

The Land Stewardship



2 major victories for LSP members see p. 5

Keeping the Land and People Together

Letter

Vol. 19, No. 1

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When 'Opportunity' Knocks

It takes a lot of guts for a land grant to say "no" to an offer from a biotech giant. But in the long run, it also takes support from the public (second of two articles).

By Brian DeVore

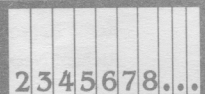
About a year ago, a certificate for "exemplary public service" was awarded to North Dakota State University. The simple citation, which was issued by the Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society, commended the university for "protection of our country's public genetic resources by keeping these resources in the public domain." Applauding a public land grant institution for keeping its research accessible to all may seem a bit excessive—like throwing a victory party every time the mail carrier hands you a letter with your address on it.

But as far as advocates for public agricultural research are concerned, NDSU's refusal to allow the results of its research—in this case its store of germplasm—to fall under the control of industry through a contract agreement is cause for celebration. The rejected contract was proposed by biotech giant Monsanto. But this example of keeping one university's research public goes beyond the debate over genetic engineering. It gets at the core of what the land grant mission is all about: using public resources to serve the public good.

"I'm trying to be diplomatic about this," says one North Dakota extension educator who is familiar with the Monsanto research contract that was proposed to NDSU, "but some of the universities have not taken such a brave stand."

Opportunity, see page 14...

Inside



Life after the checkoff.....	2
Letters correct mistakes.....	3
Waiter! This pork chop has a very sharp taste to it!.....	4
Victories in court, election booth...	5
Food/Farm Festival April 8.....	7
Minn. to gut sustainable ag?.....	10
After monitoring, what next?.....	12
Glickman, GMOs, & morality.....	14
Review: <i>Fast Food Nation</i>	16
New way to help LSP.....	18
Membership contest.....	19



The *Land Stewardship Letter* is published six times a year by the Land Stewardship Project, a private, nonprofit organization. The mission of the Land Stewardship Project is to foster an ethic of stewardship for farmland, to promote sustainable agriculture and to develop sustainable communities. Members of the Land Stewardship Project receive this newsletter as a benefit.

Annual membership dues are \$35.

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Commentary !?!?!?

The mandatory pork checkoff:

It's closer to being history—so now what?

By Mark Schultz & Mike McMahon

Family farm pork producers took a step forward on Jan. 11 when their victory in voting down the mandatory pork checkoff tax was announced by then U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman (see page 5). Hog farmers voted to end the pork tax 15,951 to 14,396. In Glickman's words, "This outcome demonstrates that the Pork Checkoff Program does not have the support of the producers it serves and therefore cannot fulfill its stated purpose. Accordingly, I am directing USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service to prepare and issue a final rule to terminate the order and the program conducted under it."

But on Feb. 28, the USDA's new Secretary, Ann Veneman, reversed Glickman's decision on this failed and unfair tax. She did so at the urging of the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC), which has grown fat and happy over the years as the main recipient of checkoff dollars.

The Land Stewardship Project, along with other members of the Campaign for Family Farms, is fighting this decision. This is not just a hog farmer issue, and we encourage anyone concerned about fairness in our society to contact policymakers on this issue (see sidebar on page 6). If democracy still means anything in this country, we will prevail. Ending the checkoff will create a whole new environment in the American hog industry—an environment that will be better for independent family farmers.

Here's a hint at what is to come:

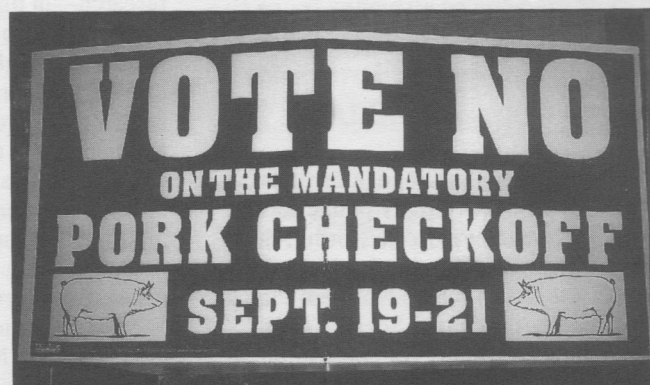
1) The NPPC will no longer be able to use family farmers' money to conduct research and promotion on behalf of corporate factory farms and the big meatpackers. No more checkoff money for studying how

to take the stink out of millions of gallons of liquid manure. No more checkoff money to develop the strategy of how to vertically integrate the pork industry. No more checkoff money to advertise for the packers' products, while the hog farmers' share of the pork dollar falls through the floor. Checkoff-funded research and promotion was directed against the family farmers' interest. That's over.

2) Now we all (hog farmers, other farmers, rural and urban citizens together) must push our land grant universities to conduct the research and education that family farmers need. Everyone must recognize that commodity groups push a research agenda that moves industrial agriculture and factory farms forward. We need to reclaim our public educational institutions. The mission of land grant universities is to serve the people of the state. The social, economic, and environmental health of our states rely on prosperous family farms and vital rural communities. It is in everyone's interest to get our state universities off the corporate agenda and onto the people's agenda. We call on our university faculty to ask the question, "What research do family farmers need and want?" and then pursue that agenda.

3) In terms of promotion, hog farmers are finding ways to promote their own

Checkoff's Wake, see page 3...



LSP members from across Minnesota posted signs like this on their farms. LSP members also gathered signatures on a nationwide petition calling for the referendum, made phone calls to other hog farmers encouraging them to vote "no," traveled to Washington, D.C., to push for USDA action on holding a fair vote, and participated in meetings during the campaign. (photo by Nick Schultz)

products for their own benefit, rather than pay for advertising for the packers and processors. The useless "Pork: The Other White Meat" campaign (if it had any effect at all) moved the packers' pork but did nothing for the prices hog farmers got for their hogs. In fact, hog farmers' share of the pork retail dollar plummeted during the course of the "other white meat" campaign. Instead, hog farmers are banding together to market their hogs and pork products. Prairie Farmers Co-op, Patchwork Family Farms, Niman Ranch Pork, Organic Valley, Berkshire Gold, Farming with Nature Co-op, and other

Letters

The details matter

I usually find the *Land Stewardship Letter* to be informative and accurate. But the November 2000 issue has so many typographic errors that they become a distraction to the content. Yes, we do read this stuff and yes we do care.

— Robert Mohler
Ord, Neb.

Not even close

I always look forward to the *Land Stewardship Letter* and I rely on the articles for solid information about sustainable agriculture.

In the December 2000 issue cover story on GMOs, however, this sentence caught my eye: "During the 20th Century, [public] research was responsible for the development of all domesticated crops—mostly from weedy wild relatives we would barely recognize." This statement is wildly off the mark. (Most of our domesticated crops were developed from wild relatives between 8,000 and 5,000 B.C.) Though it's just one sentence in a long article, when I read such a misstatement I begin to wonder what other misstatements there might be in the article—or elsewhere in the *Letter*.

I urge you to monitor articles very carefully, so that the integrity of this fine publication is maintained. Thank you!

— Mary Byrne
St. Paul, Minn.

innovative farmer-led enterprises are the emerging success stories of pork promotion. The National Farmers Organization (NFO) is a good example of farmers using collective bargaining to get a fairer price for what they produce. This kind of smart marketing, plus the political work to end packer discrimination against independent family farm hog producers in terms of prices and market access, is what is needed. Not only did the pork checkoff fail to support this kind of innovation, the NPPC supported the packers' desire to own swine and to pay more for hogs from factory farms.

4) The Land Stewardship Project believes that what is *not* needed is another mandatory checkoff that allows

Editor's Note: *Mary Byrne is correct about when most of our domesticated crops were developed. She is also correct about how misleading the quoted sentence is. The point trying to be made was that most 20th Century innovations in domesticated crop development came about as a result of public research, not private.*

The point was not that all domesticated crops came about in the 20th Century (in fact, a very small percentage of our domesticated crops have been developed within the past 100 years). A more accurate way to have written the sentence would have been: "All major domesticated crops developed in this country during the 20th Century came about as a result of public plant research." We apologize for the confusion. The Land Stewardship Letter constantly strives for accuracy in its articles through careful fact-checking. However, when we miss the mark, please let us know.

Support group

This is just a little note to thank all of you at LSP for all you do for *everyone*.

For all you do, you help some of us become more aware of what is going on and how we can help change, and for others of us who are on our way to making these changes, you at LSP are a wonderful organization for moral support.

— Duane Wheeler
Balaton, Minn.

A waste of tax money

The December 2000 issue of the *Land Stewardship Letter* included a story about a proposed mega-dairy in Waseca, Minn., and what appears to be the failure of the

farmers to ask for a refund of money taken from their sales only if they are willing to fill out several forms and wait for a month or two. The only checkoff that makes sense is one that is truly voluntary at the point of sale, in which each farmer can choose whether to pay the checkoff and which organization gets the money. □

Mark Schultz is Director of LSP's Policy Program. Mike McMahon is a Policy Program organizer. They can be reached at 612-722-6377. For late-breaking news on the checkoff issue, check the Newsroom at www.landstewardshipproject.org.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to carry out their assigned duty.

Rather than conducting studies, the MPCA relied totally on the statements of the proposers of the project concerning the nearness of the manure-spreading site to day-care centers.

The information, not surprisingly, was incorrect.

This manner of operation by the MPCA is akin to having the fox guarding the henhouse.

If the MPCA is being bought off by developers, unwilling or unable to do their assigned work, the Agency should be disbanded. It would save what seems to be a waste of tax dollars.

— Henry Crosby
Jordan, Minn.

Real pork promotion

I hope you folks are celebrating and savoring the great pork checkoff victory. Just when I become frustrated and begin to think there is little hope I am restored by this kind of news.

Letters, see page 4...

What's on your mind?

Got an opinion? Comments? Criticisms? We like to print letters, commentaries, essays and poems on issues covered in this newsletter. Contact: Brian DeVore, *Land Stewardship Letter*, 2200 4th St., White Bear Lake, MN 55110; phone: 651-653-0618; fax: 651-653-0589; e-mail: bdevore@landstewardshipproject.org.

What an achievement.

Some years ago I began a promotion of pork in my restaurant. Pork was not very popular in high dollar restaurants like mine. I did whatever I could to make it the most elegant and interesting dish on my menu. But as the "pork wars" escalated, I retreated.

Now that I have a source of local organic farm-raised pork, I'm back to promoting the hog.

Congratulations to you folks, the many organizations and especially those farmers who care enough about their professions and about the systems that produce America's food to stand up and be counted.

This is the best news since the dove brought the first green leaf to Noah.

