

Post

Spring 1993

Number 3

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

CORNER

FARMER'S CORNER



Ray and Darlene Eiswald, Bertha, MN

Ray Eiswald was born and raised a farmer. He has known no other life, but he's definitely chosen farming. He loves the land, watching his crops grow, and harvesting the fruits of his labor in the fall.

Ray married Darlene in 1956, and began farming the home place: 200 acres of slightly rolling heavy loam and 40 acres of woods and low pasture ground. His father had been one of the first 'sprayers' in the county, not only using the new miracle chemicals on his own farm, but also spraying on the neighbors' farms for them. Ray continued in the same vein, whatever the newest chemical was, he was using it.

By 1975 things were going badly. Ray's father was fighting leukemia. Everyone was sure it was the chemicals, which during the years when he sprayed so heavily would destroy his sense of smell and his sense of taste for at least six weeks. And Ray's dairy herd was suffering from a number of health problems: abortions, birth abnormalities, retained placentas. The vet was always out.

Ray and Darlene were about ready to throw in the towel, when Ray went to a meeting sponsored by the Wonder Life Company. Wonder Life sold products to help farmers farm organically. At the meeting one of the company representatives said something that struck Ray; "The health of your cattle lies in the soil." Ray listened to discussions about which in turn create healthy livestock. It made sense.

The transition was rough. He began rotating crops, and cultivating to fight weeds. The first year the weed inspector was out regularly, and Ray sprayed a few times. But by the third year, Ray and Darlene really began to see some major improvements. Their veterinarian asked if they were using someone else, because they never called him anymore.

"A lot of farmers don't realize," Ray said, "if their soil is dead, they are not getting what's naturally there out of it. Adding chemicals just adds expense."

He acknowledges, that during the transition farmers may need to purchase products to help re-balance their soil. But he believes that once through the transition, the farm can supply

(Continued on page seven)

Through the weeks of deep snow
we walked above the ground
on fallen sky, as though we did
not come of root and leaf, as though
we had only air and weather
for our difficult home.

But now
as March warms, and the rivulets
run like birdsong on the slopes,
and the branches of light sing in the hills,
slowly we return to earth.

WENDELL BERRY

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SFA SUMMER FARM VISITS & EVENTS

Use this page as a handy reference to all SFA sponsored events coming up. Contact each chapter for more details.

- Tuesday, June 15 Flame weeding at George Yokiell Farm followed by a tour of a cover crop test plot using an annual medic at the Keith Bakken farm, sponsored by SouthCentral.
- Thursday, June 17
1 pm Comparing on-farm vs. off-farm inputs & Drilled vs. rowed soybeans, sponsored by Western. David Michaelson, Dawson (612) 769-4083
- Wednesday, June 23
10:30 -3:00 Annual Medics, Solar calf building, Rotational grazing,, Reduced herbicide use Sponsored by Southeast at Dale and Carmen Pangrac's, Lewiston.
- Thursday
June 24
3:00-6:30
6:30-9:30 LSP Farm Bus Tour & Hog Roast, cosponsored by Cannon River Area SFA, MDA, and Goodhue & Rice SWCD's. See several types of tillage and rotational grazing on 3 Nerstrand area farms, and stay for a hog roast and entertainment by Michael Cotter, Austin area farmer and storyteller. Call 507-334-0014 for more information.
- Tuesday July 13 Lyn & Lynn Sorenson's University of MN, Waseca, test plot tour, followed by a workshop with Jim Tjepkama on how to save your own seeds, sponsored by South Central.
- Sunday, July 25
12:30- 4:00 Mary Doerr's Dancing Winds Farm. See this unique goat dairy and farmstead cheese plant. Potluck dinner and farm tour. Bring your kids to see hers! Sponsored by Cannon River Area.
- Friday, Aug. 6 Rotational Grazing Farm Visit, Lyle & Nancy Gunderson's near Northfield. Sponsored by Cannon River Area.
- Friday, Aug 20 Bus to Decorah, IA. to tour the Seed Savers Exchange and the Institute for Biodiversity, which features minor breeds of livestock. Preregistration is required. Sponsored by South Central, South East and Cannon River Area Chapters.
- Saturday, Aug. 21 Expanding hogs onto pasture, Jim and LeeAnn VanDerPol, Clara City. Sponsored by Western.
- Wednesday, Aug. 25
10:30 - 12:00 Sponsored by Southeast
12:30 - 3:00 Rotational Grazing at Ralph Stelling's (Millville)
Manure storage system, Weed control update at Duane Hager's (Kellogg)
- Thursday, Sept. 16
1 pm Legume trials for fertility and cover crops, sponsored by Western.
Carmen and Sally Fernholz
- Friday, Sept 17
1 pm Comparing on-farm vs. off-farm inputs & Drilled vs. rowed Soybeans, sponsored by Western.
David Michaelson, Dawson (612) 769-4083

