

# The Land Stewardship



Keeping the Land and People Together

# Letter

Vol. 22, No. 1

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## Community Supported Stewardship



Kim and Chris Blanchard, shown here with their children (left to right) Oliver, Isabel and Zane, operate a Community Supported Agriculture farm near Spring Grove, in the southeast corner of Minnesota. Community Supported Agriculture is now present in every region of the United States. (LSP photo)

**W**hen does a new way of farming evolve from fun fad to reliable reality? What are the signs that an innovation in food production and marketing is going to be around for a while? Well, one sure sign is when its practitioners begin talking about the future, and not just how much seed to buy for the following growing season. Rather, they're discussing ways to make this type of farming system viable decades down

the road, or how to make the transition to the next generation. Community Supported Agriculture has arrived at that point in its development. CSA, as it's called, began in this country in 1986, when two East Coast operations were launched. During the past 18 years, this unique system of farming/marketing has spread to every region of the United States; one estimate is that there are now as many as 1,700 of these kinds of farms. At its most fundamental, CSA farming consists of consumers buying "shares" in a farm. In return, the farm provides a weekly delivery of organically grown produce during the growing

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### Want fresh, local food?

To find local Land Stewardship Project farmer-members who are direct-marketing produce, meats, dairy products and more, check out the 2004 Stewardship Food Network, starting on page 9. The list also includes retailers and processors who belong to LSP and support these farmers.



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. The Land Stewardship Project wants to see more successful farmers raising both crops and livestock on the land. Members of the Land Stewardship Project receive this newsletter as a benefit. Annual membership dues are \$35.

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## Commentary !?!?!

# CSP: The people have spoken Now will the government listen?

By Mark Schultz

The USDA's proposed rules for the Conservation Security Program, one of the most innovative conservation programs ever passed by Congress, drew 14,000 public comments during a 60-day period this winter. This is far and away the most comments the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has ever received on a proposed conservation rule. That's an indication of how strong the public opposition is to the Bush Administration's attempt to severely curtail the program, called CSP for short. Farmers, consumers, and conservationists want this key program implemented in a timely manner and in a way that keeps it true to the original law passed by Congress.

The Land Stewardship Project was very active in informing farmers about the USDA's highly flawed proposed rules, and what the agency could do to work for positive change. In addition to alerting our own members, we worked closely with groups like Niman Ranch, Organic Valley, Food Alliance, and Pride of the Prairie, as well as the organizers of the 2004 Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference. We also worked with hundreds of individual farmers who had contacted us in the past about CSP. LSP helped to generate well over 1,000 comments, and delivered a powerful message to Washington. Thanks to everyone who did their part—and stay tuned for further opportunities to take action. Winning CSP—meaning securing adequate funding and proper implementation—is one of the most critical things our organization can do for land stewardship and the future of family farming.

The CSP was enacted by Congress in the 2002 Farm Bill to make payments to farmers based on how well they are protecting and improving the environment through their farming practices—specifically for improving water quality, protecting soil and enhancing wildlife habitat, among other things. This is a dramatic

departure from current policy, which often penalizes farmers for utilizing systems that benefit the environment.

For example, let's say a farmer introduces a third, resource-conserving crop like alfalfa or a small grain like oats into their corn and soybean rotation. Such a rotation is a proven way to protect our soil and water resources. But that conservation-minded farmer is penalized by receiving less money through the commodity program. Why? Simply because he or she is producing fewer bushels of corn and soybeans, which, along with wheat, cotton and rice, receive large subsidies.

The same dynamic occurs when a farmer shifts to rotational grazing for raising livestock, or does anything—adding grassy buffer strips along

streams or a perennial crop like orchard fruit for example—that reduces their total yield of corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton or rice. While such a maximum-production policy of these five crops certainly helps

...  
“...USDA's proposed CSP payments virtually ignore three of the most innovative and important conservation farming systems being used today...”  
...