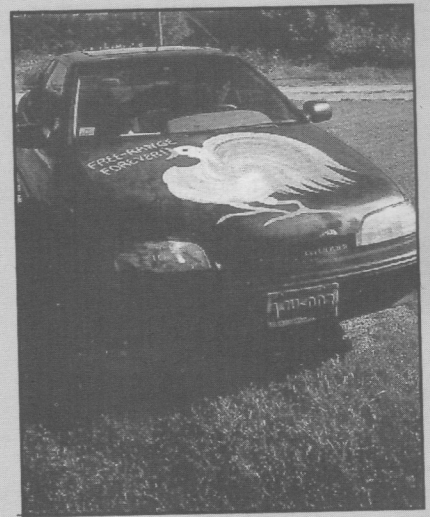
— Parker Bosley
Cleveland, Ohio

Chicken-coop hood-scoop

This is a photo of our '91 Hyundai S Coup Free Ranging Chicken—a rare and colorful breed! Perhaps readers of the *Land Stewardship Letter* might get a kick out of seeing to what lengths some of us go to promote our product.

We raise free-range layers year-round and broilers on a seasonal basis. Because the difference between eggs and meat from these birds and that produced by their cooped-up counterparts is becoming more and more appreciated, demand tends to outstrip supply. So, painting this prototype on our car hood was really just a logical next step in celebrating these animals that give us their all.

— Lynne Farmer
Rushford, Minn.



News Briefs



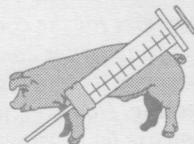
Pincushion pigs

Here's an item from the "Maybe You Really Don't Want to Know What's in Your Food" department. Mega-sized factory farms inject a lot of drugs into their pigs to keep them healthy in closed confinement. But pigs tend to move around a lot, and sometimes in all the hubbub a needle breaks off and is left behind. Sink your teeth into a broken piece of stainless steel and you'll lose your appetite for a pork chop real fast. Premium Standard Farms and the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) know this. That's why the nation's second largest pork producer and the commodity group have launched separate campaigns to make sure wayward needles don't find their way onto America's supper tables.

According to the Jan. 22 issue of *Feedstuffs*, Premium Standard is going to start using special needles that "not only are detected by conventional metal detection but are made with a plastic hub that's designed to break off at the base, leaving the hub exposed for quick removal."

Premium Standard, which is based in Kansas City, has farms and processing plants in North Carolina, Missouri and Texas. Its brand names include Fresh & Tender and Premium 97 Heart Healthy, among others.

In a Feb. 8 press release, the NPPC announced the "One Is Too Many" awareness campaign. The campaign, which is funded by the mandatory pork checkoff, is working with veterinarians and packers to "ensure pork products remain free of broken needles and other physical hazards." □



Management-intensive competition

It's becoming increasingly difficult to dismiss grass-based livestock production as a fringe farming system that can't compete with conventional agriculture.

One southwest Iowa study has compared the profitability of using management intensive rotational grazing (MIRG) with eight different cropping options (the farmland studied was highly erodible, and all of the cropping methods had to meet government "conservation compliance" requirements). According to the University of Missouri's Forage Systems Research center, the MIRG system produced the greatest net returns, even when it was compared with an

option that called for using the Conservation Reserve Program to "rent" the land to the government and leave it idle. Only one cropping system was even in the black financially.

Minnesota research shows that producing dairy heifers on pasture is far more profitable than putting them in a feedlot and hauling their feed to them. For 145 days during the summer of 2000, a farmer in west central Minnesota compared the performance of 72 heifers raised on rotationally grazed pastures with that of 72 heifers put in a feedlot. The on-farm research was conducted in conjunction with the University of Minnesota's West Central Research and Outreach Center.

The comparison wasn't even close. It cost on average \$1.43 per day, per head to feedlot the heifers. On pasture, that cost was 84 cents, making for a net return of \$197.90 per acre on 28 acres of pasture.

"When I did this, I kept saying 'what the heck am I missing here?'" Margot Rudstrom, the agricultural economist who crunched the numbers for the study, said at a recent Sustainable Livestock Systems Project field day.

For more information on the Forage Systems Research Center's work, including a list of reports and articles that its staff have written, log onto <http://aes.missouri.edu/fsrc/index.stm>. For more information on the Sustainable Livestock Systems Project, contact Terry VanDerPol in LSP's western Minnesota office at 320-269-2105. □



Victories for family farms, environment

Pork checkoff voted down by hog farmers

Soon after the announcement in early January that hog farmers had voted to end the mandatory pork checkoff, the significance of the historical vote began to sink in.

"This referendum was about much more than ending an unfair tax. It's about farmers organizing and fighting back against corporate power and money," says southwest Minnesota hog farmer Jim Joens, an LSP member. "If the checkoff is ended, the National Pork Producers Council won't be able to carry water for the agribusiness corporations while claiming to represent America's hog farmers."

Hog farmers voted to end the pork tax 15,951 to 14,396, capping off a three-year referendum campaign organized by the Land Stewardship Project and other members of the Campaign for Family Farms.

This was the first time hog farmers had been allowed to vote on the future of the checkoff in its 15-year history. Farmer-members of the Campaign for Family Farms say a referendum vote was long overdue: although since 1986 the mandatory tax has collected more than \$500 million to "promote" pork and expand markets, the hog farmers' share of the pork dollar has plummeted from 46 cents to less than 20 cents. More than 90 percent of checkoff dollars go to the National Pork Producers Council, which has used the money to promote expansion of pork production, driving prices down to a 1998-99 average of 28 cents per pound. That's a level that, when adjusted for inflation, hasn't been seen since the Great Depression. As a result, more than 250,000 hog farmers have gone out of business since the checkoff started.

Statewide mandatory tax?

A few weeks after the news broke that

USDA & NPPC strike deal to continue it

In a turn of events that astonished many within the agricultural community, new USDA head Ann Veneman announced Feb. 28 that she was ignoring the referendum vote and choosing to continue the pork checkoff. The announcement came after a deal was struck between the USDA and the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC), which receives more than 90 percent of checkoff funds. The deal was made as part of a settlement to an NPPC lawsuit against USDA.

The USDA/NPPC deal was taking place at the same time that Secretary Veneman's office was refusing to meet with farmer-members of the Campaign for Family Farms.

"Rather than meet with us, they sat down and cut a closed-door deal with the NPPC, trashed the democratic vote of America's hard-working hog farmers, and declared war on the family farm," said Richard Smith, a Wilmont hog farmer. "It's shameful."

Shameful, but perhaps not surprising. Al Tank, the NPPC's Chief Executive Officer, was named to the Bush Administration's agricultural transition team and is seen as a close confidant of Veneman.

Members of the Land Stewardship Project and the Campaign for Family Farms vowed to force the USDA to adhere to the vote result, and are currently working through the court system. When President Bush visited Sioux Falls, S. Dak., in mid-March, hog farmers from LSP and the Campaign for Family Farms were there to protest his administration's failure to uphold the referendum results.

"Secretary of Agriculture Veneman's decision to throw out the democratic vote of farmers is an outrage," says Paul Garver, a Brookings County, S. Dak., hog farmer. "If President Bush wants to restore the faith of farmers who voted

Court sides with LSP in ordering Dairy EIS

A Minnesota District Court judge ruled Dec. 22 that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) should have ordered an environmental study for a proposed dairy that would place a 7.3 million gallon manure lagoon system in an ecologically sensitive area of Fillmore County. Area Land Stewardship Project members have been organizing to stop this project for more than two years.

District Court Judge Robert Benson wrote in his ruling (www.courts.state.mn.us/districts/third/mpca.htm) that the MPCA's decision not to order an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) study for the Reiland Farms expansion was "arbitrary and capricious" and failed to consider the possibility of an underground collapse of the large manure lagoon.

Wrote Benson: "If the basin would collapse how would ground water contamination be stopped? This Court could not find any information in the MPCA's brief to answer this disturbing question. The MPCA should have addressed this issue and they did not."

The Minnesota Attorney General's Office did not appeal Benson's decision on behalf of the MPCA. The owners of Reiland Farms also declined to appeal. Judge Benson previously denied the MPCA's request to bring a Motion for Reconsideration before his court concerning his ruling.

"If the MPCA was really concerned about our groundwater, then they would have accepted this ruling rather than fighting it in court," says Jan Poldervaard a local farmer and LSP member who was a part of the legal challenge.

This means the MPCA must order an EIS, says Bobby King, an organizer in LSP's southeast Minnesota office. The lawsuit was filed against the MPCA by a group of LSP members and others who

Checkoff Victory, see page 6...

Checkoff Deal, see page 6...

Court Case, see page 6...

...Checkoff Victory, from page 5

the checkoff had been voted down, the Minnesota Pork Producers Association (MPPA) announced it would fund an effort to establish another mandatory pork tax on Minnesota hog producers within the next six months. This produced a strong response from LSP members who were involved in eliminating the national pork checkoff.

"They are still not listening," says LSP member and hog farmer Rodney Skalbeck of Sacred Heart, Minn. "There is huge dissatisfaction with the mandatory pork checkoff, and with the Minnesota Pork Producers. The only checkoff that makes sense is one that is voluntary at the point of sale, and where the producer can choose what organization his or her money goes to. Instead, the MPPA wants a mandatory assessment, with all the money going to them." □

...Checkoff Deal, from page 5

him into office he needs to overturn Veneman's decision."

Paul Sobocinski, a Wabasso, Minn., farmer and LSP organizer, says that Veneman's decision not to abide by the vote violates the democratic process legally and in spirit.

"The law states that if the majority of producers vote to end the checkoff, it will be terminated. It's a clear-cut case."

The referendum campaign has faced an uphill climb from the beginning, and independent farmers are not about to let

their voices be ignored at this point in the game, says Mark Schultz, LSP's Policy Program Director.

"When we started the petition drive, few within the agribusiness community even thought there would be a vote. Even when we got enough signatures for a vote, several times it looked like the USDA and the NPPC had succeeded in getting the referendum canceled. But farmers kept the pressure on. Now they're more committed than ever." □

Help end the checkoff

The mandatory pork checkoff is not just a hog farmer issue. The decision to reject a vote of the people in order to benefit corporate agribusiness is something that consumers, environmentalists, and all citizens who believe in democracy should be appalled by. For information on how to get involved in the checkoff campaign, call LSP's Policy Program office at 612-722-6377. Right now, here are four ways to get across the message that this vote must be honored:

1. Call Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman (202-720-3631).
2. Fax a short statement to USDA at 202-720-2166, and the White House at 202-456-2461.
3. Call your Congressional Representatives at 202-224-312.
4. Call President George W. Bush at 202-456-1414.

...Court Case, from page 5

live in the vicinity of the proposed expansion. The citizens have long expressed concerns that the expansion posed a significant risk to the fragile karst environment found in Fillmore County.

The Reiland Dairy project was watched closely by people on both sides of the issue because of its potential to influence future placements of factory farms in ecologically sensitive areas. Several prominent geologists, along with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, opposed the project.

On the other hand, the Reiland project received enthusiastic public support from top Minnesota Department of Agriculture officials and pro-factory farm state legislators. The credit firm Ag Star Financial Services, along with the dairy processing giant Land O' Lakes, also endorsed the project.

"The court said what we have been saying all along—the MPCA has not been doing its job," says King. "This decision is a landmark in the area of regulating factory farms and is particularly important for the karst region of southeast Minnesota. This means the MPCA is going to have to order an EIS whenever a large manure lagoon is proposed for this fragile area, or risk having citizens use the courts to force them to do their job."

