

NCR-SARE PDP #ENC12-129

2013 Annual Report

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Increasing agroforestry adoption and networking in the Midwest through targeted professional development.

Summary

In conjunction with the Mid-American Agroforestry Working Group (<http://midamericanagroforestry.net>), UMCA organized its' first Agroforestry Academy in Columbia, MO from August 5-9, 2013.

Prior to the start of the August 2013 Agroforestry Academy, the Center's 2006 Agroforestry Training Manual was revised and updated. In addition, with direct funding support from a MO SARE mini-grant, the Center created a brand new Handbook for Agroforestry Planning and Design. Both of these documents are currently available for download in pdf format on the Center's website.

Pre- and post-academy surveys were administered to the 27 trainees who attended the Academy. The first two days of the Academy included workshops (comprehensive classroom presentations) on the latest science and practice in support of agroforestry practices plus information intended to assist landowners develop financial budgets for agroforestry practices and market the products they grow. Days three and four consisted of visits to practitioners' farms with established agroforestry sites along with a "hands-on case study" farm that does not yet contain agroforestry. The academy concluded with an agroforestry design exercise which summed up all the knowledge and experience received during the week. The case study design exercise (with small group presentations and follow up discussions) facilitated experience in the implementation of agroforestry design and encouraged collaborative learning community efforts. The planning process helped participants envision how agroforestry practices can be successfully integrated on a farm. Lunch and dinner also included presentations from a number of agroforestry practitioners, partner agencies and group discussions. All presentations were recorded and will be made available on the Center for Agroforestry website to reach a wider audience and to be available for later use.

Goals/Objectives/Performance Targets

The main objectives for the first year of the PDP grant were to create/update the background materials that were used in the Academy (Training Manual and Handbook), to recruit an enthusiastic group of trainees from throughout the Midwest to participate in the Academy, and organize and host the weeklong Academy.

The overall long-term goal of the NCR-SARE PDP is to help achieve on-the-ground adoption of agroforestry.

The objectives of the NCR-SARE PDP are:

- 1) To create a regional agroforestry knowledge network;
- 2) Train a core group of individuals who deal with land management issues and/or interact with farmers and landowners; and
- 3) Facilitate collaboration among researchers, extension personnel, and practitioners, diverse disciplines, departments and colleges, and different agencies and organizations.

Accomplishments

The Agroforestry “Train-the Trainer” Academy format was as follows:

Day one and Day Two (active discussion throughout)

- ✓ Classroom presentations by agroforestry experts
- ✓ Classroom presentations by farmers who are practicing agroforestry

Day Three and Day Four (active discussion throughout)

- ✓ Field visits to agroforestry practitioners’ farms and a “hands-on landowner case study” group project exercise, with field visits focused on agroforestry planning and design.

Day Four Latter Half

- ✓ Trainees (in groups) design agroforestry plans for hands-on landowner case study visited that morning.

Day Five

- ✓ Trainees present agroforestry designs to whole group for discussion and feedback.

Impacts, Outcomes

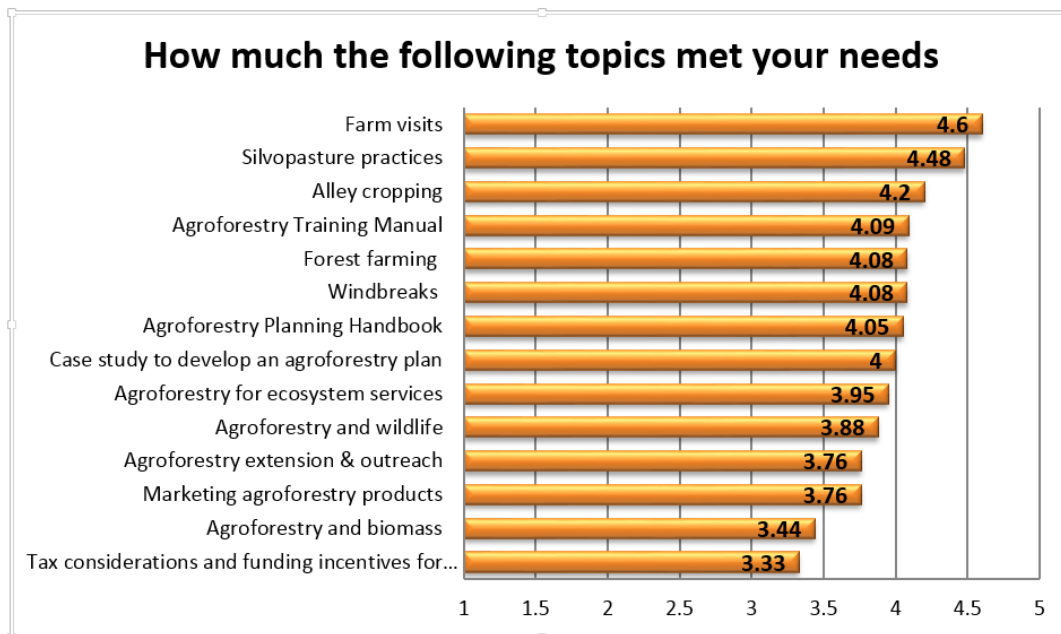
Impact was measured with pre- and post- training surveys administered to participants attending the Agroforestry Academy. The surveys were specifically designed to determine participants’ level of satisfaction with the content and organization of the event, to document participants’ gain in knowledge and obtain suggestions for future programming.

The following summary is based on the results of the 27 pre- and post-academy surveys.