Cargill's and ADM's international grain trade and processing profits, research shows it has led to the loss of family farms and increased environmental degradation. CSP, on the other hand, is designed to pay farmers—including crop farmers, livestock producers, and fruit and vegetable growers—based on the actual public benefit they produce through conservation farming practices, not just based on the number of bushels of field corn or soybeans that end up in a multinational grain trader's bins.

When the USDA's proposed rules were published on Jan. 2 after long delays, farmers and other members of the public began raising serious concerns about the USDA's plan for CSP. For one thing, USDA proposes to severely restrict CSP access to farmers in a few selected watersheds. It compounds the problem by requiring

CSP, see page 3...

farmers who live in those watersheds to fall into other, as yet undefined, categories in order to qualify. Bruce Knight, Chief of the NRCS, which is supposed to implement and administer the CSP, announced on April 14 that his plan is to enroll over the next *seven years* just 90,000 farmers. That's only 5 percent of eligible farmers.

The second major problem is that USDA's proposed CSP payments virtually ignore three of the most innovative and important conservation farming systems being used today—managed rotational grazing, resource-conserving crop rotations, and organic production. This is part of an overall failure by USDA to use CSP to reward actual environmental outcomes and recognize existing conservation. For example, the CSP base payments USDA proposes reduce what is written in the law by 90 percent. According to USDA, if local land rental rates average \$100 per acre, the CSP base payment would range from 50 cents to \$1.50 per acre—a minuscule amount that demonstrates how little USDA values real conservation.

Concerns such as these continued to grow during the 60-day comment period, leading thousands of farmers, consumers and environmentalists to send written comments calling on USDA to make CSP a widely available, nationwide program that would recognize the benefits of sustainable farming systems.

Now that USDA has seen the incredible public support for a fully implemented CSP, and opposition to their attempts to hamstring it, the Administration needs to act on these comments by the end of August and issue a final rule that puts into operation the program passed by Congress. USDA officials are currently saying they will have an interim rule out by the end of June. Let's see if they make that deadline (remember, the final rule for CSP was by law to be issued by February 2003). What's more important is that USDA substantially rewrites what it issued in its proposed rules, and we get a final rule that is consistent with the law. That's what the Executive Branch is supposed to do—administer and enforce the laws of the land. It's job is not to fundamentally rewrite or gut laws through bureaucratic rulemaking.

Here's a simple but important step USDA should take immediately:

Congress has appropriated \$41 million to be spent on CSP this fiscal year, which for the government ends Sept. 30. Starting Oct. 1, Congress has provided uncapped funding for CSP as provided for in the Farm Bill—an estimated \$1-2 billion per year. LSP has joined with other members of the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition in calling on Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman to make the \$41 million in CSP funds available to farmers this year by distributing it to the NRCS state conservationist in each state. Such an approach would get the money out to farmers now, help conserve vital natural resources, and get the NRCS up and moving on CSP. It will prime the pump for the nationwide, fully implemented program envisioned and enacted by Congress. USDA doesn't need a final rule to get that amount of funding out—it just needs to get serious about implementing this program. □

*Mark Schultz is LSP's Policy Program Director. He can be reached at 612-722-6377 or marks@landstewardshipproject.org. For the latest news and fact sheets on CSP, visit [www.landstewardshipproject.org/programs\\_csp.html](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/programs_csp.html).*

## Update

We the People...

## Policy

### Minn. lawmakers attempt to gut local control

**P**ro-factory farm lawmakers launched an all-out assault against family farming and rural communities during the 2004 session of the Minnesota Legislature. As this newsletter went to press, several troubling measures were still alive, including initiatives to make it harder to file nuisance lawsuits against factory farms, attempts to gut local government power, and an effort to make it so wealthy foreign investors could own Minnesota dairy farms.

#### Nuisance lawsuits

Proposed measures that would exempt most factory farms from nuisance lawsuits were passed by committees in both the House and Senate in March. These bills could have serious negative implications for our rural communities and the environment. When regulatory officials and the operator of a feedlot refuse to take action to correct a nuisance problem, the courts are the last option for neighbors who are adversely affected by the operation. Current law already

provides generous exemptions to the operators of feedlots against nuisance lawsuits. But these proposed bills exempt factory farms from nuisance suits even in instances of injury or direct threat of injury.