For more information on the Reiland Farms issue, check the Newsroom at www.landstewardshipproject.org. □

About 70 members of the Land Stewardship Project gathered Jan. 16 at the Orchid Inn in Sleepy Eye, Minn., to celebrate the victory of independent family farmers in voting down the mandatory pork checkoff. LSP would like to thank members Nick Schultz and Jen Clough for these photos.



Wabasso, Minn., farmer Paul Sobocinski describes how the victory sends an important message to large commodity organizations and corporate agribusiness: "They are pushing for an industrial agriculture that is anti-farmer, anti-rural community and anti-environment. This vote puts them on notice that their days of being unaccountable are over."



Linda Noble (left), a Kenyon, Minn., hog farmer, and Monica Kahout, who raises hogs near the Minnesota community of Olivia, have been involved in organizing to end the mandatory pork checkoff from the beginning.

Food & Farm Festival April 8

The annual Community Food and Farm Festival will be April 8 at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minn. It will run from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Bush Student Center (corner of Hewitt and Snelling).

This festival has proven to be an excellent venue for meeting local farmers who are marketing sustainably produced food directly to consumers. This event started out as a showcase for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), but now includes farmers who are using various direct-marketing methods. It is hosted by the Minnesota Food Association, in partnership with the Land Stewardship Project and the CSA Guild.

Besides farmer booths, this year's event will feature cooking demonstrations by local chefs, activities for kids and local music.

For more information, call the Minnesota Food Association at 651-766-8895. □

Join a CSA farm

If you're interested in receiving fresh, naturally-produced vegetables on a weekly basis during the 2001 growing season, reserve a share in a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm now.

CSA is an arrangement where people buy shares in a farming operation on an annual basis. In return, the farmers provide a weekly supply of fresh, natural produce throughout the growing season. Shares are often sold out by early spring. The details of the share arrangements and the prices charged for the shares vary from farm-to-farm.

For a free listing of CSA farms that serve the Twin Cities region, call the Land Stewardship Project's Twin Cities office at 651-653-0618, or the Minnesota Food Association at 651-766-8895. The list is also available on-line at

www.landstewardshipproject.org.

A nationwide listing of CSA farms has been compiled by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program. Go to <http://www.sare.org/csa/index.htm> to access the state-by-state list. □



LSP staff changes

Margaret Grilley recently left her position as the Land Stewardship Project's database and Web site administrator. She joined LSP's

Twin Cities office in 1999, and helped significantly upgrade our membership database. Grilley also helped spearhead a redesign of LSP's Web site.



Margaret Grilley

Tara

Blumer recently joined LSP as the database and Web site administrator. Blumer holds a bachelor's of science degree in natural resources and environ-



Tara Blumer

mental science from the University of Minnesota. In May, she will be completing a degree in visual communications technologies at Century College in White Bear Lake. Recently, Blumer has worked for the St. Paul Neighborhood Energy Consortium and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource's Water Education for Teachers program (Project WET).

mental science from the University of Minnesota. In May, she will be completing a degree in visual communications technologies at Century College in White Bear Lake.

Recently, Blumer has worked for the

Sirolli 'Entrepreneurial Agriculture' workshop April 16 in Granite Falls

"From Production Farming to Entrepreneurial Agriculture" is the title of a special Land Stewardship Project workshop scheduled for April 16 at the Community Center in Granite Falls, Minn. This event will focus on ways to market farm products through retail outlets and direct to consumers.

The workshop will feature Ernesto Sirolli, the author of *Ripples from the Zambezi: Passion, Entrepreneurship, and the Rebirth of Local Economies* (see Dec. 2000 LSL, page 16). Sirolli is well known for his work to get communities involved in entrepreneurial development. Sirolli believes that in order for any business to succeed, it must be based on a passion for production, marketing and financial management. But Sirolli says no one person can be equally passionate in all these areas. That's why he promotes the creation of "management teams" to make various skills and resources available to even the smallest enterprises.

This workshop is tailored for farmers, other business owners and community leaders. For more information on this workshop, call Terry VanDerPol in LSP's western Minnesota office at 320-269-2105. □



Heidi Benke

She is based in LSP's Twin Cities office.

Heidi Benke recently left LSP's southeast Minnesota office, where she had been an office assistant since 1999. □

Sustainable ag bill fact sheets available

A series of fact sheets have been developed on the Conservation Security Act, a proposal in Congress that the Land Stewardship Project helped develop. If passed into law, the Act would do something revolutionary: reward farmers for good stewardship rather than just producing bumper crops of commodities.

Fact sheet titles include: Whole Farm Planning; Moving Towards Clean Water: Reducing Agricultural Runoff; Incentives for Organic Production; Sustainable Livestock Production: Moving into Greener Pastures; and Carbon Sequestration.

To obtain a free set of fact sheets, contact LSP's Policy Office by calling 612-722-6377 or e-mailing marks@landstewardshipproject.org. □

Sustainable Livestock Systems Project:

Field day features low-cost livestock wintering

February 17 in central Minnesota: the daytime temperature never sneaked above 10 degrees Fahrenheit and the wind chill factor was well below zero. In other words, the conditions were perfect for a field day, or at least one that focused on low-cost options for wintering livestock outside. More than 65 farmers braved the elements that day on the Joe and Tom Molitor dairy farm near St. Cloud to see how the brothers house their 200-cow plus milking herd during the winter months with relatively little expense or maintenance.

The field day was sponsored by the Sustainable Livestock Systems Project, an initiative of the Land Stewardship Project, Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center in Morris, and various partner farmers.

Livestock housing that can withstand Minnesota's harsh winters can be expensive and difficult to maintain. However, the Molitors have developed a low-cost, effective outdoor system that fits well with their grass-based dairy operation. Participants in the field day got to see firsthand a large "pack" the cows rest on between milkings. The pack consists of bedding made of hay that is

added throughout the winter. In addition, large hay bales stacked around the perimeter of the pack provide a wind-break.

During the field day, scientists from the West Central Research and Outreach Center discussed studies they are doing on the water quality impacts of bedding packs, and the effectiveness of using them as fertilizer come spring.

Joe Molitor says they have found the pack material makes an excellent fertilizer, and crops that are exposed to it seem to yield better even under drought-like conditions. The Molitors prefer the dry manure over the liquid manure they used to get through a system that collected the waste in a pit.

"I'm not interested in going back to the pit, if I can help it," says Joe.

The Sustainable Livestock Systems Project, which is working with farmers to investigate and promote grazing based livestock systems, is funded by a Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources grant to the West Central Research and Outreach Center and the Chippewa River Whole Farm Planning and Monitoring Team. For more information, contact Terry VanDerPol in LSP's

western Minnesota office at 320-269-2105, or
tlvdp@landstewardshipproject.org. □

Grazing events

The Sustainable Livestock Systems Project and the West Central Research and Outreach Center are co-sponsoring a grazing school and a series of pasture walks in western Minnesota this summer. Check the calendar on page 20 for details.

New WWW design

Our address is the same, but the Land Stewardship Project's Web site has recently undergone a major face-lift to make it more useful to our members and anyone else interested in our work.

Now's a good time to log onto www.landstewardshipproject.org and check out the latest LSP news and information. There you'll find news releases, event announcements, an up-to-date calendar, background on our programs, and information on farmers who are direct marketing sustainably-raised food. And don't forget, you can now use our Web site to sign up as a member or renew your membership.

LSP Gallery seeks artists

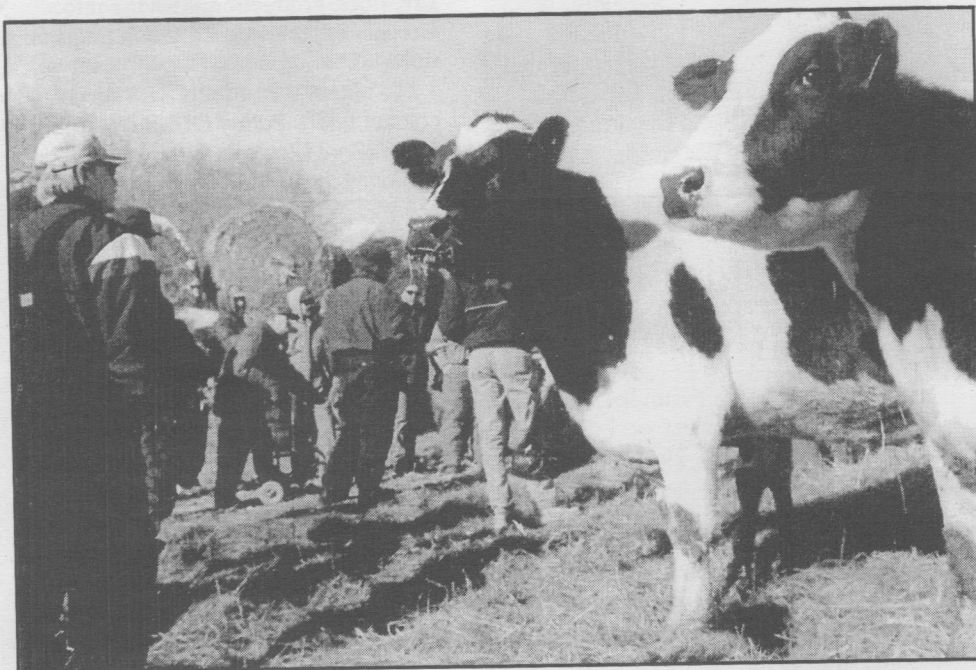
By the way, we are also looking for artists, poets, writers, photographers, etc., whose work gives us inspiration about our connection with the land. We'd like to feature this work in the "Gallery" section of our Web site.

Contact Cathy Eberhart at 651-653-0618 or cathy@landstewardshipproject.org if you'd like your work to be considered, or if you know of writers, artists, etc. who we should contact. □

LSP discussions

The Land Stewardship Project's southeast Minnesota and western Minnesota offices held a series of discussions this winter on timely and important issues. Everything from federal farm policy, milk pricing and opportunities in organic agriculture to sustainable wood production and "cultivating rural arts" were featured topics at these informal events.

For more information, call LSP's southeast Minnesota office at 507-523-3366, or our western Minnesota office at 320-269-2105. □



A few of the cows on the Joe and Tom Molitor seem comfortable even in frigid winter weather during a recent field day at the farm. Between milkings, the cows spend their time on a "wintering pack" made of meadow hay. The pack makes it possible to house cattle outside during the winter without expensive confinement facilities. The nutrient-rich pack material is spread on crop fields in the spring. (LSP photo)

Waseca mega-dairy decision put on hold

Area residents testify against 25-million gallon manure lagoon

More than 40 Land Stewardship Project members and other rural Waseca, Minn., residents traveled by bus Feb. 20 to the headquarters of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and presented a clear message: a thorough environmental review is needed before a 25-million gallon manure lagoon system is built in their neighborhood.

