

# The Land Stewardship

Keeping the Land and People Together



# Letter

Vol. 21, No. 1

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## The People's GEIS

**Minnesota has produced a first-of-its kind, \$2.97 million study on animal agriculture. It's time taxpayers started getting their money's worth.**

By Brian DeVore

Here's a tip if you ever find yourself perusing the 7,000 pages that make up the Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) on Animal Agriculture: ignore the main summary report. It is a textbook example of what happens when specific scientific conclusions that might prove inconvenient to a few powerful special interests are run through a political mill—emerging as generalized, highly-compromised products that offend no one. Instead, go straight to the technical working papers that address specific topics. Those papers represent studies that are pre-political, in many cases untouched by the influence of the industrial livestock industry.

For example, find "Final Technical Working Paper on Topics D, E & F: Economic Structures, Profitability & External Costs," and flip to the study on page 80. By page 91, it is clear why this report, "Phosphorus Balance in Minnesota Feedlot Permitting," is not highlighted by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) when it discusses the GEIS report in public. The study presents a set of statistics that show concentrated livestock feeding operations are producing much more of one nutrient than the land can take care of, posing a major potential threat to water resources.

"Larger feedlots, on average, have much higher levels of [phosphorus] build-up than do smaller feedlots,"

concluded the study's authors. "...It is clear that if Minnesota wishes to avoid high [phosphorus] soils in areas that have high levels of animal production, it must devise a permitting process that lowers the animal density on many feedlots."

### Digging deeper

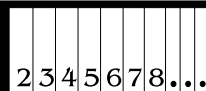
After four years, \$2.97 million and countless revisions, the final draft of the Animal Agriculture GEIS was approved by Minnesota's Environmental Quality Board in September 2002. Ever since, MDA officials have been cherry-picking parts of it to buttress their argument that there is room for more concentrated livestock operations in the state. The MDA is only partially right: Minnesota needs more livestock-based development, but it depends on what form it takes. Concentrating more animals on fewer farms will exacerbate the growing threat of manure-based pollution. As "Phosphorus Balance in Minnesota Feedlot Permitting" clearly illustrates, there is information contained within the GEIS which shows just how much of a threat such concentration poses. Good luck finding it—opening the report is like walking into a library that's lost its librarians, and they grabbed the cataloging system on their way out.

But with a little digging, the public could see a return on that \$2.97 million investment. Upcoming issues of the *Land Stewardship Letter* will feature GEIS



**This finishing facility in western Minnesota concentrates 9,000 pigs at one site. After collecting the manure in the earthen lagoons shown, the waste must be spread on nearby farm fields. A GEIS analysis of feedlot permits shows that operations with large concentrations of animals are prone to producing more phosphorus than the environment can absorb sustainably. (LSP photo)**

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*The Land Stewardship Letter* is published five 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 sting of pesticide misuse

By *Tim Rundquist*

Imagine yourself as a beekeeper, attracted to central Minnesota as a locale for starting or relocating an apiary due to its status as one of the most pesticide-free agricultural regions in the country. Then, imagine that a mere decade or so later you were forced to move or shut down your operation, due to repeated poisonings of your bee stock by pesticide misapplications—which, ironically, had been occurring under a state-sponsored program.

That is the very situation presently faced by a number of Minnesota beekeepers. Since the advent of a pilot program to raise hybrid poplars for biomass on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land, administered in part by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the pesticide applications that have accompanied such plantations have decimated apiary stocks in the vicinity. At issue is the widespread use of Sevin, a commercial insecticide that acts as a deadly neurotoxin, and is in fact closely related to nerve gas used in biological warfare. While Sevin has been moderately effective in controlling beetle populations that feed on new poplar growth, it remains active in the environment for an unusually long time—and does not distinguish between harmful and beneficial insects. Consequently, bees foraging in areas where Sevin has been recently applied will bring the substance home to their hives, where it has a lethal effect. Further, since beekeepers mix and intermingle empty equipment from dead or weakened hives, the poisoning can spread throughout an entire operation.

Jeff Anderson, a beekeeper located near Eagle Bend, Minn., began to notice a problem when, instead of an average over-winter mortality rate of 6 percent, he

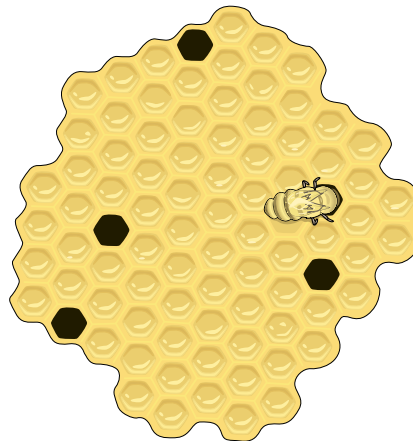
endured 10 percent, then 15 percent, 25 percent and 35 percent losses. “By the time it got to 30 percent, we were sure something was wrong,” said Anderson, who owns California-Minnesota Honey Farms in Eagle Bend and keeps his bees at 104 locations in five west-central Minnesota counties. However, it was only when Steve Ellis, another beekeeper from

Barrett, Minn., suffered a kill in 1999 that the link between Sevin spraying and bee losses was established: a Minnesota Department of Agriculture test determined that Ellis’ bees had died from carbaryl exposure, and fined the sprayer all of \$950. The above two

beekeepers and a third, Jim Whitlock of Alexandria, Minn., contend that all of the spraying that has damaged their operations occurred contrary to the directions found on the label for Sevin XLR Plus, which applicators must follow to the letter in order to comply with federal and state law.

Due to the widespread and continuing damage from the misuse of Sevin and the lack of any further restitution, the Minnesota DNR, commercial applicators and a large private timber landowner have been named in a lawsuit by the above beekeepers. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture, while not a party to the suit, is the agency charged by law with oversight of pesticide applications in-state—an oversight which, many observers believe, has been particularly lacking. For an in-depth analysis of this issue, please see the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy’s 2001 report, “Inaction Speaks Louder Than Words: The Minnesota Department of Agriculture’s Failure to Protect Minnesota From Pesticide Contamination.”

• • •  
*There’s a connection between the CRP land setaside program & bee deaths.*  
• • •



**Bees, see page 3...**

available at [www.mncenter.org/p.asp?WebPage\\_ID=24&Profile\\_ID=112](http://www.mncenter.org/p.asp?WebPage_ID=24&Profile_ID=112), or call 651-223-5969.

### What you can do to help

A bill seeking to toughen the state's commitment to policing pesticide misapplications failed to make it out of committee during the 2002 legislative session. Please contact your state representative to express your concerns about pesticide issues and to ensure that a similar bill will pass during the current session. Similarly, please write, call or visit the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to urge that it follows its statutory obligation to stop pesticide misuse. The MDA is located at 90 West Plato Blvd., St. Paul MN 55107-2094. Its telephone number is 651-297-2200. Finally, please offer your support to your local beekeepers by purchasing their products and keeping abreast of the issues that threaten their livelihoods. □

*Tim Rundquist is an attorney and sustainable farming advocate from Fergus Falls, Minn.—and a long-ago Land Stewardship Project intern. He can be contacted at 651-848-8406, or [tim\\_rundquist@hotmail.com](mailto:tim_rundquist@hotmail.com).*

## Myth Buster Box

### An ongoing series on ag myths & ways of deflating them

◆ **Myth:** There are so few small- and medium-sized farms left that's it not worth saving them.

◆ **Fact:** The vast majority of farms in rural America are still family-sized operations. It just seems like the majority of farms are mega operations with thousands of acres under cultivation and tens of thousands of head of livestock. That's because of all the headlines—most of it negative—these industrialized operations grab. But in Minnesota, for example, 96 percent of dairy operations have 200 or fewer cows, 86 percent of hog operations less than 2,000 head, and 99 percent of beef operations less than 1,000 animals. Those numbers come from *Minnesota Agricultural Statistics 2002*, published by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture ([www.Nass.usda.gov/mn/](http://www.Nass.usda.gov/mn/)). This publication also shows that the average Minnesota farm is 361 acres.

Looked at this way, small- and medium-sized farms are still the backbone of many small Minnesota towns. Now here's the bad news: The handful of mega-operations in Minnesota and other states are gobbling up the lion's share of the commodity market, meaning that family farms are given less of an opportunity to contribute to the economic health of local communities—hence the shuttered storefronts, closed churches and empty schools that characterize many farm towns these days. Studies show that fewer, larger operations are bad news for Main Street economies.

Minnesota has lost 10,000 farms of all kinds in the last decade, and with that trend has come numerous problems. Consider what's happened in a sector like hog production: From 1991 to 2001 the state lost 7,500 swine farms, but gained 800,000 hogs. In other words, more hogs are becoming concentrated on fewer farms. That concentrates manure in a smaller area (see page 1). It also concentrates wealth.

For more information, check out "Impacts of Concentration in Hog Production on Economic Growth in Rural Illinois: An Economic Analysis," by logging onto <http://agecon.lib.umn.edu/aaea00/sp00go03.pdf>.

## The mathematics of factory farm welfare

By Jeff Klinge

Is funding for large-scale manure storage a good use of taxpayer dollars that are earmarked for conservation? That's the question we have to ask ourselves as we consider the new proposed Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) rules. If these proposed rules are finalized, EQIP would allow huge factory farms to receive up to \$450,000 in cost-share money to build new or expand existing facilities. As a Midwestern cattle producer who is trying to compete with these mega-operations, I'm appalled at this corporate welfare handout. As a resident of a part of Iowa that is vulnerable to groundwater pollution, I'm just plain scared.

First, let's look at the economics. A new so-called state-of-the-art hog finishing building (early wean to finish) costs approximately \$165/pig space (not including land, water and electrical

hookups). A 2,499-head unit costs approximately \$412,335 ( $\$165 \times 2,499$ ). Keeping the maximum capacity below 2,500 finishing hogs, which is considered 1,000 animal units in Iowa, will make it easier to meet state and federal environmental regulations for this type of facility. One integrator I'm aware of is paying farmers who own facilities like this about \$36/pig space/year and is guaranteeing this for 10 years for labor, management and building use. The yearly gross income from this facility would be \$89,964 ( $\$36 \times 2,499$ ). That amount is guaranteed even if there are no pigs in the building. So far, these facilities seem to be going up without EQIP funding.

Under the proposed rule changes, EQIP allows for 75 percent cost share for manure storage with a limit of \$450,000/individual. The cost of the liquid manure pit and pit wall usually runs 35-38 percent of the entire building ( $\$412,335 \times 35$  percent = \$144,317). This \$144,317 amount would be cost-shared at 75 percent ( $\$144,317 \times 75$  percent =

\$108,237). So \$108,237 out of \$412,335 represents 26 percent of the cost of the entire building, which could be paid for with taxpayers' dollars. I should note that Iowa allows EQIP money to go toward construction of new facilities, which makes no sense at all.

Farmers who grow their own feed prefer to have all their hogs at one site to save the time and expense of running feed and hogs to different locations. Because the hogs and feed are brought in from outside the farm in my example, it's feasible to have facilities at multiple sites. Someone could build four of these facilities at four sites, receive \$108,237 cost sharing for each facility, equaling \$432,948 (well within the \$450,000 limit), and have a capacity of 9,996 hogs. A married couple that has kept their records separate could double that.

What's the environmental cost of paying farmers to build huge manure

EQIP, see page 4...

...EQIP, from page 3

facilities? These things may leak and accidental spills have occurred. We've had major manure-caused fish kills in Iowa and southern Minnesota in recent years. The Northeast Iowa Demonstration Project provided cost share incentives for the construction of 30 settling basins and manure storage structures. Now several of the operations that erected these facilities have gone out of business. The worst-case scenario is when a publicly funded structure sits unused and full of manure, creating a potential environmental hazard no one wants to deal with. The proposed EQIP rule changes could multiply that risk by a thousand.

EQIP doesn't have to be a factory farm handout. In my part of Iowa, EQIP, as it was implemented before 2001, helped improve woodlands and local pasture systems. And Iowa's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), with the

help of county committees, is considering ways to limit spending, such as allowing only 50 percent cost share on projects over \$100,000 and giving priority to other eligible projects such as rotational grazing and timber stand improvement. You can help continue such positive steps by contacting your local NRCS office and getting involved with the local EQIP work group. These groups help determine what practices will be given priority under EQIP.

And call your U.S. Representatives and Senators and tell them that \$450,000 is way too much for one operator to get. Tell them to cut the EQIP payment limit to \$100,000, which is still double what it was two years ago. □

*Jeff Klinge farms with his wife Deb Tidwell near Farmersburg, Iowa. He is a member of the Land Stewardship Project's Federal Farm Policy Committee.*

## Letters

### The thread of sustainability

Thanks for all the dirty work you have done over these past 20 years, a lot of which goes unrecognized because it is grunt work—prep work done before you call in the lights and camera. Thanks.

I've just finished reading Joan Dye Gussow's *This Organic Life* that was profiled in an earlier newsletter of yours (July/August 2001). And it occurs to me that one of the threads that binds us all—farmer, consumer, rural and city—is sustainability in all our lives. But it is sustainability as thought of by a tree that counts, or the seven generations of the Eastern Oneida—long term sustainability.

What I was thinking before I got carried away was sustainability could be used as a theme to connect people in your *Land Stewardship Letter*. Often we read stories about how those in the country are trying this or that to better themselves and their connection to their land—to live in some sense sustainable. And we read about how others can take advantage of their care and purchase goods they help

bring forth.

But, as a city dweller I too live on or off the land. I too have a connection to land. Be it my yard or the sidewalks I walk, the streets I drive upon. I am seeing your newsletter as being just as applicable to me as it now is to farmers. You have focused on the rural life but all of us stand on the same ground and we could use the hard-found wisdom of those with muddy boots.

Congratulations on 20 years!

—William Norman, St. Paul, Minn.

