



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
CM Extension

**COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS &
 SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM**

**Eat Well, Do Good
 In Missouri!**

Issue 2006

May 2006

What is SARE?

Since 1988, the USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program has helped advance farming systems that are profitable, environmentally sound and good for communities through a nationwide research and education grants program. This USDA program is managed in partnership with regional land grant hosts to fund projects and conduct outreach designed to improve agricultural systems.

North Central region - SARE

To advance such knowledge nationwide, SARE administers a competitive grants program first funded by Congress in 1988. Grants are offered through four regions -- North Central, Northeast, South and West -- under the direction of councils that include farmers and ranchers along with representatives from universities, government, agribusiness and nonprofit organizations. Missouri is part of the North Central Region together with 11 additional states. The region embodies what most people think of when they envision the Heartland, i.e. endless rows of corn, strong family traditions and quaint rural towns. The Heartland is this and much more including highly diversified farms, urban-rural partnerships and community-supported agriculture. The NCR-SARE's

challenge has been to hold fast to historical roots in a contemporary manner, preserving its place in the front lines of food production and promoting healthy food systems.

The NCR-SARE goals are to: foster site-specific, integrated farming systems; satisfy human food and fiber needs; enhance environmental quality, natural resource conservation and the integration of on-farm and biological resources; enhance the quality of rural life and support owner-operated farms; protect human health and safety; and promote crop, livestock and enterprise diversity and the well-being of animals.

The region's cultural history, agricultural prowess, and innovative new systems behoove us to enhance rural areas and support healthy, productive farms and ranches. SARE strives to sustain NCR agriculture by encouraging research and education on profitable and environmentally sound systems that strengthen communities.

Competitive Grant Programs

The NCR funds 50 to 75 cutting-edge projects every year in four grant programs. Through grant-making and other initiatives, NCR leaders have supported and encouraged connections between people, communities, and natural resources, promoting healthy food systems in the North Central Region. Four main grant programs provide funds for sustainable agriculture projects are:

Research and Educational Grants — Awarded to multi-disciplinary teams of researchers, producers, educators and others exploring sustainable agriculture. The NCR Call for Pre-proposals are in April.

Farmer Rancher Grants— Awarded to farmers and ranchers for on-site projects in sustainable agriculture. NCR Call for Proposals are in the Fall.

Professional Development Program Grants — Awarded for educational programs in sustainable agriculture practices and concepts for Extension, NRCS, and other agricultural professionals. NCR Call for Proposals are in February.

Graduate Student Program Grants—Awarded
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to graduate students studying sustainable agriculture in the North Central Region. NCR Call for Proposals are in December.

Other NCR Initiatives include: State Strategic Plans — Since 1994, the Administrative Council (AC) has allocated money to each North Central Region land grant institution to help implement a strategic plan in sustainable agriculture. In our state, the Community Food Systems & Sustainable Agriculture Program and Lincoln University prepare a statewide proposal every year. This includes sponsoring seminars, workshops and trade shows to boost rural communities and farm families.

State Sustainable Agriculture Conferences — The AC designated funds in 1996 to support state or multi-state meetings on sustainable agriculture. Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan pooled funds to hold a conference entitled *Profitable Farming in a Changing Environment*, which featured speakers, discussion groups, poster sessions, and workshops.

Promoting Diversity — In 1997, the AC awarded four special Diversity Enhancement grants for Native American communities to implement sustainable practices and concepts on reservation lands. This initiative is intended to open doors and forge partnerships with Native American land grant universities. Future NCR-SARE initiatives will encourage participation of minority groups and under-served communities. Contact Jose L. Garcia, GarciaJL@missouri.edu for more information.

People That Help Sustain The CFSSA Program

Something new we would like to add to our newsletters this year, is to share a little information with readers about the backgrounds and interests of the board members who are currently volunteering their time and energy to the CFSSA Program.



Margot McMillen

Margot McMillen has been working on issues of sustainable farming much of her adult life. Watching the landscape change around her family farm in Illinois, she first saw the diversity of crops disappear into monocultures of corn and soybeans, and then saw the fences and barns disappear and, finally, saw the land itself

disappear under pavement and housing developments. Moving with husband Howard Marshall to a 45-acre farm in Calhoun County in 1994, she was determined to restore the piece to diversity and now keeps Salers beef cattle, Katahdin sheep and a family garden and chicken flock. In 2005, she purchased Terra Bella Farm, a diverse farm that specializes in raising vegetables. She is a co-host of “Farm and Fiddle,” the radio program that celebrates and explores rural life on KOPN community radio 89.5 FM, Columbia, and she writes a twice-monthly column for Progressive Populist, which is archived at populist.com. She has authored five books and many articles on Missouri history and culture and teaches English part-time at Westminster College.