The 1,600-cow operation Alliance Dairy (see Dec. 2000 LSL, page 6) is proposing would consist of five earthen lagoons, a 60,000 square foot silage bunker and a facility for composting dead calves. The project is proposed by two local hog farmers, Peter and Paul Zimmerman, and a group of "agricultural investors" that have not been identified. During the Environmental Assessment Worksheet process, several local residents expressed concerns about the vulnerability of three day-care centers that are located within a mile of the manure spreading area.

In addition, an environmental engineer who works with large feedlots has expressed concern that the MPCA did no air emissions modeling to determine if the mega-dairy will exceed the state's hydrogen sulfide emissions standards. Hydrogen sulfide is a poisonous gas given off by manure lagoons. For the initial assessment of the 1,600-cow dairy, the MPCA has used a controversial new process that allows the proposers to avoid doing air modeling for odor and hydrogen sulfide. Last year the Minnesota Department of Health determined that hydrogen sulfide emanating from the manure lagoon of one of the state's largest confinement livestock operations poses a potential health threat.

Despite these potential hazards, MPCA staff have recommended that an Environment Impact Statement (EIS) not be done. An EIS is an in-depth environmental review that examines probable environmental damage a project could cause and proposes alternatives to mitigate that damage. By law the MPCA is required to perform an EIS if a project demonstrates the potential for significant environmental impacts.

The dairy's fate is now in the hands of the MPCA Citizens' Board, which heard testimony on the proposal at its regular meeting Feb. 20.

James Raetz, who lives within one mile of the proposed site, told the board that as a contractor licensed by the MPCA

he has built "hundreds" of manure storage basins. In his experience, compacted soil does not stop manure from leaking from these basins.

Eugene Miller, a Waseca County resident who runs his own tiling machine, said the silty clay in the area is very porous.

"There's no way in the world you can keep from contaminating the soil," he told the board.

• • • •

"There's no way in the world you can keep from contaminating the soil."

— Eugene Miller,
Waseca County

• • • •

Citizens' Board member James Dunlop asked John Elling, the MPCA staffer in charge of managing the Alliance proposal, whether water monitoring would be done in the vicinity of the lagoons if they were built. Elling answered that it was "his understanding" that the Zimmermans would do such monitoring.

"Your understanding? Will they do it or not?" Dunlop asked.

Elling said he "wasn't sure."

Officials from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the University of Minnesota Extension service testified in

favor of building the facility without an EIS. Harold Stanislawski, the Department of Agriculture's Agriculture Development Specialist, told the Board that the Alliance operation would be the 15th 1,000 cow-plus dairy to be built in the state. He said the Agriculture Department is "size neutral" when it comes to farms but that more of these larger facilities are needed to keep the agriculture economy strong in the state.

In an unusual move, the MPCA Citizens' Board put off making a decision on the Alliance Dairy proposal until March 29. The Board in the recent past has failed to order environmental studies on two large feedlots that the courts later determined should have had an EIS (see page 5).

"We hope the MPCA has learned from these mistakes and has learned to protect Minnesota's environment without a court order," says LSP member Alice Oden, whose mother is the nearest neighbor to the proposed Alliance Dairy site.

For more information, check LSP's Newsroom at www.landstewardshipproject.org, or contact Bobby King in LSP's southeast Minnesota office at 507-523-3366. □



Myth Buster Box

An ongoing series on ag myths & ways of deflating them

Myth: American corn and soybean farmers feed the starving of the world.

Fact: Two-thirds of the corn and soybeans we export go directly to 28 wealthy countries within the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (this organization includes Japan and the entire European Union), according to the United Nations. On the other hand, 25 countries with at least 35 percent of their population undernourished (Bangladesh, Somalia and Ethiopia are examples), receive less than one percent of these exports.

In a paper entitled "Feeding the World?" University of Minnesota agricultural economist Dick Levins and Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy staffer Mark Muller use such statistics to make the point that we aren't feeding the world's neediest, but rather those that can most afford to pay for it.

"...more U.S. corn goes to making alcoholic beverages in this country than is exported to feed the hungry in the world's 25 most undernourished countries combined," concluded Levins and Muller.

For a copy of the paper, check out <http://www.iatp.org/foodsec/>. You can also call 612-870-0543 for a copy.

Legislative Update

Minnesota sustainable/organic ag programs in jeopardy

The State of Minnesota's nationally recognized initiatives in sustainable and organic agriculture are in dire straits. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has presented a budget to the 2001 state legislature that if implemented would cripple its sustainable agriculture program, almost cut in half the amount of money that goes to the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture's Information Exchange and eliminate a two-year-old organic certification cost-share program.

The cuts include:

- \$180,000 (47 percent) of \$380,000 for demonstration grants and information for sustainable agriculture and integrated pest management.
- \$10,000 (25 percent) of \$40,000 for information and outreach, including publication of the *Greenbook*.
- \$80,000 (40 percent) of \$200,000 for the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture Information Exchange.
- \$100,000 (100 percent) for an organic certification cost-share program.

Farmers and sustainable/organic agriculture organizations such as the Land Stewardship Project are concerned that such cuts come at a time when more farmers than ever are looking for alternatives in their farming systems.

At a Feb. 7 meeting with representatives of the organic and sustainable agriculture communities, Minnesota Agriculture Commissioner Gene Hugoson said such cuts are needed so his department can fund new initiatives like the Minnesota Certified (MnCERT) program. MnCERT is being touted by Hugoson as a way for consumers to trace Minnesota farm products back to the farm. However, questions have been raised by LSP and other organizations as to how much it will benefit family-sized independent operations.

On Feb. 20, the Minnesota House Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development heard testimony on the proposed cuts. DeEtta Bilek, coordinator for the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota, made it possible for several farmers to testify about the benefits of MISA and the MDA's work in sustainable and organic agriculture.

Greg Reynolds, a vegetable producer and LSP member from Delano, Minn.,

sits on an MDA review committee that considers proposals for on-farm sustainable agriculture research grants. This year, he told the House Agriculture Committee, farmers and others requested more than \$600,000 from the program, more than three times what was available. He said that the research, which is summarized annually in the popular *Greenbook*, is an example of the kind of "systems research" needed by farmers who are trying to farm more in harmony with the ecology of the land.

"I don't think you can buy research like this for what's being spent on it. It's a bargain." Reynolds said, adding that the *Greenbook* is mailed to 46 states and 30 different countries.

Brad Donnay, a Kimball, Minn., farmer, told the committee that when he graduated from college a few years ago, he was searching for alternative ways to go back to the family farm. He picked up a copy of the *Greenbook* and read about MDA-funded research Joe Molitor was doing on grass-based dairying. Molitor,

who lives near Donnay, was able to provide advice to the young farmer. Donnay now produces organic milk from 60 cows and 100 goats.

"We wouldn't be farming if we couldn't do it the way we are," he said.

Representative Robert Ness, who chairs the Agriculture Committee, said he would consider taking action to get the budget revised to reduce the cuts.

"You're the group of farmers we want to keep going," he said. □

At this writing, several pieces of legislation were being proposed that would restore funding for sustainable/organic agriculture programs. It's critical that legislators hear from their constituents about the proposed budget cuts via telephone calls, e-mail, letters and personal visits. The session ends in May, so the sooner they hear from you, the better. For more information on the status of the budget proposal, contact LSP's Policy Program office at 612-722-6377.

2001 Minnesota legislative priorities

The 2001 session of the Minnesota Legislature is in full swing, and several issues of interest to family farming and sustainable agriculture are being considered. This is the time of year when calls, letters, e-mails and personal visits to your representatives can be critical. For information on the status of various bills and how you can have a positive impact, contact our Policy Program office at 612-722-6377.

Also, check the Newsroom at www.landstewardshipproject.org for late-breaking legislative and policy news.

Here are a few of the issues the Land Stewardship Project is tracking at the legislature:

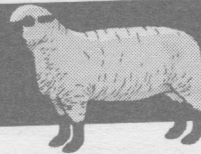
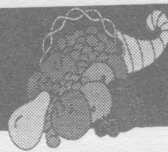
- **Feedlot cost-share funding:** The Minnesota Legislature should provide financial support for small and moderate scale livestock operations. A portion of the funds should be specifically allocated to farmers to establish sustainable livestock production practices and infrastructure, such as rotational grazing, pasture farrowing or Swedish-style deep-bedded straw swine systems.

- **The Minnesota Environmental Policy Act:** The state should strengthen the environmental review process, making it easier for citizens to require environmental assessments on large-scale livestock operations and other damaging developments, and allowing a larger role for state agencies responsible for natural resource conservation and protection of public health.

- **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP):** LSP supports a proposal that includes \$54.1 million for CREP, which provides financial incentives for taking environmentally sensitive farmland out of production.

- **Protecting & enhancing township comprehensive planning & zoning authority:** Any attempt to weaken or eliminate townships' authority to enact comprehensive planning and zoning should be vigorously fought.

- **State resolution to support federal legislation to suspend agribusiness mergers** (see *Policy Update* on page 13).



Stewardship Food Network

The *Stewardship Food Network* is a list of Land Stewardship Project members who produce meat, dairy products, eggs, vegetables, fruit, flowers, grain and other products in a sustainable manner. The Network also lists LSP member-businesses selling or processing food produced by other LSP members.

Some of the production methods used by the Network farmers include certified organic, free of genetically modified organisms, pasture-based, integrated pest management to reduce pesticide use, deep-bedded straw livestock housing and conservation tillage.

The listing provides contact information for the farmers so consumers can call or e-mail them personally to learn more about production methods, availability of products and prices. For a complete listing, contact our Twin Cities office at 651-653-0618 or go to our Web Site (www.landstewardshipproject.org) and click on Food & Farm Connection.

LSP will periodically update and make corrections to our Food Network listing. If you are an LSP member who would like to be listed, please contact us at our Twin Cities office. Here are the latest corrections/additions:

Western MN

- Evavold's Oak Grove Farm**
Les & Kathy Evavold
14653 355th Avenue
Battle Lake, MN 56515-9531
Phone: 218-747-2456
E-mail: evavold@hotmail.com

→ Products: *Beef*

✕ Also services: *Delivers along I-94 from Fargo/Moorhead to Twin Cities*

Southeast MN

- Fairview Farm**
Mark & Laurie Timm
RR-1, Box 92
Altura, MN 55910
Phone: 507-534-2034

→ Products: *30 kinds of potatoes, garlic, raspberries, blackberries, apples, chickens, eggs*

✕ Also services: *Farmers' Markets at Plainview, Rochester, Winona*

- Sunfresh Foods**
Dave Schmidt
RR-2, Box 155
Preston, MN 55965

Phone: 507-765-2358

→ Products: *Beef, pork, poultry*

Twin Cities MN Metro

- Lucia's Restaurant**
Lucia Watson
1432 W. 31st St.
Minneapolis, MN 55408
Phone: 612-825-1572

Web site: www.lucias.com

→ Products: *Restaurant emphasizing local organic & sustainably-produced food*

- Pat & Tom's Farm**

Pat Schiltgen & Tom Coffield
8250 Elmore Ave.