### Sharing, not consuming

I'm proud to be a member of the Land Stewardship Project because it supports the conservation ethic I learned from other mentors long ago. This is not just a way to satisfy one's economic needs, but a theological question about the relationship between God, people and creation. If we choose to consume our riches, rather than invest or share them, that is a statement of our spiritual condition, not our economic condition.

—Willard Kreitlow,  
Howard Lake, Minn.

## Call Congress today

Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for the phone number for your representatives in the House and Senate. Tell them to push for a \$100,000 payment limitation for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) during consideration of the next ag appropriations bill.

### Make these key points:

→ Conservation programs should promote conservation, not factory farm expansion.

→ We need action now so the new limit on how much any one operation can get is in place before the 2004 EQIP money (\$1,000,000,000—yes, a *billion* dollars) is spent.

→ The reduced payment limit will ensure that many more livestock and other farmers will be able to receive EQIP funding.

→ This is a clear waste of taxpayers' dollars, at a time of much greater needs. Let's start saving money by putting a \$100,000 payment limitation on EQIP.

## What's on your mind?



Got an opinion? Comments? Criticisms? We like to print letters, commentaries, essays and poems on issues we cover. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Contact: Brian DeVore, *Land Stewardship Letter*, 4917 Nokomis Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55417; phone: 612-729-6294; e-mail: bdevore@landstewardshipproject.org.



## Antibiotic creep

Evidence is piling up that the overuse of antibiotics to boost livestock growth is helping super bugs evolve at a frightening rate in our environment. As the *Land Stewardship Letter* reported in the March/April and May/June 2002 issues, antibiotics, when shed through animal manure, have proven to be quite adept at infiltrating our soil and water. Now add air and plants to the list.

Microbiologist James Zahn has found that the air emitted at all three confinement hog facilities he tested contained bacteria that resisted being killed by the antibiotic tylosin. Tylosin, which is used to treat human infections, was being fed to the pigs at subtherapeutic levels.

Such research has major human health implications. However, after Zahn announced his results during the 2001 International Animal Agriculture and Food Science Conference, his superiors at the USDA's Agricultural Research Service denied his request to submit the whole study for publication in a scientific journal, according to Perry Beeman, writing in the Dec. 1, 2002, edition of the *Des Moines Sunday Register*.

Other researchers are finding that when antibiotics make their way into soil, they can have serious impacts, according to a summary of studies published in the June 29, 2002, edition of *Science News*. In the early 1980s, a USDA-Agricultural Research Service microbiologist found that when pinto bean roots were exposed to antibiotics the legumes fixed less soil nitrogen, picked up fewer nutrients from their environment and in general produced lower yields.

The February 2002, edition of the scientific journal *Chemosphere* published a study showing that when certain antibiotics were applied in heavy doses around soybean roots, the plants died. Italian research has shown that antibiotics can severely stunt barley, corn, a water fern and various weeds, according to *Science News*. The next step for researchers is to figure out if antibiotics in soil are accumulating in plant tissue and eventually making their way to our supper tables. □

## 'Dead Zone' biggest ever

The Gulf of Mexico's "Dead Zone" is

now a record 8,500 square miles in size, making it larger than the state of Massachusetts, according to the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium. The Dead Zone is an area off the coast of Louisiana and Texas that is so "hypoxic"—low in oxygen—that fish, shrimp and crabs can't survive in lower parts of the water column. A White House-level assessment of the causes and consequences of the hypoxic zone has pointed the finger of blame straight at nitrogen. Farm fields in southern Minnesota, most of Iowa, and parts of Illinois and Indiana are by far the biggest contributors of nitrogen to the gulf. Half of that nitrogen comes from fertilizer that escapes fields, another 15 percent from livestock manure. □

## Family farms child friendly

Owner-operated farms and core industries such as advanced manufacturing and professional services produce positive living conditions for children in rural communities, according to data analyzed for all rural counties in Iowa, Kansas and Missouri. David Peters of the Missouri Department of Economic Development looked at "children-at-risk" data for the counties. He found that greater household incomes, farm proprietorships and employment in education, health, information and communication services resulted in better socioeconomic conditions for children. Conversely, greater employment in areas like industrial agriculture produced worse socioeconomic conditions for children. In an earlier study that examined Missouri data only, the more farmers in a county, the better the outcomes for children, according to the University of Minnesota's *Sustainable Agriculture* newsletter.

For a copy of the study, contact Peters at 573-522-2791 or [dpeters@ded.state.mo.us](mailto:dpeters@ded.state.mo.us). □

## Gopher pork power

Minnesota is the home office king of industrial pork. The latest *Successful Farming* Pork Powerhouse list ranks the top 40 U.S. hog producers as of Sept. 1, 2002. Eight of the Pork Powerhouses are headquartered in Minnesota, more than any other state. Iowa and North Carolina

are each home to seven "Powerhouses." Cargill, which owns 104,500 sows, is the largest pork producer based in Minnesota (reportedly none of those sows are raised in the Gopher State). The Pipestone System and Christensen Farms, which own 100,000 and 80,500 sows respectively, made it into the top eight. Both companies are based in Minnesota and raise sows in the state. □

## GMO crops

Do genetically engineered crops mean more profits for farmers? Not according to analyses of the 1998 and 2000 crop years by Iowa State University agricultural economist Mike Duffy ([www.leopold.iastate.edu/pubinfo/paperspeeches/biotech.html](http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/pubinfo/paperspeeches/biotech.html)). Using information gathered from the USDA's National Agricultural Statistic Service's Cost and Return survey, Duffy found that lower yields and higher seed costs for genetically engineered seeds took away the profit potential offered by these products. In the end, herbicide-resistant soybeans and corn that kills European corn borer (Bt corn) had no significant impacts on farmers' bottom lines.

If there are no corn borers around, there are no economic benefits to growing Bt corn, concludes an analysis by researchers from Texas A&M, the University of Minnesota and Iowa State University. In Iowa and Minnesota, corn borer populations have been low since 1998. What is unclear is whether Bt plantings have contributed to the lack of borer infestations. □

## Home cooking

A new program in Kentucky rewards restaurants and caterers for buying their food directly from local farmers.

Through "Restaurant Rewards," a joint program of Partners for Family Farms and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, restaurants and caterers buying Kentucky produce are eligible to be reimbursed \$25 in advertising dollars for every \$100 of produce they buy, with a maximum reimbursement of \$125 per month. If they buy Kentucky meats, eggs and value-added products like cheese, jams, jellies and sauces the restaurants and caterers can be reimbursed \$100 in advertising dollars for every \$1,000 of food they buy, with a maximum reimbursement of \$500 per month.

For more information, log onto [www.kyagr.com/mkt\\_promo/LPF/Livestock/meatmarketing/restaurant%20rewards.htm](http://www.kyagr.com/mkt_promo/LPF/Livestock/meatmarketing/restaurant%20rewards.htm), or call Tess Caudill at 502-564-3956. □

## Water, Grass & Livestock published

Do good fences always make for good water quality? A new Land Stewardship Project publication provides ample evidence that excluding livestock from water is not always the best solution environmentally or economically.

*Water, Grass & Livestock: An Annotated Bibliography of Riparian Grazing Publications* contains more than 250 listings for journal articles, brochures, manuals and book chapters. It covers such topics as bank erosion and vegetation, fish and insects in a stream, pollution removal by buffers, compaction, and pasture systems. This guide was developed by Melissa Driscoll, an LSP intern, and Bruce Vondracek of the Minnesota Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Unit at the University of Minnesota. Sections are alphabetized by author and each entry includes a full reference and short synopsis.

LSP staff member Caroline van Schaik, who edited *Water, Grass & Livestock*, says this is the first publication of its kind to seriously question the conventional wisdom that livestock and water never mix. The bibliography offers information pertaining to the whole-farm ecology, as well as practical how-tos, of streamside grazing.

“Research, logistics and farmer case studies contained in this guide help readers see the range of grazing options that their unique riparian setting might permit,” says van Schaik.

*Water, Grass & Livestock* is one result of a USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) effort to inform farmers and agriculture educators about select riparian management and the financial and environmental benefits to be reaped.

A pdf version of the 36-page publication can be downloaded for free from [www.landstewardshipproject.org/pdf/graze\\_biblio.pdf](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/pdf/graze_biblio.pdf). The fee for receiving a paper copy through the U.S. Mail is \$5. Call 651-653-0618 or e-mail [lsplib@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:lsplib@landstewardshipproject.org) for information on purchasing a paper copy. □

## Thanks, Philadelphia!

The Land Stewardship Project would like to thank Philadelphia Community Farm for lending us seven AmeriCorps volunteers during our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in Mankato, Minn., Aug. 24. The volunteers helped with set-up and clean-up, as well as food service and other duties.

Philadelphia Community Farm is located on the banks of the St. Croix River near Osceola, Wis. The Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) operation provides organically grown produce to its members throughout the growing season. Some of these vegetables and herbs go to a food pantry in St. Paul, Minn. The farm also provides a home to several community members with special needs and provides retreat/educational services for various groups. Philadelphia is also a founding member and partner in the Standing Cedars Land Trust. The trust has preserved 1,500 acres along five miles of the St. Croix. For more information on Philadelphia Community Farm, call 715-294-3136 or e-mail [pcomfarm@centuryinter.net](mailto:pcomfarm@centuryinter.net).

While at the farm in 2002, the AmeriCorps volunteers helped in efforts to improve “homeland security” through development of a local, sustainable food system. Volunteers worked on habitat restoration and fieldwork, as well as improvement of the farm’s educational facilities. AmeriCorps is a network of national service



**AmeriCorps volunteers take a break from work at Philadelphia Community farm. Pictured are (front row, left to right) Reed Graves, Jill Henske, Bobby Strong, (back row, left to right) Claire Blum, Bobbi Conway, Crystal Thomas and Cate Stein. The volunteers hail from Virginia, Illinois, Georgia, Ohio, New Hampshire, West Virginia and Maryland.**

programs that engage more than 50,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. AmeriCorps volunteers are currently helping with LSP’s Farm Beginnings program. For more information on AmeriCorps, call 1-800-942-2677 or log onto [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org).



## Meetings tuck into local food issues

Creating a local food and farm system was the theme of three Land Stewardship Project-related events in recent months.

On Oct. 24, the Pride of the Prairie program served locally produced food to some 700 students, faculty and community members at the University of Minnesota-Morris.

In November, Pride of the Prairie fed another 140 people during its “Moveable Feast” event in Montevideo, Minn. This was the second year of the event, which this time featured Kamyar Enshayan, coordinator of the University of Northern Iowa Local Food Project. Enshayan explained how in 2001 the initiative generated \$584,987 in sales for local farmers. This project links institutional

food buyers to nearby farmers and processors.

Enshayan also spoke at the Southeast Minnesota Sustainable Farming Association (SFA) annual meeting Feb. 8. That meeting, which was co-sponsored by LSP, Experiment in Rural Cooperation, Bluff Country Co-op and Southeast Minnesota Food Network, featured a discussion on new and developing efforts underway in southeast Minnesota to create a local food system.

For more information on local food efforts in southeast Minnesota, call the SFA’s Lonny Dietz at 507-932-5225. For more information on Pride of the Prairie, call 320-269-2105, or log onto [www.prideoftheprairie.org](http://www.prideoftheprairie.org). □

## Farm as Natural Habitat praised

The Land Stewardship Project's groundbreaking book on reconnecting food systems and ecosystems has received a number of positive reviews since it was published almost a year ago. *The Farm as Natural Habitat: Reconnecting Food Systems with Ecosystems* has been lauded by general interest publications, agriculturalists, environmentalists and a respected scientific journal.

*Des Moines Register* reviewer Susan Maas wrote on May 26, 2002, that the book "...makes a grim and thorough case against industrial agriculture. Then it breaks new ground: It shows how productive, diversified, small-scale farms can and do nurture wildlife. Sacrificing ecology is not an inevitable part of food production." The Nov./Dec. 2002 edition of *Sierra* magazine said of the book: "There is something for everybody who cares about the growing revolution in food production: farmers, conservation biologists, agriculture policymakers, and environmentalists. And birdwatchers, hunters, anglers, and other wildlife enthusiasts. And everybody who eats."

"Environmentalists have already begun to 'get on the same side of the table' with labor, the religious community, and some businesses. *The Farm as Natural Habitat* demonstrates that we must also build such coalitions with agriculture," wrote Jonna Higgins-Freese in the Oct. 21, 2002 issue of *Grist Magazine*. University of Wisconsin plant pathologist Andrew Bent said in the Nov. 15, 2002 issue of the journal *Science* that, "*The Farm as Natural Habitat* provides excellent food for thought..."

The book's ideas were also debated during a series of discussion evenings hosted by LSP members in recent months. In addition, a special reading event at Ruminator Books in St. Paul, Minn., attracted a standing-room-only crowd.

Dana Jackson, LSP's Associate Director, co-edited the book with her daughter, Laura Jackson, who is a University of Northern Iowa biology professor and LSP member. In addition, chapters were written by LSP Executive Director George Boody, *Land Stewardship Letter* editor Brian DeVore, LSP Board Member Cheryl Miller, and LSP members Tex Hawkins, Nick Jordan, Judith Soule and Beth Waterhouse, as well as several other contributors.

For information on purchasing a copy of *The Farm as Natural Habitat*, call

Island Press toll-free at 1-800-828-1302 or log onto [www.islandpress.org](http://www.islandpress.org). For information on getting an LSP member discount when buying the book, call 651-653-0618 or e-mail [lsplib@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:lsplib@landstewardshipproject.org). □

## LSP staff update

**Tara Blumer** has left the Land Stewardship Project to take a fulltime teaching position at Century College in White Bear Lake, Minn. For the past year and a half, Blumer has served as LSP's database and Web site administrator. Through her work, LSP was able to update its membership database and expand significantly the content and scope of its Web site. Blumer is still coordinating LSP's Web site part-time.

