

NCR-SARE AWARDS 2013 FARMER-RANCHER GRANTS; 3 IN MINNESOTA

For the 2013 Farmer Rancher Grant Program, NCR-SARE awarded more than \$495,000 to 45 projects ranging from \$2,219 to \$22,500. The Farmer Rancher Grant Program is a competitive grants program for farmers and ranchers who want to explore sustainable solutions to problems through on-farm research, demonstration, and education projects. Projects selected for funding in Minnesota:

Cherry Flowers of St. Paul, MN was awarded \$7,499.00 for the project, “Water Capture From High Tunnel Diversion into Irrigation System Using Renewable Energy.” This project will address water conservation by capturing the water flow from a high tunnel, and redirecting it into a drip irrigation system using a renewable energy source to increase water pressure.

Winona LaDuke of Callaway, MN was awarded \$7,500.00 for the project, “White Earth Land Recovery Project Fish Fertilizer Project.” With the project, they hope to restore soils and microbes thorough utilizing the traditional techniques of their Anishinaabe ancestors.

Christopher Patton of Minneapolis, MN was awarded \$14,980.00 for the project, “Developing Commercial Elderberry Production in Minnesota.” A group of Minnesota farmers will explore whether sufficient marketing opportunity exists to support widespread production of elderberries in Minnesota.

More about other funded NCR-SARE grant projects:
<http://www.northcentralsare.org/Grants/Recent-Grant-Projects>

The next Call for Proposals for the 2014 NCR-SARE Farmer Rancher Grants will be coming out in August of 2013. If you have a great idea for a project, it’s not too early to be thinking about applying for a grant to help move it forward. More information about the application process, requirements, and timelines is here: <http://www.northcentralsare.org/Grants>

Since 1988 the SARE program, part of USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture, has helped advance farming systems that are profitable, environmentally sound and good for communities through a nationwide research and education grants program.

DEVELOPMENT OF CAMELINA OIL FOR CULINARY USES

The Batalden family from Lamberton, MN is producing and marketing a new cooking oil from the seeds of the camelina plant, *Camelina sativa*, a member of the Brassicacea family of plants that also includes mustard and canola. The Bataldens are organic farmers, and Phil Batalden is currently serving on the MISA Board of Directors. Producing oil from camelina seed was a project undertaken by the Bataldens after daughter Kathleen Batalden Smith and her husband, Justin

Smith, wanted to join the farm operation. A 2010 Farmer-Rancher Grant from North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) helped Kathleen and Phil chase down the details of how to process and market a new edible oil product. Now the camelina oil from their farm is marketed as “Omega Maiden” oil, with uses ranging from cooking to hair and skin care products. A documentary video about Omega Maiden was an official video

selection of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Film Festival in 2013. Watch the video: <http://vimeo.com/65511374>

Read about the Bataldens:
www.northcentralsare.org/Educational-Resources/From-the-Field/Camelina-Seed-to-Oil-Video

Visit their Omega Maiden website: www.omegamaidenoils.com/index.html

GREEN ROUTES IDEAS FOR SUMMER TRAVEL

Minnesota has a lot to offer travelers who want to eat locally and support family-run tourism businesses during their summer travels. A project of Renewing the Countryside, it maps and catalogs restaurants and Bed & Breakfast

establishments that serve local food or even grow their own, use renewable energy, have unique re-use programs, or other features; tourist locations with a conservation and sustainability focus; farms that allow visitors; and even some on-farm lodging options.