Both bills provide for a shield protection from nuisance liability to their neighbors, who in rural areas often are farmers, says Paul Sobocinski, an LSP organizer and southwest Minnesota livestock farmer.

"LSP is opposing these bills because we believe livestock development should be done in conjunction with supporting the community and quality of life of neighbors," he says. "And when it's done that way, it doesn't need a nuisance shield."

#### Foreign investor ownership

A bill that would allow non-immigrating foreign investors to own Minnesota dairy farms was turned back in 2003 due to overwhelming opposition from farmers in the state. But the measure was revived this year by proponents of corporate

agriculture. Current Minnesota law allows immigrants to own farmland and LSP supports that, says Sobocinski. But this bill would allow holders of "non-immigrant treaty (E-2) investment visas" to own farms. The Web site of the United State's Embassy in the Netherlands states: "The principal applicant [of an E-2 treaty investor visa] must be a Dutch citizen and must not be immigrating to the U.S. (Individuals who want to stay indefinitely in the U.S. need immigrant visas.)" This bill is about foreign investors, not immigrants, says Sobocinski. It is opposed by LSP, Minnesota Farmers Union, Minnesota COACT, Minnesota Dairy Producers Board and Milk Power. In a well-orchestrated move, Senator Dallas Sams (DFL-Staples) rushed the bill through the Senate Judiciary Committee on March 11, the same day he added himself as chief author. At the hearing, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture testified in support of the bill with no opposing testimony allowed. The bill passed the full Senate on April 7, but at press time no action had been taken on the issue in the House.

Legislature, see page 4...

...Legislature, from page 3

**Local control**

The power of local township residents to have a say in what kind of livestock development takes place in their community has long been the target of factory farm promoters, both in Minnesota and around the nation (see story below). That became even clearer late last year when the Minnesota Agri-Growth Council published their *2003 Minnesota Livestock Industry Benchmark Report* ([www.agri-growth.org](http://www.agri-growth.org)). The Agri-Growth Council represents the interests of large agribusiness concerns in the state such as Cargill, Hormel Foods, AgStar Financial Services and Land O'Lakes. It has long lobbied for a vertically integrated factory farm production model. The *Benchmark Report* concludes that Minnesota is lagging behind other states by not encouraging large, vertically integrated operations. It cites the success of states like

California at developing a "friendlier" economic climate by centralizing the regulatory process. The report concludes that township government in Minnesota is a "central negative issue." On cue, factory farm supporters in the Legislature such as Sen. Steve Dille (R-Dassel) and Senator David Hann (R-Eden Prairie) introduced initiatives that appear to be designed to weaken local township government. One measure would make it more difficult to put in place moratoriums on development while townships do planning and zoning, while another is intended to redefine what types of farms would be subject to planning and zoning.

At press time, LSP's members and staff, as well as other organizations, had worked successfully to hold off efforts to gut local control, but Sobocinski predicted an end-of-the-session push to weaken township power.

**Good news for sustainable ag**

Measures that would benefit family farmers and rural communities were still moving ahead at this writing. One would provide no-interest loans to farmers who establish on-farm processing enterprises. This measure was proposed as an

addition to one that would provide no-interest loans for farms building methane digesters as part of their liquid manure handling system. The on-farm processing proposal was led by Senator Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls), who amended Senator Sams' bill on manure digesters to include this provision. In the House, Rep. Lyle Koenen (DFL-Maynard) sponsored a similar bill. Rep. Dean Urdahl (R-Grove City) carried an amendment to the House Omnibus Ag Finance Bill to include money for on-farm processing and pasture development. In addition, funds were put into a Senate "dairy modernization" bill that would help farmers with development of pastures. □