**Heidi Busse** and **Connie Smith** have been helping with the Farm Beginnings program in the southeast Minnesota office of LSP.



Connie Smith (left) & Heidi Busse

Busse was raised on a dairy farm in central Wisconsin and has an Environmental Studies degree from Lawrence University. She has studied Earth's Systems Science at the Biosphere 2 Center in Arizona and apprenticed on organic farms in Virginia, Arkansas and Arizona. Busse has taught at ecology camps for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders in Arkansas and Wisconsin and worked in the education department at Heifer International. At LSP, she is monitoring the success of Farm Beginnings.

Smith lives with her five children in the Houston, Minn., area. She has a degree in Network Administration and has worked as a Web site designer. She is assigned to the Farm Beginnings program as an AmeriCorps volunteer. Smith is researching funding sources as well as profiling farmers. She is also helping



David Van Eeckhout

link established farmers with beginning farmers.

**David Van Eeckhout** is LSP's new Database Administrator. During the past three years, Eeckhout has been farming with organic producers Greg and Mary Reynolds at Riverbend Farm in Delano, Minn. Prior to that he worked for a large market farm in Pennsylvania.

Eeckhout and his wife, Melinda, have recently purchased land near the western Wisconsin community of Arkansaw, where they are developing a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) operation. As the Database Administrator, Eeckhout will be based in LSP's White Bear Lake office.

**Laura Borgendale** is interning for the Farm Beginnings

program in LSP's western Minnesota office. Borgendale received an English degree in 2002 from the University of Minnesota. She has been working on her parents' Lac qui Parle County dairy farm and is enrolled in Farm Beginnings. □



Laura Borgendale

## Wilcke new regional SARE coordinator

Land Stewardship Project member Bill Wilcke has been appointed regional coordinator for the USDA's North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program.

Wilcke has been the coordinator for sustainable agriculture and professional development programs with the University of Minnesota Extension Service. From May 2000 through January 2002, he served as the acting administrator for the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA).

The national SARE program ([www.sare.org](http://www.sare.org)) began with the 1985 Farm Bill. Congress appropriated initial funds in 1988 for grants in sustainable agriculture research, education and demonstration (see page 19). Funding goes to farmers, scientists, educators and public and private institutions and organizations.

Wilcke can be contacted at 612-625-8205 or [wilck001@umn.edu](mailto:wilck001@umn.edu). □

## Checkoff case goes to appeal March 14

Oral arguments on the constitutionality of the mandatory pork checkoff will be heard on March 14 in the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in Cincinnati, Ohio.

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman and the National Pork Producers Council are appealing a decision from U.S. District Court Judge Richard Enslen who, in ruling in favor of the Campaign for Family Farms (CFF) and several individual hog farmers, wrote that the mandatory pork checkoff violates the U.S. Constitution. It infringes on hog producers' right to free speech by forcing them to pay into a program that supports factory-style hog production and corporate control of the industry, and is detrimental to their interests, according to the ruling, which can be found at [www.miwd.uscourts.gov/profile/Pork.judgment.pdf](http://www.miwd.uscourts.gov/profile/Pork.judgment.pdf).

In 1998, the Land Stewardship Project and other CFF members initiated a national petition drive calling for a hog farmer referendum to decide if the program should be ended. That led to a vote conducted by the USDA in August and September 2000 in which over 30,000 U.S. hog producers voted 53 percent to 47 percent to terminate the mandatory pork checkoff. Following the announcement of the vote results in January 2001, then-U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman ordered the termination of the program.

However, in a move that shocked hog farmers and various members of Congress, newly appointed Ag Secretary Ann Veneman cut a backroom deal with the National Pork Producers Council in February 2001 to throw out the results of the democratic vote and force hog farmers to keep paying the checkoff. This action led to the Campaign's lawsuit against USDA, which includes a specific claim that the checkoff violates hog producers' constitutional rights by infringing on the First Amendment.

Besides LSP, CFF members include Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, Missouri Rural Crisis Center and Illinois Stewardship Alliance. Farmers' Legal Action Group represents CFF and the individual farmers in the lawsuit. □

## Congress urged to reject anti-conservation budget

The Land Stewardship Project strongly criticized the Bush Administration's budget requests for fiscal year 2004, released Feb. 3, which included the proposed USDA budget.

"This budget puts no brakes on subsidies to the biggest operators to expand production and get paid by taxpayers for tearing up the land, while it shreds the only program that would stop penalizing farmers who are practicing good land stewardship," says Dave Serfling, an LSP member who farms near Preston, Minn. "The Bush Administration budget for agriculture ought to be rejected by Congress, and programs such as the Conservation Security Program maintained with full funding, as was passed in the 2002 Farm Bill."

In the USDA budget, the Administration proposes that Congress re-open the recently signed Farm Bill to cap the Conservation Security Program (CSP) at \$2 billion over the next 10 years. With a cap, the program would be changed from the first-ever conservation entitlement program available to all farmers who qualify and apply (on a par with commodity support programs), to a program with limited enrollment, preferential

bidding systems and waiting lists.

The Bush Administration also drastically cut programs aimed at value-added rural development, sustainable agriculture research, and wetlands preservation and restoration. Meanwhile, the Administration left intact commodity program payments (estimated at \$12.6 billion for 2004) and a huge increase in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP – funded at \$1 billion for 2004), maintaining a ninefold increase in what an individual farm operator can receive from EQIP, from \$50,000 to \$450,000.

"Apparently, the Administration has decided it doesn't like conservation and rural development that is based on family farms," says Dan Specht, an LSP member who farms near McGregor, Iowa. "In making cuts, they should start with payment limitations on commodity programs and EQIP—huge billion-dollar budgets that send money flowing to the largest operations in obscene amounts regardless of need, often for production practices that hurt, not help, the environment. Now's the time for people to call Congress and tell them to reject the Administration's attempt to rewrite the Farm Bill through the budget." □

*See page 4 for information on contacting your representative in Congress.*



**Participants in the Land Stewardship Project southeast Minnesota Farm Beginnings class discuss marketing strategies during a January workshop in Rochester. Pictured sitting are: (left, with pen) Jane Hardwick, Mark Sample, Joseph Guiney, Gene and Joyce Wertheimer, Cathy Twohig, and Greg and Nancy Rasmussen. Standing are instructors (left) Prescott Bergh, Eric Klein and Chuck Schwartau. Bergh and Klein both operate grass-based livestock operations and direct-market meat products. Schwartau is a Goodhue, Minn., County Extension Educator. Klein and Schwartau serve on the Farm Beginnings Steering Committee. For more information on Farm Beginnings, call Karen Stettler at 507-523-3366, or Amy Bacigalupo at 320-269-2105. (LSP photo)**



## Conservation & D.C.—it's not all bad news

The Land Stewardship Project and its allies in the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition scored an important victory Feb. 13 when bipartisan leaders of the U.S. Senate promised to fully fund the Conservation Security Program (CSP) and assure that it is operated as a nationwide conservation entitlement program as established in the 2002 Farm Bill. Officials in the Bush Administration are trying to cut back the CSP in budget proposals (see page 8).

“USDA needs to support the full restoration of CSP funding and honor the law that established this proactive conservation program as an entitlement program,” said LSP Policy Program Director Mark Schultz. “That’s important because it means the CSP will provide payments to all farmers who apply for the program and qualify for conservation security payments because of the conservation benefits they deliver through stewardship farming practices. Americans supported the CSP as an honest conservation program that provides incentives and rewards for farming that produces real and long-lasting benefits on the land—like increased soil building instead of loss, healthy wildlife habitat, and ground and surface water protection from chemicals and run-off.”

LSP’s farmer-members have told policy makers and USDA officials that certain core principles need to apply to CSP, which are that it a) be implemented nationwide; b) be an entitlement program; c) retain strong payment limitations on the amount of money that any one producer can receive; d) reward actual positive conservation outcomes and make significant payments for excellent stewardship; e) have meaningful minimum requirements for the program’s first tier.

If you are interested in joining with other citizens to make official comments to USDA regarding how the program should be implemented, contact LSP’s Policy Program office at 612-722-6377. The comment period will last until March 18.

## ValAdCo settles with state

Minnesota’s largest hog manure lagoon will be drained and destroyed, under the stipulations of a nuisance lawsuit settlement announced in December. ValAdCo, which operates seven factory hog farms in Renville County, was sued by Minnesota Attorney General Mike Hatch in July. Hatch sued ValAdCo after three monitors installed by his office recorded excessive hydrogen sulfide emissions at the “Norfolk 27” hog facility. Although the lawsuit related only to the Norfolk 27 lagoon, which has a capacity of 16 million gallons, the settlement involves a number of commitments that include the other six ValAdCo facilities as well. Under the settlement, ValAdCo will drain the lagoons at five of its sites and replace them with concrete pits. The lagoon sites will eventually become wetlands. ValAdCo is also being ordered to use pit covers, conduct regular water monitoring and pay \$125,000 in civil penalties.

Responsibility for meeting the requirements of the settlement ultimately falls on Christensen Farms, a Sleepy Eye, Minn., firm that is in the process of buying the financially troubled ValAdCo and which was recently ranked the eighth largest pork producer in the country (see

page 5). ValAdCo was started in the early 1990s as a farmer-owned cooperative, but one of its members has sued it, charging that, among other things, the co-op violates Minnesota’s law against corporate ownership of farms.

Hatch installed the monitors after almost eight years of complaints from neighbors of the ValAdCo facilities. In the spring of 1995, a few months after the Norfolk 27 site went into operation, members of the Julie and Jeff Jansen family began experiencing nausea, headaches, vomiting, severe diarrhea and other illnesses. Many of these symptoms are similar to what people experience when they’ve been exposed to high levels



**During testing last summer, Renville County resident Julie Jansen set up portable hydrogen sulfide monitoring equipment near a ValAdCo hog confinement facility. (LSP photo)**

of hydrogen sulfide. The Jansens’ family physician concluded that the gases produced by the lagoons were causing the illnesses. Informal surveys showed other Renville County residents living next to lagoons were suffering negative health effects as well. State officials received so many complaints that in the fall of 1995 Minnesota Department of Health investigators visited several homes in the county. They concluded many rural residents were indeed getting sick, and ruled out any “in-house” causes.

After several unsuccessful attempts to get the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to conduct more extensive air quality tests in the area, several Land Stewardship Project members took matters into their own hands. In 1996, LSP staff met with local citizens to plan a series of hydrogen sulfide emissions tests using borrowed monitors. That spring, the citizen monitors found several lagoons in the county were violating state limits on hydrogen sulfide emissions. Those tests led the Health Department to conclude that these lagoons represented a potential public health threat. In 1997, LSP and its allies worked with legislators to push through a law that was a direct result of the citizen monitoring. The law required the MPCA to enforce air quality standards related to the hydrogen sulfide emissions.

The MPCA did begin monitoring lagoons in Renville County, and in fact found the Norfolk 27 facility to be in violation of hydrogen sulfide limits hundreds of times. In 1998, the MPCA ordered ValAdCo to cover the lagoon to reduce emissions, and after repeated delays, the cooperative capped the lagoon with fabric and straw. But violations continued. Finally, Hatch erected the monitors and took legal action.

In public comments, Hatch has credited the activist-citizens of Renville County for bringing ValAdCo’s problems to the attention of regulators. However, he expressed regret that it took almost a decade of complaining to get state agencies to respond.

Monica Kahout, a hog farmer and Norfolk 27 neighbor who serves on LSP’s Board, says she is cautiously optimistic about the settlement.

“We have been consistently let down by government agencies. It is hard for us to trust any agreement involving ValAdCo and the government,” she says. “In spite of this, we are hopeful that the steps taken by the new company will cut down the air and water problems.” □



## Packer ban introduced in Senate

*Meeting on meatpacker power & factory farms March 22 in Iowa*

Four U.S. Senators introduced legislation on Jan. 7 that would ban giant meatpackers like Smithfield, Cargill, Premium Standard Farms, and Hormel from owning livestock. The Senators—Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Tom Harkin (D-IA), Mike Enzi (R-WY), and Tim Johnson (D-SD)—are introducing the bill to address one of the most important issues facing independent livestock producers across the country—corporate control in the livestock industry. Later in the month, Senator Mark Dayton (D-MN), signed on as a co-sponsor of the legislation.

Members of the Land Stewardship Project and other organizations belonging to the Campaign for Family Farms (CFF) met with Senator Grassley on Dec. 4 in Des Moines, Iowa, to encourage him to introduce the packer ban in the Senate as soon as possible.

“We appreciate Senator Grassley and the other co-sponsors taking this action,” says LSP member Ramona Garver, a livestock producer from Hendricks, Minn. “When we met with Senator Grassley, we told him we need to tackle the problem of corporate ownership of livestock and excessive control over markets, and this bill does that.”

CFF led the grassroots effort that was successful in passing the packer ban through the Senate during the 2002 Farm Bill debate. The packer ban was removed from the final version of last year’s Farm Bill in conference committee, following intense lobbying pressure from meatpackers and commodity groups to kill the packer ban. However, the packer ban remains widely popular with independent livestock producers across the country, who have made it a priority for addressing the lack of competition and excessive corporate concentration in the livestock industry.

“Last year both our Senators, Mark Dayton and the late Paul Wellstone, voted for the packer ban,” says LSP member Brian Romsdahl, who raises livestock near Butterfield, Minn. “We were glad Senator Dayton signed onto the bill, and

are urging Minnesota Senator Norm Coleman to support it. Passing the ban is the single most important thing Congress can do this year to help independent producers—and the sooner we pass it the better.”

### Packer ban meeting March 22

LSP and other member-groups of the Campaign for Family Farms are sponsoring a “Take Action on Corporate Power in Agriculture” meeting, March 22, from noon to 5:30 p.m., at the Best Western Starlite Village in Ames, Iowa (Exit 133 off of I-35).

