They Walk the Walk, and Talk the Talk
Farmers Helping Farmers

National SARE Conference Features Farmer-to-Farmer Teaching and Learning

In workshops, roundtable sessions, group presentations, poster sessions, and tours, farmers and ranchers from across the country met and shared innovative ideas at the 2006 National Conference on Sustainable Agriculture in Oconomowoc, WI on August 15-17, 2006.

Many of the participants were recipients of grants from the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. The farmers used the funds for on-farm research and education projects that support ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially responsible farming. They spoke about their projects, which were as varied as the farm operations represented, ranging from single family operations to urban agriculture projects working with hundreds of farmers from many different ethnic groups.

Farmers explored how to develop new markets for products like Saskatoon berries, heritage turkeys, prawns, and exotic fruits. They explained how to create farmer-to-farmer networks to reduce pesticide risk and farmer partnerships to raise and market livestock like hair sheep. They looked at the social and economic aspects of adding value to crops like corn by saving and breeding traditional seed for organic feed and food. They explored renewable energy solutions, farm-to-school programs, ideas for working with diverse groups of farmers and consumers, combining timber and hog production for creative silvopasture opportunities, year-round pasture based beef systems and much, much more.

To view powerpoint presentations and photos from the conference go to: http://www.sare2006.org/

The Farmer’s Forum has become a tradition as an integral part of the National Small Farm Trade Show & Conference and this year you can plan on another three days packed full of great presentations!

Three days of presentations at the Boone County Fair Grounds in Columbia, MO, November 2-4, will feature panels on a diversity of topics such as Selecting Sheep for Parasite Resistance, Organic Marketing, Farm to Cafeteria Programs and presenters with topics regarding Sustainable Solar Irrigation Systems, Selling to Chefs, Raising Tilapia Trout & Hybrid Striped Bass, Growing Tropical Plants, Innovating Field to Market Processes for Small Produce Farms and many other topics. There will also be a Missouri Organic Association general membership meeting where you will have the opportunity to meet other members, and participate in a drawing for door prizes!

Presenters represent a variety of backgrounds, from agriculture producers who have received sustainable agriculture grants, to extension educators, to community leaders, and sustainable agriculture programs staff.

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2006 Farmer’s Forum
**Latinos in Agriculture**

Missouri experienced a Latino farm increase of 66% between 1997 and 2003, counting 50,443 Latino farms. We can only assume that this number will be larger when the Agriculture Census is conducted next year. Several media have published stories about Latino farmers, the latest one is this: “Once limited to field work, Hispanics now buying farms” (http://www.heraldnet.com/stories/06/08/28/100bus_hispanicfarms001.cfm) Our program has been servicing Latinos and other minorities in agriculture and those who work with them for two years and we are pleased to announce three new publications on Risk Management. You can download them from our website or request a hard copy from us.

“Introduction to Risk Management in Agriculture: A compilation of materials used in a Risk Management Education Project Targeting Latino and Immigrant Farmers” (English/Spanish) [http://agebb.missouri.edu/lac/RiskMgmt.pdf](http://agebb.missouri.edu/lac/RiskMgmt.pdf)

“Human Risk Management Realities and Resources: The Latino Labor Force in Agriculture” (English) [http://agebb.missouri.edu/sustain/lac/HumanRiskMgmt.pdf](http://agebb.missouri.edu/sustain/lac/HumanRiskMgmt.pdf)

“Una Guia para Desarrollar un Plan de Negocios para Granjas y Ranchos” (Spanish) [http://agebb.missouri.edu/sustain/espanol/negocios.pdf](http://agebb.missouri.edu/sustain/espanol/negocios.pdf)

**People That Help Sustain The CFSSA Program**

*We would like 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.*

[Image of Rick Hopkins]

**Rick Hopkins**

Rick Hopkins is a livestock producer from Lawrence County Missouri and is an advocate for sustainable choices. His farm produces 100% pasture raised beef, veal, lamb, and free range hen and duck eggs along with seasonal produce which is sold through two farmers’ markets in the Springfield area, several retail partners, on the internet, and at the farm. Rick’s farm has evolved from a conventional cow-calf operation into a diversified farm enterprise that seeks profit through reduced input costs. The philosophy employed to minimize farm inputs is to allow natural processes and the livestock to do most of the work.

Rick learned through involvement in small farm advocacy groups that the consumer directs the future of agriculture and he now focuses his attention primarily on educating consumers as to how their daily choices affect the future of agriculture, energy, and government policy. Even though farming and advocacy could either become a full time job, Rick finds time to cook for family and friends and assist other producers who seek alternative markets for their farm products.

Rick has been with our program over the long haul. Moreover, his commitment to sustainability and family farms makes him a leader in several organizations. Rick is a core member of our Stakeholder Advisory Board and his input and contributions to our program help us be more alert, more critical and better prepared to face challenges and issues affecting sustainable agriculture.

Thank you, Rick, for your involvement and support.

[Image of Debi Kelly]

**Debi Kelly**

Debi Kelly has 13 years experience with the University of Missouri Extension as the Project Manager for the Missouri Alternatives Center (MAC). She sorts through the masses of information on alternative agricultural options in order to provide small and sustainable farmers with the information they are seeking. Debi works to improve their profitability and, at the same time, aid in maintaining the agricultural base needed to sustain rural communities. Debi has worked with numerous grants and projects from pastured poultry, organic production, farmers markets, agritourism to beginning farmer training. She has a vast network of people and resources across the country through which to secure information.

Debi’s experience in answering a wide variety of small farm/small acreage/sustainable agriculture questions is her specialty. Her ability to help individuals decide not to enter into a particular enterprise is just as important as helping them to enter one. She takes pride in knowing she has saved them headache, heartache and money.