*As this newsletter went to press, the 2004 Minnesota Legislative session was scheduled to adjourn by mid-May. The next Land Stewardship Letter will have a complete summary of the session. For the latest updates, visit [www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org). More information is also available from LSP organizers Paul Sobocinski (507-342-2323) or Bobby King (507-523-3366).*

**Heffernan: Global ag consolidation hurts local democracy**

Large multinational firms want to completely dominate the livestock industry, and see local township government in states like Minnesota as a major barrier to reaching that goal, says a leading researcher on corporate consolidation in agriculture. Bill Heffernan, a professor emeritus of rural sociology at the University of Missouri, spoke to more than 200 farmers and local government officials gathered in Willmar, Minn., on March 15. He said agribusiness corporations are working nationally to eliminate as much local control of livestock operations as possible.

"In this country and here in Minnesota you've got companies that want to move in and in a sense reap some of the benefits of the local area without paying all the costs," Heffernan said. "They mess up the environment, they mess up the social structure of the community and so forth. And so one of the reasons they don't want the local folks to make the decisions is that they know that they don't want to cover all the costs."

But, the sociologist added, there's nothing inevitable about current trends in agriculture: "The rules and

regulations were put together by humans and they can be changed by humans." The meeting, which focused on protecting local control and independent livestock producers, was sponsored by Minnesota Farmers Union, Minnesota National Farmers Organization and the Land

Stewardship Project. □

*To read an interview with Bill Heffernan, visit [www.landstewardshipproject.org/opinions/04/opin\\_040317.html](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/opinions/04/opin_040317.html). For more on Heffernan and his research, check out [www.foodcircles.missouri.edu/consol.htm](http://www.foodcircles.missouri.edu/consol.htm).*



**More than 200 farmers and local government officials attended the "Protecting Township Local Control and Independent Livestock Producers" meeting. (LSP photo)**

## Ross serving LSP internship

**Marjorie Ross** is serving an internship with the Land Stewardship Project's White Bear Lake office. Ross organized the Community Food and Farm Festival at the Minnesota State Fair Grounds in early May, and helped coordinate LSP's



**Marjorie Ross**

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) roundtable discussion in February (see page 1). She is also conducting a survey of CSA farms in the region.

Ross is pursuing a master's of science degree in applied plant

sciences at the University of Minnesota. She holds a bachelor's degree in environmental studies and sustainable agriculture from Kenyon College and has worked as an assistant farm manager, landscape technician and horticultural specialist. □

## New LSP board members

**Bonnie Haugen, Herman Hendrickson** and **Mike Lorentz** have joined the Land Stewardship Project's board of directors.

**Bonnie Haugen** operates a grass-based dairy farm near the southeast Minnesota community of Canton. In recent years, Haugen and her husband Vance have hosted numerous farmers, consumers and government officials on their farm. She has also served as a presenter at such events as the Upper Midwest Grazing Conference.



**Bonnie Haugen**

**Herman Hendrickson** lives near Sauk Centre, Minn., and, along with his wife Marianne, raises garlic and onions for the Whole Farm Cooperative. A retired molecular biologist, Hendrickson has worked with local dairy farmers interested in making



**Herman Hendrickson**

cheese from their grass-fed cows, and has been involved with the central Minnesota chapter of the Sustainable Farming Association.

**Mike Lorentz**, along with his brother Rob, operates Lorentz Meats in Cannon Falls, Minn. Lorentz has long worked with local farmers who are direct marketing livestock products and in recent years developed the innovative "Branding Your Beliefs" marketing curriculum. He gives numerous Branding Your Beliefs workshops around the region each year. □



**Mike Lorentz**

## Paul Gruchow: 1947-2004

This winter the land lost one of its most eloquent and grounded voices. On Feb. 22, Paul Gruchow died in his home in Duluth, the victim of an apparent suicide. Gruchow was 56, and had long struggled with mental illness.

He was born and raised on a farm near the western Minnesota community of Montevideo. That background served as the basis for the many lyrical books of essays he penned over the years. His award-winning writing focused on the land and people's relationship to it. Gruchow was a

longtime Land Stewardship Project member and spoke at various LSP events over the years.