During that meeting, farmers and rural residents from across the Midwest will come together to discuss what it will take to win a ban on packer ownership of livestock, as well as issues related to factory farms, production contracts and sustainable livestock farming. Members of Congress, regulators and representatives of the livestock industry have been invited to this event. Senators Grassley and Harkin are expected to attend.

There is a \$5 registration fee for this event. To register, or for more information, call LSP at 612-722-6377. Details will also be available at [www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org).

CFF is a coalition of farm and rural groups. Besides LSP, CFF member groups include Missouri Rural Crisis Center, Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement and Illinois Stewardship Alliance. □

## New CAFO rules ‘open the barn door’

New Federal regulations for large-scale industrialized livestock operations were released by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in December, and it soon became clear that the concerns of family farmers and environmentalists had been all but ignored. Land Stewardship Project and other member-groups of the Campaign for Family Farms are criticizing the rules as a “cave-

in” to factory farm and meatpacking interests. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES) regulations apply to CAFOs (concentrated animal feeding operations). The EPA defines a CAFO as a facility with at least 2,500 hogs, 1,000 head of feeder cattle or 125,000 chickens.

The rules promised to deal with the massive amounts of manure CAFOs pollute the environment with annually, but in the end they overlooked public comments calling for stricter regulations, says Paul Sobocinski, an LSP organizer who raises hogs near Wabasso, Minn.

Specifically, the Campaign for Family Farms has called for the NPDES regulations to provide:

- **Integrator liability for factory farms**—Corporate agribusinesses like Smithfield, Tyson, Cargill and Premium Standard Farms should be held responsible for the pollution caused by their operations. EPA failed to require this accountability.

- **Freedom of Information Act/public notice full disclosure**—Public notification and public hearings are an essential part of a fair and open process. The EPA failed to grant full public disclosure for items such as nutrient management plans.

- **Lagoon closure and future banning of lagoon construction**—A significant failure of the current environmental regulatory system is its continued acceptance of hog and dairy CAFOs that rely on huge earthen lagoons or basins to store millions of gallons of liquid manure.

- **General vs. individual permitting**—These rules allow many CAFOs to hide behind general group permits instead of having each facility apply for an individual, site-specific permit. This helps these operations avoid public disclosure and scrutiny.

“There is a desperate need for local input and control in the permitting of CAFOs in our communities,” says Sobocinski. “The EPA has left the barn door open to easy permitting and it will be up to the townships and counties in our states to pick up the cleaning bill.”

The Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, to which LSP also belongs, further criticized the rules because they put farmers who are utilizing alternative methods at an economic disadvantage while allowing CAFOs to continue placing the environmental cost of doing business onto taxpayers. □



## Moore leaves LSP

After almost two decades of service as an organizer, Patrick Moore has left the Land Stewardship Project. In the early 1980s, Moore helped promote LSP's cultural programs, particularly the *Planting in the Dust* play. He traveled throughout the Midwest helping community groups set up the landmark one-woman play on land stewardship. Moore later went on to launch LSP's western Minnesota office in Montevideo. He used his organizing skills to start two watershed organizations—Clean Up our River Environment (CURE) and the Chippewa River Watershed Partnership. Both groups have gone on to become nationally recognized for their success at bringing a wide variety of people together over water quality issues. Moore was also deeply involved in initiatives to make natural drainage more possible in the Upper Minnesota River Valley.

It should be noted that Moore has made one other significant contribution to the Land Stewardship Project: he designed the organization's "circle" logo.

"Patrick has served LSP with distinction in several different capacities over the years," says LSP Executive Director George Boody. "He is an entrepreneur, and he excels at bringing together people from diverse perspectives to solve problems and to create exciting new



**Patrick Moore, along with his wife Mary and their children, Frances (left) Martin and Anna. (LSP photo)**

visions for people in west central Minnesota."

In 1998, Moore, along with his wife, Mary, started Java River Café ([www.javarivercafe.com](http://www.javarivercafe.com)) in downtown Montevideo. This coffee shop is committed to serving locally raised produce and meat. An accomplished musician and artist, Moore has turned the café into a

place where local performers can show their talent. It has also become a popular venue for individuals to meet when discussing community and environmental stewardship issues. Moore has also helped revitalize Montevideo's downtown, organizing public events and fundraisers to preserve such cultural icons as a local movie theater.

Most recently, Moore has served on the steering committee of the Western Minnesota Enterprise Facilitation Network (WMEFN). Since officially forming a steering committee in January 2002, the WMEFN has set about securing the funds to establish an Enterprise Facilitation service for anyone who is serious about starting or expanding a business in western Minnesota. Enterprise Facilitators work

with a community based board to provide free, confidential business management and networking assistance to local entrepreneurs.

For more information on the WMEFN, contact Susan Brickweg at 320-269-8484. □

## Poetry

### Sister Earth

(the words of hope of a confessing participant—it is good for the soul)

The silence sounded like a billion times a billion screaming ta-tonka when the first steel blades lifted prairie's silken shirt,  
Rolling it back for the forceful penetration of a foreign seed.  
Naked lay the centuries of prehuman work, excited chemistry  
exposed to a new catalyst, intent on releasing the stored energies.  
It was called farming, husbandry of earth's thin skin, in spite of the  
gifted reality that "the two shall become one."  
Is it a vision without sight that brings us to our rush to cover our deeds, or  
self-hatred's edict of irreversibility of momentum that silences the confession,  
that restores the soul?  
The Word became flesh, humus, and this life brought light to the people, and  
the darkness can not overcome it.  
God's sighted vision, of "two become one" in a nurturing, graceful embrace of what is,  
as anticipation of what will come.  
The sound of the perennial meadow soil-soul- is symbiotic voices...reassuring... like  
the deep mellow clucking of a safely free mother hen tending her chicks in the Son's light.

— Larry H. Olson  
Granite Falls, Minn., farmer



# Factory farming's new regulatory buddy

*MDA's 'Livestock Friendly' designation is starting to smell like a theft of local control*

In its drive to recruit large-scale, industrialized livestock production into the state, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has repeatedly been frustrated by local units of government—townships and counties specifically. These local governments enact ordinances limiting large feedlots to protect family farmers and the environment. After all, it's the counties and townships that have to deal with the manure spills, overpowering odors and complaints from area citizens.

Enter the Livestock-Friendly Counties Program. Pushed through the 2002 Minnesota Legislature by factory farm advocates, this program has now become Minnesota Commissioner of Agriculture Gene Hugoson's newest program to promote factory farms.

Harold Stanislawski, an Ag Development Specialist for the MDA, travels to California regularly to promote Minnesota's dairy industry. He bemoans the fact that Minnesota is losing ground to the western states, where mega-dairies that can house thousands of cows have become common in recent years. Stanislawski says a good model for Minnesota locally is South Dakota. Officials there have launched an initiative to increase the dairy herd by 65,000 animals, and are actively promoting operations that can house at least 2,500 cows. South Dakota is wooing dairy producers from the Netherlands, Canada and other areas.

"We need that kind of thing to happen in Minnesota," said Stanislawski during a presentation at the Minnesota Pork Congress in January. "I'm about as size neutral as you get...but let's face the facts: There are certain individuals that bring certain things to the table...and take all the risks."

Stanislawski argues that the "Livestock Friendly" designation is "nothing but a symbol" that shows certain counties are open to more animal agriculture-based economic development.

However, farmers and local government officials are questioning just how symbolic this program is. In order to be designated "livestock friendly," a substantial area of a county must be "governed by a regulatory framework conducive to a viable animal agriculture sector..." according to the Department of Agriculture's Web site ([www.mda.state.mn.us/agdev/](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/agdev/)

lfcprogram.htm). What is not "conducive" to livestock agriculture? According to the MDA, limiting the size of operations that can be built through animal unit caps, placing moratoriums on feedlot expansion or new construction, and prohibition of earthen basins for dairy manure all make a county anti-livestock.

"You can't be in the business of economic development and growth with those kinds of things," says Stanislawski.

But critics of the program say county

control of livestock development. In that state's Dickinson County, a large hog facility is being proposed within 1.5 miles of 30 homes, and within 1.25 miles of a 120-acre recreational park.

"If we relinquish our control to the state, we give up our rights at the county and township levels," says Lein. "That would be a colossal mistake."

County officials have also expressed concern that the "Livestock Friendly" designation will open up their community to industrialized livestock without providing resources from the state to help them deal with the added costs that come with large-scale manure storage, transportation, etc. This is of particular concern at a time when there is a real danger the state will cut programs that help counties inspect and otherwise regulate feedlots.

To address these concerns, the Land Stewardship Project has helped create a coalition that's working to repeal the "Livestock Friendly" legislation. The coalition includes Minnesota Farmers Union, Minnesota Catholic Conference, the Lutheran Coalition for Public Policy, Izaak Walton League, Minnesota CO-ACT, Minnesota Dairy Producers Board and the Milk Power Board.

The program is beginning to attract critics from many quarters. In a Jan. 23 column, *AgriNews* editor Mychal Wilmes called the program "silly and empty." But dismissing "Livestock Friendly" as silly makes it sound less threatening that it may actually be. Thom Petersen, Government Relations Director for the Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU), says removing animal unit caps will open the door for huge livestock operations. MFU believes livestock are key to a viable rural economy, but "rather than one 1,000 cow dairy we'd rather see ten 100-cow dairies in a community."

He says MFU's members are not complaining that regulations are putting them out of business. Rather, the lower prices they receive are a barrier to being competitive.

The MDA has responded sharply to criticism of the program. Hugoson and Assistant Commissioner Jim Boerboom have authored newspaper commentaries defending it, and Stanislawski has given numerous presentations on the advantages to being "Livestock Friendly."

## Animal unit caps & livestock vitality in Minnesota

County	Animal Unit Cap	Production Rank in Minn.
<i>Fillmore</i>	2,000 a.u.*	1st in beef cows** 5th in beef cattle
<i>Winona</i>	1,500 a.u.*	3rd in dairy** 3rd in beef cattle
<i>Blue Earth</i>	3,000 a.u.*	2nd in swine**
<i>Morrison</i>	1,000 a.u. for hogs, 1,500 for other*	4th in dairy** 3rd in beef cows 4th in beef cattle

\* Source: "Summary of Animal-Related Ordinances in Minnesota Counties," Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Feb. 2000

\*\* Source: *Minnesota Agricultural Statistics 2002*, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 2002

regulations and a healthy livestock sector are not mutually exclusive (see table). In the end, these critics say, the program basically strips away local control, pits county against county and opens the door to massive operations that damage economic and environmental health.

"This program is about undermining county control and paving the way for corporate-backed livestock operations at the expense of independent producers," says Ed Gadiant, who raises hogs near Pine Island, Minn.

That's what concerns Loren Lein, a commissioner in southern Minnesota's Faribault County who is opposed to the "Livestock Friendly" designation. He says farming is integral to his county's economy (it rates 12<sup>th</sup> statewide in swine production), and he wants livestock raised in the community on many independent operations, not concentrated on a few corporate-backed feedlots. He's seen what has happened across the border in Iowa, where counties do not have local

**Livestock Friendly**, see page 13...

## The Texas model

"It seems like it's taken a lot of the MDA's time," says Petersen. "What is the true goal?"

Based on experience in other states, the goal may be to eventually eliminate all local control, says William Weida, a Senior Status professor of economics at Colorado College who studies the impacts of factory farms on rural communities. He says promoters of large-scale animal factories are realizing that it's easier to lobby legislators and regulators at the state capital than it is to go into a local community and talk county supervisors or township officials into making changes that affect their neighbors.

"A lot of states have looked at this because they've realized the thorn in their side when it comes to slowing factory farm expansion in the counties," he says, adding that there has also been a push to dump local control in Canada.

One of the most extreme examples is Texas, where counties have lost the ability to control placement of large-scale livestock operations. Now, when a factory farm comes into that state, its backers submit a request to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, which rubber stamps the proposal as long as the proposal falls within the broad boundaries of what the state considers "desirable." Weida says the result has been predictable: it did not help local farmers and ranchers, but instead made the state a magnet for huge corporate-controlled hog and dairy operations shopping around for lax regulations. In 1994, Premium Standard Farms was granted a permit by Texas to build a facility that would produce 925,000 hogs at one site. After that, operations housing tens of thousands of hogs became common in the state, particularly in the Panhandle. By 1994, new dairies, mostly large, were being built in one Texas county at a rate of one per month.

"The end result is the counties are totally helpless," says Weida. "It has drawn companies from all over that wanted to expand. These people don't seem to be capable of acknowledging they are in competition for these sites all over the country. When they take steps to loosen these rules, they will attract these large operations looking for the loosest regulations they can find."

Still, MDA officials maintain that since Minnesota's "Livestock Friendly" program is voluntary, it is harmless. They

also argue that it is size neutral—it will help the smallest livestock farmers, as well as the largest. Stanislawski says that with the state facing a fiscal crisis, livestock development offers a great opportunity to create jobs in local communities. (Studies actually show that large-scale livestock production is not the basis of long-term economic development in rural areas; see sidebar.) When communities adopt a go-slow approach to placement of these large-scale facilities, it sends the wrong message to the livestock industry, says Stanislawski.

But townships and counties are often at a loss of how to deal with a sudden influx of operations the size of which can be unprecedented. Local officials are increasingly using temporary moratoriums on development to buy time as they gather scientific and economic informa-

## Repeal the law

At press time, the Land Stewardship Project was working to get the "Livestock Friendly" program repealed by the 2003 Minnesota Legislature. For information on how to help, contact Bobby King at 507-523-3366 (e-mail: [bking@landstewardshipproject.com](mailto:bking@landstewardshipproject.com)), or Paul Sobocinski at 507-342-2323 (e-mail: [sobopaul@rconnect.com](mailto:sobopaul@rconnect.com)).

tion on the impact of such operations, while seeking input from citizens who will be neighbors to these facilities. Large-scale livestock development prompts some hard questions for communities, such as who will be responsible for abandoned manure storage facilities, what impact will manure hauling have on roads, and how close to a residence or church is too close?