Add some “green” fun to your vacation, or plan your whole vacation around a “Green Route!”
Visit the Green Routes website: www.greenroutes.org

MINNESOTA'S BOUNTY: The Farmers Market Cookbook

Minnesota's Bounty is a user's guide to shopping and cooking from your local farmers market, and it applies a practical, easy approach to creating a truly seasonal kitchen. Beth Dooley has suggestions and recipes that inspire simple, modern, and healthy meals following an ingredients-first philosophy, helping readers to be more confident and spontaneous both at the

market and in the kitchen. Including a fascinating history of Minnesota farmers markets—with particular focus on the downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis markets—Dooley presents an extraordinary introduction to our markets and the region's sustainably grown fresh foods. From a warming Coconut Curry Winter Squash Soup and

Heartland Brisket to a summer's meal of Minted Double Pea Soup, Lamb Burgers with Tzatziki, and Blueberry Lemon Ginger Sorbet, the guiding tenet of Minnesota's Bounty is splendidly uncomplicated: take this book to the market, buy the market's best offerings that day, then come home, cook, and enjoy. Published by the University of Minnesota Press, May 2013.

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL FOOD RESOURCES

A new resource website has launched with materials to support farmers, food businesses, local governments and community organizers working on local food systems in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. The site grew out of a project funded by a Professional Development Program grant from North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE). The Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships in Minnesota, together with North Dakota State University Extension,

FARRMS based in North Dakota, and Buy Fresh Buy Local South Dakota collaborated on the project. Part of it involved bringing together citizens who were working on local food systems in three communities to work through ideas and identify barriers and opportunities to local food. Napoleon, ND represented a community just getting started, with little existing local food infrastructure. Spearfish, SD represented a community with some local food efforts already present, but working on building capacity. Bemidji, MN

represented a community with a strong local food effort that wanted to keep it strong and build it further. Materials useful to local food efforts in each of those types of communities are available on the Community and Local Food Resources website:

<http://www1.extension.umn.edu/rsdp/community-and-local-food/>

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEM?

Carrie Edgar and Laura Brown of University of Wisconsin Extension have produced a peer-reviewed publication that answers that question. Drawing on definitions and descriptions from a variety of sources, they present common characteristics of community food

systems: existence of a collaborative and integrated network; diversity; focus on local production, processing and sale; integration of the values of equity and social justice; and consideration for impact of food systems activities on the environment and future generations.

A Review of Definitions of Community Food Systems:

<http://fyi.uwex.edu/cfsi/files/2012/10/CFS-definitions-5-21-13.pdf>

TIERS OF THE FOOD SYSTEM: VALUES-BASED FOOD SUPPLIERS

"Tiers of the food system" is a concept developed by staff at the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems (CIAS), University of Wisconsin-Madison. It's a model that asks you to visualize the whole food system as concentric circles, with food that you grow or catch for yourself in the center, food that you buy from local farmers in the first ring, called "Tier 1;" and the global movement of food in the outermost circle. "Tier 2" in this model consists of food businesses that buy and re-sell food from local producers, but keep some level of producer identity with the products being sold. Overlapping parts of these circles of food supply, Values-Based food supply chains include a measure of environmental responsibility, fair labor

practices, and fair returns" to the producers as part of their business model. CIAS has now produced case studies for four Values-Based, Tier 2 food businesses in the United States:

Co-op Partners Warehouse in Minneapolis, www.cias.wisc.edu/featured/values-based-food-supply-chain-case-study-co-op-partners-warehouse/

Shepherd's Grain based in Oregon and Washington, www.cias.wisc.edu/featured/values-based-food-supply-chain-case-study-shepherds-grain/ Idaho's Bounty,

www.cias.wisc.edu/featured/values-based-food-supply-chain-case-study-idahos-bounty/

Organic Valley based in Wisconsin, www.cias.wisc.edu/featured/values-based-food-supply-chain-case-study-organic-valley/

<http://www.cias.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/tiers082610lowres.pdf>