"He just got it," says Audrey Arner, a Montevideo farmer and former LSP organizer. "His gift was to bring the air of poetry to the local experience."

"He's been a tremendous inspiration to the environmental movement here in the Montevideo area," says Patrick Moore, who also worked as an LSP organizer and now owns and operates Java River Cafe in Montevideo. Moore reviewed Gruchow's book, *Grass Roots: The Universe of Home* for the July/August 1996 *Land Stewardship Letter* ([www.landstewardshipproject.org/lsl/lspv14n3.html](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/lsl/lspv14n3.html)). "He is like our Aldo Leopold," says Moore.

Gruchow took part in a June 1998 meeting at the Leopold Shack organized by Dana Jackson, LSP's Associate Director. Discussions during the meeting resulted in the writing of the 2002 book, *The Farm as Natural Habitat: Reconnecting Food Systems with Ecosystems*.

"I am so sad that mental illness took away the insights and wisdom of Paul Gruchow," says Jackson. "His books taught readers to look at the natural world and appreciate all its mystery and complexity. He understood that farms were created from the riches of nature, and that without respect for nature humans will squander that heritage." □



**Dean Harrington, President of the First National Bank in Plainview, Minn., gives a presentation on credit during a Land Stewardship Project business planning workshop in February. The workshop was one of a series LSP put on this winter for agricultural educators and beginning farmers at various locations in southeast and western Minnesota. Workshop funding was provided by the North Central region of the USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. (photo by Caroline van Schaik)**

## Farm Beginnings field days this summer

Grass-based dairying, Community Supported Agriculture, appropriate technology for small farmers, on-farm dairy processing, organic beef production, pasturing swine and organic crop production will be the subjects of a series of Land Stewardship Project field days this summer:

◆ **Thursday, May 20, New Prague, Minn.**—On-farm dairy processing, New Prague, Minn.

◆ **Saturday, June 12, Clearwater, Minn.**—Organic grazed beef.

◆ **Wednesday, June 16, Minneiska, Minn.**—Organic milk production using managed intensive rotational grazing; grassland bird responses to intensive rotational grazing with Melissa Driscoll.

◆ **Saturday, June 19, Kerkhoven, Minn.**—Pasturing hogs and dairy heifers.

◆ **Saturday, June 26, Madison, Minn.**—Pork and organic crop production.

◆ **Thursday, July 15, Prairie Farm, Wis.**—Community Supported Agriculture vegetable production and profitability; what it takes to be a successful beginning vegetable farmer.

◆ **Saturday, July 31, Wykoff, Minn.**—Low-cost, appropriate technologies for small farmers; Community Supported Agriculture vegetable production.

To attend a field day, call LSP's southeast Minnesota office at 507-523-3366 or our western Minnesota office at 320-269-2105 to reserve a spot and get directions. LSP members can attend these field days for free. The fee for nonmembers is \$5 per person and \$10 per family. If you choose to become a member of LSP the day of a tour, an immediate benefit will be free admission. □

**It's field day season!**

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

## Grazing workshop June 8-9 in Minn.

Economics, livestock health, forage management, fencing and watering systems will be some of the topics covered during a two-day grazing workshop June 8 and 9 at the West Central Research and Outreach Center (WCROC) near Morris, Minn. This workshop will also include presentations on whole farm planning and a special panel discussion involving experienced

farmers who are grazing dairy cows, beef cattle, dairy heifers, sheep and pigs. The site of this workshop, WCROC, is the center of extensive research into how rotational grazing can be done in an environmentally and economically sound manner (see July/August/September 2003 *Land Stewardship Letter*; [www.landstewardshipproject.org/news-lsl.html](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/news-lsl.html)).

