

Corner Post

Fall '93

Number 4

Sustainable Farming Association news, events, and stories, from several corners of Minnesota

FARMERS CORNER: KOENENS OF MONTEVIDEO

by Tonia M. Kittelson

Sustainability in agriculture means farming in a more environmentally sound manner which improves quality of life by requiring less time and work, and which makes a profit. One approach that can provide both is controlled grazing.

With this method, the animals are concentrated on a pasture for a short period of time and then moved to fresh pasture, letting the animals do the work. The intensity and movement of the herd makes the forage more nutritious, dense and appealing to the animals. These benefits have made switching to controlled grazing an attractive option for many farmers, including the Koenen family.

The Koenen Dairy operation, located northeast of Montevideo, was begun in 1965 by Kenneth and Emma Koenen. Kenneth and Emma and their sons, Kurt and Lyle, and Sandy, Lyle's wife, formed a partnership in 1979. Kurt eventually found other employment and a third brother, Paul, and Lynn, his wife, joined the partnership in 1984.

The operation was strictly based on housing the animals in barns... up until June 16, 1993. The Koenens became aware of controlled grazing when Lynn Koenen

heard about it this past winter at the Land Stewardship Project (LSP), where she works. As their interest grew, they started going to SFA events for support and a way of sharing information with other farmers. This spring the Koenens began controlled grazing by setting up small plots of pasture with portable fencing.

Their initial cost was about \$2500 for 1" & 3/8" fiberglass posts, maxi-shock wire, polywire, springclips to hold the wire on the posts, and two electric fencers. It was a quick set up because they wanted to get going on it this year rather than be delayed another year. The only difficulty was all the rain this year. The wetness led to muddy lanes where the cows walk between paddocks. Also, they ended up grazing a pasture that was underwater, which made a mess of the alfalfa. That plot will take a little longer to recover before it can be grazed a second time. Paul and Lyle don't plan on putting up permanent fence for at least a couple of years or until they get a better idea of how they want their paddocks arranged for the most productive sequence.

Such a drastic change is not only an adjustment for the people involved, but also a shock to the animals. "Cows don't like change," said Lyle. This was evident by their reaction the first week. "They were very nervous and uneasy, some didn't even want to leave the barns," said Paul. "Their udders and legs got sore from walking and they weren't used to that." By the second week the cows had settled into the new routine. Now, the Koenens notice some cows standing by the gate and waiting to go to pasture rather than eating the grain!

When the weather is nice and fairly dry, the Koenens have noticed that the cows come in much cleaner than if they would have spent all day in the barn. Of course, this year they have often been muddy.

When I asked Lyle and Paul if they had much of a response from the neighbors they

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Kenneth, Lyle, Paul and Lynn Koenen of Montevideo show off their well-adjusted cows.

(Continued on page six)

Fall and Winter Calendar of Events

Use this page as a handy reference to SFA sponsored and other interesting events. Contact each chapter or organization for more details and to confirm the events, as weather and other factors may influence these dates.

Oct. 1 - 24 daily - 5th Annual Fall Pumpkin Pick and Craft Festival. Free admission and hot apple cider. Mon - Fri noon to dusk Sat & Sun 9:00a.m. to dusk. Pick your own pumpkin, petting zoo, dried flowers and gifts, country store, and more. Gary & Maureen Vosejka's Thorncrest Farms, Dundas. For information or flyer call (507) 645-4182.

October 26, 10:30 to 3:30 - Strategic Planning for Organizations. Mankato. Sponsored by the Land Stewardship Project. SFA members encouraged to attend. For information call Audrey (612) 269-2105; or Todd (507) 334-0014.

WISA (Women in Sustainable Agriculture) meetings: October 11, 7p.m. at Diane Milan's, near Northfield; Bring books and other resources that have helped you farm sustainably. **November 7, 5p.m.** Potluck at June Redig's, Northfield, topic: Inspiration. For information call June at (507)334-0014.

December 7-8th - Hiawatha Grazing Conference: , Rochester Minnesota. Featuring Jim Gerrish, Larry Muller, Alan Henning and more. Topics: stockpiling, calf rearing, seasonal dairy, species, stockers, young stock contracting, pigs on pasture. \$90 if registered before December 1st. \$110 if after. For information, call Dan French (507) 635-5619 or Mike Watson (507) 289-3882.

