • www.mngarlicfest.com

Sponsored by the Crow River Chapter, Sustainable Farming Association

VENDOR COORDINATOR WANTED!

Stipend available. Contact Jerry Ford, jerry@sfa-mn.org, 763.244.6659

Growers were feeling good about the measures they were taking to prevent Garlic Bloat Nematode when they got blindsided by a different pathogen, one that has never caused appreciable damage to garlic in the U.S. before. The story of this second bug reads like a science fiction, and the credit goes to Demitre Mollov of the Plant Disease Clinic for tracking this one down. Starting in June, many growers noticed premature yellowing of the plants. By mid-July, when harvest normally happens, some fields were completely wasted down and others were suffering. It turns out, as Mollov discovered, that the culprit was Aster Yellows Phytoplasma (AYP), a microscopic pathogen that is brought in on a particular kind of leaf hopper. It seems that the incredibly mild spring, along with a prevailing jet stream from the southern U.S., brought in these leaf hoppers far earlier than when they normally arrive, in numbers estimated as high as 3,000,000 per acre, and the hoppers bit the young garlic leaves, which doesn’t do any damage in itself, but was enough to transfer the phytoplasma.

By August, it became apparent that even though there are only a handful of Garlic Bloat Nematode cases in the state, practically all of the upper midwest was impacted by Aster Yellows Phytoplasma. The degree of damage varied widely; some growers harvested no usable bulbs, while others had good yields. However, often even the best looking crops showed signs of infection.

As garlic planting commenced in October, the overriding question was, “will Aster Yellows persist into next year?”. Some growers are choosing to select and plant the best of their cloves; while other growers have decided to buy new seed stock. Only time will tell.

Advanced Grazing Workshop at SFA’s Annual Conference

In our continuing series of GrazeFest events, SFA’s Livestock and Grazing Specialist, Kent Solberg, has put together a day-long workshop on advanced grazing techniques at this year’s Annual Conference. To be held on Fri., Feb. 15 (the first day of the conference), the Advanced Grazing Workshop will feature a roster of experts to take you to the next level with your pastures and livestock.

Dr. Allen Williams of Grass Fed Beef, LLC, will discuss trends and opportunities in grass-finished beef production, and advanced pasture and forage management techniques for grass based livestock systems. Speaking on considerations for finishing beef cattle on pasture and forages is Howard Moechnig, owner of Midwest Grasslands, former NRCS Grazing Specialist, and author of the authoritative book, “Improving and Sustaining Forage Production in Pastures.” Keith Kloubec, a District Conservationist with the Carver County NRCS office, will present a session entitled “Pasture management and Soil Health”. And, finally, Kent Solberg, SFA Livestock and Grazing Specialist, will discuss profit opportunities for pasture based livestock systems.

When you sign up for the Advanced Grazing Workshop at http://www.arboretum.umn.edu/2013SustainAgSummit.aspx, your registration entitles you to also take in the opening keynote session with Mark Seeley, U of M professor and NPR Weather & Climate Commentator, speaking on Climate Change and Minnesota Farming. You will also be eligible to attend the end-of-day social gathering, and lunch is included.
SFA Annual Conference: ‘Growing the Farmer-to-Farmer Network’

22nd Annual Conference • Feb. 15-16, 2013 • Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Chaska
Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota • www.sfa-mn.org/conference

Conference Headliners
(Schedule subject to change)

**Michael Ableman (keynote)**, founder of the Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens, and author of “On Good Land” and “Field of Plenty”

**Mark Seeley**, climatologist, author, and professor at the University of Minnesota, on how weather/climate impacts to Minnesota agriculture, transportation, energy, tourism, and natural resources.

**Atina Diffley**, farmer, author of “Turn Here Sweet Corn” and organic consultant

**Advanced Grazing Workshop**, with Dr. Allen Williams of Grass Fed Beef, LLC; Howard Moechnig, owner of Midwest Grasslands; Keith Kloubec, District Conservationist, Carver County NRCS office; and Kent Solberg, SFA’s livestock and grazing specialist (separately ticketed event Friday, Feb. 15).

**Culinary Workshops**, from MN Garlic Festival Chef Wrangler and TV personality Mary Jane Miller, with a daylong series of cooking, pairing and saving local food and drink (separately ticketed event Saturday, Feb. 16).

Conference Attractions

- **Best Practices for Raw Milk** – with Tim Wightman, President of the Farm-to-Consumer Foundation
- **The Annual Seed Swap** – bring your seeds to share
- **New Diseases in Garlic: What the Experts Say** – Learn the latest on this year’s Aster Yellows infection and Garlic Bloat Nematode, with Dimitre Mollov, MN Plant Disease Clinic; Michelle Grabowski, Extension Plant Pathologist; Dr. Carl Rosen, Soil Scientist and Garlic Researcher; and Chris Kudrna, Plum Creek Garlic.
- **One-on-One Networking Sessions**
- **Educational Sessions include**: Seed Savers Exchange, Organic Q & A, Social Media Marketing, Urban Soil Mitigation, Specialty Crops, Cucurbit Squash Production, Growing Wine Grapes, Animal Welfare Approved Certification, and Farm Succession.
- **And a Minnesota wine and beer tasting finale!**
Annual Conference Registration Form

You may also register online at www.sfa-mn.org/conference or by phone at 952.443.1422. Phone registration may be taken via check or credit card during Arboretum business hours.