## Local limits on feedlot size

MDA officials are also upset that some counties have chosen to impose caps on how many animals can be housed at one site. At least 13 of Minnesota's 87 counties have such limits in place. These limits start at 1,000 head for dairies, 2,100 for feeder cattle facilities, and 2,500 for sow operations. Keep in mind that 86 percent of Minnesota pork producers have less than 2,000 swine, while 96 percent of the state's dairy farms are under 200 cows, according to the Minnesota Agricultural Statistics Service.

Stanislawski maintains that too many times counties put in place animal unit limitations without giving serious thought as to the long-range implications.

But Bob Christie says when he served on a feedlot committee in Winona County, he and the other members of the committee took the idea of imposing animal unit limits very seriously. Christie, who raises 200 beef steers on 320 acres near St. Charles, Minn., says southeast Minnesota's karst geology makes the groundwater particularly vulnerable to manure runoff. The Swiss cheese-like formations that underlie the area's soil allow contaminants to make their way into underground water. Eventually, Winona County settled on a 1,500 animal unit limit. That's equal to 1,071 milk cows, 3,750 sows and 1,500 slaughter beef steers. Christie says he and other committee members looked at the size of the average farm in the county and gave them plenty of room to grow.

"A 1,500 animal unit cap accommodates even a pretty large family operation," he says. "We didn't feel we were limiting any families in the county from doing what they were doing."

Christie concedes that the 1,500 animal unit cap probably will inhibit one group of producers: outside investors who want to build large-scale operations. For example, two 2,100-cow dairies are being proposed by New Jersey investors in Dodge County, north of Winona County. The promoters of those dairies, including the MDA, argue they are needed to keep processors in the area. But farmers like Christie aren't buying that argument. He says processors would much rather pick up milk from a few large operations and not bother stopping at several smaller farms in a county. In fact, processors pay volume premiums that penalize smaller farms. Once those larger operations are established, they will push out smaller family farms, he says.

Christie, who has been farming in the county since 1969, says he has no problem doing business under a cap.

"Winona County ranks third in dairy and third in beef cattle," he says. "Those numbers don't suggest we aren't livestock friendly. If you have environmental criteria that also benefit the economy, so much the better." □

## Crunch the numbers

For more information on the economic impacts of large-scale livestock operations, see the Myth Buster Box on page 3. On the Web, you can check out "A Citizen's Guide to the Regional Economic and Environmental Effects of Large Concentrated Dairy Operations," at [www.factoryfarm.org/reports.html#dairyreport](http://www.factoryfarm.org/reports.html#dairyreport).

research that should be of interest to anyone concerned about the future of family farming, rural communities and the land. We can't hope to provide an exhaustive guide to this huge resource. But perhaps a little light can be shown on portions that promoters of factory farms would rather the public not know about. First, we'll start by looking at "Phosphorus Balance in Minnesota Feedlot Permitting," which provides some disturbing insights into the relationship between animal concentration and manure pollution.

The paper is based on an analysis of 3,907 feedlot permits issued by Minnesota counties between 1980 and 2000. The study divided permits into three farm size categories:

- **Small**—fewer than 100 animal units.
- **Medium**—100 to 299 animal units.
- **Large**—300 to 1,000 animal units.

In Minnesota, a mature dairy cow is equal to 1.4 animal units, one head of feeder cattle equals 0.7, a sow is 0.4 and a chicken under five pounds is 0.003. For example, 100 animal units equals 71 dairy cows and 250 sows. One thousand animal units is the equivalent of 714 dairy cows and 2,500 sows.

It should be noted the study only considered operations that had at least 10 animal units and no more than 1,000. That size range is consistent with feedlot regulations in force during the time period studied.

The authors—soil scientist Dennis Kenney, University of Minnesota agricultural economist Richard Levins and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency nonpoint pollution educator Joseph Schimmel—examined how much manure-based phosphorus each farm category produced. For example, the manure excreted by a 1,400-pound dairy cow each day contains about a quarter-pound of phosphorus. Multiply that by how many days the cow is present on the farm, and an annual estimate is obtained.

The researchers also examined how many acres these operations had available to spread the manure on. Then, they looked at what crops are typically raised in the county the farm sits in, and historical yields of those crops (the higher the yield, the more phosphorus a plant should utilize). Armed with that information, an estimate of how much surplus phosphorus each farm produced was developed by the researchers.

What's considered surplus phosphorus? Any amount of the nutrient that plants growing on the land can't take up and use. For example, corn removes 36

pounds of phosphorus for every 100 bushels of the grain harvested. So if 50 pounds of phosphorus is applied to an acre of land, and that acre produces 100 bushels of corn, there are 14 pounds of the nutrient left over.

If that excess leaves the field, it can create serious water quality problems. Phosphorus, which attaches itself to soil particles, can make it into surface water through erosion. When that happens, it can ignite algal blooms, severely affecting aquatic health by blocking sunlight and eating up oxygen. Wayward phosphorus can change an ecosystem beyond recognition. In a lake that is low on phosphorus, one pound of the nutrient flowing in can produce 500 pounds of algae.

"You put in a little bit, and you will get a monstrous response," says Schimmel.

### Too much manure, too little land

The analysis found that small farms had a median phosphorus *shortage* of 17.3 pounds per acre, while the medium-sized operations had a surplus of 4.5 pounds per acre. The largest feedlots studied were producing 38.2 pounds of excess phosphorus for each acre of land to which the manure was applied.

"I was shocked," says Levins. "I

GEIS, see page 15...

## What is the GEIS?

In 1998, tired of wrestling with the contentious environment created by the aggressive growth of large-scale livestock facilities in the state, the Minnesota Legislature commissioned a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) on Animal Agriculture. The Legislature gave the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) \$2.97 million to conduct a statewide study of the present and projected impacts of livestock facilities. A 24-member Citizen Advisory Committee was created to guide the scope of the study. It consisted of organizations and individuals who are involved in livestock farming issues. Mark Schultz, the Land Stewardship Project's Policy Program Director, represented LSP on the committee.

The objective of the study was, according to the Environmental Quality Board, to "...provide balanced information on animal agriculture and recommendations on future alternatives to optimize livestock production in the state, while protecting public health, social stability and environmental quality." The study is being touted as the first of its kind in the nation.

The Citizen Advisory Committee eventually directed the development of a 1,500-page literature summary, as well as 10 technical working papers on subjects such as human health and water quality. That's an impressive pile of pulp, but Schultz and other members of the committee say the report fell far short in two key areas: identifying and comparing a range of options for the future of animal agriculture in Minnesota, and evaluating cumulative effects of animal agriculture development on the state's environment and communities (comments from the general public

also raised concerns about the report's lack of coverage in these two areas). Both of these elements were priority goals of the study, as approved by the EQB in 1998.

Schultz says one of the reasons the report didn't live up to its stated objectives was due to the influence of Minnesota Agriculture Commissioner Gene Hugoson, who served as the chair of the EQB while the GEIS was being developed. In a letter to GEIS manager George Johnson dated Oct. 25, 2001, Hugoson expressed concern that the report not be too heavily weighted in favor of "environmental concerns." In the letter, Hugoson called the current state environmental review process a "trumped up roadblock" and said regulations threaten to either drive farmers out of business or make them "move to a state or country with a less onerous regulation structure." When a draft of the GEIS report was released a month later, several paragraphs of Hugoson's letter were tacked onto the introduction. Although the words were virtually verbatim from the letter, there was no recognition that Hugoson was the author. Several groups represented on the Citizen Advisory Committee, including LSP, the Izaak Walton League and the League of Women Voters, expressed strong objections to including Hugoson's words in a supposedly "neutral" report introduction.

Johnson eventually removed the objectionable words from the introduction.

"It was really poor judgement on my part," Johnson said later of his decision to excerpt Hugoson's letter in the introduction. "I was not compelled by the Commissioner of Agriculture to put that in. It was my choice and it was the wrong choice."

assumed it would be the same across all sizes."

What was the variable? The larger feedlots tended to have less land per animal available to spread the manure. The larger operations averaged 503 animal units and 558 acres of land available for manure disposal, while the smaller ones averaged 55 animal units and 220 acres.

Schimmel, an animal scientist, says it's not size per se that causes excess phosphorus. Rather it's density of animals—the animals-to-acre ratio. A small farm may concentrate too many animals on too little land and, in fact, the researchers did find some small operations had a surplus. They also found larger operations with a good phosphorus balance. However, the fact is smaller and medium sized farms are more likely to have a variety of crops growing nearby, thus providing land for manure application. Those crops are often grown as feed for the animals being raised on the smaller farms. So, the nutrients in the manure are cycled through the livestock via the feed crops. If the animals are grazed, the manure is cycled even more directly because the animals spread the nutrients on their own.

"On the small farms, it's more of a closed system" as far as nutrient cycling goes, says Schimmel.

Larger, specialized livestock operations may not be as likely to have those field acres handy because they are often shipping in feed from other locations. On a bigger scale, consider this: the study estimated that 54.2 million pounds of phosphorus was being produced by the feedlots studied. Crop use was estimated to be 52.8 million, leaving 1.4 million pounds of the surplus nutrient. Now, if that 1.4 million pounds could be transported economically from one part of the state to another, spreading it evenly over the land, that would be one thing. But that's not the case. Liquid manure is uneconomical to transport more than a mile from the storage facility, according to the GEIS.

In order to obtain a permit, farmers must submit manure management plans that describe how they plan to deal with waste disposal. Those plans are written with nitrogen, another major nutrient present in manure, in mind. And for good reason: nitrogen tends to leach down through soil profiles, getting into drinking water and posing a risk to babies. It also has been identified as the

main culprit in the formation of the Gulf of Mexico's hypoxic "Dead Zone." But the fact is, corn uses a tremendous amount of nitrogen.

Although phosphorus is a valuable nutrient, plants like corn don't need as much of it. So, if a farm is applying manure based solely on how much nitrogen can be taken up, it is probably applying too much phosphorus.

Talk of making phosphorus a bigger factor when doing manure management plans raises the hackles of large-scale livestock producers. An agronomist for Christensen Farms showed up at one GEIS hearing and expressed strong concerns about proposals to reduce phosphorus applications. No wonder: Christensen's 80,500 sows produce a whole lot of manure.

There's no doubt rewriting manure plans in a way that requires more land per animal unit would have significant negative impacts on large-scale factory farms. What makes these operations economically competitive is the ability to avoid paying the full expense of production. This is an example of externalizing costs and getting someone else—often

## The phosphorus balance\*

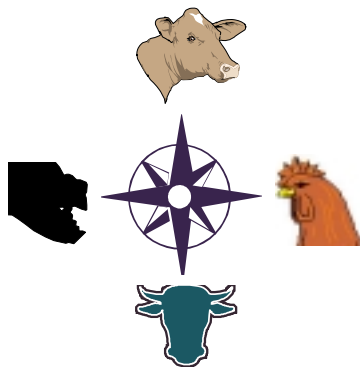
	Avg. # animal units	Avg. # acres for manure disposal	Median phosphorus surplus/acre
Smaller feedlots	55	220	-17.3 pounds
Medium feedlots	172	343	+4.5 pounds
Larger feedlots	503	558	+38.2 pounds

\* Source: "Phosphorus Balance in Minnesota Feedlot Permitting," Final TWP, Economics of Agriculture, Generic Environmental Impact Statement for Animal Agriculture, Minnesota Environmental Quality Board, Sept. 2002

society at large—to cover them. When manure is spread on land at more concentrated levels than it should be, factory farms avoid paying the full expense of waste disposal, and the community pays a dear price in the form of polluted water. If they aren't able to displace so much of their waste disposal costs onto society, these operations will lose much of the competitive edge they now enjoy.

Under such a scenario, who would that edge go to? Smaller, diversified operations that don't see manure as just so much waste to get rid of, but more as a valuable part of a production cycle involving animals, feed crops and land. □

## Navigating the GEIS



To get a copy of the Generic Environmental Impact Statement on Animal Agriculture, you can log onto [www.mnplan.state.mn.us/eqb/geis](http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/eqb/geis). A CD-ROM version of the report is also available for \$5 (that covers shipping and handling). If you have a computer, the CD-ROM is a good investment: it includes all 7,000 pages and is cross-referenced, making for easier researching.

For information on ordering the CD-ROM, call the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) at **651-296-2888**. Some regional **Minnesota libraries** also have the report available. If your local library doesn't have it, call the EQB to find the closest library that's carrying it.

### To find the study discussed here

→ First, go to the "Technical Working Papers" section.

→ Find "Technical Working Paper on Topics D, E & F: Economic Structures, Profitability & External Costs."

→ Go to "Phosphorus Balance in Minnesota Feedlot Permitting" on page 80.

If you're on the Internet, the direct address for the technical working paper is [www.mnplan.state.mn.us/eqb/geis/TWP\\_Economic.pdf](http://www.mnplan.state.mn.us/eqb/geis/TWP_Economic.pdf).

On CD-ROM, you can find the paper by clicking on the file **TWP\_EC~1.PDF**.

# Food & Farm → → → → Connection

## A local meal checklist

Thinking of serving local food at your community group's next function? The Pride of the Prairie program has developed some guidelines for sourcing and serving a meal supplied by local farmers.

### 1. Start small

- Start with a small group, perhaps choosing to serve some local food for a meeting or workshop you are sponsoring.
- Choose one local food to feature on the basic menu at your next group dinner.

### 2. Get in touch with farmers

- Go to farmers' markets to find local, direct-marketing farmers.
- Contact a Land Stewardship Project office near you for a list of farmers who produce food for direct sales, or go to [www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org) for a list of direct-marketing farmers.