Contact the Cannon River area chapter about the following farm visits. . . Steve Schwenn and the Full Circle Co-op in August or September. . . Dennis Rabe's pasture farrowing in September.

GOOD NEWS!! The Cornerpost will now include ads. Guidelines follow:

Farmer generated ads only - no commercial ads.

One free ad per farmer member each year.

Additional ads (or non-member ads) \$10.

40 words or less, including NAME AND CHAPTER.

Donations accepted for free ads.

Send Ads for the Summer issue by July 9 to:

SFA Cornerpost Editor, 328 Central Ave., # 5, Faribault, MN 55021. Look for the Summer Cornerpost around Aug. 1.

The Redeemer - Land Stewardship Community Garden in Winona (SE) 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) 452-2304.

ATTN: Any graziers or want-to-be-graziers in Central MN (east or west), we are looking to form one or more regional grazing groups for sharing ideas and for periodic pasture walks at each others' farms. Call Tammy Keith-Wellstone, Milaca, (612)983-2177.

MUSINGS . . .

by Jim VanDerPol, Clara City, MN

Our combine broke down last fall, as elderly machines are apt to do, and since it happened late and a part needed to be ordered, we found ourselves with a four day wait. Partly out of a need for distraction, I got together a little of the best kind of help (family) and we built some fence. We used materials we had on hand, a little of the new portable stuff on reels and a good bit of old farm store wire and insulators. We enclosed about five acres of cornstalk residue, a small drowned out spot and a bit of diverted acres that our sheep had been grazing since early September. The chore took three of us about three hours. The company was enjoyable and while the work was difficult enough, it was certainly no worse than repairing a combine.

Eighteen bred sows, two boars and the flock of thirty ewes were turned into this enclosure on October 24. On November 1 and 2, it snowed about eight inches. Just before Thanksgiving, on about November 24, I sorted the hogs, placed them in drylot and began feeding them again. The sheep went to winter pasture. The sows farrowed at the end of December. Their litters were satisfactory by farm standards for size and health.

A sow costs us about .25/day to feed during gestation. Boars get the same ration. The keeping charge for a dry ewe in drylot is about .10/day. Feed savings calculated from these numbers for a period of 30 days is \$240. If we could ignore the value of the grazed down set-side acres, we could say that the project netted \$48 dollars extra for each of those five acres of corn, less fencing (on hand and reusable) and labor. The Central Minnesota Farm Business Management program shows an average return to labor and management for corn in recent years of about \$35/acre as a comparison.

I have, in thinking about this, found it difficult to say why it pleases me so much. The \$48/acre

return to livestock is extra, above whatever was made on the crop, assuming anything was, and unexpected income is always a pleasure. The livestock weren't prone to breakdown as the machine was. Moreover, the idea of livestock foraging is something that I wouldn't or couldn't consider until I had given up the idea that corn residue needs to be plowed every year. I had some satisfaction therefore, when I saw the animals out helping themselves while we worked on the rest of the corn.

But it's the simplicity of it that impresses me. After conventional agriculture had its go for the year the profit on those acres was turned by a four footed beast that wanted to eat! We didn't haul, dry, grind, mix, or deliver that feed. We didn't haul the manure either, that was returned just where it belonged. Nobody defended an oil well to produce that little bit of pork and lamb.

We learned some things that I believe will be helpful on this farm in the future. Sows don't mind snow. They waded out there just before dawn each morning and spent the day. Sheep and hogs mix easily, given enough room. They just ignore each other. The problem would be in feeding grain to the mixed group; this difficulty we did not have as we used the opportunity to flush the sheep for breeding. The timing was right.

The objections to this are easy to figure. Not every year, it will be said, is there such a field loss on corn. True enough; it happens about once in five years somewhere on this farm. I am interested to see what sows would do with 'ordinary' field loss.