Note: This year’s conference is Feb. 15-16 at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, 3675 Arboretum Dr, Chaska. You may register for either Friday or Saturday, or both. Registrants may choose to attend the traditional sessions both days, the Advanced Grazing Workshop (Friday) or Mary Jane Miller’s Culinary Workshops (Saturday). Lunch is included with each day’s fee. Again this year is the special Leaders Breakfast, to be held Saturday morning; an extra admission ticket for $35 is necessary to attend the breakfast.

First Attendee

Name __________________________________________________ Email _____________________________________________________
Address _____________________________________ City ___________________ State____ Zip ______ Phone _____________________

Days to attend (circle your choices; lower price is before Jan. 15, higher price is after Jan. 15)

Friday ($90 or $95) Saturday ($90 or $95) Friday & Saturday ($180 or $190)

Saturday Leaders Breakfast? Yes (add $35) No

Curriculum/Lunch Options

Friday educational track: _____ Advanced Grazing Workshop or _____ Regular track sessions
Friday lunch: _____ Sliced turkey, bacon and provolone _____ Veggie flatbread with cucumbers, hummus and feta
Saturday educational track: _____ Culinary Workshop or _____ Regular track sessions
Saturday lunch: _____ Muffaletta (salami, ham & cheese) _____ Roasted curried vegetable wrap

Second Attendee

Name __________________________________________________ Email _____________________________________________________
Address _____________________________________ City ___________________ State____ Zip ______ Phone _____________________

Days to attend (circle your choices; lower price is before Jan. 15, higher price is after Jan. 15)

Friday ($90 or $95) Saturday ($90 or $95) Friday & Saturday ($180 or $190)

Saturday Leaders Breakfast? Yes (add $35) No

Curriculum/Lunch Options

Friday educational track: _____ Advanced Grazing Workshop or _____ Regular track sessions
Friday lunch: _____ Sliced turkey, bacon and provolone _____ Veggie flatbread with cucumbers, hummus and feta
Saturday educational track: _____ Culinary Workshop or _____ Regular track sessions
Saturday lunch: _____ Muffaletta (salami, ham & cheese) _____ Roasted curried vegetable wrap

TOTAL ENCLOSED: $ __________________ Make checks payable to Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

To register more than two people from the same household, copy this form or download another copy from www.sfa-mn.org/conference.
Award Nominations

2012 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:

**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 to the advancement of sustainable farming in Minnesota.

Nominee: ______________________________________________________________________________________

**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 to supporting sustainable agriculture in Minnesota.

Nominee: ______________________________________________________________________________________

My name: _____________________________________________________________________________________
Address: _____________________________________________________________________________________
Phone: ___________________________ Email: _______________________________________________________

Please explain why your nominee(s) deserve the award: ______________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________

Your signature: _________________________________________________________________________________

Honorees will be announced at the Leaders Breakfast at the SFA Annual Conference on Sat., Feb. 16, 2013, at Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in Chaska. You may register for the conference and Leaders Breakfast at sfa-mn.org/conference, or use the registration form on the opposite page.

Mail your nomination form by Feb. 1, 2013, to: SFA of MN, c/o Mary Hanks, 10500 295th Street W, Northfield, MN 55057; or email your nomination to Mary.Hanks@state.mn.us.
2013 SFA Annual Conference: ‘Growing the Farmer-to-Farmer Network’

Feb. 15 & 16 • Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Chaska

Conference Fees

Through Jan. 15: $90/day • After Jan. 15: $95/day

See registration page for additional pricing; register now at sfa-mn.org/conference or by calling 952.443.1422

Who Should Attend

• Farmers and landowners
• Chefs
• Graziers
• CSA farmers & customers
• Meat farmers & customers
• Local food enthusiasts
• Sustainable farming supporters and anyone interested in developing a strong, dynamic farmer-to-farmer network

Conference Presenters

• Michael Ableman
• Mark Seeley
• Atina Diffley
• Mary Jane Miller
• Marla Spivak
• Seed Savers Exchange
• Farm to Consumer Foundation

Conference Features

• Culinary workshops
• Local wine, beer, and cheese tastings
• Leadership breakfast
• Urban land update
• Urban soil mitigation
• Food justice discussions
• Economically successful case studies
• Graziers workshop
• Public policy workshop
• Social media and marketing
• Micro-processing & value-added product development
• High-tunnel best practices & case studies
• Specialty crops
• Seed-Saving Swap
• Cucurbit Squash Session
• Growing Wine Grapes

Sustainable Farming Association
Box 192
Princeton, MN 55371
www.sfa-mn.org