Webster, MN 55088

Phone: 507-744-2146

E-mail: coffield@means.net

→ Products: *Beef*

- Wedge Community Food Co-op**

2105 Lyndale Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55405-3027

Phone: 612-871-3993

Fax: 612-871-0734

Web site: www.wedgecoop.com

→ Products: *Natural foods co-op*

Midwest Food Alliance label looking for sustainable farmers

Interested in capturing the tremendous value of your good stewardship? Would you like to join with other farmers, retailers and consumers in growing healthy, sustainable communities? Then consider having your products certified through the Midwest Food Alliance (MWFA) program in 2001.

This "sustainable seal of approval" was successfully test marketed in various Minnesota grocery stores last fall. Ray Kirsch, who is MWFA's Farm Program Coordinator, says the certification system is now gearing up to expand the variety of products it covers, as well as the number of farmers and retailers it serves.

The program, which is a joint project of LSP and Cooperative Development Services, has already developed standards for apples, beef, pork and fall squash. Standards for dairy products, poultry, potatoes and blueberries are currently being developed. In addition, MWFA is consider-

ing standards for sweet corn, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, herbs and cucumbers. One possibility is that we will eventually be able to certify market garden/Community Supported Agriculture operations on a "whole farm" basis.

"In other words, MWFA is looking at various creative ways of making sure stewardship-minded farmers are recognized and rewarded for their efforts," says Kirsch.

You can contact Kirsch at 651-653-0618, or rkirsch@landstewardshipproject.org. He will be happy to send an informational packet and the brief instructions for getting started. Information on MWFA is also available on the LSP Web site—www.landstewardshipproject.org (click on Food & Farm Connection). You can also check out the Web site of The Food Alliance, our partner organization in the Pacific Northwest, at www.thefoodalliance.org.



Monitoring Project—the sequel

By Caroline van Schaik

The Monitoring Project is finished.

Oh, not finished as in done, finito, never to be heard of again.

Quite the contrary. Because in true sustainable fashion, it has spawned efforts that are gaining their own momentum. They admittedly look quite different from the initial Biological, Financial and Social Monitoring Project that was launched in 1993. But at their core they “feel” the same. In fact, they’ve helped us view “monitoring” in a whole different light. It is no longer seen as just an exercise in taking water samples or doing soil tests, and then comparing those results over time. The role the human element plays in monitoring is becoming clearer all the time.

For example, south of Minneapolis in the Sand Creek Watershed, residents have coalesced into a remarkable team of farmers and friends. They are part of the Sustainable Farming Systems Project, a multifaceted attempt to look at water quality and economics as a function of different sustainable farming practices. This project paves the way for the meetings, phone calls, field events and informal kitchen gatherings that make the group a team.

Before the project, they were neighbors, more or less. Some of them were in a grazing club, or had shared equipment,

or just knew of one another. Most have lived in the watershed for generations but for one reason or another this natural resource has not been the glue that holds them together as a community.

Why are they the next generation of the Monitoring Project? “Monitoring” isn’t in the Sand Creek Watershed Team’s name. It’s not mentioned in its mission statement or on the educational display Team members have taken to county fairs and conferences. They hardly use the word as individuals.

Yet the Team is trying to be as deeply into monitoring as was the original group of six southeast Minnesota graziers and others who made up the Biological, Financial and Social Monitoring Project. Its subjects are the creek, obviously, and especially, the community of people and wildlife that impact and are impacted by it. By whatever word, Team conversation reflects an awareness not just of the biological environment of the watershed, but the social one.

This integration of science with the social aspects of the watershed is more than academic in nature. Sand Creek is a rural watershed influenced by Twin Cities Metropolitan urbanization, and farming and development interests can and do team up against environmental interests. This watershed group has its collective finger on that pulse—monitoring, if you will, the community’s willingness to attend a birding event along Sand Creek, a streamside walk to look at a restoration

project, or an indoor slide show on hydrology. Nothing about monitoring, nothing about the environment—not up front, anyway, not in your face—because the pulse is erratic.

Much of what the Team does is designed to gently educate people into a better mood about their watershed. It is slow going and takes time. We keep checking our mission statement and it keeps ringing true.

This is monitoring.

The Team also monitors the stability of the banks along certain stretches, and when Paul Konrad of Minnesota Audubon led a walk last summer, we talked about the connections between birds, habitat and water quality. Just a little. It was a lovely evening and the local newspaper gave the event full play. The newspaper’s owner even called a Team member and said the work was great.

The turnout was even better for an on-farm field day, with a welcome mix of land-users. Terms like, “environment” and “quality of life” were spoken out loud. The *Minnesota Environmental Journal* filmed the event (see sidebar). There was a hefty debate about tile lines. These are not just indicators of a successful event. What we are really paying attention to is the bigger picture. Our mission is outreach and education to help residents understand that how they—we—live really matters on all

Monitoring, see page 13...

At the movies

The Sand Creek Watershed Team hosted an afternoon streamside walk last summer to showcase some innovative, low-cost renovation work on a highly-eroded stretch running through Cedar Summit Farm north of New Prague. The event was filmed as the lead segment of a *Minnesota Environmental Journal* program, which was then aired statewide in the fall by stations that carry the public access program.

The Team has since made copies of the program (#258) available to the public through branches of the Scott County Public Library System in New Prague and Jordan, the watershed’s largest towns. Library card-holders can borrow the tape as they would any other video.

After hosting a potluck and premier showing, the Team arranged to have the program aired over Jordan’s public access channel in January.

Cedar Summit Farm is the home of dairy and livestock producers Dave and Florence Minar, who are also members of the Sand Creek Team. The field event and follow-up outreach with the video are part of the Team’s mission to restore the biological and aesthetic integrity of Sand Creek and to educate watershed residents about our collective role in its preservation.



A recent gathering of the Sand Creek Watershed Team: “By whatever word, Team conversation reflects an awareness not just of the biological environment of the watershed, but the social one.” (photo by Caroline van Schaik)

New monitoring publication

While the original Monitoring Project has moved into new and challenging phases, the lessons of that remarkable 26-member team will be published on the Land Stewardship Project's Web site.

Whole Farm Participatory Research—Recommendations from the Monitoring Project Team, will be available at www.landstewardshipproject.org by early spring.

This is the Biological, Financial and Social Monitoring Project's newest resource. This document is applicable to anyone involved or interested in whole farm participatory research—that is, on-farm research that is farmer-driven and team-based,

with all sides equally engaged and integrated in terms of scientific measurements, farmer observations, and a holistic approach to both.

Other Monitoring Project resources include the *Tool Box*, a quarterly newsletter called *Close to the Ground*, a video by the same name, and *Monitoring Sustainable Agriculture with Conventional Financial Data*, by University of Minnesota agricultural economist Dick Levens.

For more information, call Caroline van Schaik at 651-653-0618, or e-mail her at caroline@mtn.org.

...Monitoring, from page 12

sorts of levels. Sand Creek is in our backyards, to turn on its head the NIMBY (Not in My Back Yard) acronym, and that is what the Team is monitoring.

Monitoring is coming of age. These

days, it highlights the mutual importance of making a living, preserving our environment, and contributing something extra to one's community. The Sand Creek Team is learning that the proof is in the doing, by whatever name. "The doing," it turns out, can't separate science and society. The Monitoring

Project is completed, but look what it's spawned with its best concepts intact and very much alive. □

Caroline van Schaik coordinates the Sand Creek Watershed Team. She can be reached at 651-653-0618 or caroline@mtn.org.

Update

We the People...

Policy

Setting the tone across state lines

By Paul Sobocinski

On Dec. 28, I attended the Midwest Agricultural Legislator's Conference in Sioux City, Iowa. This was a great opportunity for the Land Stewardship Project to get together with other grassroots groups throughout the region and coordinate farm-related legislative priorities on the state level. Despite a major snowstorm, more than 100 farmers and farm leaders from various states were present at the conference, which was organized by Minnesota state Senator Ted Winters, among others.

Efforts to coordinate legislation across state lines can pay big dividends. Last year, grassroots groups were successful in getting mandatory livestock price reporting laws passed in states throughout the Midwest. This served as a good precursor to the national price reporting law that went into effect Jan. 30.

At this year's conference, I presented two issues that LSP would like to see become priorities in state legislatures.

First, we need to reform agricultural contracts so the real societal costs of the contract system are borne by the corporations that use and benefit from the system. As a veteran farm leader used to

say, "Corporations never have crop failures, because they farm the farmer." I told the forum participants about how even in the 1960s and 1970s many recognized that contracting as an individual was not a way to enhance farmers' profitability.

Erhard Pfingsten, who was the National Farmers Organization vice president back in those days, once said, "If there was a dumber way for farmers to serve the market, they would have us doing it." In his opinion, grower contracts were that dumber way.

That's why we need provisions that put liability for health and environmental damage on the corporation, rather than the farmer who holds the contract. The contract reform proposal out of the Iowa Attorney General's office provides for a "contracting bill of rights," but it does not contain integrator liability measures. (In this case, an integrator is defined as a large company that has farmers raising products for them on contract. The products—hogs, for example—are owned by the integrator.) Right now, producers who rely on contracting are at the mercy of the integrator. A contracting bill of rights is a step in the right direction. But it is not a real fix because the farmer has no political power as one individual up against Smithfield Foods or Farmland.

One other measure that I pushed at the Sioux City conference was a resolution to suspend agribusiness mergers and acquisitions. We urged each state to pass resolutions that would push Congress to stop such mergers for at least 24 months. These business deals are happening at such a dizzying pace that the law, or the markets, can't keep up. More specifically, we are calling for a special investigation of Joel Klein's tenure as head of the Justice Department's antitrust division. During his time there, agribusiness mergers went on unabated. Within months of his leaving the Justice Department, Klein went to work as a consultant for Smithfield Foods, who at the time was attempting a hostile takeover of IBP.

Presenting such resolutions at such a conference is more than a chance to blow off steam. As our success with mandatory price reporting shows, it's an opportunity to set the tone for laws that influence family farming throughout the region. □

Policy Program organizer Paul Sobocinski farms near Wabasso, in southwest Minnesota. He can be reached at 507-342-2323.



Indeed, in recent years various agreements between universities and private industry have locked up the fruits of land grant science at a dizzying pace. Ties between private industry and public institutions have always been a part of U.S. agricultural research. However, biotechnology has accelerated and deepened those ties considerably in recent years. Its incredible expense and insatiable appetite for resources has sent "life sciences" corporations and universities rushing into each others arms (see Dec. 2000 LSL, page 1).

This trend is raising concerns among advocates of public research that land grant institutions are becoming little more than field stations for private corporations. Such an environment is less likely to produce anything that can't produce profit in the near term for corporations, says Bill Tracy, a University of Wisconsin sweet corn researcher who is spearheading an effort to educate the public about the threats public-private partnerships pose to public plant breeding. Having such shortsighted goals guide research agendas leaves little room for seeking out innovations that aren't profit-driven, such as sustainable cropping systems that don't rely on chemicals and other purchased "products" to thrive.