Someone will point out that a living cannot be made on several hundred extra dollars on five acres. To this I can only say that a living cannot be made by ignoring it either.



STATE SFA NEWS

From Tammy Keith-Wellstone

My family and I moved during Southeast MN's April's blizzards, driving from the snow into Central MN's sunny skies. I am now unpacking my office, which is located in our farmhouse, near Milaca. We will miss SFA members in the Southeast. But we are looking forward to meeting more Central chapter members and building new support networks. Reach me at:

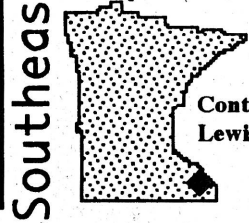
Tammy Keith Wellstone 612-983-2177
State SFA Coordinator
18773 160th Ave.
Milaca, MN 56353

The State SFA Annual Meeting on March 13th in St. Cloud attracted 130 members and interested farmers from across the state. Michael Cotter, story teller and farmer from Austin, MN set the tone. He presented a colorful oral picture of farm life, full of challenges, yet enriched by the values, creative approaches, and individuality which farming embodies. These elements help build sustainable farming systems, which we heard about the rest of the day. A thank you goes to the state board for organizing such an enjoyable event. **The State board members are listed below:**
Ralph Lentz- State Chair (Southeast)
Carol Ekarius - Vice Chair (Central)
Ken Peterson - Secretary (Northeast)
Brian Schultz - Treasurer (South Central)
Dwight Ault (South Central)
Ray Eiswald (Central)
Carol Thornton (Southeast)
Wes Moechnig (Southeast)
Dan Webster (Northeast)
Linda Noble (Cannon River Area)
Ron Keller (Cannon River Area)
John Sluss (Western)
Carmen Fernholz (Western)
The next board meeting is July 19-20 in Sudan, MN at the Sluss farm.



Brian and Carol Schultz and their daughters, from Wells, enjoy the social at the State SFA Annual Meeting.

Southeast Chapter News



Contact: Ray Radatz
Lewiston (507) 523-3536

It has often been heard of our chapter members, "What would we do without Tammy?" Now we will have an answer to our question. We bid a fond farewell to Tammy, David and Cari as they headed north to a new farming operation and— for Tammy—new responsibilities with SFA. Now our question is: "How could we ever thank Tammy enough for the pioneering work she accomplished here?"

We are grateful, however, to have a person with SFA experience and a strong vision for our organization to take over as Chapter Coordinator. Sheila Nordgaard farms near

Lewiston. She and her husband Glen have been involved in dairy in the past and are now raising beef cattle. Three of her five children live at home. Welcome, Sheila!

Board member Kim Neumann organized a "Young Farmer Meeting" with the purpose of drawing area ag teachers, members of our board, and our county extension agent into a conversation about the training students receive at the secondary level. It was agreed that a more positive image of the farmer and of farming are needed. The teachers related some of their difficulties related to dwindling budgets and enrollments. Some of them had little notion of what "sustainable farming" was about. The teachers will be placed on our mailing list. Other farming organizations will also be approached to see if they want to work with us on this matter of getting young people back into farming.

Two Field Days are set for this summer:

Wednesday, June 23, 10:30 - 3:00 at Dale and Carmen Pangrac's (Lewiston)

Topics: Annual Medics
Solar calf building
Rotational grazing
Reduced herbicide use

Wednesday, August 25, 10:30 - 12:00 at Ralph Stelling's (Millville)

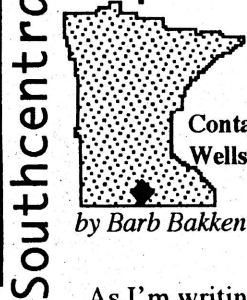
Topic: Rotational Grazing

12:30 - 3:00 at Duane Hager's (Kellogg)

Topics: Manure storage system
Weed control update

In closing, we've discussed having animal behaviorist Bud Williams as a workshop leader. At our last meeting we heard a testimony to his ability in controlling and separating animals with ease. LaVerne Nelson's response was: "If having him here saves one marriage, it'll be worth it."

Southcentral Chapter News



Contact: Barb Bakken
Wells (507)874-3737

by Barb Bakken

As I'm writing this rain continues to plague farmers and concern over delayed planting is mounting.