Margot has been involved in sustainable agriculture and with our program for many years. She has always been active serving as a member of our Advisory Board, as an advocate, and as a friend giving good advice and ideas to us. Thank you very much, Margot, for beings such a great supporter of the CFSSA Program.



Patrick Byers



Patrick Byers, Fruit Grower Advisor at the State Fruit Experiment Station, Missouri State University, was born in Nebraska and raised in the Midwest. He can trace his interest in fruit and vegetable production to market gardening while he was in his teens. His educational back-

ground includes an associate degree in commercial horticulture from the University of Nebraska, a bachelor’s degree in horticulture from the University of Missouri, and a Master’s degree, also in horticulture, from the University of Arkansas. His job experience includes 3 years at the University of Arkansas Fruit Substation, where he served as research associate in the peach and apple breeding programs, and 16 years in his current position of Fruit Grower Advisor at Missouri State University’s State Fruit Experiment Station in Mountain Grove. Patrick’s responsibilities include outreach education to Missouri’s commercial fruit industry, as well as research interests in elderberry, pawpaw, persimmon, primocane raspberry, blackberry, and other fruit crops. Patrick and his family manage a small commercial orchard near Fordland, Missouri, where they produce and market peaches, sweet corn and other vegetables, and honey. Patrick has an interest in international agricultural issues, and has made trips in 2003 and 2004 to Uzbekistan and in 2005 to China to consult with fruit producers and scientists. His interests in agricultural sustainability stem from his work with Missouri’s fruit growers, many of whom are small scale, diversified farmers involved in direct marketing.

Pat (as we warmly call him) is a senior member of our Program Coordination Committee. He has been the bridge between our CFSSA Program and faculty and researchers at Missouri State University. We want to express our appreciation for Pat’s thoughtful contributions to the CFSSA Program.



North Central Region SARE Announces Grant Opportunities In Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education



The backbone for America's sustainable agriculture practices takes place in research and education carried out by innovative individuals throughout the country. Researchers throughout the North Central Region of the U.S. can now apply for grants that promote unique sustainable agriculture practices. The North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) Program has announced their annual call for preproposals for researchers and educators looking to be a part of a growing movement toward self sufficiency and individual empowerment in agriculture.

The NCR-SARE Research and Education grant program is an excellent opportunity for collaboration between universities, extension offices, farmers, ranchers, and non-profit groups. The program awards annual grants ranging between \$10,000-150,000 to approximately eleven recipients per year. The North Central Region consists of twelve states including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. "SARE support has allowed me to reach beyond the confines of university research and into minds of farmers managing natural resources," said Diane Rickerl, of South Dakota State University, who studied wetland management in the Prairie Pothole Region. The bridge between America's research labs and farmland is one of the important gaps that SARE attempts to fill through their grant programs. "Agricultural scientists found in these trials an opportunity to conduct research at a greater number of sites that closely approximate the 'real world,'" said Rich Exner, Iowa State University educator and Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI) coordinator. "PFI farmers gained the expertise and laboratory facilities of the researchers."

The current call for research and education preproposals is available through the NCR-SARE web site at <http://www.sare.org/ncrsare>. Individuals may also request the proposal or more information by contacting Bill Wilcke at wilck001@umn.edu or 612-625-8205. The deadline for preproposal submissions is June 20, 2006.

ATTENTION: Students & Educators

Announcing a New Course in Sustainable Agriculture

Questions about water quality, clean air, healthy soil, wholesome food, prosperous communities...?

These questions and many more will be addressed through the new course in Sustainable Agriculture this coming fall at the University of Missouri-Columbia. This experiential course will provide an overview of the principles and practices of sustainable agriculture and provide students an understanding of the integrated nature of sustainable agriculture. Students will examine the environmental, economic, and social dimensions of agriculture, and better understand the successes and challenges of sustainable agriculture.