### 3. Consider availability

- Set dinner dates for seasons when local food is plentiful (summer and fall, rather than winter and early spring).
- Contact farmers as soon as your group's calendar is set to discuss possibilities.
- Plan your basic menu around what local farmers can supply.

### 4. Consider preparation

- Fresh, local foods may require different preparation—vegetables, for instance, may need to be washed and peeled. Using local foods means that you will need to plan for such tasks—or perhaps come up with new and creative ways to deal with them.

### 5. And don't forget

- Recognize the farmers who produced the food. Let people know where this good food came from. □

## Low mileage shopping list

Last summer, the Land Stewardship Project's western Minnesota office helped provide a locally grown roast beef buffet as part of the observance of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the film *Foreclosure* (see May/June 2002 *Land Stewardship Letter*). More than 70 people

enjoyed the food at the More Café in Milan, Minn. As part of the meal, LSP organizer Audrey Arner created a chart showing the number of miles the meal's food traveled to get to the More Café:

- ✓ Roast beef: **2 miles** (Double D Natural Meats, Milan, Minn.)
- ✓ Meat processing at Carlson Meats in Grove City, Minn.: **200 miles**
- ✓ Lettuce & radish salad: **7 miles** (Easy Bean Farm, Milan)
- ✓ Wheat bread with Omega flax: **14 miles** (A-Frame Farm, Madison, Minn.)
- ✓ Strawberries: **30 miles** (Glueksberry Farm, Gluek, Minn.)

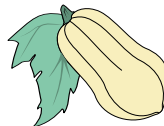
**TOTAL: 253 miles**

An Iowa study recently showed that food obtained from conventional sources on average traveled **1,546 miles** to get to that state.

The locally produced meal at the More Café was a Pride of the Prairie initiative, a collaboration of LSP, West Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership and Prairie Renaissance.

## Yum, yum

During the Pride of the Prairie's Moveable Feast in November a winter squash slaw was served that caused people to, according to Land Stewardship Project organizer Audrey Arner, "go gaga." So, due to popular gaga-fueled demand, here's the recipe. It comes to us from Odessa Piper, chef/owner of L'Etoile restaurant in Madison, Wis. Piper says she likes using Jonathan or Winesap apples in this salad. If you like a creamy slaw, she suggests adding 1 cup sour cream or *crème fraîche*.



### Ingredients (serves four to six)

- ☛ 2 tart red apples, cored and grated with skins (about 1 cup)
- ☛ 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- ☛ 3 tbs. Passionfruit vinegar (or 3 tbs. cider vinegar plus 2 tbs. honey)
- ☛ 1/2 small butternut squash, peeled, halved, seeded and grated (about 3 cups)

- ☛ Salt
- ☛ 1 cup shredded green cabbage
- ☛ Freshly ground black pepper

### Directions

In a small bowl, toss the apples and dried cranberries with the vinegar. Set aside.

Spread the grated squash on a flat pan and sprinkle with 1/2 tsp. salt. This draws out a bitter substance in the squash. After 5 minutes, pat the squash dry and transfer it to a large bowl. Add the shredded cabbage.

Add the apple-cranberry mixture to the squash and cabbage. Mix thoroughly. Season with salt and pepper.

*To download this and other recipes, log onto [www.landstewardshipproject.org/foodfarm-recipes.html](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/foodfarm-recipes.html). We also welcome contributions of recipes featuring local foods. E-mail them to [cathye@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:cathye@landstewardshipproject.org), or send them to: LSP, 2200 4th Street, White Bear Lake, MN 55110.*



# Food & Farm Fest April 12-13

Consumers will have a chance to meet some of the faces behind the food at the 2003 Community Food and Farm Festival, to be held in conjunction with the Living Green Expo, Saturday, April 12, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sunday, April 13, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., at the Minnesota State Fair Grounds' Education Building, 1265 Snelling Ave. N., in St. Paul. There is no admission charge. The Community Food and Farm Festival is co-sponsored by the Land Stewardship Project and the Minnesota Food Association.



During the past five years, the Community Food and Farm Festival has evolved into one of the region's most popular venues for meeting farmers who are direct marketing various kinds of food. Farmers will be on hand this year to answer questions about the sustainable production methods they use to produce food that is safe and good for the environment. Learn about joining a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm or buying food directly through various other means, as well as what products are within driving distance of the metro area (meats, vegetables, dairy products, grains and more). Consumers can sample various items and sign up to purchase sustainably raised food right on the spot. "There is a growing desire among

regular folks to eat local, sustainably-raised food," says Jay Lyons, Community Food and Farm Festival Coordinator. "What many people don't know is where and how to get locally-grown food. They may patronize their farmers' market in the summer, but don't know that local meats, dairy products, herbs, honey, maple products, and many other foods can be bought year-round, directly from the farmer. The Food and Farm Festival is one of the best opportunities available to make those connections."

But the Living Green Expo isn't just about food. It is a two-day event that provides Minnesotans with information, ideas, resources, products and motivation to live more sustainably. Information and products for clean transportation, home energy efficiency, home remodeling, yard and garden care, and other purposes will be exhibited. Music, children's activities, educational forums and food vendors will be a part of the Expo this year.

For more information about the Community Food and Farm Festival, log onto [www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org) and look under *Upcoming Events*, or contact Lyons at 651-653-0618; [jayl@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:jayl@landstewardshipproject.org). For information on the Living Green Expo, log onto [www.livinggreenexpo.org](http://www.livinggreenexpo.org) or call 612-331-1099; 651-215-0218. □

## Baskin-Robbins economics

*"Almost every developed country can raise enough calories to feed itself. Much of our world food trade involves trading 'flavors' between countries."*

— Jerry Fruin, economist and marketing/transportation specialist with the University of Minnesota Extension Service, writing in an April 17, 2002, press release

## 'Pride' develops seasonal food guide

The Pride of the Prairie local foods initiative has developed a seasonal food guide for eating in the Upper Minnesota River Valley. It can be picked up at our western Minnesota office, which is at 103 W. Nichols in Montevideo. The guide can also be downloaded from the Land Stewardship Project Web site at [www.landstewardshipproject.org/pdf/food\\_guide.pdf](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/pdf/food_guide.pdf). □



# 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 goods 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, antibiotic and hormone-free, 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 [www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org) and click on *Food & Farm Connection*.

LSP periodically updates and makes corrections to its Food Network list. If you are an LSP member who would like to be listed, please contact us at 651-653-0618. Here are the latest additions:

## Twin Cities Metro

### □ Ames Farm

Brian Fredericksen  
11325 County Rd. 20  
Watertown, MN 55388  
Phone: 952-955-3348  
E-mail: [info@amesfarm.com](mailto:info@amesfarm.com)  
Web site: [www.Amesfarm.com](http://www.Amesfarm.com)  
→ Products: *Honey & bee pollen;*

### 20 varieties of apples & pears

✕ Also serves: *Fruit & honey at Minneapolis Farmers' Markets on Lyndale Ave. & Nicollet Mall; honey products at Twin Cities natural food co-ops and natural foods stores*

## Southeast Minn.

### □ Simple Harvest Farm

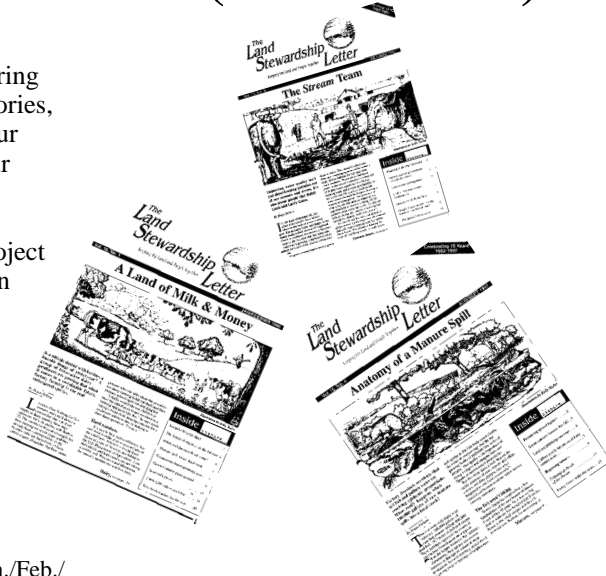
Theresa, Kathy & Nick Zeman  
11539 East 200th Street  
Kenyon MN 55946  
Phone: 507-789-6375  
E-mail: [zeman@cannon.net](mailto:zeman@cannon.net)  
→ Products: *Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) produce operation; eggs, broilers, beef, pork, lamb, goat, Icelandic wool, & goat milk soap*

# Did you miss a *Land Stewardship Letter* (or 2...or 10)?

*Here's a chance to catch up on your stewardship reading*

The Land Stewardship Project celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2002. During two decades of existence, we've accumulated a lot of things: major victories, battle scars...and back issues of the *Land Stewardship Letter*. Here's your chance to help us lighten our load while adding some enlightening material to your bookshelf. Find out why *Whole Earth* magazine calls the *LSL* one of its "favorite newsletters...Grounded, intimate, striving, practical." And the price of these back issues won't weigh heavy on your bank account either—the Land Stewardship Project is offering the first 10 back issues of the newsletter for free (if you order more than that, call us for information on paying shipping and handling charges).

Listed on this page are subject areas covered by the newsletter over the past several years (sorry, we don't have back issues dated before 1986). To order these back issues, just contact Louise Arbuckle, LSP's Twin Cities Office Manager, and let her know which subjects you are interested in. Louise will then put together a packet of *LSLs* and ship them to you. Did we mention she will do this for free? A more detailed description of each back issue is available at [www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org) in pdf format. Happy gleaning!



## *Land Stewardship Letter* back issues subject list 1986-2002

- ◆ **Animal welfare & sustainable agriculture** (May/June 1995)
- ◆ **Antibiotic resistance & agriculture** (May/June 2002; March/April 2002)
- ◆ **Beginning farmers** (July/Aug./Sept. 2002; Jan./Feb. 2002; Sept./Oct. 2001; Dec. 1998; Spring 1994)
- ◆ **Biodiversity & agriculture** (Sept./Oct. 2001; Dec. 1998; Nov. 1998)
- ◆ **Birds & grass farmers** (Dec. 1997)
- ◆ **Clean Up our River Environment-CURE** (Summer 1992)
- ◆ **Community Supported Agriculture-CSA** (Jan./Feb. 1995; Spring 1992)
- ◆ **Conservation Reserve Program-CRP** (Nov./Dec. 1994)
- ◆ **Contract farming** (April/May 1999)
- ◆ **Corporate consolidation & agriculture** (Jan./Feb. 2002; Nov. 1999; Jan./Feb./March 1999)
- ◆ **County soil protection ordinances** (Summer 1987; Winter 1986; Summer 1986)
- ◆ **Dairy farming & rotational grazing** (Jan./Feb./March 1998)
- ◆ **Direct marketing of local food** (Jan./Feb. 2002; Sept./Oct. 2000)
- ◆ **Factory hog farming** (Aug./Sept. 1994)
- ◆ **Farmer-to-farmer networking** (November 1999)
- ◆ **Farm as Natural Habitat** (July/Aug./Sept. 2002; March/April 2002; July/Aug. 1998)
- ◆ **Federal farm policy** (March/April 2002; Jan./Feb. 2002; Sept./Oct. 2001; Nov. 2000; July/Aug. 2000; April/May/June 2000; March/April 1995; Summer 1989; Winter 1989; Summer 1988; Winter 1986)
- ◆ **Fighting factory farms** (Jan./Feb. 2002; Jan./Feb./March 2000; July/Aug. 1996; Summer 1993; Spring 1993; Winter 1992)

- ◆ **Genetic engineering & farming** (Jan./Feb./March 2001; Dec. 2000; Jan./Feb./March 2000; April/May 1999)
- ◆ **Globalization & sustainable agriculture** (Sept./Oct. 2000; Jan./Feb./March 1997)
- ◆ **Gulf of Mexico's Dead Zone & Midwestern farming** (Sept./Oct. 1999)
- ◆ **Holistic Management & whole farm planning** (May/June 2002; Sept./Oct. 1998; Sept. 1996; May/June 1996; Sept./Oct. 1995; Winter 1991)
- ◆ **Hydrogen sulfide & factory farms** (July/Aug. 1996)
- ◆ **Insurance companies & their treatment of farmland** (Autumn 1992; Autumn 1990; Summer 1990; Winter 1990; Summer 1989; Spring 1989; Summer 1988; Spring 1988; Winter 1987; Fall 1987; Summer 1987; Spring 1987; Summer 1986)
- ◆ **Land grant mission** (July/Aug./Sept. 2002; Jan./Feb./March 2001; Dec. 2000; April/May/June 1998; Dec. 1997)
- ◆ **Land trusts** (May/June 1995; Winter 1992)
- ◆ **Lawns & environmental problems** (April/May 1997; May/June 1996; Summer 1986)
- ◆ **LSP's history** (Oct./Nov./Dec. 2002; Oct./Nov. 1997; Aug./Sept. 1997; June/July 1997; April/May 1997; Jan./Feb./March 1997; Winter 1993)
- ◆ **Manure spills & rural communities** (Aug./Sept. 1997)
- ◆ **Marketing sustainably-produced food** (Jan./Feb. 2002; Nov./Dec. 2001; Sept./Oct. 2000; April/May/June 2000; Nov./Dec. 1995)
- ◆ **Meat irradiation** (May/June 2002)
- ◆ **Midwest Food Alliance** (July/Aug./Sept. 2002; Jan./Feb. 2002; April/May/June 2001; Jan./Feb./March 2001; June/July/Aug. 1999)
- ◆ **Minnesota's Corporate Farm Law** (Spring 1993; Winter 1992)
- ◆ **Monitoring on sustainable farms** (Jan./Feb./March 1999; Nov. 1998; Sept./Oct. 1998; Oct./Nov. 1996)

