Dear Sustainable Farming Association Volunteer,

Welcome to SFA! Thank you for choosing to share your talents and time with our organization. Your commitment to our mission will insure that the excellent quality of the service we provide can grow and expand.

We hope that your time here with us is full of learning, dedication and enjoyment — we all do this work because we love it!

The goals of SFA are to promote education and development of sustainable farming systems, and to provide a network of sustainable farmers and supporters. You will be a part of this legacy in whatever way you contribute: on the association board or a chapter board, on a committee, at a special event or helping out with a project.

We appreciate your help and we hope that you find the experience fulfilling and rewarding.

Sincerely,

John Mesko
Executive Director
What is SFA?

The Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was chartered by the State of Minnesota in 1990. Originally a collaborative offshoot of Land Stewardship Project, SFA was formed to better serve sustainable farming communities in particular regions of the state, providing a community network for farmers, growers, producers and supporters. The goal was and is to provide an effective way to distribute and use the “wisdom of the community” for education and enhancement of our farms and communities. We are focused on protecting and improving the environment, building more profitable and resilient farms, and strengthening our sustainable farming community.

The vast majority of this work is carried out by volunteers.

The structure of SFA is somewhat unique: in regions where there is interest in joining together at a local level, chapters are formed and maintained. There are currently nine chapters operating across the state that are defined by both geography and/or common interests. You can see more about chapters here: http://www.sfa-mn.org/chapters/

Each chapter elects leadership that they feel is appropriate for their particular goals and activities, and the association as a whole has a board of directors comprised of delegates from each chapter and at-large directors.

Individuals, farms and other businesses may become members of the association in general, without joining a particular chapter.

In addition, SFA hosts Networking Groups that focus on particular interests, such as grazing or winter greenhouses.

The professional staff consists of an Executive Director, a Communications Coordinator; a Grazing, Livestock and Soil Health Coordinator; a Network Coordinator, a Webmaster, and additional personal that can vary depending on current projects.

For more information, please visit the website: http://www.sfa-mn.org
VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

VOLUNTEER CONDUCT
The way you conduct yourself while volunteering with SFA reflects the standards of the association and is indicative of your support for the organization’s mission. A professional attitude, a polite tone of voice and friendly manner can mean a great deal to those with whom you interact. Inappropriate conduct while working for SFA may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY STANDARDS
As a volunteer with SFA, you are asked to protect the privacy of all members, staff and fellow volunteers. Violation of this policy will subject a volunteer to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

FLEXIBILITY
SFA strives to offer flexibility in its volunteer opportunities: if you do not feel comfortable in the position you were assigned, we can offer you another open position. If your schedule changes, we can try and accommodate you with other openings.

DRESS CODE
It is important to select clothing that is appropriate for your job. Please check with your supervisor if you have questions. We always appreciate it when volunteers wear SFA branded attire.

TELEPHONE AND COMPUTER USE
Volunteers may occasionally be provided with the use of telephone and computer systems if required for their position. While incidental personal use is permitted, they are to be used in a manner consistent with SFA policies and procedures. Electronic and technological communications are not to be used in ways that may be disruptive, offensive, or harmful to others and must be professional at all times. SFA reserves the right to monitor and access all communications made through its equipment, including the contents of any SFA computer, as needed. Violations of any portion of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE
SFA's work environment is free from drug use. SFA volunteers may not report to or be at work under the influence of controlled substances including but not limited to abused prescription medications or alcohol.

Volunteers may not use, possess, sell or transfer illegal drugs, while working. Any volunteer who violates this policy is subject to discipline up to and including termination.

HARASSMENT
SFA is committed to providing a work environment that is free from sexual harassment, other harassment and discrimination. If you believe that you or someone else has been subject to harassment, you should immediately report it to your supervisor or the Executive Director.

PROHIBITION of WEAPONS
SFA does not allow volunteers to possess guns while working for the organization.

**VOLUNTEER CONCERNS and SUGGESTIONS**

If an SFA volunteer has a grievance concerning his/her work with SFA, they are urged to bring the matter up immediately with their supervisor. The supervisor is required to investigate the grievance and provide a response or decision within a reasonable period of time.

**REPRESENTATION to the PUBLIC**

No volunteer may formally represent himself/herself as a spokesperson for SFA without prior approval from the Board President or Executive Director.

**Volunteer Termination**

SFA reserves the right to terminate a volunteer for violation of any of the above policies.

**VOLUNTEER RIGHTS**

Volunteers have the right to:

1. A clearly communicated schedule.
2. Support, information and respect from SFA staff and other volunteers.
3. Oriented to the agency's missions, goals, staff, activities, and policies (see above, “What is SFA?”).
4. Access to staff to insure adequate supervision, training, feedback and open communication to discuss opinions.
5. Reasonable accommodations regarding volunteering at SFA in the case of physical, mental or sensory disabilities.
6. A safe supportive environment, which does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital or military status, citizenship, sexual orientation, ancestry, or any other legally protected status.
7. Say no to particular tasks which the volunteer feels are inappropriate, unacceptable or uncomfortable.

**VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Volunteers are required to:

1. Complete any training required for various positions.
2. Attend required meetings and keep up to date on new information.
3. Be on time for scheduled work or contact your supervisor if you have a time conflict (with as much notice as possible.)
4. Be open and honest with the association about your expectations, needs and abilities, and provide timely and constructive feedback to the agency if necessary.
5. Maintain confidentiality and privacy with regards to agency information, clients and personnel.
6. Contribute to a safe, supportive environment.
8. Dress appropriately for role and tasks.