"We are in the privatization model," says Tracy. "Universities are supposed to be more like businesses."

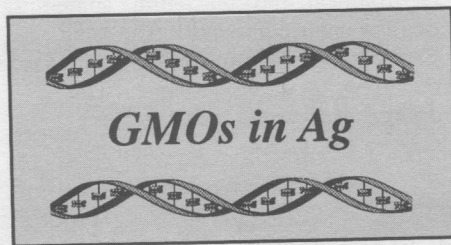
Public servant

Albert Schneider began working as a crops scientist in North Dakota almost four decades ago. Schneider, who is now chair of the North Dakota State Univer-

sity Plant Sciences Department, says that public-private partnerships in agricultural science have always been around in some form, but have become much more prevalent in recent years.

"It costs money to do this research and these companies have to get a return. And as research has become more expensive, you have to go more and more toward these partnerships," he says. "But there's a price you pay, which is less control."

The loss of some control over a university's scientific resources isn't always bad, particularly if it results in access to expensive, cutting-edge technology that would be difficult to come by otherwise. That's the nature of a



give and take relationship. However, there comes a point when the returns don't justify the costs. It became clear to Schneider in late 1999 that a particular contract he was negotiating with Monsanto gave the company a little more say over public resources than he was comfortable with. The details of the proposed contract are not available, but in general it involved the sharing of NDSU's tens of thousands of varieties of wheat that it has developed over the years—its germplasm—with the agribusiness giant. Seeds would be sent to Monsanto's laboratories, where scientists would insert genes that help make plants resistant to herbicide spray. The altered

lines would be sent back to NDSU, where researchers could further develop them through conventional crossbreeding. On the face of it, the deal was pretty straightforward. Monsanto would get access to a university's supply of germplasm developed over many decades. Even plant research involving cutting-edge biotechnology is very reliant on access to some good old-fashioned germplasm—lots of it. In return, NDSU would get access to Monsanto's herbicide-tolerant technology. (These "Roundup Ready" genes have revolutionized soybean production in the United States in the past half-dozen years.)

But there's a catch. The insertion of an engineered gene into a plant line suddenly makes it a very expensive product. It can cost tens of thousands of dollars to bring a new plant variety to market via traditional breeding methods. The price tag for its genetically modified counterpart runs in the tens of millions. That means when Monsanto introduces one of their GMO products into a public seed bank like the one at NDSU, they have in a sense put their very expensive, and very proprietary, technology out in the public realm. That won't do. That's why the company presented a contract to NDSU that would have restricted public access to all those seed lines.

That's a major resource to lay claim to. Unlike the West Coast, where the presence of high-speed computer technology has made genetic engineering a key player in the scientific community, NDSU isn't exactly in the biotechnological fast lane. But, like many land grants, it has a resource that no amount of supercomputing can replicate: tens of

Opportunity, see page 15...

Ex-USDA head: balanced view on GMOs considered 'immoral'

During much of Dan Glickman's tenure as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, he pretty much repeated the agribusiness mantra that genetic engineering was needed to feed the world and keep American farmers competitive.

But in late January, right after he left office, Glickman dropped a bit of a bombshell. In an interview with Bill Lambrecht of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the former secretary sharply criticized the pressure that was put on USDA by pro-biotech forces.

"What I saw generically on the pro-biotech side was the attitude that the technology was good and that it was almost immoral to say that it wasn't good because it was going to solve the problems of the human race and feed the hungry and clothe the naked," Glickman told Lambrecht. "And there was a lot of money that had been invested in this, and if

you're against it, you're Luddites, you're stupid."

Glickman continued: "There was rhetoric like that even here in this department. You felt like you were almost alien, disloyal, by trying to present an open-minded view on some of the issues being raised. So I pretty much spouted the rhetoric that everybody else around here spouted; it was written into my speeches."

One would think the top guy at the USDA would have a little more autonomy when it came to talking about agricultural issues. But when, in a National Press Club speech, Glickman said biotechnology companies should consider labeling genetically engineered food, he soon regretted straying from the script. The speech had not been submitted to the White House beforehand—Glickman knew it would come back "sterile"—and he received so much grief from within the government for his remarks that at one point he feared for his job, according to the *Post-Dispatch*.

thousands of seed lines developed over much of the 20th Century.

Germplasm is the keystone of plant research. It's the genetic material that makes up the very nature of a plant. Those characteristics are packaged into seeds that come from plants that have been developed through innumerable crosses. These seeds are stored in controlled environments, awaiting the time when a scientist somewhere needs access to it for research purposes. A wheat variety that sports a certain characteristic that wasn't valuable to agriculture at the turn of the century may suddenly be in great demand as new problems or opportunities pop up. That makes these long-term depositories of germplasm invaluable.

Schneider recognizes that value.

"The only thing we really have to offer anybody is our germplasm, which we've developed over many, many years," he says. "The people of North Dakota feel very strongly that these varieties belong to them. I feel the same way. I'm a taxpayer too."

It's not just the taxpayers of North Dakota that benefit from such stalwart protection of the germplasm. This genetic material is shared, for example, when working with South Dakota, Minnesota and Manitoba on wheat scab research. This type of germplasm sharing is the bread and butter of public plant research. NDSU is currently working with scab-resistant wheat lines it obtained from researchers in China and South America.

Not that schools like NDSU always give out new developments for free. A newly created line of wheat, say, may be licensed by the North Dakota Research Foundation, a private entity with close university ties. The Foundation, which has counterparts under various names in most agricultural states, charges royalties for commercial use of that seed. That allows the university to recoup some of the costs of research and development.

But the new contracts sweeping the public plant breeding world are more restrictive, and often disallow or severely limit the trading—in any form—of germplasm between researchers at different institutions. As a result, land grant scientists are having an increasingly difficult time getting access to the germplasm they need to do even basic research, according to a national survey conducted by Iowa State University

"Restrictive agreements are counter-productive to innovation because every-

one will be working on their own little thing and not sharing germplasm," says Schneider.

With this in mind, in late 1999 the scientist had to turn down the Monsanto contract proposal that would have given NDSU access to Roundup Ready wheat technology.

"We wanted to make sure we had more say in it, more control of it," he says of the contract, which was under negotiations for the better part of a year.

An important "no"

"More power to him. It's an unusual attitude in the land grant system today," says Neil Hamilton, a Drake University law professor who has written extensively on how patents and other legal protections affect farming and research.

Hamilton says keeping germplasm public in our land grant system is particularly critical at a time when the other major public plant breeder, the federal government, is having a difficult time managing its national seed bank. Hamilton serves on the National Genetic Resource Council, which advises the USDA on management of its germplasm. To Hamilton's dismay, it has not been a very active council—it's woefully underfunded. In addition, a nationwide network of seed banks, known as the National Plant Germplasm System, is in great disrepair, according to a General Accounting Office report.

They keep coming & coming...

When talking about the rejection of the one Monsanto contract, NDSU's Schneider takes pains to make it clear his institution is not spurning any and all agreements with biotech companies. In fact, the Plant Sciences Department has other agreements with Monsanto that Schneider says are not as restrictive. It's important to the scientist that his university does not burn any biotech bridges with industry, or even one company specifically. He says genetic engineering offers a lot of possibilities that make herbicide-resistant plants pale in comparison. But once a university starts working with GMO technology, it finds itself dealing with the same company on many different crop traits. In other words, perhaps Roundup Ready wheat is not worth signing on the bottom line for, but cancer-fighting barley might be a different story. Schneider knows all too well that no matter what the expected payoff, negotiations over such contracts are never easy.

"People in universities really have no

knowledge in business and businesses have no knowledge of how a university works. It's like you're from Mars and I'm from Venus. We've had some pretty heated discussions with people in industry and there were times I thought that we were through, but they always come back."

And that's something the public needs to keep in mind. Until biotech companies can figure out how to develop their plant products without access to public germplasm, they will always come back to places like NDSU. And anyone who wants land grant research to focus more on practices that benefit sustainable agriculture and family farmers must be willing to support institutions that take their public trust seriously. That support must be moral as well as financial, says Theresa Podoll, Director of the Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society.

"The pressure isn't going to go away just because NDSU says no once." □

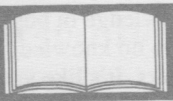
GMO corn compensation

The maker of a controversial genetically engineered corn has agreed to pay farmers and grain handlers to keep the harvested grain out of the food system. Aventis CropScience will pay 25 cents per bushel extra for its StarLink corn, according to an agreement the company signed in January with attorneys general in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota and 12 other states.

But taxpayers are helping shield Aventis from taking full responsibility for this debacle. USDA announced in mid-March that it would buy as much as \$20 million worth of seed corn that had been tainted by the GMO product, supposedly through pollen drift.

In November, several LSP farmer-members met with Minnesota Attorney General Mike Hatch to explain the importance of holding manufacturers of genetically engineered products liable for problems associated with contamination (*see Dec. 2000 LSL, page 15*). Many farmers who planted the corn felt they had been misled by Aventis as to the ease with which the product could be marketed once it was harvested. LSP is part of the Farmer-to-Farmer Campaign on Genetic Engineering, a collaborative effort among farm organizations to promote the farmer perspective on genetic engineering.

For more information on the Farmer-to-Farmer Campaign, contact LSP's Bobby King at 507-523-3366.



Fast Food Nation The Dark Side of the All-American Meal

By Eric Schlosser
2001; 356 pages
\$25.00 hardback
Houghton Mifflin Company
222 Berkeley Street
Boston, MA 02116
www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com

Reviewed by Brian DeVore

Journalist Eric Schlosser thinks food is the key to understanding what makes our society tick. He's not so much interested in what we eat as how that meal gets from the land to our mouths. In America, more often than not that trip is a frenetic one. The meal starts on factory farms, passes through gigantic processing plants and ends, wrapped in paper and perched on antiseptic plastic trays, in "fast food" restaurants: the likes of Wendy's, Burger King, Subway, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Taco Bell, and the all-time burger-and-fries champion of the world, McDonald's. In 1970, Americans braked their cars long enough to fork over about \$6 billion for this kind of food. Last year, that figure was \$110 billion. We spend more on fast food than on higher education, personal computers, computer software or new cars.

No wonder Schlosser's new book is entitled *Fast Food Nation*. And, as the subtitle implies, *The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*, such a system of preparing and consuming food does more than satisfy our Big Mac attacks: the huge profits raked in by fast food chains have been made possible by "losses imposed on the rest of society," writes Schlosser. And those losses are not insignificant. The demise of independent family livestock farmers, urban sprawl, dangerous working conditions, food safety scares and rural pollution are just some of the problems that have significant connections to the fast food industry's insatiable demand for cheap beef, pork, chicken and potatoes.

Through meticulous reporting based on government and industry documents, first-person accounts and skillful interviews, Schlosser has served up an extra-large helping of facts and figures on fast food and all that it touches and is touched

by it. But this is no ponderous diatribe against the evils of modern crispy-fried society. Rather, it's a levelheaded look at how we've allowed the "fast food" mentality to influence and even control many aspects of our lives.