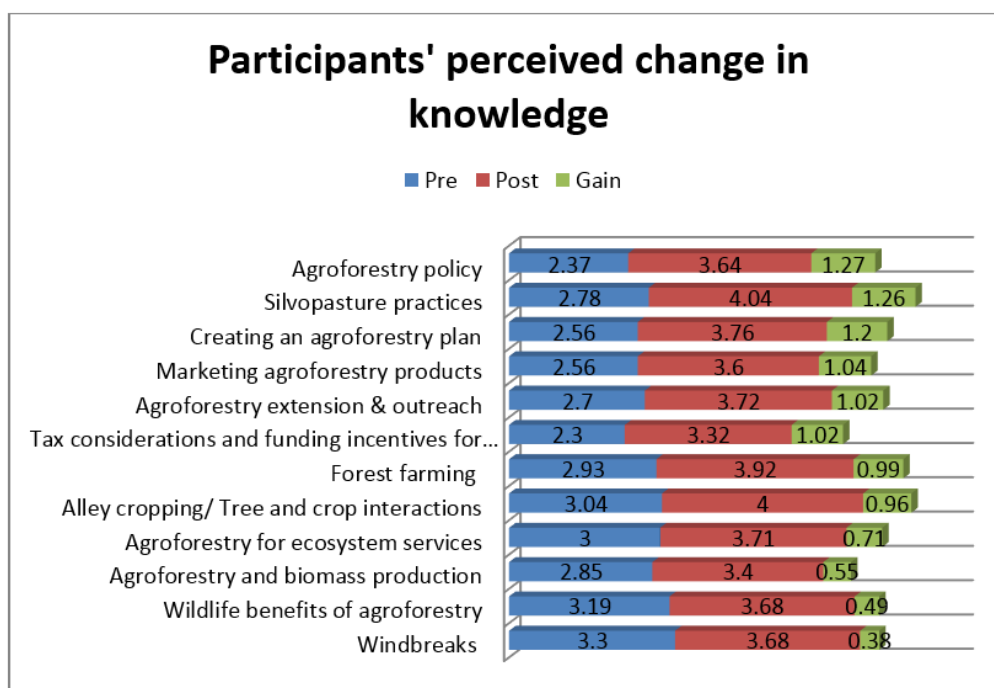
Participants were very satisfied with Academy. Overall quality was rated as excellent by 71%, and good by 29%.

- **The top rated aspects** of Academy (on a scale of 1 (unsatisfactory) to 5 (excellent)) were:

- ✓ Farm visits (4.6); Silvopasture (4.48)
- ✓ Alley cropping (4.2); Training Manual (4.09)
- ✓ Forest farming (4.08); Windbreaks (4.08)
- ✓ Handbook (4.05); Case study (4.0)



- Trainees reported substantial gains in subject matter knowledge.



- 100% indicated that they benefited from information about agroforestry practices
- 96% motivated to continue learning about agroforestry and to disseminate information about agroforestry
- 92% motivated to get their organization more involved in agroforestry
- Important benefits from academy participation included:
 - ✓ the network of participants and trainers
 - ✓ resource materials for future use

Outputs

1) Proceedings article

Gold, M.A., M.M. Cernusca and S. Jose. 2013. Creating the knowledge infrastructure to enhance landowner adoption of agroforestry through an agroforestry academy. In: Laura Poppy, L, J. Kort, B. Schroeder, T. Pollock and R. Soolanayakanahally, eds. Agroforestry – Innovations in Agriculture. Proceedings, 13th North American Agroforestry Conference. Charlottetown, PEI, Canada. p. 92-96.

2) Training Manual for Applied Agroforestry Practices – 2013 Edition

Gold, M.A., M.M. Cernusca and M.M. Hall (eds). 2013. Training Manual for Applied Agroforestry Practices – 2013 Edition. MU Center for Agroforestry. 245 p.

3) Handbook for Agroforestry Planning and Design - NEW

Gold, M.A., M.M. Cernusca and M.M. Hall (eds). 2013. Handbook for Agroforestry Planning and Design. MU Center for Agroforestry. 80 p.

Both the Training Manual and Handbook are available online on the Center for Agroforestry website at: <http://www.centerforagroforestry.org/pubs/training/index.php>

In addition to the Academy, oral presentations about the need to stimulate increased adoption of agroforestry through the training of natural resource professions via an Agroforestry Academy were given (and will be given) at four different venues in 2013. These included:

- 1) The 13th North American Agroforestry Conference (NAAC), Prince Edward Island, Canada (June 19-21, 2013);
- 2) The Society of American Foresters national convention, Charleston, SC, October 25, 2013;
- 3) The Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) in Turrialba, Costa Rica, November 6-7, 2013; and
- 4) The Green Lands Blue Waters annual meeting in Minneapolis, MN, November 20-21, 2013.

As part of the 13th NAAC, an article on the AF Academy entitled “Creating the knowledge infrastructure to enhance landowner adoption of agroforestry through an agroforestry academy” was published in the NAAC proceedings.

Plans for 2014

A second Agroforestry Academy will be based in Winona, Minnesota from July 21-25, 2014. A similar format will be used including presentations by farmer practitioners using agroforestry, visits to their farms, and a hands on design exercise. Active recruitment of the 2014 trainee class is underway. Hard copies of the 2013 Agroforestry Training Manual and Handbook for Agroforestry Planning and Design will be provided to all 2014 trainees.

Additionally, it is expected that the academy trainee “graduates” will organize their own agroforestry trainings and both Center staff, MAAWG members and National Agroforestry Center staff will help conduct these trainings.