December 6th - Western Minnesota Chapter's Annual Meeting, - Sunwood Inn, Morris. For more information call: (612) 269-2105.

December 3-4 12:00 noon through 4:00p.m. Minnesota Lamb and Wool Producers' Association's Annual "Shepherd's Winter Holiday", Radisson Metrodome, St. Paul. For more information call (507)925-4415.

December 14 - Annual Medics Conference - Southeast Minnesota. Call (612)983-2177.

Feb 22-23 - Introduction to Intensive Grazing, Radisson Hotel, MPLS. Stockman Grass Farmer. The basics of intensive grazing. Jim Gerrish and Alan Nation. For information call: 1-800-748-9808.

Introduction to Holistic Resource Management Courses by Land Stewardship Project: *Informational meetings:* Dec. 14, Plainview; Jan 11, Faribault; Jan 25, Granite Falls. *Courses:* Jan. 18-20, Plainview; Feb. 1-3, Faribault; Feb. 16-18, Granite Falls. For information call (507)523-3366.

December 1-3 - HRM Wealth Generating Seminar Mankato, Roland Kroos - instructor. Call LSP office for Details (507) 523-3366.

Controlled Grazing Courses by the Land Stewardship Project: *Introductory Courses:*, Jan. 27-28, Western Minnesota; Feb. 24-25, Whitewater (Southeast MN); March 7-8, Cannon River Area. *Advanced Course:* March 10th-bus tour in Eastern Minnesota. \$75, additional family members \$50, for registration and materials.

Possible Events, call for more information:

South Central Chapter Workshop, November, call (507) 874-3737.

Grazing course - Central Minnesota, February 10-11, call (612) 983-2177.

Bud Williams, Stockmanship Course on reducing livestock handling stress. *Maybe* December 4, 4:30 Lamb and Wool Assoc. , St. Paul; *Maybe* Dec 6 or 10, Southeast Minnesota. (612) 983-2177.

Joel Salatin, grass farmer and columnist for the *Stockman Grass Farmer*, January 28 - Southern Chapters, January 29 Central, Western Chapters. Call your chapter for information.

Words from Tammy Keith-Wellstone, State SFA Co-ordinator

"My Experiences in Buryatia"

During May I had the opportunity to work in Russia as a VOAC (Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance). VOAC is a non-profit organization that coordinates farmer-to-farmer programs in foreign countries. My assignment was to work with the Rural Innovation Center at the agricultural college in Ulan Ede, Buryatia, to design and implement a training program for beginning farmers.

Buryatia is located in southern Siberia near Mongolia approximately 3,000 miles east of Moscow, near Lake Baikal, the deepest lake in the world. It is also an environmental treasure, having many species of plants and animals found nowhere else in the world.

As most of you know, in Russia, most of the agriculture has been in collective farms for the past 70 years. There are many problems to overcome in helping farmers to become private or family-type farmers. There has been no private land ownership or laws that provide for transfer of property. It is very difficult to borrow money for land and operating capital.

Agricultural infrastructures, such as storage, transportation, processing, and marketing do not exist. The collective farms were, and still are huge, consisting of thousands of acres, employing many people and using large scale machinery.

The workers have little to do with managing the farms. I was informed that on some of the farms in Buryatia, they were told when to sow grain by a party agricultural administrator who knew little of soil temperature and weather conditions at the time.

I saw little evidence of conservation practices on the collective farms.

The area looks much like the wheat farms and ranches of the high plains of Montana, except that it is still open range for livestock. Sheep, goats and cattle wander around everywhere. There are virtually no fences. Overgrazing is common, and there are often dust storms from soil blowing off the land. I don't mean to be overcritical. In our country we had the same thing happening in the thirties, and in some areas it is still happening.

It was interesting to me that in my presentations and discussions with college faculty members, and no private farmers, that they wouldn't believe that we also have serious problems in agriculture. I always mentioned that they possibly could learn from some of our mistakes.

Certainly crop losses in parts of Minnesota and the Midwest are not evidence of sustainability, nor are the substantial soil losses which are greater than we can possibly realize. It certainly would have been far better economically and environmentally this year in Minnesota and Iowa if one half the land used for row crops was in rotational pastures.

