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SARE Project LNC94-64

APPENDIX A

PUBLICATIONS

TITLE: Integrated System for Sustainability of High Value Field Crops

LOCATION: Huron County, Michigan

CONTACT PERSON: Jim LeCureux, Extension Agricultural Agent, Huron County

PUBLICATIONS

Funding was received from the Michigan Integrated Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS) Project, which is 1 of 17 Integrated Farming Systems Program funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The Innovative Farmers were selected to be one of the several Michigan MIFFS sites. The IF group was awarded \$12,000 over two years for dissemination of information and developing leadership within the Innovative Farmers Group. The Innovative Farmers newsletter was developed, printed and distributed with the MIFFS funding. Below is a list of Innovative Farmer Newsletters distributed over the past year.

Innovation News

Issue 1	January, 1996
Issue 2	February, 1996
Issue 3	April, 1996
Issue 4	May, 1996
"Special Issue"	June, 1996
Issue 5	July, 1996

Innovation News

Prepared by: MSU Extension - Project Office, 1460 S Van Dyke Road, Bad Axe MI 48413 ☎ 517/269-6099

INNOVATIVE FARMER ANNUAL MEETING

The 1996 Annual meeting of the Innovative Farmers will be on Tuesday, January 23. The meeting will be held at Cousin's in Bad Axe and will start at 11:30 a.m. with lunch.

During lunch, tables will be arranged so that each work group (site-tillage system) will be asked to address these three questions.

1. What worked in your 1995 system plan?
2. What surprised you?
3. What changes are needed for next year?

After lunch, we'll have each group share their information with the other groups.

At this meeting we'll also be electing officers, committee chairs and there will be a treasurer's report.

To help us plan for the meals, please contact our office (269-6099) to let us know if you plan to attend and how many from your farm. Thank You!

INNOVATIVE FARMER MEMBERSHIP CONTINUES TO GROW

Two new members have recently joined the Innovative Farmer Group. Jim Schornack, Bad Axe and Keith Gentner, Minden City have joined.

In addition, Monsanto and BASF have committed financial support and/or materials to this year's effort.

This is a positive sign as interest continues to grow beyond Huron County.

FIRST INNOVATIVE FARMER BANQUET JANUARY 18

The first Innovative Farmer Banquet will be held on January 18 beginning at 7:00 p.m. The banquet will be held at the K of C Hall, west of Bad Axe.

The purpose of this banquet, is to honor the sponsoring partners that have demonstrated their support by contributing or committing over \$60,000 to our project. Without their support, the Innovative Farmer project would not have been possible. In addition, without their demonstrated support, several of the grants would not have been made available. Therefore, we hope to have a large turnout of members to show our support for their efforts.

Another purpose of the banquet, is to kick-off a new Sustainable Agriculture - Economic Development Project. This project is funded by W.K. Kellogg Foundation and involves nine communities in three states; Nebraska, Missouri and Michigan.

Funding is provided for interested citizens in each of the communities to analyze resources and to consider different approaches for enhancing the agricultural economy in that community.

Each community will take different approaches.

To help kick-off this program, John Gardner, North Dakota State University Extension, will be the featured speaker. John will outline how farmers in North Dakota have formed eighteen farmer-owned cooperatives to add value to their products. In John's area, they've started an aquiculture co-op as well as pasta and bison processing cooperatives. I think you'll find his comments very interesting.

Farmer owned/added value cooperatives are only one possibility. There are many others and we need to explore them all so that we can position ourselves for the next 10 to 20 years.

With changes in trade bills, decreasing government support and other possible changes in the farm bill, we need to think now how we can put Huron County in a better economic position. Twenty-five percent of the household income in Huron County is derived from agriculture, so we need to be sure it remains an important and viable industry.

Plan now to attend the FIRST Innovative Farmer Banquet. Tickets for members are \$5.00 each and \$10.00 each for non-members. Tickets are available in our office.

FERTILIZER STORAGE CONTAINMENT PROJECT UNDERWAY

The first of ten on-farm secondary fertilizer containment facilities has been completed. The structure was built on the Mel Gingrich farm.

Mel was the first member to respond to the survey and his farm was also a demonstration farm for the Saginaw Bay Water Quality Demonstration Project.

It was important to complete one project this fall to verify construction costs and to allow others to see how the containment structure will look.

Sally Comer is now working with other farmers who have indicated interest in building secondary containment facilities on their farm.

Each participant has to complete the Farm*A*Syst units that pertain to their farm. A Groundwater Stewardship Team, comprised of Innovative Farmer members, Sally Comer, Jim LeCureux and Kurt Damrow, Emergency Services Director, will prioritize the applicants to determine which are built this year.

If additional funds are needed, a second grant will be submitted to the M.D.A. Groundwater Protection Program in 1996.

COVER CROP YIELD AND SUGAR RESULTS CREATES QUESTIONS

While compiling the I.F. Plot results, it became apparent that a trend was emerging as a result of the use of cover crops in sugar beets.

In 1995, at the tillage sites and in the cover crop plots, the more and thicker the cover crop, the higher the sugar.

In the tillage plots, trans-till and zone till, where cover crops were used, higher sugar contents were recorded.