For example, the industrialized fast food system relies on removing "skill" and "creativity" at every turn. Chains like McDonald's made a decision long ago to invest in systems, rather than skilled people. Industry leaders are constantly looking for new machines that can be run with "zero skill." Preparing food in a typical fast food kitchen consists of responding to lights, buzzers and other signals. Almost all important decisions are made in the restaurant's corporate headquarters.

"The management no longer depends upon the talents or skills of its workers—those things are built into the operating system and machines," writes Schlosser, who has spent a lot of time around fast food executives, managers and their employees. "Jobs that have been 'de-skilled' can be filled cheaply. The need to retain any individual worker is greatly reduced by the ease with which he or she can be replaced."

In fact, the typical fast food worker quits or is fired every three to four months—an annual turnover rate of 300 to 400 percent. For the fast food chains, such high turnover has several advantages. For example, short-timers don't make good candidates for union membership and usually don't qualify for insurance and other pricey benefits that kick in after a certain length of time.

The same mentality has taken over in meatpacking, which for decades was considered a highly skilled trade. In 1961, the first plant featuring the "IBP System" was opened in the southwest Iowa community of Denison, just a few miles from where I grew up. That plant revolutionized meat packing in much the same way the opening of the first McDonald's a few years prior influenced the restaurant industry. The IBP System consists of a disassembly line where workers perform the same task thousands of times a day. "We've tried to take the skill out of every step," A.D. Anderson, the co-founder of IBP, once crowed.

And with lower skill comes lower pay, and, as the lines run faster and faster (during the past two decades, the number of cattle slaughtered per hour in an American packing plant has increased from 175 to 400), more injuries. What a cruel joke: at a time when meat packing has become one of the most dangerous

occupations, the industry's high annual turnover rate—80 percent to 100 percent—has made it possible for the owners to reduce health insurance costs.

Now comes perhaps the last remaining free-thinking link in the food chain: the farmer. The same mentality that strips away the creativity involved in preparing food, or the skill that it takes to process a hog, is being applied to food production on the land. Attempts to basically "franchise" farming through exclusive contracts that control every aspect of a family's operation have been successful in poultry production. The de-skilling of hog production is in full-swing, although it hasn't completely snuffed out the independent pork farmer just yet. Beef producers are next in line.

Schlosser is concerned where this will all ultimately lead: "The early Roman Republic was fed by its citizen-farmers; the Roman Empire, by its slaves."

So is it our fate to eat only food produced, processed and prepared by servants to a simplistic system? No. That's the great thing about reforms in our food system: we all eat, and therefore we can all have a hand in making changes. At an appearance in the Twin Cities recently, Schlosser told an audience of nervous consumers that because 70 percent of fast food purchases are impulsive, companies like McDonald's are actually very vulnerable to the whims of the burger-eating public. The industry's worst nightmare is for people to put some thought into their food-buying decisions, instead of obediently pulling into the drive-through at the sight of the Golden Arches.

That may be a good way to bring about some short-term reforms. But why not put our food savvy to use at *truly* revolutionizing the system? Let's support farmers we know are producing food in a manner that treats people and the land as if they are going to be around for a while. Community Supported Agriculture, farmer-owned marketing co-ops, eco-labeling systems, and plain old face-to-face direct marketing are just a few of the avenues now available for connecting consumers with food that's produced and processed with skill and creativity. There's no drive-up window involved, and it certainly isn't fast. But for an increasing number of consumers, supporting such a food system gives a whole new meaning to the phrase, "have it your way." □

Brian DeVore is the editor of the Land Stewardship Letter.

Grazing ruminations

An Annotated Bibliography of Riparian Grazing Publications will be available on the Land Stewardship Project Web site later this spring.

The bibliography is a 40-page reference to some 200 articles, pamphlets, book chapters, and bulletins that address the interaction between streams and grazing livestock. Each entry is fully referenced and includes a paragraph summarizing the main points. Articles are divided between five main sections and several subsections, and are alphabetized by author.

Nearly all articles are available through inter-library lending services or the publishing organization (a university extension service, for example). In addition, hard copies of most entries are available from Mary Hanks at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Energy and Sustainable Agriculture program. Requests for a specific paper can be made by calling her at 651-296-1277 during business hours.

This document was produced under the auspices of an LSP-coordinated grant from USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. Look for it at www.landstewardshipproject.org by clicking on the Resources section. □

Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems

The University of Minnesota has announced the third recruitment for the "School of Agriculture Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems." The Chair is designed to play the role of catalyst for innovation and progress on agricultural issues within the College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences, as well as throughout the state of Minnesota. The position is intended to address long-term societal values of rural communities and healthy agricultural landscapes as well as identification of current and potential relationships between agriculture and rural communities, landscapes and food systems.

There are no formal degree requirements for this position. It will be a non-tenure track or senior fellow position within the College, with a flexible appointment of one week to one year in duration.

Applications are being accepted until June 30. For more information, call the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, 612-625-1268 or 800-909-6472. □

Iowa Meats Directory

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship has published a listing of 87 Iowa farmers who sell meat directly to consumers. The directory provides information about how the livestock was raised, what it was fed and the number of livestock available for processing. It also lists state and federally-licensed slaughter and processing facilities in Iowa.

For a free copy, call 515-281-6936, or e-mail Pat.Paustian@idals.state.ia.us. □

Local food interns

The University of Northern Iowa Local Food Project has been working with several hospitals, colleges, nursing homes and restaurants to help them buy a greater portion of their food from local farms, investing their food dollars in the community. This project is now taking applications for summer (May/June through August/September) interns who can help coordinate networks between farmers and institutional food buyers.

The interns will work in northeast Iowa and learn how to start similar projects in other regions. The internship features flexible work hours and a modest stipend. Candidates must have excellent oral communications skills and be self-motivated. A college junior standing or higher is preferred for this internship.

For more information, contact: Kamyar Enshayan, Physics Building, UNI, Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0150; phone: 319-273-6895. □

Be a grass master

Identifying Pasture Grasses provides descriptions of 15 common annual and perennial grasses found in Midwestern pastures. It includes chapters on identifying seeds and seedlings, as well as the actual grass plant and seed heads. The booklet also includes a section on grass management during the early years of pasture establishment and renovation.

A free copy of this 58-page publication can be downloaded from <http://www1.uwex.edu/ces/pubs/>. For a paper copy, send a check for \$8.50 to: Cooperative Extension Publications, 45 N. Charter St., Madison, WI 53715. Ask for publication number A3637; make checks payable to "University of Wis.-Extension." Call 877-947-7827 for more information. □

Hidden woody profits

Discovering Profits in Unlikely Places: Agroforestry Opportunities for Added Income is a new publication that describes how landowners can use trees and shrubs to provide income and improve conservation on odd corners of their property.

Developed by, among others, the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, this resource includes "before" and "after" full-color drawings of agroforestry practices, a list of commonly used trees and shrubs, and resources for more information.

To order a copy of this 20-page booklet, send a check for \$4 to: University of Minnesota Extension Service, Distribution Center, 405 Coffey Hall, 1420 Eckles Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108-6068. Ask for publication number BU-7407; make the check payable to "University of Minnesota." To order by credit card, call 800-876-8636. □

International sustainable ag trip

Global Exchange is hosting a sustainable agriculture tour to Cuba and Haiti May 24 to June 7. This trip will trace sustainable agriculture through various levels of design, research and implementation. For more information, call 800-497-1994, or log onto http://www.globalexchange.org/tours/auto/2001-05-24_CubaandHaitiSouthSouthCoopera.html. □

River of grass

Grazing Streamside Pastures is a 16-page booklet that describes grazing management practices that help protect water quality and pasture productivity.

A free copy can be downloaded from <http://www1.uwex.edu/ces/pubs/>.

For a paper copy, send a check for \$4.50 to: Cooperative Extension Publications, 45 N. Charter St., Madison, WI 53715. Ask for publication number A3699; make checks payable to "University of Wisconsin-Extension." Call 877-947-7827 for more information. □

Chicken grit

Pastured Poultry is a 40-page report that describes the experiences of 35 southern farm families who participated in a project to produce and market pastured poultry. The report is full of firsthand accounts of farmers and provides data on pen-building, brooding, feeding, processing, marketing, legal matters, economics, etc.

For a free copy, call Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas at 800-346-9140. □

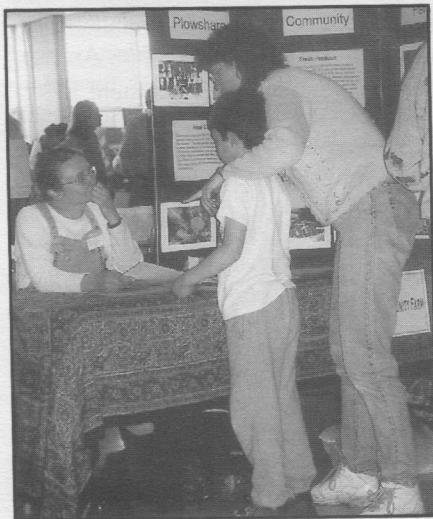
Some good reasons to become a donor:

Do you think LSP should continue to...

By Katie Person

◆ Connect consumers to sustainable producers?

How do consumers in the Twin Cities learn about Community Supported



LSP member Erica Jensen answers questions about her CSA farm during the 2000 Community Food and Farm Festival in St. Paul, Minn. (photo by Caroline van Schaik)

Agriculture (CSA) farms that are offering shares of vegetables each summer? They attend the annual Community Food and Farm Festival, co-sponsored by the Land Stewardship Project, or they obtain the CSA directory we print each year.

Regional producers direct-marketing meat and cheese also have tables at the Festival and those who are LSP members are listed in the Stewardship Food Network. To keep the land and people together, LSP helps farmers become economically viable through local markets.

◆ Offer convenient resources on our Web site?

Interested in reading breaking news related to LSP and sustainable agriculture? Visit the Newsroom on our Web site. LSP's Web site is a valuable resource that members are able to access free of charge.

◆ Publish the *Land Stewardship Letter*?

Consider not being able to page through the *Land Stewardship Letter's* various feature articles, program updates, interviews, commentaries and book reviews. The *LSL* is a nationally recognized source of information pertaining to issues in sustainable agriculture.

◆ Fight for the integrity of Minnesota sustainable ag?

LSP was a major player in the Sustainers' Coalition, which founded the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA) with the University of Minnesota's College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences in 1992. We have been engaged in intense negotiations to maintain the integrity of the Institute since College Dean Charles Muscoplat fired its executive director, Don Wyse, last April because of "philosophical differences." We are working hard to keep the state of Minnesota invested in sustainable agriculture.

◆ Tackle critical & timely issues?

In November, LSP members and staff took their concerns about holding manufacturers of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) liable for contamination of non-GMO crops to Minnesota Attorney General Mike Hatch. LSP is participating in a collaborative effort among family farm organizations in eight states to promote the farmer's perspective on genetic engineering.

◆ Take some risks in developing new programs?