In closing, my experience in Buryatia was very rewarding. The people were always friendly and very glad to meet Americans. None of us could understand how we could ever have been in the "Cold War" that went on for years.

Spending time in Russia brought into perspective, that with all our problems and faults, we are a great country. I am glad to be an American, and to be involved with sustainable farmers.

Well, the wet weather slowed down many of the SFA's activities, including the *Cornerpost*, which is written by farmers who had a few challenges to deal with. Writing was not the immediate priority. Sometimes planning for farm tours wasn't either. We all thank you for your patience.

This has been a year to count our blessings, and look closely at our approaches to farming, our communities and our values. This is a time when I appreciate greatly the SFA's Statement of Purpose (see below*).

I want to thank each of you who have contributed your experience, time, money, and a lot of energy to build the SFA. You all have made this an organization which is a vital support network for almost 600 members around the state.

The organization has meant so much to us. But it is time for us to reach out further. How many neighbors do you have that you would like to see become a member? Why not ask them? The worst they can say is "No." Some of the most dedicated members started out as skeptics who joined the SFA because of the urging of a friend.

If you haven't been involved in an SFA event, ask a local board member or coordinator what you can do. It can help you get to know other members better, and expand your opportunities to learn more about approaches other people are taking on their farms. We are member directed, and farmer run.

* The Mission Statement below was adopted by the State SFA board at their summer meeting. It was developed by the Cannon River Area SFA Board of directors in the Spring of 1993.

"The Sustainable Farming Association recognizes the wisdom within ourselves and our communities to find ways of farming that are economically viable and ecologically sound. In the spirit of cooperation we offer mutual support and fellowship to strengthen our families and communities. Our diversity enhances the sharing of resources, new ideas, and approaches to farming."

Southcentral Chapter



Contact: Sheila Nordgaard,
Lewiston: (507)523-2204

by Gordon Hoffert

Amidst all the news generated by the weather, some other important things have been going on in our area. Last November we were presented with the idea of doing a fund-raising campaign within our chapter. LSP donated the services of Dick Engdahl, a professional fund-raiser on their staff. The project here has become an experiment of sorts, to test one way for SFA chapters to become more financially independent, and thus more stable, as we look to broadening our programming and our impact. The project was also one of immediate need. As LSP reduced their funding of our chapter, we had a budget shortfall of over \$5,000.00 for 1993.

The approach which the campaign committee decided to use combined mailings with personal contacts—mainly by phone. We called our effort “Sowing the Future,” and developed an attractive brochure with this theme for distribution. By now almost all of our 125 members have been invited to

contribute, and here are some results:

- 1) Pledges have exceeded our original goal and now total \$5,676.00!
- 2) Of those contacted, 79% made a pledge. This far exceeded projections.
- 3) The pledged amount includes 3 Lifetime Memberships of \$1,000.00 each—with at least half of this to be invested in a permanent, “socially responsible” Endowment Fund.

We’re pleased with the response of our supporters and by these results! Several of our members have agreed to work on the “business phase” of Sowing the Future. This will involve contacting larger businesses in our geographic area.

Successful Field Days were held this summer at Dale and Carmene Pangrac’s, Lewiston on controlled grazing of dairy cattle, solar calf building, and annual medics interseeded into corn. Near Kellogg, we visited Ralph and Dennis Stelling to see controlled grazing of dairy cattle, and also Duane Hager’s controlled grazing, gravity flow manure system and non-

chemical cropping systems. We co-sponsored a field trip to the Seed Savers Exchange and the Institute for Biodiversity in Decorah, Iowa. We also co-sponsored a farm tour at the Koenig and Bedtke farms with 4 other organizations on a “Whitewater Watershed Field Day” September 14.

It has been a full summer. We appreciate the skills of our new Chapter Coordinator, Sheila Nordgaard. Programs were moving full steam when she got on board and didn’t slow much all summer. Thanks, Sheila, for hanging in there. And thanks to LSP for the commitment they have shown to us. And now, how about an October 25th first frost?



Sheila Nordgaard admires some purple beans in the extensive gardens of Heritage Farm at the Seed Savers Exchange in Decorah.