The registration fee is \$100 for the first participant from a farm, and \$75 for each additional person who will be sharing a workshop manual. This workshop is being put on by the Land Stewardship Project, the University of Minnesota, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and USDA's Agricultural Research Service. For more information and to register, contact Dennis Johnson at WCROC by calling 320-589-1711 or e-mailing [dairydgj@mrs.umn.edu](mailto:dairydgj@mrs.umn.edu). More information is also available by contacting LSP's Terry VanDerPol at 320-269-2105 or [tlvdp@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:tlvdp@landstewardshipproject.org). □

## SE Meeting June 26

The Land Stewardship Project's southeast Minnesota office will hold its annual meeting Saturday, June 26. The supper event will be held at the Eric and Lisa Klein farm in Elgin, Minn. Speakers for the evening will be independent organic inspector Jim Riddle and Steve Morse, Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems at the University of Minnesota. This event will celebrate food, family and farming in the southeast Minnesota region. LSP will provide a bountiful array of local meats to compliment potluck salads and desserts for this gathering. For more information, call 507-523-3366 or e-mail [lpse@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:lpse@landstewardshipproject.org). □

## VanDerPol joins MISA board

Land Stewardship Project organizer Terry VanDerPol has joined the board of directors of the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA). VanDerPol raises cattle near Granite Falls, Minn., and works on local food and livestock issues out of LSP's western Minnesota office in Montevideo.

MISA is a partnership between the University of Minnesota's College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences and the Sustainers' Coalition, a group of nonprofit organizations, including LSP. More information on MISA is available at [www.misa.umn.edu](http://www.misa.umn.edu) or by calling 1-800-909-6472. □



Howard Moechnig, the Minnesota state grazing specialist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service, shows watering system parts to a group of farmers in Lewiston during a Land Stewardship Project grazing workshop on March 20. Among other topics, Moechnig discussed setting up a basic grazing plan. He led a similar LSP workshop in western Minnesota in April. (photo by Caroline van Schaik)

## Food Alliance: Helping tell the farmer's story

Consumers want food with a story behind it, and eco-labels can help tell that story. That was an oft-repeated message during the third annual meeting of the Food Alliance Midwest on Feb. 12 in Bloomington, Minn.

Food Alliance Midwest is in its fifth year of certifying Midwestern farmers who adhere to food production standards that reduce pesticide use, conserve soil and water resources, preserve wildlife habitat and provide safe and fair working conditions for workers. A joint initiative of the Land Stewardship Project and Cooperative Development Services, Food Alliance Midwest is a regional partner of the Food Alliance, which is based in Portland, Ore. Nationally, Food Alliance certifies over 200 products. In the Midwest, 62 farms are Food Alliance approved, and 50 retailers now carry certified products. Food Alliance Midwest is also working with several major distributors such as Roots and Fruits. And a marketing agreement with food service company Sodexo has gotten Food Alliance products onto college campuses in Minnesota, Wisconsin and the Dakotas.

In 2003 Food Alliance Midwest received extensive coverage in the Minneapolis *Star Tribune* newspaper as well as several regional and national magazine. Last August, 1,500 people participated in the Alliance's "Taste of Tuesday" event at the Minnesota State Fair.

This is all great news, said Jim Ennis,



Director of Food Alliance Midwest. But there's still a lot of work to do to educate the public about how food that carries this seal is different, and worth paying more for, added.

"Sustainability is still a very difficult to understand term in the broader population," he told the meeting's

participants, which included Food Alliance certified farmers, food company officials and extension educators.

Kirsten Bansen Weigle, who coordinates a group of southeast Minnesota grass-based dairy farmers called PastureLand Cooperative, says they market their cheese and butter directly and via retail outlets. "We find we do best when we can tell our unique story and talk directly to consumers," she said during a panel discussion.

Jackie Hoch, who, along with her husband Harry produces apples and vegetables near La Crescent, Minn., said they also have a mixed marketing strategy: half of their products are sold wholesale and the other half is direct marketed through farmers' markets. She agreed that consumers want to know the story behind the food—how it was raised and by whom. For example, she enjoys telling consumers about the "weeder geese" they use to clean up the orchard and garden.

"Usually the first question consumers ask is, 'Are you organic?' I say, 'No, but we are Food Alliance certified,'" Hoch said, adding that such a statement can serve as an opening for discussing their sustainable production techniques.