We have had some very interesting workshops already this year. In January we co-sponsored an alternative low cost hog workshop which was attended by about 45 people and featured Mark Honeyman from U of Iowa Extension.

Biological farming was the topic of another workshop in January which featured Gary Zimmer and drew about 27 people.

Our annual meeting in February was probably the coldest day of the year, however, the turnout was good. Featured speaker Paul Gruchow expounded on issues agriculture needs to address in order to be productive,

economically viable, and socially just. He pointed out the relationship between agriculture and the viability of the communities it supports and which support agriculture.

Welcome to new board members Lyn and Lynn Sorenson. Thanks to outgoing board members Dwight and Becky Ault for all their work on the board. Since Dwight is on the State Board he will still meet with our chapter board to report back from State Board meetings.

Newly elected officers in the South Central Chapter are: Terry Cunningham; President, Lois & Arvid Jovaag; Vice Presidents, Mary Hubbard; Secretary, Lafe Ioerger; Treasurer, Jim Tjepkama; Vice Treasurer, Lyn & Lynn Sorenson, Historians.

Our Summer Lineup looks like this. On June 15th we'll see flame weeding at George Yokiell's Farm followed by a tour of a cover crop test

plot using an annual medic at the Keith Bakken farm.

On Tuesday July 13th we will tour Lyn & Lynn Sorenson's University of MN, Waseca, test plot and have a workshop with Jim Tjepkama on how to save your own seeds.

On Aug 20th the South Central, South East and Cannon River Area Chapters will take a bus to Decorah, IA. to tour the Seed Savers Exchange and the Institute for Biodiversity, which features minor breeds of livestock. Preregistration is required.

Also planned for sometime this summer is a field day at Rolling Green farm on rotational grazing and nitro alfalfa.

If you haven't received your 1993 membership renewal letter yet, it's on its way. Please fill out the questionnaires and return them with your membership dues.

Thanks to all who have attended our workshops and meetings and have helped to make our South Central Chapter a success. Also thank you to all who have sent in their membership dues. Wishing you all a speedy planting!



Central Chapter News

Central



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

by Carol Ekarius

Our Chapter held its Second Annual Meeting and Workshop on Saturday, February 27. The meeting was scheduled to take place at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Long Prairie, but had to be moved at the last minute, due to a funeral. The Long Prairie School technical food program students were preparing the lunch for us anyway, so with their intervention we were able to move our meeting to the school. This definitely caused a little bit of confusion, but the day came off quite well in spite of the crisis.

About 60 people attended the session. They heard from Ken Tschumper, a La Crescent dairy farmer

from the South East Chapter. Ken farms the land homesteaded by his grandfather, using many of the same techniques. He runs a profitable, low cost dairy, using a controlled grazing system for his herd of Brown Swiss cattle.

Dr. Delvin Salathe, a local veterinarian, spoke about Mixing Your Own Dairy Rations to Improve Your Bottom Line. He stressed the importance of fiber for rumen health, and said that most farmers worry about protein and energy, but forget fiber. Proper rumination depends on adequate fiber. He also told farmers to look at the feeds they grow themselves, like forage crops, and to then purchase feeds that will complement and fill in what their on farm feeds lack.

Doug Gunnink, a farmer and employee of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, who is primarily involved with sustainable practices and Holistic Resource Management, talked to the group about Manure Manage-

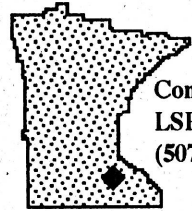
ment in a Sustainable Farming System. Doug stressed the importance of proper manure handling and application, and the need to credit manure nutrients when calculating fertilizer needs.

During the business meeting, the group elected Stephen Hege of Long Prairie to fill a vacancy on the Board of Directors left by the resignation of Jim Pratt. Other members reelected to their seats were Marty Palmersheim of Sartell and Jim Sarff of Eagle Bend.

We are hoping to sponsor some field days and events this summer. If any members have suggestions of appropriate topics, or suggestions for farms they think we should visit (don't be shy, volunteer your own place if you are doing something of interest,) please let us know. And if you know someone who might be interested in joining, please give us their name and we'll send a free copy of the Cornerpost.

Cannon River Chapter News

Cannon River



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

by Mary Doerr

Sustainable Women Meet Again!