Southcentral Chapter



Contact: Barb Bakken
Wells (507)874-3737

by Barb Bakken

About 35 People toured the Annual Medic test plot at the Keith and Barb Bakken farm near Alden on August 12th. The test plot is a part of a project coordinated by University of Minnesota researcher Craig Sheaffer, involving eight Minnesota farmers. Annual medic is a legume, which has nitrogen fixing properties of plants like hairy vetch, yet is an annual, and if planted in the spring will die back

by mid summer.

The medic at Bakkens farm was planted in six row strips of alternating strips of corn and beans with a row in each strip that wasn’t planted with medic. The weed control was readily apparent in the beans, where weeds were plentiful in the row with no medic. Around the state, medic inter planted with corn seemed to suppress corn growth in this wet year, but the research will go for several more years to determine if it will be a useful green manure, forage and smother crop in Minnesota.

From Bakkens the group traveled to the Lynn and Lyn Sorenson farm where we toured their new rotational grazing system. Gyles Randal, University of Minnesota Researcher, was also on hand, and after a potluck

supper, he conducted a tour of the University test plot on the Sorenson’s farm. The test plot is in its third year of a corn bean wheat rotation on ridges and some of the results are very interesting.

A tour to Seed Saver’s exchange and the Institute for Biodiversity in Decorah, Iowa was another activity organized by the South Central Chapter in cooperation with the Southeast and Cannon River Chapter.

The board has met several times in August and September to plan a fund raiser for September 22 at the Albert Lea Civic Center, featuring Story Teller Michael Cotter and country folk singer Becky Thompson.

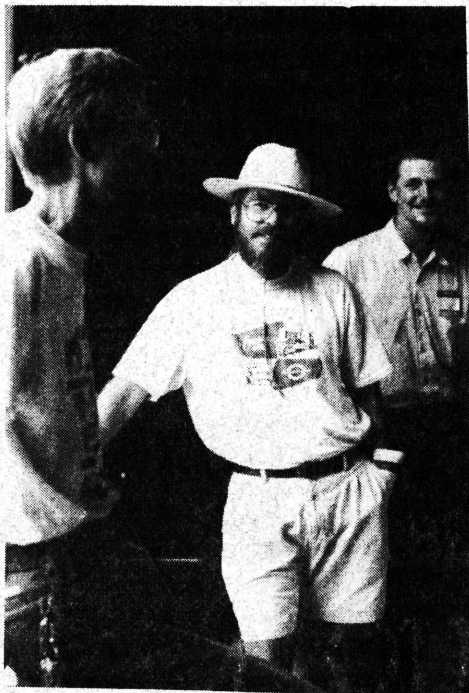
A workshop is tentatively being planned for the end of November. Call for more information on this.

Cannon River Chapter



Contact: June Redig,
LSP- Faribault
(507) 334-0014

by June Redig



Hans Peter Jorgensen, of the Institute for Agricultural Biodiversity, talks with SFA members Scott Caldwell from the Cannon River Chapter and Devin Ellinghuysen from the Southeast chapter (left to right) about the importance of preserving genetic diversity in livestock. 42 people from 3 chapters attended the tour on August 20th to the Seed Savers Exchange and the Institute for Ag Biodiversity, both located in Decorah.

The Cannon River Area SFA has grown both in numbers and strength during 1993. We currently have 130 members, a dynamic and motivated board of directors, a season of successful field days behind us (despite the uncooperative weather this summer), and increasing community recognition. The focus of the board has been on reaching out to increase numbers and strength of the chapter.

In addition to producing a directory (due out by the end of the year) to further networking opportunities for members, we have started sending out a monthly update of SFA news and events. The board has enjoyed the benefits of participation in the SFA - new ideas and support in trying them, thoughtful discussions, shared resources, and camaraderie - and thought this could be a way to extend these benefits to all the members of the chapter.

Summer events included field days at Mary Doerr's Dancing Winds Farm near Kenyon, which includes a goat dairy and farmstead cheese plant; Lyle & Nancy Gunderson's small grass/beef farm, Dennis & Sue Rabe's and Ralph & Gerrie Lentz' grass based farms; a trip to the Seed Saver's Exchange and the

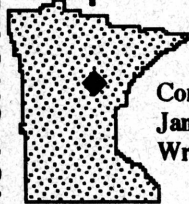
Institute for Agricultural Biodiversity in Decorah, Iowa with the Southeast and South Central Chapters; Steve Schwenn & Nan Hiers' Earthen Path farm, which features several forms of renewable energy use and organic produce; a summer picnic for board members at Gary and Maureen Vosejka's, several 'Women In Sustainable Agriculture' meetings, and a farm visit by 16 students from Mexico through the Science Museum.