FARM BEGINNINGS AND JOURNEYPerson TRAINING COURSES NOW TAKING APPLICATIONS

The Land Stewardship Project (LSP) established its Farm Beginnings training program in 1997. In its 16-year history it has trained hundreds of potential farmers, and has helped to foster new farming operations for about 60% of those who complete the course in Minnesota – no small feat, considering all of the barriers to new farm start-ups. The Farm Beginnings course has been so successful that it has now spread to other states, including Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Missouri, Kentucky, Indiana, New York and Maine. Farm Beginnings is a 10-month course that includes 43 hours of

classroom and hands-on training. Farm Beginnings course graduates were always appreciative of the course, but often felt that there was more to be learned once they really “dug in” to their own beginning farm operation. Thus, the LSP JourneyPerson Farm Training course was developed to help beginning farmers take those next steps to solidify and build their farm operations. Farmers enrolled in the JourneyPerson course also have access to the Matched Savings Account program, which provides a 100% match up to \$2,400 to money that the enrolled farmer saves over a 24-month period.

Applications are now open for both the Farm Beginnings and JourneyPerson courses in Minnesota. Learn more about these programs and find application materials: Farm Beginnings, application deadline August 1: landstewardshipproject.org/morefarmers/farmbeginningscourse JourneyPerson Farm Training, application deadline September 1: landstewardshipproject.org/morefarmers/lspfarmernetwork/lspjourneypersonfarmtrainingcourse

FLOODED FIELDS AND PREVENTED PLANTING GETTING YOU DOWN? STRESS IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM; HELP IS AVAILABLE.

The USDA Crop & Weather Report for June 10, 2013 is striking in contrast to last year's report: www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Minnesota/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/. Last year by that time 100% of most crops had been planted and had emerged, and 84% of oats were in the joint stage. This year the percentages are far lower on all counts; and the percentage of crops in good to excellent condition is below 75% for all crops. It's no news to Minnesota farmers that the late spring has

pushed many planting dates out past the allowed dates for program crops. Farmers may be facing financial difficulties and higher than usual levels of personal stress as a result. Being stressed-out is something to take seriously. There are two helpline numbers that are available to farmers, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, all year long: Minnesota Farmer Assistance Network (MFAN) provides business and financial guidance at no cost to Minnesota farmers and farm families facing economic hardship.

www.mda.state.mn.us/mfan; 1-877-898-MFAN
Crisis Connection is a nonprofit agency that provides 24-hour crisis counseling by telephone. <http://www.crisis.org/>; 1-866-379-6363

SUMMER EVENTS

There is a whole slate of terrific summer field days, pasture walks, bus tours, and workshops coming up. Check the MISA calendar often for updated event listings! Here's information on some of them: Prairie STRIPS Research Bus Tour. July 9, Prairie City, IA; bus arranged by Land Stewardship Project departs from southern MN. Space is limited and participants must reserve a spot by contacting the Land Stewardship Project's Caroline van Schaik at caroline@landstewardshipproject.org or 507-523-3366.

WASTED: Feed the Folks, Starve the Landfills. July 12, Cedar Falls, IA. Learn about the challenges of handling food waste and innovative strategies for reducing food

waste from field to plate to landfill, including diverting food from the waste stream back into the food system. Registration: https://events.benchmarkemail.com/event/4D6C3C712?utm_source=BenchmarkEmail&utm_campaign=event19820&utm_medium=email
Sustainable Farming Association Festival of Farms. July 13 in a variety of locations around Minnesota. www.sfa-mn.org/festival-of-farms/.
Food, Fuel, and Fiber Network Tour. August 20-22, Taylorville, Champaign and Charleston Illinois. www.illinoissare.org/fff_network_tour.html. Bioenergy and sustainable food production practices will

be the focus of this event. Check with your state SARE coordinators; there may be travel funds available: www.northcentralsare.org/State-Programs/Minnesota
Women's Environmental Institute Organic Farm School. 10 weeks of classes take place Monday evenings, 6:00-8:00pm, June 10th-August 12th, at Midtown Global Market. www.w-e-i.org/education-programs/organic-farm-school
Land Stewardship Project Farm Beginnings Tours, variety of dates and locations. Field days are free to LSP members and open to the public for \$35 each. <http://landstewardshipproject.org/morefarmers/fielddays/fbfielddays2013>

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