On Sunday, May 2nd about a dozen women harmonically re-converged at Dancing Winds Cheese Farm of Kenyon for a farm tour, potluck, and discussion. The gathering was hosted by Mary Doerr and her kids. The group first met on April 4th at Mary Ellen Frame's place near Northfield.

We officially chose our fledgling group's new name: Women In Sustainable Agriculture (WISA). Thanks to a very soggy pasture and a very stuck car, the group bonded quickly in an effort to get the car out of the mud. We were successful!

A farm tour introduced the W.I.S.A. group to this dairy goat operation in business since 1987. All

enjoyed meeting the "class of '93" kids. This year's theme for doe kids names' is "Women in Politics" so we have Hillary Rodham Clinton as our "first lady" as well as Geraldine Ferraro, Diane Feinstein, Marian Edelman, and Carol Mosley Braun. A powerfully lively group indeed! The milking facilities and on-farm goat cheese plant were also toured.

Appetites having been worked up, we adjourned to the house and sat around the roaring fire in the fireplace (on May 2nd!) to eat an array of delicious food and discuss our vision of this group, frequency of meeting, feasibility of helping one another both physically w/group projects on each others farms and emotionally w/ support, encouragement, network equipment, sharing marketing ideas, tapping useful resources.

We each spoke a little about ourselves: where we were coming from and our farming ideas, hopes, and the issues we face. There were creative ideas and plenty of support.

We are meeting again on June 13th at Laurie Haugen-Eitzman's near Nerstrand for another potluck, and to work on setting goals.

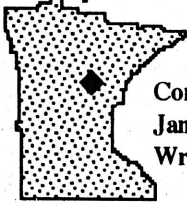
We know some of your hopes and dreams but want you to visualize

where you want to go and what tangible steps you can take to get there. Mary Hanks and June Redig will share some helpful ideas to give us guidance. W.I.S.A. seems successfully launched and on her way! See you on the 13th.

Although our annual meeting was on the first day of Spring, it seems like at least a season has passed since then. Our speakers, Wes Moechnig and Charis Stenberg, offered plenty of food for thought about matters both practical and philosophical. In addition, a panel discussion on "Who Will Control Your Land?" with farmers, environmentalists, and regulators, served to begin discussion on a topic important to us all. The day also offered a chance for members to discuss what makes (or would make) the SFA effective. Some of our ideas follow: Membership Directory, Information network, Apprenticeship program- support/nurture young farmers, Remain grassroots, Neighbor to neighbor meetings, Get the message out that we have the tools to win!!

Look for our Summer farm visits and events in the Calendar on page 2. Wishing you all sun and/or rain and good growing!

Northeast Chapter News



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

by Ken Peterson, Tamarack

Our Farm Tour this summer will be held at the Mark & Terri Thell home in Wrenshall Sunday, August 1, beginning with a potluck dinner at 12:30 P.M.. Hamburgers, buns, milk and coffee will be furnished. Bring your favorite salad, hot dish or dessert. The Thell family has planned games for the future gardeners and farmers (children) that are there.

Mark says they have increased the stocking rate of their beef herd by using rotational grazing. He will also show us test forage plots and garden plots using various organic fertilizers.

The second stop of our tour will be at John and Jane Fisher-Merritt's. They furnish vegetables to about 40 subscription families. Green peppers and tomatoes are grown in greenhouses and are available until late October. They are practicing rotational grazing with their chickens using moveable fences. In addition, they contract with the City of Carlton to

take all of the leaves and grass clippings which they compost for their own farm use. See you at the tour — mark this date on your calendar!

The NE MN Chapter of the Sustainable Farming Association held a joint meeting on Thursday, April 15, 1993, with the following: MN Extension Service: Carlton County, Soil Conservation Service, and the Soil and Water Conservation District. Our Chapter & Extension invited Doug Gunnick, MN Dept. of Agriculture, Energy & Sustainable Agriculture, and Mike Hartmann, dairy and crop farmer from Gibbon, who farms organically, practices intensive rotational grazing, composts manure. These two shared a discussion on the "Economics of Manure Handling" which included Expense & environmental concerns about liquid manure systems; Practicality and expense of composting on a large scale; Results shown on a organic composting system; Items of comparison between liquid manure & composting systems.