Debi enjoys assisting small farmers, particularly those who are working on alternative enterprises and marketing direct to the consumer. Her passion has always been “working for the little guy.” Debi finds these farmers to be highly creative, hard working, dedicated individuals who thrive to make their families and land successful.

Debi is a strong partner of our program, not only as a Program Coordination Committee member but also in the programmatic arena. We value and appreciate Debi’s partnership and support.

Be sure to check out the MAC website at [http://agebb.missouri.edu/mac](http://agebb.missouri.edu/mac)
Grant Funds Help Make Room for New Ideas

In our May newsletter we reported that “the backbone for America’s sustainable agriculture practices takes place in research and education carried out by innovative individuals throughout the country.”

We now offer our Congratulations to the Missouri Farmers who successfully applied for Sustainable Agriculture grants this year! These out-of-the box thinkers and practitioners set an example of what farmers can do just by having new sustainable ideas and putting together a proposal.

Curt Aldredge, Platte City, “Dwarf Fruit Tree Management on Marginal Soils.”


Bill Crites, Chaffee, “A Production and Marketing Assessment of Pacific White Shrimp in Rural Missouri.”

Ellis Dieckhoff, Higginsville, “Transition of a Conventional Swine Operation to a Closed System, Freshwater Fish Operation”


Dan Kuebler, Ashland, “Sustainable Solar Irrigation System.”

Russell Kremer & Team, Bonnotts Mill, “Reducing and Eliminating the Reliance on Antibiotic Administration on Sustainable Hog Farms.”

Jamie Root, Kansas City, “A Feasibility Study for a Sheep and Goat Market.”

Ivan Stoilov, Dittmer, “Sustainable Fig Farm Using Renewable Solar and Geothermal Energy.”

Daniel West, Macon, “Phase II: Ethanol from Waste Fruit.”

Ericka Wright, Kansas City, “Urban Agricultural Youth Program.”

NCR-SARE awards grants to farmers and ranchers for on-farm research, demonstrations, and education projects. By providing funds ranging from $6,000 per individual grant to up to $18,000 for grants awarded to groups of three or more, NCR-SARE helps facilitate essential agricultural research and development. Last year, 47 grants totaling $414,489 were funded. This year farmers and ranchers throughout the North Central Region will have the opportunity again to apply for roughly $400,000 in grant assistance. The 12 states that comprise the North Central Region are Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The NCR-SARE program receives its funding through the United States Department of Agriculture. Grants are awarded based on the applicants ability to describe how their project will be sustainable in terms of having long-term profitability, being good for the environment, producing healthy foods, being socially responsible and supporting their community. Grant proposals are due by December 1, 2006. Applicants may contact Jose Garcia, University of Missouri, Columbia, 573-884-3794 or GarciaJL@missouri.edu or NCR-SARE at 1-800-529-1342 or ncrsare@unl.edu. The current Farmer Rancher Grant Call for Proposals application can be found at the National SARE website at www.sare.org

Growing Growers Conference—’Feeding Kansas City’

The Growing Growers program of Kansas City is currently planning it’s 2006 Selling Local Conference, December 2nd at the Kauffman Conference Center. This year’s conference aims to assist in developing marketing connections for local farm products in the KC area. The day-long format includes 30 presentations on direct marketing successes and ideas, hurdles to overcome in local food sales, a forum for producers, chefs and grocery stores to meet, and roundtable discussions addressing Kansas City’s increasing demand for local food. Come hear from farmers that have found success in marketing their products to area restaurants, farmers’ markets, distributors, grocers, though agritourism stops and on the web. Listen as wholesalers and retailers discuss what it is that they are looking for in potential suppliers. Find out what state and/or local regulatory agencies are involved in the sale of local food products so you can be in compliance.

“Growing Growers” is a program in KC to train farmers in local food production. Their goal is to increase the number and effectiveness of small farms that grow food organically and/or sustainable. Growing Growers is a collaborative effort of K-State Extension, University of Missouri Extension, the Kansas Rural Center and the Kansas City Food Circle. For more information contact Crystal Weber at (816) 876-2790 or email webercd@missouri.edu
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, September 25, 2006,

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

Sustainable Ag Farm Model Appearing at 4th Annual Chestnut Roast

If you have never had the opportunity to view the CFSSA Sustainable Ag Farm Model at one of its many appearances in Missouri and surrounding states, then you need to LOOK for it and our program information booth, under the BIG Tent at the 4th Annual Missouri Chestnut Roast on October 14th at the 600 acre Horticulture and Agroforestry Research Center in New Franklin. We will have someone there to personally talk to you and to answer questions you may have about Sustainable Agriculture. Come out and enjoy guided tours of the farm, educational booths, many outstanding Missouri agricultural products, family activities, live music, cooking demonstrations, and more... You can access additional information at: www.centerforagroforestry.org

Mark Your Calendar

4th Annual MO Chestnut Roast
October 14, New Franklin, MO
573-882-3234
www.centerforagroforestry.org

National Small Farm Conference and Trade Show
November 2-4, Columbia, MO
1-800-633-2535

Feeding Kansas City Conference
December 2, Kansas City
www.growinggrowers.org

Midwest Wine & Grape Conference
February 3-5, Tan-Tara Resort
Osage Beach, MO
1-800-329-wine

MO Small Fruit & Vegetable Conference
February 12-14, Springfield, MO

University of MO South Farm Showcase
September 16, Columbia, MO

Growing Growers 2006 Market Gardening Workshops
www.growinggrowers.org
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

MO Botanical Garden’s Best of