In the early stages, promising new programs are not always fully funded. Farm Beginnings in southeast Minnesota relied on member donations to supplement grants and become a respected training program for people going into sustainable farming.

◆ Pay day-to-day operating expenses?

Have you ever called any of the LSP offices to ask a question or request a publication? Every day staffers in the various LSP offices are busy answering

the phones, copying, mailing important information, updating computer files, doing the accounting—basically keeping LSP functioning. While the operational activities of LSP offices are often overlooked, they are crucial to our work.

•••••

If you answered YES to the above questions, then you should make a contribution to Land Stewardship Project! Help support the work you appreciate.

Almost all grants from foundations are designated for specific programs. But LSP is engaged in many projects to carry out its mission that are not supported by grants. Only individual gifts make them possible. Activities described on this page are paid for by contributions. Without gifts above the cost of membership, LSP could not do this work.

To learn how to support LSP's work, call me at 651-653-0618, or e-mail me at kp@landstewardshipproject.org. □

Katie Person is LSP's Development Associate.

New matching opportunity!

Last summer's McKnight Match was a wonderful example of the dedication and passion of our members to protect our land, health and communities. The McKnight Foundation awarded LSP a grant that challenged us to raise \$75,000 in new and increased donations of \$200 or more. Not only did we meet this match, we exceeded it. By the Sept. 1, 2000, deadline, we actually raised over \$88,000 in new and increased major donations.

By exceeding the goal, we proved to the McKnight Foundation that we have the commitment and support needed for a strong future. For this reason, they have awarded LSP another matching grant! The McKnight Foundation will match new and increased gifts of \$200 or more up to \$25,000. Like last year, if you have never given at the \$200 level and give \$200 or above, your entire gift will be matched. If you have given \$200 or more and increase your gift, the difference will be matched.



Enter the LSP membership recruiting contest

By Cathy Eberhart

Our goal is pretty straightforward: Recruit 850 new Land Stewardship Project memberships before June 30, 2001. As of mid-March, nearly 300 new memberships have been received. We need your help to recruit another 550. Here's the exciting part: you can now help increase LSP's membership while making yourself eligible for winning one of many wonderful prizes. The time is now to enter LSP's Membership Recruitment Contest.

The prizes

Only seven members have been recruited through the membership contest — in other words you still have a great chance of winning one of many excellent prizes. Recruit at least one new member and your name will be listed in an upcoming newsletter. Recruit at least two new members and choose a free LSP T-shirt or hat. The 10 members who recruit the most new members will get to choose from this list of prizes:

✓ Three pounds of excellent **grassfed cheeses and butter from PastureLand** (can be shipped to any location).

✓ Three pounds **Velasquez Family Coffee**, naturally grown in the mountains of Honduras (can be shipped to any location).

✓ \$50 gift certificate for **Lucia's, a Minneapolis restaurant that emphasizes the use of local food** grown using organic and sustainable methods.

✓ \$50 gift certificate for **food items from the Whole Farm Coop**, a group of 35 Minnesota sustainable farmers that deliver to the Twin Cities, St. Cloud, Alexandria, Brainerd, Cambridge and Wadena.

✓ **Guided canoe tour on the Chippewa River** near Montevideo in western Minnesota.

✓ A night's stay at **Moonstone Bed and Bagel Farmstay** near Montevideo.

✓ \$25 gift certificate for **Java River coffee and sandwich shop** in downtown Montevideo.

✓ \$20 gift certificate for **Winona Food Coop** in Winona, Minn.

✓ \$20 gift certificate for **Blue Heron Coffee House** in Winona.

✓ One weeknight's stay at the **Dancing Winds Farm Bed and Breakfast** near Kenyon, Minn.

For a membership recruitment form, or more information on the contest, give me a call at 651-653-0618 or e-mail me at cathye@landstewardshipproject.org. You can also download forms from www.landstewardshipproject.org. □

Cathy Eberhart is LSP's Membership Coordinator.

LSP creates privacy policy

When you become a member of the Land Stewardship Project, we ask for some basic information: your name and address, as well as your phone number or e-mail if you choose. We recognize that providing LSP with this personal information is an act of trust and your right to privacy is very important to us.

At its January 2001 meeting, the LSP Board of Directors approved a privacy policy intended to protect the personal information of our members. Here are some of the key points included in the two-page policy:

1) LSP never sells or rents its mailing list to other organizations. To reduce the cost of acquiring new members, LSP may exchange lists with other like-minded nonprofit organizations, generally one or two times per year or less. These exchanges are typically for a one-time mailing only.

2) We greatly appreciate the support of our members. On occasion, we may honor our members by publishing their names in an LSP publication. If you would like your membership and/or donation to remain anonymous, please inform us.

3) LSP is one of several environmental organizations in Minnesota collaborating on the Minnesota Environmental Action Network (MEAN)—an e-mail action alert system. As a collaborating organization,

LSP now provides Minnesota e-mail addresses to the network so that members can receive action alerts about urgent environmental issues.

The e-mail addresses are kept in a secure server and are contacted no more than 12 times per year with environmental action alerts. With every e-mail action alert, participants will be given the chance to opt out of the alert system.

If you have any questions or concerns about our Privacy Policy, or if you would prefer that we not exchange your name or share your e-mail with MEAN, please let us know so we can respect your wishes. LSP's privacy policy is available on our Web site at www.landstewardshipproject.org, or by calling 651-653-0618. □

Memorial thanks

The Land Stewardship Project would like to extend a special thank you to member Larry Olson for the \$332 that was donated in honor of his mother Ingeborg Olson, who died last fall. □

Workplace giving

The Land Stewardship Project is a proud member of the Minnesota Environmental Fund (www.mnenvirofund.org). You can support us in your workplace by giving through the Fund and designating that the money go to LSP. If your employer does not provide this opportunity, ask the person in charge of workplace giving in your office to include it. For more information, contact Katie at LSP's Twin Cities office, 651-653-0618; kpersion@landstewardshipproject.org.



STEWARDSHIP CALENDAR

→ **APRIL 8** — **Community Food & Farm Festival**, 1 p.m. -5 p.m., Hamline University, St. Paul, Minn.; Contact: 651-766-8895

→ **APRIL 14** — **Western Minnesota Farm Beginnings Workshop on Soils**

Monitoring, Easy Bean Farm, Milan, Minn.; Contact: Amy Bacigalupo, LSP, 320-269-2105; amyb@landstewardshipproject.org

→ **APRIL 16** — **Direct marketing workshop featuring Ernesto Sirolli**, (see page 7), Granite Falls (Minn.) Community Center; Contact: Terry VanDerPol, LSP, 320-269-2105;

tlvdp@landstewardshipproject.org

→ **APRIL 20** — **Deadline for Minnesota Voices of the Land Essay Contest**; Contact: 651-312-1000

→ **APRIL 24-27** — **Basic Cheesemaking Short Course for all Levels of Experience**, University of Wisconsin-River Falls; Contact: 715-425-3704; www.uwrf.edu/food-science/cheese.htm

→ **APRIL 26** — **Monitoring Birds on Farms with Minnesota Audubon's Paul Konrad**, 2 western Minnesota farms (details to be announced); Contact: Amy Bacigalupo, LSP, 320-269-2105;

amyb@landstewardshipproject.org

→ **APRIL 28** — **Arbor Day Tree Sale, Environmental Expo, Job Fair & Crafts Festival**, Ramsey Elementary School, Ramsey, Minn.; Contact: Bruce Bacon, 763-427-1410; bbacon@ci.ramsey.mn.us

→ **APRIL 29** — **Kelley Farm Arbor Day Forestry Festival**, Elk River, Minn.; Contact: Jim Mattson, 763-441-6896; jim.mattson@mnh.s.org

→ **EARLY MAY** — **Citizen Stream Monitoring Training**, Sand Creek, New Prague, Minn. (details to be announced); Contact: Caroline van Schaik, LSP, 651-653-0618; caroline@mtn.org

→ **LATE MAY** — **Grazing Schools in southeast Minnesota & southwest Wisconsin** (details to be announced); Contact: Caroline van Schaik, LSP, 651-653-0618; caroline@mtn.org

→ **MAY 12-13** — **Shepherd's Harvest Sheep & Wool Festival**, Washington County Fairgrounds, Lake Elmo, Minn.; Contact: Pat Ryan, 651-459-8554; http://burroak.hypermart.net/festival.htm

→ **MAY 19** — **Upper Mississippi River Festival, with the theme "Celebrating a River of Life,"** St. Feriote Island, Prairie du Chien, Wis.; Contact: 319-873-3423; www.prairieduchien.org

→ **MAY 19-20** — **CURE 9th Annual Spring Observation Trip**, 6 western Minnesota prairie rivers; Contact: 320-269-2984; cure@info-link.net

→ **MAY 21-23** — **31st Annual BioCycle National Conference on Composting & Recycling**, Radisson Riverfront Hotel, St. Paul, Minn.; Contact: 610-967-4135; www.biocycle.net

→ **JUNE 1** — **Western Minnesota pasture walk featuring impacts of seasonal changes & the management of grazing animals on pasture regrowth & forage availability**, West Central Research & Outreach Center, Morris; Contact: Terry VanDerPol, LSP, 320-269-2105;

tlvdp@landstewardshipproject.org

→ **JUNE 7-10** — **Joint Meetings of the Agriculture, Food & Human Values Society & the Association for the Study of Food & Society**, Minneapolis, Minn.; Contact: Helene Murray, MISA, 612-625-8235;

murra021@maroon.tc.umn.edu

→ **JUNE 15** — **Western Minnesota Canoe Race**, Montevideo; Contact: Patrick Moore, 320-269-7106

→ **JUNE 20-21** — **Western Minnesota Grazing School**, Wadena; Contact: Terry VanDerPol, LSP, 320-269-2105; tlvdp@landstewardshipproject.org

→ **JUNE 22-24** — **2001 Renewable Energy & Sustainable Living Fair**, Portage County Fairgrounds, Amherst, Wis.; Contact: 715-592-6595; http://www.themrea.org/

→ **JULY 6** — **Western Minnesota pasture walk**, West Central Research & Outreach Center, Morris; Contact: Terry VanDerPol, LSP, 320-269-2105;

tlvdp@landstewardshipproject.org

→ **JULY 17-19** — **Tri-State Grazing Conference**, Dubuque, Iowa; Contact: Larry Tranel, 319-583-6496

→ **AUG. 3** — **Western Minnesota pasture walk**, West Central Research & Outreach Center, Morris; Contact: Terry VanDerPol, LSP, 320-269-2105;

tlvdp@landstewardshipproject.org

→ **SEPT. 7** — **Western Minnesota pasture walk**, West Central Research & Outreach Center, Morris; Contact: Terry VanDerPol, LSP, 320-269-2105;

tlvdp@landstewardshipproject.org

→ **SEPT. 29** — **LSP's Twin Cities Local Foods Banquet** (details to be announced); Contact: Cathy Eberhart, LSP, 651-653-0618

Event information

Check the Newsroom at
www.landstewardshipproject.org
for the latest on upcoming LSP events.



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