

MISA ANNOUNCES NEW ENDOWED CHAIRS IN AGRICULTURE SYSTEMS

The Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture is pleased to announce the appointment of four people to the School of Agriculture Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems for 2013.

Megan O’Hara will be working to identify and document market sector issues associated with regulations. She will be developing a series of case studies that identify regulatory challenges for farms and farmers markets, restaurants and delis, and small food processors and manufacturers. Megan has been a leader of Homegrown Minneapolis, was a founding member of the Mill City Farmers’ Market, and was a partner in developing “Roots for the Home Team” a youth garden collaborative salad cart at Target Field.

Angie Tagtow will take the lead organizing role to develop Standards of Professional Performance for Registered Dieticians in Sustainable, Resilient & Healthy Food and Water Systems. Additionally, she will work with University of Minnesota Extension’s local food systems educators to support

a coordinated public health approach to community food system networks. Tagtow is the founder and managing editor of the Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition and has worked extensively with regional food and farming coalitions, not-for-profit organizations, professional organizations, government agencies and universities to provide community assessments and engagement.

Renee Pardello is Assistant Dean, University of Minnesota Extension. In her time in the Chair, she will work to develop research, education and rural advisory and extension linkages between the University of Minnesota and Morocco faculty and graduate students at the Institute of Agronomy and Veterinary Medicine, Hassa II (IAV), the national School of Agriculture (ENA) and the Rural Tourism Network in Morocco. Working with Pardello will be Dr. Hakima Bahri, Professor at ENA and UMN Alumni; and Ms. Zebakh Sanaa, Deputy Director of International Cooperation and Development at the IAV and responsible of the development

of partnership with several countries and institutions.

Rob Myers is the Regional Coordinator and Director for the North Central Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Professional Development Program, and is an adjunct faculty member of the Plant Sciences Division at the University of Missouri in Columbia. In his time in the Chair, Dr. Myers will work with members of the Green Lands, Blue Waters initiative to explore options to increase continuous living cover options on farms including cover crops and other conservation plantings.

To reach any of the Chair holders or for more information contact the MISA office: misamail@umn.edu, 612-625-8235 or toll free 800-909-MISA (6472). More information about the Endowed Chair program can be found at: www.misa.umn.edu

WHOLESALE SUCCESS: A FARMER’S GUIDE TO FOOD SAFETY, POSTHARVEST HANDLING, PACKING AND SELLING PRODUCE

MISA collaborated with FamilyFarmed.org and others to offer four Wholesale Success workshops in Minnesota over the past few months. These were taught by Atina Diffley, formerly of Gardens of Eagan, and were very well-received by attendees. Farmers attending those workshops received Wholesale Success manuals. Much of the information contained in the manual is available from a variety of other sources, but

the manual brings it all together into a 312-page glossy, spiral-bound book with numerous photos and straightforward explanations. If you missed attending and want a manual, you can order one from MISA for \$60 (includes sales tax & shipping). Contact the MISA office at misamail@umn.edu, 800-909-6472, or 612-625-8235; or use the online order form: <https://cfans.wufoo.com/forms/wholesale-success-manuals/>. We have

four chapters of the book available online for free download: <http://www.misa.umn.edu/Publications/WholesaleSuccess/index.htm>. MISA will be pursuing grant funds to offer more Wholesale Success workshops in Minnesota next year. If you would like to see a workshop happen in your area, please contact Jane Jewett by April 20th: jewet006@umn.edu.

USDA & MDA FUNDING FOR BEGINNING FARMERS

One of the most common questions that we see in the MISA office is some variation of “Where can I get money to start a farm?” A new resource from the National Agricultural Library of the USDA has some answers. Visit the Start2Farm website at <http://start2farm.gov/> to find useful information about how to find financing and services. The website section on

financing describes the basics of financing for a farm or ranch business, what activities may be eligible for grant funding, what it takes to qualify for a loan, microfinance options, and a list of federal programs that offer funding assistance for various types of enterprises.

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture

also has a variety of grant and loan programs available to farmers. This web page has links to descriptions of the MDA's funding programs: <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/grants.aspx>. Each program description includes contact information for the MDA staff people in charge of it. Scroll down to the bottom of page to find contact information.

GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAPS) AND GROUP GAPS CERTIFICATION

GAPs, or “Good Agricultural Practices,” are the on-farm food safety protocols that are increasingly being required by wholesale buyers of fruits and vegetables. In Minnesota, it is possible for farmers to become GAP-certified. Michele Schermann of the University of Minnesota offers GAPs training to farmers, and has many resources available on her website: <http://safety.cfans.umn.edu>. Her training teaches farmers how to develop an on-farm food safety plan that will pass a GAPs audit. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has staff who will perform

GAPs audits of farms. Find more about the GAPs audits: <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/licensing/licensetypes/fruit-veg-insp/fruitandvegetable.aspx> Although GAPs certification is possible, becoming GAPs certified is difficult for many farms. The audits are costly, and developing and implementing the on-farm food safety plans can be a daunting task for individual farmers, especially those with small-scale operations and a diverse mix of products. Because of this, some organizations are working on options for group GAPs certification. One

example is the Fifth Season Cooperative based in Viroqua, WI. Read about their requirements for produce: <http://fifthseason.coop/about/649-2/>. The Wallace Center at Winrock International recently released a report on a Group GAP pilot project done with Good Natured Family Farms in Missouri. Find that report here: <http://ngfn.org/resources/ngfn-database/knowledge/Wallace%20Center%20Group%20GAP%20Report%20December%202012%20with%20Appendices.pdf> (PDF, 2 Mb).

LOCAL FOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

This committee was formed to address problems of confusion, lack of clarity, and the need for education around state regulations that affect local food production, marketing, and distribution. The Committee works directly with staff from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Dairy and Food Inspection Division, and the Minnesota Department

of Health. The intent is to provide a non-adversarial setting where issues relating to local meat and food can be raised and discussed, information can be shared and problem-solving between Dairy and Food Inspections and the local food community can take place. If you have a concern or you've spotted an issue in some way that local food production, distribution, and

marketing interacts with state regulations, please let the committee know! You can submit comments anonymously on this form: <https://cfans.wufoo.com/forms/comments-for-local-food-advisory-committee/>. Contact information for the committee can also be found on that form.

MISA MEAT & POULTRY INFORMATION ONLINE

Interest in locally grown meats and poultry is growing, but farmers and their advisors have a lot of questions about where to find USDA-inspected, State Equal-To inspected, or Custom-Exempt meat processors; what regulations apply to various types of products and various types of marketing scenarios; and how to work with customers

who buy quarter, half, or whole animals. The MISA website section on Meat & Poultry Sales was developed to answer these questions! <http://www.misa.umn.edu/FarmFoodResources/LocalFood/MeatPoultrySales/index.htm> This web page includes links to Minnesota Department of Agriculture fact sheets,

resources like a carcass cutting and yield document from Iowa State University, up-to-date lists of meat processing plants in Minnesota, information you can share with customers, and presentations from workshops held in 2012 and 2013.

NCR-SARE CARBON ENERGY AND CLIMATE CONFERENCE

In fall of 2012, North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) hosted a conference to discuss carbon, energy, and climate as they relate to agriculture. Participants included more than 100

Extension Educators, USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) staff, non-profit staff, and farmers from 11 states in the region. The state teams will organize efforts for training farmers and other educators in 2013 about carbon,

energy and climate topics. For more information, contact Betsy Wieland at 612-596-1175 or eliza003@umn.edu, contact Kate Seager at 612-625-8235 or kseager@umn.edu.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION SARE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GRANTS

The 2013 North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program's (NCR-SARE) Professional Development Program Call for Pre-proposals is now available online at <http://www.northcentralsare.org/Grants/Our-Grant-Programs/Professional-Development-Grant-Program>. The deadline is 4:00 pm CDT, Thursday, May 16, 2013.