Don Kulick, the district manager for Sodexo Campus Services, said they have been very pleased with the quality of the Food Alliance products they have served to clients so far. The relationship with Sodexo started at the University of Minnesota-Morris, when former LSP organizer Audrey Arner and other members of the "Foodies" group approached college officials about serving locally produced food. Donna Bauck, the Sodexo General Manager at Morris, said they don't currently have a lot of students who demand sustainably produced, local food. But when they do serve Food Alliance products, it helps make students more aware of environmental, social justice and animal welfare issues.

"Every student will have an *aha* moment," she said. □



Participants in the Food Alliance Midwest annual meeting did some brainstorming on how to increase awareness of the Food Alliance certification seal. (LSP photo)

### Interested in being certified?

See page 8 for information on becoming Food Alliance certified.

# Food Alliance Midwest looking for more producers

*Cost share dollars available for strawberry growers; food service opportunities with Sodexo*

*By Ray Kirsch*

Food Alliance Midwest has two unique marketing opportunities to begin 2004 and is seeking producers who would like to take advantage of certification this year.

First, there are cost-share dollars available to commercial strawberry growers who apply for Food Alliance certification this year. Through a producer SARE grant, money will be available to substantially offset Food Alliance certification fees. Certified farms will be able to use customized bag stuffers, banners, and point-of-sale materials. Additionally, the Minnesota Grown directory will feature Food Alliance certified direct-marketing farms.

Second, Sodexo USA, a Food Alliance marketplace partner, is featuring Food Alliance certified foods at 11 college campuses throughout the Upper Midwest (see below). As this partnership grows in 2004, demand for Food Alliance certified foods will exceed our supply. Opportunities exist for certified farms to provide foods for dining halls, catering, and campus stores.

Sodexo is particularly interested in local, Food Alliance certified fruits and vegetables.

For those farms interested in working with Sodexo but daunted by the logistics, there is a new distribution option for 2004. Gary Pahl will be working this year with Sysco Inc. as a consolidator and supplier to Sodexo. Gary's farm is Food Alliance certified, and is just south of the Twin Cities. He has offered to assist other Food Alliance certified farms by arranging and consolidating food service deliveries through Sysco to Sodexo college accounts.

If you're interested in this option, please contact Gary at 952-431-4345 or gpahl67349@aol.com.

To get your farm certified so you can take advantage of these marketing opportunities, contact me at 651-653-0618 or ray@foodalliance.org.

*Food Alliance Midwest Certification Coordinator Ray Kirsch is based in the Land Stewardship Project's Twin Cities office.*

## Food Alliance Midwest marketplace partners

Food Alliance Midwest has 60 participating market partners – partners looking to source and sell Food Alliance certified foods. If you'd prefer an on-going marketing relationship with a partner that views your certified farm products as value-added and worth a premium price (your price), then you should consider Food Alliance certification. Certify now and enjoy the support of these partners:

### Retailers

Seward Co-op  
North Country Co-op  
Linden Hills Co-op  
Wedge Co-op  
Mississippi Market Co-op—two locations  
Hampden Park Co-op  
River Market Community Co-op  
Lakewinds Natural Foods—two locations  
Valley Natural Foods  
St. Peter Food Co-op  
Fresh and Natural Foods  
Barlow's Hy-Vee

### Kowalski's Markets

White Bear Lake  
Camden  
Uptown  
Lyndale  
Woodbury

Parkview  
St. Paul

### Coborn's Inc.

Albertville  
Clearwater  
Delano  
Foley  
Glencoe  
Huron  
Long Prairie  
Mitchell  
Mora  
Morris  
Park Rapids  
Princeton  
Sauk Centre  
Sauk Rapids  
St. Cloud—two locations  
Sartell  
Little Falls  
Elk River

### Cash Wise

Waite Park  
Hutchinson  
Fargo  
New Ulm  
Willmar  
Owatonna  
Moorhead  
Bismarck  
Austin