Needless to say, there was something for everyone in our diverse chapter. Some possibilities for winter events include workshops on marketing, alternatives for hogs, small enterprise opportunities, house meetings on grazing or other topics, and the annual meeting in February. Stay tuned for more information!



A hog family at the Rabe farm watches the visitors to their farrowing pasture on Sept 2nd. 45 people attended.

Northeast Chapter



Contact:
Jane Fischer Merritt
Wrenshall (218)384-3356

by Ken Peterson, Tamarack

In July we sent out a survey in our quarterly Extension Service newsletter for anyone in Northeast Minnesota interested in locally produced food. The purpose of the survey was to learn about the needs of both consumers and producers.

RESULTS OF SURVEY OF LOCAL PRODUCERS & CONSUMERS

What we found out was that many consumers pick their own berries and fruits. Sixty percent of the consumers stated a preference for organically grown food. Fresh vegetables and fruit consumers are interested in include: (no particular order) berries, apples, herbs, greens, peas, beans, potatoes tomatoes, lettuce, corn, zucchini, cucumbers, carrots, cherries, squash, onions, rutabaga, bananas, brocolli, beets, and cabbage. Eighty percent of consumers also indicated a preference for chemically free meats

(chicken, turkey, beef, and lamb, etc.) while 73% indicated a preference for locally grown produce at the grocery market. Ideas on extending the season include community greenhouses and hydroponic farming. The two producers who answered the survey raise corn, soybeans, rye, beets and beans. They stated a need for assistance with marketing and advertising.

We are still getting responses back but wanted to relate what we have learned to date. If anyone has more feedback or suggestions, please call Ken or Cindy at 384-3511.

Chapter

Central



Contact: Carol Ekarius,
Verndale (218)445-5494

By Ken Woodard

The highlight of the summer for our chapter was a field day held on Saturday, July 24. With about sixty people in attendance we started the day at the farm of Ray and Darlene Eiswald, near Bertha. Ray explained their cropping practices and conducted a tour. The Eiswalds have been crop farming for nearly twenty years using organic practices, and few purchased inputs. Ray grows quite a diversified

rotation of predominantly small grains and legumes, and is unquestionably one of the foremost authorities on organic farming practices in this area. He depends on cover crops and cultivation to supply fertility and control weeds. The Eiswalds direct market most of their grains to other farmers in the area, either for feed or for seed. This has helped sustain their operation, and get a premium for the crop. Ray expressed concern with the quality of their fields this year-rain had drastically interfered with his ability to cultivate. In spite of this, the wheat stand looked good. Darlene served the group lunch, prepared with their own organic beef. During the lunch break there was a group discussion on Coping with Adverse Weather. Todd County

Extension Agent Leroy Williams and area farmers Jim Sarff and Stephen Hege led the discussion. Williams cautioned those in attendance to the dangers of mycotoxins in hay from a wet summer like this one, which include reduced milk production, breeding problems, and even death.

The group reconvened in the afternoon at the farm of Ken Woodard and Carol Ekarius by Verndale. Ken and Carol operate a grass-based, seasonal dairy. The group looked at the flat parlor milking area in the renovated barn, which allowed the farm to go Grade A at minimal cost. The group then looked at calves-all born in May and June-raised on grass from three days old.

The group watched the dairy herd strip grazing a hay field. Through managed grazing, milk production is maintained at over 50 lbs/day/cow, with only 7.5 lbs of grain fed (all purchased). Feed costs in the grazing season (running well into November) are less than a dollar per cwt. The cows are dried off in January, giving Ken and Carol time to take a vacation.

Another field day was held the 14th of September at the Joe, Shirley, and Tom Molitor farm near St. Cloud. Molitors have been grazing their 120 young stock and dry cows for five years, and plan to get their milk cows grazing eventually.

Molitors showed the "tools" they have found useful through the years. Amongst the fence insulators and watering systems, the star of the show was Liz, their border collie, who by command went out and retrieved the cows from over a quarter mile away.