The course combines classroom lectures, student-led discussions, field visits, readings, and guest lectures. Students will show their understanding of the topics covered through tests, quizzes, short reports, and group projects/presentations. Instructors for this course will be, Dr. Fred Martz, Emeritus Professor of Animal Science and Dr. Jose Garcia, Extension Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the Sustainable Agriculture Program. Students from all backgrounds and majors are encouraged to register for this course. Contact Jose Garcia for more information: GarciaJL@missouri.edu

Bringing the Farm to School Food Services

- Do you know that school districts around the country are buying produce, meat, and dairy products from local farmers?
- Do you understand the local economic development, nutrition, and health benefits of linking local farmers with local schools?
- Would you like to know more about how to implement such programs in your own community?

A Training opportunity about developing links between local farms and local institutions like school cafeterias and universities. Who should attend? Extension educators and agency personnel interested in agriculture, nutrition and rural development. School food service personnel, school board members, or parent association representatives.

June 22, 2006
8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
**ITV sites around
Missouri & Kansas**
*(Extension specialists
sign up for ISE 433)*



For More Information on how to register contact:
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We're on the Web!
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Have Questions or Need Information???

Please feel free to
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What's New In Sustainable Food and Farming Series:

Each month during the school year the *Community Food Systems & Sustainable Agriculture Program* features speakers on important topics at our "What's New in Sustainable Food and Farming" series. These informal seminars are held on the UMC campus from 11:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (* unless otherwise noted) and refreshments are provided.

Monday, August 28, 2006, "Stealing Home Plate: How Toxic vs. Healing Food Environments Affect National Health" Memorial Union, S304

Mark your calendar now for our first presentation this coming fall. Melinda Hemmelgarn will compare two food systems and explain why local is healthier, and how the industrial food system has so affectively stolen home plates. She will also provide strategies for winning it back through media literacy and grass roots advocacy.

Copies of most past presentations may be viewed at agebb.missouri.edu/sustain

2006 National SARE Conference, August 15th —17th

Join us in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin for the 2006 National SARE Conference. "A Midwest Homecoming: Sharing a New Tradition of Sustainability" is the theme of the 2006 biennial USDA/SARE national conference. The conference will feature oral presentations, poster sessions, workshops, and roundtable discussions designed to recognize and advance sustainable agriculture practices. Topics of focus will include people in sustainable agriculture, community development, energy usage, policy making, and exploring how issues such as new marketing opportunities and globalization will affect farmers and ranchers in the 21st Century. **For more information you can check out the website address: <http://www.sare2006.org> or contact: Roger Simonsen, Phone: 402 472-7081; email: ncrsare@unl.edu**

Mark Your Calendar

**Small Food Processor
Entrepreneur Workshop**
May 24—Jefferson City, MO
Contact Bryan Haugen (417) 895-6932

**CFSSA Stakeholder & Coordination
Board Mtg.**
May 30—Columbia, MO
GarciaJL@missouri.edu

National Value-Added Conference
June 12-13—Nashville, TN

Missouri Dairy Grazing Conference
July 6-8—Mt. Vernon, MO
[http://agebb.missouri.edu/dairy/grazing/
conference.htm](http://agebb.missouri.edu/dairy/grazing/conference.htm)

"From Recipe to Reality"
August 11—Chicago, IL
www.fpc.unl.edu

Designed specifically to assist food entrepreneurs in the basics of getting started in business. If you are serious about a local food business, this program is not to be missed. Contact Jill Gillford, 402-472-2819, jgifford1@unl.edu

**Growing Growers 2006 Market
Gardening Workshops**

www.growinggrowers.org

May 8, Olathe, KS -

**Equipment & Farm Safety for Vegetable
Growers**

June 5, TBA -

Harvesting & Post-Harvest Handling

July 10, Lawrence, KS -

The Taste & Nutrition of Local Vegetables

August 7, Kearney, MO -

Starting a New Farm & CSA

August 27, Independence, MO -

Pests, Diseases & Weeds

September 25, Higginsville, MO -

An Integrated Farm

October 21, TBA -

Business Management for Small Farms

Contact Katherine Kelly, (913)488-1270 or
see above website for more information.

**Community Food Security Coalition
Annual Conference**

October 7-9, Vancouver, BC

www.food.security.org

4th Annual Missouri Chestnut Roast

October 14, New Franklin, MO

www.centerforagroforestry.org