NCR-SARE's Professional Development Program (PDP) provides funds for professional development projects that provide sustainable agriculture training to agricultural professionals and educators serving the food and fiber system. Projects can be up to three years in duration, and funding level is capped at \$75,000 for each project, but projects requesting less than

full amount are encouraged. Approximately \$400,000 will be available for funding projects. Questions regarding the NCR-SARE Professional Development Grant Program should be addressed to PDP Regional Coordinator, Dr. Rob Myers at 573-882-1547 or myersrob@missouri.edu.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION SARE GRADUATE STUDENT GRANTS

The 2013 North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (NCR-SARE) Graduate Student Grant Call for Proposals is now available online at www.northcentralsare.org/Grants/Our-Grant-Programs/Graduate-Student-Grant-Program.

Graduate students enrolled at colleges or universities in the North Central region can submit proposals for up to \$10,000 to fund sustainable agriculture projects that will be

part of their educational programs. NCR-SARE expects to fund about 15 projects in the twelve-state North Central region. New this year, NCR-SARE will be accepting online submissions for the Graduate Student Grant Program. Proposals must be completely submitted to the online system by 4 p.m. CDT, May 9, 2013. Potential applicants should note the deadline, and plan accordingly, since it may coincide with finals.

Previously funded proposals have contributed to farmer or rancher profitability, environmental quality, and the enhancement of the quality of life of farmers or ranchers, their communities, and society as a whole. NCR-SARE strongly encourages students to involve farmers and ranchers in their Graduate Student Grant projects. Potential applicants can contact Beth Nelson with questions at bethnelson@umn.edu or 612-626-4436.

URBAN AGRICULTURE EXPO

The 2013 Urban Agriculture Expo will be held on April 20th, 2013 at the Sabathani Community Center at 310 East 38th St, Minneapolis, MN 55409. The Expo will be from 9:00am – 1:30pm, with seminars beginning at 9:30am. Topics will include minimizing water use, soil management, understanding cost of production, engaging communities near you, and many more.

This event is for those who currently have an urban farming enterprise, are considering starting one, are supporters of urban farming, or are just curious to learn more. No preregistration is required for the event. There is suggested donation of \$5 to attend. More information: please visit www.misa.umn.edu and click on the 'Urban Ag Expo' pdf. Questions? Contact Betsy

Wieland, Agriculture Extension Educator, at 612-596-1175 or eliza003@umn.edu. The 2013 Urban Agriculture Expo is possible thanks to generous sponsorship by NCR Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) and the University of Minnesota Extension in Hennepin County.

EXTENSION VIDEOS ON FEEDLOT ODORS & EMISSIONS

Dr. Kevin Janni of the University of Minnesota helped produce a new series of videos to provide science-based information and resources about odors and airborne emissions to owners and managers of animal feeding operations, their neighbors, elected officials, policy makers and interested community members. The videos are available online through [eXtension.org](http://www.extension.org),

an online initiative to share information generated at land-grant universities across the United States.

Videos in the Series:
Airborne Emissions and Odor Management: Policy Considerations, <http://www.extension.org/66999>
Feedlot Air Emissions Treatment Cost Calculator, <http://www.extension.org/67055>

Managing Odors and Neighbor Relations and Estimating Setbacks, <http://www.extension.org/67056>
Manure Covers and Biofilters for Managing Odors and Air Emissions, <http://www.extension.org/67057>
Health Impacts of Air Emissions from Animal Feeding Operations, <http://www.extension.org/67058>

IATP VIDEOS ON SUSTAINABLE FARMING PRACTICES & CLIMATE CHANGE

The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy has released a video project titled "Climate change meets resilience: Real farmers solving real climate problems with sustainable solutions." Find links to the videos here: <http://www.iatp.org/blog/201302/climate-change-meets->

[resilience-real-farmers-solving-real-climate-problems-with-sustainable](http://www.iatp.org/blog/201302/climate-change-meets-resilience-real-farmers-solving-real-climate-problems-with-sustainable). Narrated by Julia Olmstead formerly of IATP, the five videos show farmers who are ahead of the curve in using sustainable practices on their farms that help them stay resilient to a changing climate and increasingly common hurdles

like the 2012 drought. The videos feature topics like crop insurance, the Farm Bill, extreme weather, and agricultural diversity; through the stories of individual farmers that have found their own approaches to dealing with risk.

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