"The neighbor kept thinking I had a girlfriend hidden out in the woods," Joe said, "Because she would always hear me talking to and calling for Liz."

"We straightened that out as soon as we heard it," said Shirley.

Despite the cold weather and misty rain, over 60 people stayed to examine paddocks, water system, and the different pasture species Molitors had been trying. Grazing has improved their pastures and eliminated many of the thistles.

FARMER'S CORNER *(Continued from Page one)*

laughed and told me that one fellow asked if they needed help getting their cows in! Other than that, it has mostly been curiosity.

One of the Koenens' new pastures is planted with different clovers, canary, and brome grasses. Most grasses are cool weather grasses and grow faster in April, May, and June, while they grow slower in July and August, the hot months. Recuperation time between grazing will vary with the weather and pasture species. Well managed grazing systems reach full productivity after 5 years.

The Koenens currently have long, narrow plots but hope to work into more square plots so the cows won't trample the forage as much. They tried letting the animals graze on one half of the 1/4 mile long (2-3 acre) pasture for the first day and then the whole plot the second day to decrease trampling; it seemed to work okay.

Within this short time there has been significant differences in the way of life for the Koenens. Controlled grazing is less work, plus the work that is done is much more pleasant, like moving fence vs. cleaning the barn. Instead of cleaning the barn and hauling manure once a day, they now haul 2 - 3 times a week because the cows are only in the barn at milking

time. Feed handling has been cut tremendously, too.

The Koenens expect costs to decrease by switching to controlled grazing, because the harvest cost is gone. They anticipate some fertilizer cost initially, but that and the herbicide costs will be gone once the pastures are established.

The Koenen family is committing themselves to at least two years with this process and are excited and willing to try strategies that have worked for other farmers. Best of luck Koenens!

Author's Note: Hi! My name is Tonia Kittelson and I'm a nineteen year old from rural Milan, MN. I worked as an intern this summer with the Western chapter of the SFA.

My parents are Kenneth and Janet Kittelson and I have two brothers, Guy, who is 23, and Wade who is 20. We raise crops with my cousin Larry Kittelson. I will be a sophomore at the University of Minnesota, St. Paul campus this fall, majoring in Environmental Studies.

Thank you for the opportunity to be involved with this organization. It's a great experience which I will benefit from - always!

Western Chapter

Contact: Audrey Arner
LSP - Montevideo
(612) 269-2105

by Kurt Arner

On July 16 Craig and Joanie Murphy of Morris hosted a field day entitled "Making the Transition to Certified Organic Production." The Murphys have farmed 270 acres organically since 1979. This year they

began managing the 3-year transition of 195 additional acres to meet or exceed organic certification standards, as well as using reduced tillage methods. There was an opportunity to tour the fields and then Craig spoke on why a certified organic, reduced tillage project was needed. Glen Borgerding, a crop consultant from Freeport, addressed cropping history. And Dan Perkins, of the Adult Farm Management Program in Morris, presented an economic history of yields and goals. Co-sponsors of the event were the MN Dept. of Ag., Energy & Sustainable Ag Program, S.F.A. of Western MN., and the U of

MN Extension. The same agencies co-sponsored "Outdoor Hog Production," north of Clara City on August 21. Jim, LeeAnn, and Josh VanDerPol have reduced their investment and improved the health of their herd by making the transition from confinement to pasture raising hogs. Ext. Livestock Specialist, Rich Fisher, spoke on the results of forage testing and evaluated the body condition of the VanDerPols' hogs. Other chapter events included, "Legume Trials for Fertility and Cover Crops" on Sept. 16 at the farm of Carmen and Sally Fernholz, just east of Madison, and on Sept. 17 we had a tour: "Revisit to Compare Planting, Fertility and Weed Control in Soybeans" at the farm of David Michaelson, east of Dawson.

The Graziers Circle is a group of area farmers interested in controlled grazing and earlier this summer cooperatively purchased \$15,000 of fencing supplies. Intensively managed grazing practices are being applied by a rapidly increasing number of farmers throughout the area. The group offers an opportunity for grass farmers to exchange information and ideas that are relatively new (or lost) to American agriculture. For more information on participating with this group, call Land Stewardship Project office in Montevideo (612) 269-2105.