- ◆ **Multiple benefits of agriculture** (Jan./Feb. 2002; Sept./Oct. 2001)
- ◆ **Myths in agriculture & ways to debunk them** (Dec. 1999)
- ◆ **On-farm research** (Spring 1992; Summer 1988; Fall 1986; Winter 1986)
- ◆ **Pesticides & children** (July/Aug. 1998)
- ◆ **Planting in the Dust** (Oct./Nov. 1997; Winter 1988; Fall 1986; Winter 1986)
- ◆ **Pork checkoff** (Jan./Feb. 2002; April/May/June 2001; Jan./Feb./March 2001; Jan./Feb./March 2000; April/May/June 1998)
- ◆ **Precision agriculture & crop farming** (July/Aug. 1996)
- ◆ **Rotational grazing** (Jan./Feb. 2002; Jan./Feb./March 1998; Spring 1993; Autumn 1992)
- ◆ **Rural economic development** (July/Aug./Sept. 2002; Dec. 1997)
- ◆ **Soil and Survival: Land Stewardship and the Future of American Agriculture** (Fall 1986)
- ◆ **Soil erosion** (July/Aug. 2001; April/May/June 2001; July/Aug. 1995; Summer 1993; Summer 1990; Autumn 1989; Summer 1987)
- ◆ **Sprawling development & farming** (Aug./Sept. 1997; Dec. 1996; Jan./Feb. 1996; Nov./Dec. 1994; Winter 1994; Summer 1993; Spring 1991; Autumn 1990)
- ◆ **Streamside grazing** (Oct./Nov. 1997)
- ◆ **Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota** (Sept./Oct. 1998; Autumn 1991; Summer 1989; Spring 1989)
- ◆ **Sustainable farming field days** (Fall 1988)
- ◆ **Sustainable pork production** (May/June 2002; Nov. 2000)
- ◆ **Watersheds, communities & land use** (Sept./Oct. 1995)
- ◆ **Wildlife habitat & sustainable farming** (Jan./Feb./March 1998; Sept. 1996)
- ◆ **Women & sustainable agriculture** (Dec. 2000; Autumn 1989)



## Bringing food home

Everyone, everywhere depends increasingly on long-distance food. Encouraged by food processing innovations, cheap oil and subsidies, since 1961 the value of global trade in food has tripled and the tonnage of food shipped between nations has grown fourfold, while population has only doubled. In the United States, food typically travels between 1,500 and 2,500 miles from farm to plate, as much as 25 percent farther than in 1980.

For some, the long-distance food system offers unparalleled choice. But it often runs roughshod over local cuisines, varieties, and agriculture, while consuming staggering amounts of fuel, generating greenhouse gases, eroding the pleasures of face-to-face interactions around food, and compromising food security.

Fortunately, the long-distance food habit is beginning to weaken under the influence of a young, but surging, local foods movement. From peanut butter makers in Zimbabwe to pork producers in Germany and rooftop gardeners in Vancouver, entrepreneurial farmers, start-up food businesses, restaurants, supermarkets, and concerned consumers are propelling a revolution that can help restore rural areas, enrich poor nations, and return fresh, delicious and wholesome food to cities.

Brian Halweil, a research associate with the Worldwatch Institute, has written a paper on why local food systems are more important than ever. *Home Grown: The Case for Local Food in a Global Market* is

Worldwatch Paper 163. A copy of the 83-page publication is available for \$5. For ordering information, log onto [www.worldwatch.org/pubs/paper/163/orderpage.html](http://www.worldwatch.org/pubs/paper/163/orderpage.html) or call toll-free 1-888-544-2303. □

## newfarm.org

Remember *The New Farm*, that popular Rodale Press magazine that served such a key role in the spread of sustainable agriculture during the 1980s? Since the award-winning publication's demise in 1994, farmers have been looking for a replacement that helps balance the lack of—or worse, negative—attention sustainable agriculture gets in the mainstream farm media. Well, for farmers who are hooked up cyber-wise, the wait is over. In January, a Web-based version of *The New Farm* was launched at [www.newfarm.org](http://www.newfarm.org).

The site continues the magazine's tradition of covering practical sustainable production techniques gleaned from the nation's most successful produce, livestock and crop farms. These articles are rooted in the idea that the best place for farmers to learn about sustainable production systems is from other farmers. Readers of the old *New Farm* will recognize such bylines as George DeVault, who is writing a "High Value Farming" column for the Web site. But [newfarm.org](http://newfarm.org) also has an activist-oriented bent to it, with action alerts and provocative columnists such as Alan Guebert addressing GMO contamination, factory farming, commodity checkoffs and other controversial issues.

A bonus is a special national index that helps farmers track the weekly going price for organic products in their region. □

## Sustainable ag grants

March 28 is the deadline to apply for grants from the North Central Regional Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. Farmers and ranchers can apply for grants of up to \$6,000 for individuals and up to \$18,000 for groups of three or more people interested in investigating any sustainable practice or concept. The grants go for research, demonstration projects or education initiatives related to profitable, environmentally sound and socially responsible agriculture.

For applications, contact North Central Region SARE at 402-472-7081 or [ncrsare@unl.edu](mailto:ncrsare@unl.edu). Applications are also available at [www.sare.org/ncrsare](http://www.sare.org/ncrsare). □

## CSA workshop

An intensive, hands-on workshop on how to operate a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm will be held for five days this summer at Sunflower Fields CSA near the northeast Iowa community of Postville. The organizers are proposing the workshop for either July 26 to July 30, Aug. 2 to Aug. 6, or Aug. 9 to Aug. 13. The actual date of the workshop will be determined based on responses from those interested in participating. The fee is \$250 per person or \$400 for two people working within the same CSA.

For more information, contact Michael or Solveig at 563-864-3847. Sunflower Fields' Web site is [www.sunflowerfieldscsa.com](http://www.sunflowerfieldscsa.com). □

## Communicating about local food

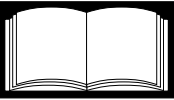
The FoodRoutes Network has produced a communications toolkit for organizations looking to communicate with the public about sustainable farming and local food systems. *Where Does Your Food Come From? Recipes for Communicating Effectively About American Agriculture* contains information on farmer and consumer focus group research, a step-by-step guide to creating a strategic communications plan for your initiatives, and how-to tips from communications experts on working with the media, creating a Web site, and other activities. The toolkit also contains a resource directory and a CD-ROM full of communications tools.

The toolkit is free of charge to your organization (limit one per group). To order, log onto [www.foodroutes.org](http://www.foodroutes.org) or call 814-349-6000. You can also write the FoodRoutes Network at PO Box 443, Millheim, PA 16854. □

## Organic network

The Minnesota Organic Network is a group made up of farmers, federal and state agency staff, University of Minnesota Extension educators and researchers. The group uses e-mail and monthly conference calls to discuss issues related to organic production, processing and marketing. Members of the network exchange information, support each other's work, help each other capitalize on opportunities and plan joint activities.

The monthly conference call is sponsored by the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA) and the e-mail listserv is sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. For more information, call Meg Moynihan at 651-297-8916 or [Meg.Moynihan@state.mn.us](mailto:Meg.Moynihan@state.mn.us). □



## Fatal Harvest

### The Tragedy of Industrial Agriculture

Edited by Andrew Kimbrell  
2002

396 pages

\$75 (hardcover); \$45 (paper)

\$16.95 (*The Fatal Harvest Reader*—no photos, 320 pages)

Island Press, P.O. Box 7,  
Covelo, CA 95428

www.islandpress.org

*Reviewed by Nancy Adams*

**F**atal Harvest is a huge and stunning book—literally and figuratively. A coffee-table sized work weighing in at over five pounds, *Fatal Harvest* contains essays written by 40 authors and over 250 beautiful (and haunting) photos. They present a comprehensive view of the fatal harvests from our current industrial agriculture systems—poisoned streams, degraded soils, skyrocketing cancer rates, habitat destruction, lack of biodiversity, destroyed rural communities, genetic manipulation, and so on.

Rather than being just another depressing book about overwhelming environmental problems and the failures of our current industrial food production system, the authors show that there is another way crops are being grown without destroying our biological systems and communities—the agrarian model. They also point the way toward a new paradigm of agriculture for the future, which will be “beyond organics” and include “farming in nature’s image” and “farming with the wild.” Most importantly the authors point out that informed citizens can change the current poisonous industrial agriculture production system and the stranglehold the multinational corporations have on our society with their buying power and by becoming involved to challenge the powers the multinational corporations have accumulated.

Two adages came to mind while I was reading *Fatal Harvest*: there is strength in numbers and a picture is worth a thousand words. I can’t imagine one author effectively covering all the topics included in this book; and Andrew

Kimbrell, the editor, has done a wonderful job by pulling together the eloquent thoughts of 40 scientists, ecologists, philosophers, farmers and activists like Ron Kroese (co-founder of the Land Stewardship Project), Fred Kirschenmann, Wes Jackson, Jim Hightower and Wendell Berry in a way that is comprehensive, easy to read, and makes sense. Interspersed among the essays are stunning photographs that hammer home the points being made in the essays. We see dead birds and fish and deformed frogs along streams poisoned by pesticides. We see the sterility and monotony of fields where one crop is being grown. We see farmers wearing gas masks as they spray chemicals on their crops (our food) and declare war on nature. We see wastelands where agricultural soils have become so degraded that nothing can be grown there. We see



pictures of hundreds of varieties of tomatoes, apples, potatoes, lettuce and corn that have been replaced by one or two varieties in the supermarket—Beefsteak tomatoes, Iceberg lettuce, Starlink corn, and red and golden Delicious apples. Contrasting with these dismal photos are beautiful, colorful, complex pictures of diversified farms where farmers are intercropping, growing crops without chemicals, providing wildlife habitat, planting buffers along rivers to stop soil erosion, and farming with nature. The words and facts in the essays register in our minds; but the pictures resonate in our hearts and souls. It is a powerful combination.

The book is divided into seven sections: 1) Farming As If Nature Mattered: Breaking the Industrial Paradigm; 2) Corporations: Breaking the Myths of Industrial Agriculture; 3) Diversity, Scale, and Beauty; 4) Industrial Agriculture: The Toxic Trail from Seed to Table; 5) Biodiversity and Wildlife: the Over-appropriation of Wildlife Habitat by Agriculture; 6) A Crisis of Culture: Social and Economic Impacts of Industrial

Agriculture; 7) Organic and Beyond: Re-visioning Agriculture for the 21st Century. The authors cover every imaginable topic, including climate change; degraded, diminishing and vanishing resource bases (soil and water); loss of wildlife habitat, species and biodiversity; the reliance of industrial agriculture on oil—a nonrenewable resource; globalization; international trade agreements; intellectual property; the power of multinational corporations; vertical integration of our food system; corporate welfare; citizen activism; eco/food labeling; CSAs; farmers markets; world hunger; an increasing global population; the dangers of GMOs, biotechnology, and irradiation; and cancer and other health related problems resulting from chemical-laden food.

I particularly liked three parts of the book. The first part outlined and then dispelled seven myths of industrial agriculture that the corporations perpetuate to keep control of our food system: 1) industrial agriculture will feed the world; 2) industrial food is safe, healthy, and nutritious; 3) industrial food is cheap; 4) industrial agriculture is efficient; 5) industrial food offers more choices; 6) industrial agriculture benefits the environment and wildlife and 7) biotechnology will solve the problems of industrial agriculture. To change a system we don’t like, we need information and facts that will help us understand the reality of what is going on, which we don’t get from advertising and propaganda from the big food conglomerates. We do get it from this book.

The second section of the book that I thought was very effective compared and contrasted the industrial and agrarian visions of agriculture. For 110 pages the editor interspersed informative essays with two-page presentations on growing over 20 crops in different ways. If you open the book flat on a table, the left page describes and shows pictures of the crop being grown under the industrial model—in a monoculture, with chemicals, on an industrial scale. The right page discusses and shows pictures of the same crop being grown in the agrarian way—on a smaller scale, without chemicals, amidst diversity. This section makes it clear there is an effective and viable way to produce food using methods which protect and enhance the environment while providing wildlife habitat.

Since I’ve been doing a lot of thinking lately about how to break the stranglehold

*Fatal Harvest*, see page 21...

multinational corporations have on every aspect of our lives, I found the essay by Dave Henson, "The End of Agribusiness: Dismantling the Mechanisms of Corporate Rule," to be a real eye-opener. He believes we need to directly challenge the power of multinational corporations by asking the refrain: "By what authority?" do they do the things they do, instead of trying to regulate their activities, i.e. stating how much pollution they can emit. He recommended several actions that should be taken at the state and local level to curtail corporate power, including recommending that states amend their constitutions to insert "defining language that will declare, for example, that a

corporation does not have the constitutional rights of a person, that patents on life are not allowed, and that the polluter pays." Corporations are chartered in states; and their charters have to be renewed. Other authors reminded me that the dollar talks. It will make a difference to the bottom lines of the big conglomerates if we refuse to buy processed food that contains GMOs, meat and poultry filled with hormones and antibiotics, and coffee grown by impoverished Third World farmers. *We* have a choice—we can buy directly from local, small, diversified organic farmers; we can buy in co-ops or from buying clubs; and we can buy free-trade fairly-priced sustainably grown coffee.

Knowledge is power; and *Fatal*

*Harvest* is an invaluable asset for citizen activists who want to understand and change the current agriculture and food production systems. It is a wonderful reference and could be used as a text book for any number of courses. The book is serving as the basis for a national campaign called "Organic and Beyond," and there is a smaller version of the book that contains only the text. We in the environmental and sustainable agriculture communities owe a debt of gratitude to everyone who made its publication possible. □

*LSP member Nancy Adams is an environmentalist, futurist and organic farmer who lives near LeRoy, Minn.*

## Coming Home to Eat The Pleasures and Politics of Local Foods

By Gary Paul Nabhan

2002

330 pages

\$24.95 (hardcover)

W. W. Norton & Company, 500  
Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10110

www.wwnorton.com

*Reviewed by Mary Jo Forbord*

**A**re you interested in eating locally? Then imagine a New Year's resolution in three "easy" steps:

- 1) Place a point on a map where you live.
- 2) Draw a circle around the point with a radius of 250 miles.
- 3) Eat only foods grown, fished or gathered from within this circle for a year.