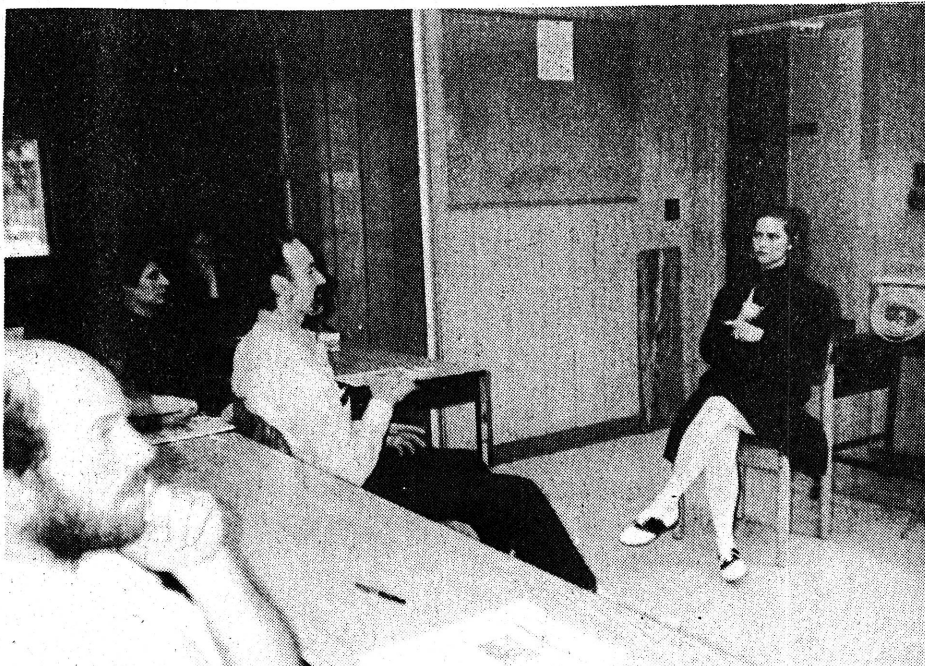
Experience has shown these are some advantages of composting: A "slow release" nitrogen is formed in process; Compost is a soil conditioner and can't be over applied; Temperatures during composting tend to break up weed cycles; Less equipment and operative overhead; Better soil health;

and 1992 yield examples on compost system: oats-114 bushels/acre; barley-104 bushels/acre; corn-127 bushels/acre.

Some drawbacks of changing to composting systems include: Time to learn the system and time to run process; Space needed for operations (windrows); Relative price and availability of a good high volume windrow turner.

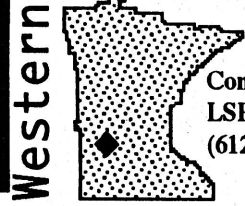
Minnesota Power and NRRI were represented in the audience and were interested in composting systems using industrial wastes. The Soil & Water Conservation persons contributing were Jeff Stewart and Ron Hanson. They explained their agency's responsibilities in Agricultural waste and control management, the types of control systems in NE MN, the advantages and disadvantages of the systems they experience and the assistance available for installation of system according to MPCA.

After a buffet style lunch, the group separated into two groups. One group continued with questions and answers on the economics and practicality of manure handling with the presenters already noted. The second session was led by two of our local chapter's more successful organic producers of garden and small animals, John Fisher-Merritt and Joel Rosen. They did a fine job explaining: Use of compost - greenhouse and garden; Building a good potting soil; Use of rotation with vegetables; Finding and using other organic plant food material; Green manure and other plowdowns; Herbs for fun and profit (Plus other items).



An SFA member participates in the Northeast Chapter annual meeting through sign language.

Chapter News



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

Western Chapter Sponsors Grazing Study Circle

The Grazing Study Circle is a mix of established, new and wanna-be graziers as well as ag professionals. Interests range in grazing as a tool for improving lifestyles and farm numbers, conserving energy and upgrading water quality. There is a high interest level in small-group, farmer-to-farmer information sharing, accompanied by (for example) extension educators.

The group agreed to collaborate in any Sustainable Farming Association-sponsored field days on grazing this summer. Participants will be invited to the experiment station at Morris to offer input and ask the kinds of questions that may help determine the dairy research agenda, which (as Dr. Johnson indicated) is being modified to better meet the needs of the moderate-sized producer.

Participants had the following comments:

"What we're really talking about here is quality of life." — Jim Johnson, Sacred Heart area farmer.

"We need to be looking at our energy use in the long run in our farming systems and be moving toward a more solar-powered agriculture, increasing our profit per acre."