Richard Handeen, John Sluss (both from Western chapter) and Brian Schultz (South Central chapter) enjoy the sunny day on the prairie at the summer state SFA board meeting on the Sluss farm.

NEW MEMBERSHIP / RENEWAL FORM cut-out and send to appropriate chapter(s) If renewing, check mailing label and note any corrections. Thank you!

Western \$10 basic (Call about special membership premiums)

SFA, 103 West Nichols
Montevideo, MN 56265

Cannon River \$10
SFA, 328 Central Ave, Suite 5
Faribault, MN 55021

Northeast \$10
Cindy Darwin
PO Box 307 - Civic Center
Carlton, MN 55718

Southeast \$15
SFA, P.O. Box 53
Lewiston, MN 55952

Southcentral \$15
Barb Bakken
RR#2 Box 88
Alden, MN 56007

Central \$8 individual, \$10 family
Carol Ekarius,
R.R.1, Box 65
Verndale, MN 56481.

New Member Information

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

County _____

Tax deductible Contribution \$100 _____ \$50 _____ \$25 _____ other \$ _____

Classified Ads

Guidelines are: Farmer generated ads only - no commercial ads. 40 words or less. One free ad per farmer member each year. Additional ads (or non-member ads) \$10, payable to "SFA." Include NAME AND CHAPTER. Send Ads for the Winter issue by November 30 to: SFA Cornerpost Editor, 18773 160th Ave, Milaca, MN 56353. Look for the Winter *Cornerpost* by January 1st.

The Redeemer - Land Stewardship Community Garden in Winona needs a reliable pick-up truck. Anyone interested in selling or donating a truck as a tax deductible contribution, please contact Doug Nopar at (507) 452-2403. [Please note, in the last issue, the phone number was misprinted.]

Wanted: organic clear hilum and dark hilum soybeans. Any organic certification considered. If you feel you may qualify as organic, talk with us. Also interested in other organic commodities. Any quantities. LIVING FARMS: 1-800-533-5320, Lori or Jan.

Trekking in Nepal: A tour to be led by Mary Ellen Frame, March 12-27, 1994. Cost, about \$3000. For more information, call 800-657-4888, or (507) 645-7315.

Grant Proposals From Farmers Sought by MN Dept. of Ag. Sustainable Agriculture and Energy Program

Demonstration projects which will make your farm more sustainable, and which can be emulated by other farmers in Minnesota, may qualify for grant funding by the MN Dept. of Agriculture's Sustainable Agriculture and Energy Program. A maximum of \$10,000 is available for three year projects. Deadlines for preproposals have been extended, but call now for an application, or to discuss your project with a staff person. Preproposals give farmers the opportunity to get feedback on the viability of your project.

Final proposals must be postmarked by November 18th. Call (612)296-7673, for applications and information. Send applications to: Energy and Sustainable Ag. Program, MDA., 90 West Plato Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55107.

Opportunities for On-Farm Research

SFA members in the past and present have been involved in on-farm research to help them make decisions about implementing practices on their own farms. Potential opportunities exist for members to be involved in some organized research efforts statewide and locally. Some opportunities would be coordinated by University of MN researchers, others could be coordinated by the SFA:

- *Narrow Strip Cropping - Ridge Till Systems
- *Annual Medics in Cropping Systems
- *Economic Analysis of Grazing Operations
- *Comparisons of Cultural Weed Control Methods
- *Identifying Barriers to the Adoption of Sustainable Agricultural Systems

Interested in doing on-farm research in any of these topics, or in other areas? Contact Tammy Keith-Wellstone by phone (612) 983-2177, or mail: SFA 18773 160th Ave, Milaca, MN 56353.

"Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms, and grass will grow in the streets of every city. . ."

William Jennings Bryan

The Sustainable Farming Association (SFA) of Minnesota is a farmer-run educational organization dedicated to facilitating farmer-to-farmer information sharing on ecologically and economically sound farming practices. The SFA now has six chapters throughout Minnesota. To learn more about a chapter in your area, call Tammy Keith-Wellstone at (612) 983-2177.

Sustainable Farming Association
of Southeast Minnesota
P.O. Box 53
Lewiston, MN 55952

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 13
Lewiston, MN 55952

Audrey Arner
Coordinator
Sustainable Farming Assoc. of W Minn.
103 W Nichols
Montevideo, MN 56265