Might be quite a challenge, right? Now try moving the center of your 250-mile radius circle to the southwest Arizona desert region and eat from within *this* locale for a year. Sound impossible? One might think so. Yet this is exactly what author Gary Paul Nabhan does in his book *Coming Home to Eat*. The reader is along for the experience, and an experience it is!

The author is about as equipped as anyone could be for the journey. A first-generation Lebanese-American, he has honed an amazing passion and perseverance for seeking all things local, wher-

ever local might be for him at the time. His credentials are that of an avid gardener, an ethno-botanist preserving seed diversity, a subsistence hunter-gatherer and an activist devoted to recovering native food traditions. Nabhan's day job is that of director of the Center for Sustainable Environments at Northern Arizona University.

The philosophical backdrop for the yearlong commitment to eat locally unfolds in Lebanon. The visiting Nabhan is served a gargantuan welcoming feast, but is struck by the fact that not a single item served has come from Lebanese soil. While everyone else at the feast is "relishing in the riches of the global marketplace...the entire world at our disposal," the author finds this bent toward an over-developed global palate unsettling and distasteful. The contrast is heightened when a short day's drive takes him to the soul-satisfying native foods and locally grown feasting of his ancestral culture.

Returning to his home in southwestern Arizona, Nabhan formulates his "rules" for the coming year based on Thoreau's advice to "live each season as it passes, breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit, and resign yourself to the influences of each." One could not pick a more challenging location to eat locally. The climate is often harsh and burning for lack of rainfall, and the region is nearly devoid of fertile soil. Discovering native foods becomes a near archeological quest. Indigenous inhabitants have to be located that still know where cultural foods grow wild and can demonstrate preparation methods that have been passed down for generations.

As a Midwesterner, I found the local fare of this Southwestern region very

unfamiliar (the fine illustrations helped illuminate the detailed descriptions) and at times unappetizing (the high point on the yuck scale occurred when hornworms were eaten with pesto sauce not long after the author had prepared them by squeezing a similar substance out of each of them). Nonetheless, the author's willingness to yield to the limitations of his terrain and find abundance where the average American would starve was more than admirable. Of particular interest to me was the account of his travel to Iowa to attend a Seed Savers convention and subsequent side-trip to Monsanto headquarters in St. Louis and the city's native cuisine a la White Castle. His view of our corn monoculture had me thinking of the "desert" we are creating by allowing the food industry to shape our food choices.

*Coming Home to Eat* serves as a reality check on how far we have strayed from eating locally and just how difficult and necessary finding the way back might be. In an age where most Americans seem to give no thought to what they eat, this book stands in sharp contrast: "Eating close to home is not just a matter of convenience—it is an act of deeply sensual, cultural, and environmental significance," writes Nabhan. *Coming Home to Eat* is a thought-provoking book that just might stir you to a resolution of your own. □

*Mary Jo Forbord is a member of the Pride of the Prairie coordinating committee and a nutritionist. She is raising organic, grass-based miniature Black Angus cattle near the Pope County, Minn., community of Starbuck.*



## Membership Update



# You've got mail!

By Cathy Eberhart

Last November, I spent a great deal of my time thinking about envelopes, letters, mailing lists, and postage requirements.

An appeal letter on the Land Stewardship Project's policy work resulted in 175 of you giving gifts totaling more than \$12,000. And a recruitment letter resulted in 92 memberships and nearly \$3,500.

During the year, renewal letters reminded you of the importance of continuing your membership. In 2002, 1,077 of you renewed, providing LSP with more than \$97,000 in much-needed support.

Even in this age of electronic communication, the good old letter remains one of our best tools for communicating with our members, recruiting new members, and raising much-needed funds.

Yet, I know that all of our mailboxes are filled with wasteful "junk" mail, and so we work hard to make our mail efforts as efficient as possible:

✓ **Clean Databases**—We work especially hard to keep the addresses in our database current and to prevent duplicates, but mistakes do occur. You can help by letting us know via the phone, e-mail or with a note of changes or if you start receiving duplicate mailings.

✓ **Volunteers**—We are blessed to have a good crew of volunteers who label, stuff and seal many mailings.

✓ **Increased use of e-mail**—In 2002, we started using e-mail for renewal reminders to those who request it. This saves us paper, postage and staff time.

✓ **Multiple purpose mailings**—Twice a year, you may receive special campaign letters from us, highlighting a particular program or aspect of our work. Our aim is to make these "special appeal" letters informative while providing opportunities for those members who wish to give extra donations beyond their membership dues. However, if you prefer to only be contacted when it is time for your membership renewal, let us know.

✓ **List trades**—One way many nonprofit organizations save money recruiting new members is by trading

names with other organizations. After careful consideration, LSP's board approved a privacy policy that allows for up to two such trades per year with like-minded organizations. (They also agreed to never sell our members' names.) Many years, we don't use this option to trade lists, but we recently signed agreements with two Minnesota environmental groups for one-time trades. We understand that some of you would prefer that **we not share your name**. If so, let us know and we will exclude your name from future trades. Also, in spite of our best efforts to screen out our members, a few of you received LSP's recent membership recruitment letter because you are members of these other groups. We apologize.

In order to build our power to make change, LSP is always working to expand our membership base. Mail is an important tool toward that end, but we want to use it wisely. We will also do our best to honor your preferences for how much mail you want to receive. I welcome your comments and suggestions. □

Cathy Eberhart is LSP's Membership Coordinator. For membership queries,

## Help keep LSP's costs down and reduce unwanted mail

→ Call, e-mail or write us if your address changes or if you start receiving duplicate mailings so we can update our database.

→ Volunteer with an upcoming mailing at the LSP office nearest you.

→ Renew your membership on time to avoid multiple renewal notices. Your renewal date should appear above your name on the address label of this newsletter. You can renew using the envelope enclosed in this newsletter, by phone at 651-653-0618 using your credit card or on-line at

[www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org).

→ Eliminate renewal letters by signing up for e-mail renewal reminders. Mark this option on your next membership contribution, or e-mail us at [cathye@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:cathye@landstewardshipproject.org).

→ "Recycle" this newsletter (and the enclosed envelope) by passing it on to someone interested in our work and encouraging them to join.

→ Let us know if you would prefer fewer letters from us, or if you want to be excluded from list trades.

write her at LSP, 2200 4th Street, White Bear Lake, MN 55110, or call her at 651-653-0618. She can also be e-mailed at [cathye@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:cathye@landstewardshipproject.org).

## Support LSP in your workplace

The Land Stewardship Project is a proud member of the Minnesota Environmental Fund, which is a coalition of 18 environmental organizations in Minnesota that offer workplace giving as an option in making our communities better places to live. Together member organizations of the Minnesota Environmental Fund work to

A PROUD MEMBER OF



**MINNESOTA**  
Environmental Fund

- promote the sustainability of our rural communities and family farms;
- protect Minnesotans from health hazards;
- educate citizens and our youth on conservation efforts;
- preserve wilderness areas, parks, wetlands and wildlife habitat.

You can support LSP in your workplace by giving through the Minnesota Environmental Fund. Options include giving a designated amount through payroll deduction, or a single gift. You may also choose to give to the entire coalition or specify the organization of your choice within the coalition, such as the Land Stewardship Project. If your employer does not provide this opportunity, ask the person in charge of workplace giving to include it. For more information, contact LSP's Twin Cities office or e-mail [lsppwb@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:lsppwb@landstewardshipproject.org).

# Get the latest in stewardship fashion

...and salute LSP's 20th when drinking your coffee or tea!



20th Anniversary t-shirt & baseball-style cap



20th Anniversary mug



Bucket hat & baseball-style cap

These items are available in each of LSP's offices, or use the coupon below to order by mail.

## QUANTITY

\_\_\_\_\_ Ceramic coffee mugs with 20th Anniversary LSP logo. \$5.50; \$5.00 for LSP members

\_\_\_\_\_ Organic cotton T-shirt with LSP 20th Anniversary logo in sage green; adult sizes small, large, XL & XXL (please specify size when ordering). \$16.50; \$15.00 for LSP members

\_\_\_\_\_ Baseball-style cap; cotton, green & tan, fits all sizes. \$11.50; \$10.00 for LSP members

\_\_\_\_\_ Bucket hat; cotton, tan, available in 2 sizes: small/medium & large/XL (please specify size when ordering). \$13.50; \$12.00 for LSP members

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Minnesota residents please add 6.5% sales tax

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Please add \$3.85 for shipping & handling

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total enclosed

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check (please make checks payable to LSP)

Please charge to my:  Visa  MasterCard

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Clip & mail to: LSP, 2200 4th Street, White Bear Lake, MN 55110  
(you can use the envelope enclosed in this newsletter).  
For more information, call 651-653-0618 or e-mail [lsfwbl@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:lsfwbl@landstewardshipproject.org).

## STEWARDSHIP CALENDAR

→ **MARCH 15—Introduction to Grazing with Howard Moechnig**, Southeast Minn. LSP office, Lewiston, Minn.; Contact: Karen Stettler, LSP, 507-523-3366; stettler@landstewardshipproject.org

→ **MARCH 21-22—Midwest Environmental Education Conference**, Rosemount Community Center, Rosemount, Minn.; Contact: www.naaee.org/maee; 952-858-8875; 1-800-958-8875

→ **MARCH 22—Taking Action on Corporate Power in Ag meeting**, Ames, Iowa; Contact: LSP, 612-722-6377 (see page 10)

→ **South Central Minnesota Sustainable Farming Association annual meeting**, First Baptist Church, Clarks Grove, Minn.; Contact: Marlene Vogelsang, 507-256-4839; marivogel@hotmail.com

→ **MARCH 28-29—Great Lakes International Grazing Conference**, Battle Creek, Mich.; Contact: 517-788-4292 (ext. 1319); www.msue.msu.edu/home/events.htm

→ **MARCH 29—Vanishing Democracy—Challenging Corporate Power: Issues & Actions Defending Our Rights, Restoring Democracy**, First Universalist Church, 3400 Dupont Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn.; Contact: 651-458-7090; wilpf@earthlink.net

→ **SPRING—“Building a Sustainable Business” workshops** (details to be announced); Contact: Beth Nelson, Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA), 1-800-909-6472; www.misa.umn.edu

→ **APRIL 5—Central Minnesota Sustainable Farming Association annual meeting**, Hewitt Community Center, Todd County, Minn.; Contact: David Butcher, 218-

568-8624; davidb@uslink.net  
→ **APRIL 12—Tour de Manure—an educational program that discusses why conditions in factory farms require routine antibiotic treatments**; Contact: Kendra Kimbirauskas, Sierra Club, 612-659-9124; kendra.kimbirauskas@sierraclub.org

### Food & Farm Festival April 12-13

The Community Food and Farm Festival will be April 12 and 13 at the Minnesota State Fair Grounds in St. Paul. For details, see page 17.

→ **APRIL 22—Discussion on biotechnology, with Anne Kapuscinski, professor of fisheries, wildlife & conservation biology, & Margaret Mellon, Union of Concerned Scientists**, 7:30 p.m., Ted Mann Concert Hall, University of Minn.-Minneapolis; Contact: 612-624-2345

→ **APRIL 23-24—International Water Conference**, Moorhead, Minn.; Contact: www.tri-college.org/watershed/conference.htm

→ **MAY 1-4—American Wetlands Conference**, Minneapolis, Minn.; Contact: www.iwla.org/sos/awm/conference; 1-800-284-4952

→ **MAY 3—Ramsey Tree Sale, Green Business Expo & Environmental Education Event**, 7 a.m.-1 p.m., Ramsey Elementary School, 1500 Nowthen Blvd. NW, Ramsey, Minn.; Contact: Bruce Bacon, 763-427-1410, or Jill Smith, 763-506-4012

→ **MAY 10—Cedar Summit grass farm & dairy open house for consumers**, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., New Prague, Minn.;

Contact: 952-758-6886; www.cedarsummit.com  
→ **MAY 22-25—Upper Midwest Introduction to Permaculture workshop, featuring Toby Hemenway & Nick Jordan**, Garden Farme, Ramsey, Minn.; Contact: Paula Westmoreland, 612-870-3467;

permanentagriculture@hotmail.com  
→ **SUMMER—LSP Educational farm tours in southeast Minnesota** (details to be announced); Contact: Karen Stettler, LSP, 507-523-3366;

stettler@landstewardshipproject.org  
→ **JUNE 20-22—Renewable Energy & Sustainable Living Fair**, Custer, Wis.; Contact: 715-592-6595;

www.the-mrea.org  
→ **JUNE 26—From Soil to Table—Pride of the Prairie experiential learning for food service providers, farmers & local foods enthusiasts**; Contact: Audrey Arner, LSP, 320-269-2105;

aarner@landstewardshipproject.org  
→ **JULY or AUGUST—Intensive 5-day workshop for people interested in CSA farming**, Postville, Iowa (see page 19);  
→ **AUG. 9—Pastureland Cheese Tour**, Roger & Michelle Benrud farm, Goodhue, Minn.; Contact: 651-923-5274

→ **Southeast Minn. Farm Beginnings Potluck Picnic**, Roger & Michelle Benrud farm, Goodhue, Minn.; Contact: Karen Stettler, LSP, 507-523-3366; stettler@landstewardshipproject.org

### Event information

Check the *Newsroom* (click on *Press Releases*) or *Calendar* at [www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org) for the latest on upcoming field days, conferences, meetings and other events.



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The date above your name on the address label is your membership anniversary. Your timely renewal saves paper and reduces the expense of sending out renewal notices. To renew, use the envelope inside or go to the LSP Web site.