— Ed Radermacher, Bellingham area farmer.

"I'm looking to identify the issues that experiment station research can help address: How can we lengthen the grazing season here? How can we manage for quality? Is seasonal dairying something for West Central Minnesota farmers to consider?"

— Dennis Johnson, dairy specialist, West Central Experiment Station, Morris

"If our goal is to develop community, it changes our tools significantly."

— Larry Olson, Granite Falls area farmer and ELCA minister.

This project is possible with support of the North Central Region's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program.

FARMER'S CORNER

(Continued from page one)

most of its own nutrients.

Ray rotates a wide variety of crops, including alfalfa, clover peas, corn, beans, wheat, oats, barley, rye and vetch. He interseeds legumes with his small grains for biomass and nitrogen. Ray's rotation gives him flexibility; "One year out of ten you might get good small grain, hay and corn-but most years something isn't going to do well. By not putting all our eggs in one basket, we always get something to feed our cattle and to sell."

In the fall, Ray is busy planting cover crops of rye and winter wheat. They hold the soil, inhibit weed germination, and provide him with an abundance of organic matter. He shoots for at least 3% organic matter in all his fields. Between cover crops and rotations, Ray has virtually no weed or pest problems.

Ray plants open-pollinated varieties, and saves his own seed. "I have seeds I've been planting for 15 years that do as good now as they did then. Farmers used to raise their own seed, and were able to maintain their independence. Now they buy certified seed that has been bred for production at the expense of other traits. It can't take up the full range of nutrients, so it runs out." He adds, "No one should be able to patent a form of life."

Ray and Darlene helped start the Central Chapter. Ray says, "People are searching for this information, and it's our job to help them learn." And Darlene adds, "I'm glad to see young people coming to our meetings. We were once considered crazy, when we started doing this, but not anymore."

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 \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ other\$ _____

OPPORTUNITIES . . .

GRANTS

AVAILABLE TO FARMERS

Farmers wanting to adopt sustainable agricultural practices may qualify for a producer grant from the North Central Region of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program.

About \$100,000 will be available in the 12-state region for grants to help producers identify and overcome barriers they face in converting from conventional to sustainable practices. Last year 25 grants were funded in the region. Projects included rotational grazing, nutrient management, biological weed control and equipment modifications. Projects must be repeatable, useful beyond one year, and not specific to only that farm. One year grants will be funded for up to \$5,000. Application deadline is July 15.

Grant application forms are available from the North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Office, 207 Agricultural Hall, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68583-0701. For more information about the program, call Steven Waller, North Central Region coordinator, at (402) 472-7081.

HELP SPREAD THE WORD

LSP is developing a list of farmers who can talk about stewardship. This list has been requested by schools, churches, and other community organizations, rural and urban.

We each have something to share, and speaking out will bring growth in stewardship of the land. Interested? Call Carol Michaelis, LSP's Volunteer Coordinator, at (507) 523-3561, or the Lewiston office (507) 523-3366.

Sustainable Ag Field Days

To hear Alan Henning or learn about backgrounding beef using rotational grazing, bees, small grains, red deer farming, low input weed control, cash crop windbreaks and much more, call the Minnesota Department of Agriculture Sustainable Agriculture & Energy Division at 612-296-1277 for their summer field day schedule.

ATTRA OFFERS ANSWERS

ATTRA, or Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas, provides a resource for farmers interested in sustainable farming practices. ATTRA is managed by the National Center for Appropriate Technology, which was incorporated in 1976, "to help communities find better ways to improve the quality of life, using skills and resources at hand."

Through a 1987 grant provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ATTRA offers cost free assistance to farmers and others interested in sustainable agricultural practices. Their goal is to promote energy and resource conserving agricultural alternatives to help farmers gain greater control over their

income and environment.

To utilize ATTRA's services, just call 1-800-346-9140. A technical staff person discusses your questions with you and then puts together a response, which is mailed out. Questions may be general in nature, or highly specific. If the question is general, a prepared Information Packet is sent out. For example, they offer Information Packets on Sustainable Dairy and Hog Production. If on the other hand, the question is more specific, the response will be more specific and will deal with your operation, your soil, your climate, etc.

Your information will arrive in two to four weeks, and may include reprinted articles, bibliographies, source lists, and names of organizations and individuals familiar with your area of interest.

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

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