## Food Service— College Campuses

### Sodexo USA

Augsburg College  
Bethel College  
College of Saint Catherine's  
Carleton College  
Concordia College  
University of Minnesota-Morris  
Minnesota State University-Moorhead  
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire  
Mayville State University  
Valley City State University  
Waldorf College

## Distributors

Roots and Fruits  
Bix Produce  
J&J Distributing  
Malat Produce  
Russ Davis Wholesale

### Want to be a retail partner?

If you are interested in becoming a Food Alliance Midwest retail partner, contact Jean Andreasen at 651-265-3682 or jean@foodalliance.org





## 2004 Stewardship Food Network

The following seven pages list Land Stewardship Project members who produce food for direct marketing to consumers. The methods these farmers use to produce food vary, and we have chosen not to describe them here in-depth. Sustainable farming practices represented in this list include certified organic, antibiotic and hormone-free, humanely raised and slaughtered, free of genetically modified organisms, pasture-based, integrated pest management to reduce pesticide use, deep-bedded straw livestock housing and conservation tillage.

We encourage you to contact the farmers personally to find out specifics about which production methods they are utilizing.

We have listed the farms according

community, participate in a regional farmers' market, or use mail services to deliver their products.

If you are looking for farmers nationwide who are direct marketing sustainably produced foods, log onto [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org).

When contacting the farmers, consider asking these questions in trying to determine if their production methods fit your needs and desires:

- ✓ Are the animals raised on well-managed pastures or deep-bedded straw (hogs) at least part of the time?
- ✓ How are antibiotics and hormones used in animal production? Why are they used?
- ✓ Are vegetables, fruits and grains produced using chemical pesticides? If so, are integrated pest management

growing season begins. In return, they receive a weekly delivery of fresh produce throughout the growing season.

• **Integrated pest management (IPM):** An approach to managing pests that combines biological, cultural, physical and chemical means to reduce environmental risks.

• **Grass-based livestock production:** A large part of an animal's nutritional needs are met through grass, in particular via managed intensive grazing systems that rotate livestock through numerous paddocks, spreading manure in a biologically sound manner.

• **Little or no use of antibiotics:** Antibiotics and hormones are not used on a daily basis to increase production performance in animals.

• **Certified by:** Some of the farms listed here have been inspected and certified by one of several third-party agencies. These agencies document what production methods are (and are not) utilized on the farms. As a consumer, you can ask for a certifying agency's standards.

### Do you want to be listed in the Network?

If you are a Land Stewardship Project member (from any state, not just Minnesota) and are direct marketing food to consumers, we would like to include you in the Stewardship Food Network list. We'd also like to hear from LSP members who are retailing or processing food produced by other LSP members. For information on being included in the list, contact Cathy Eberhart at 651-653-0618 or [cathy@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:cathy@landstewardshipproject.org).

to location: *Central MN; Northeast MN; Northwest MN; South Central MN; Southeast MN; Southwest MN; Twin Cities Metro Area; Southwest WI; Southeast WI; North Central WI; Southeast SD; North Central Iowa; Nebraska*. The majority of these farms sell their products in their immediate area via on-the-farm sales or farmers' markets. However, as we have indicated with an "Also services" category, some farms do market outside their region. These farms may deliver to a different

techniques used to reduce reliance on chemicals as much as possible?

- ✓ Are conservation tillage techniques such as minimum till, no till and ridge till used?
- ✓ Are diverse rotations that involve small grains, forages and perennial grasses used?

A few handy definitions:

• **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA):** This is a system where consumers buy a "subscription" in a farm before the

This list is by no means exhaustive, and we have undoubtedly missed some producers. We want to hear from LSP members—both Minnesotans and non-Minnesotans—who are direct-marketing their farm products so that we can update this directory. Please see the sidebar on this page for information on how to be listed. □

### Thanks!

The Land Stewardship Project would like to thank Mary Ann Litfin, who volunteered her time to update this listing of the Stewardship Food Network.

# Farms

## —Central MN—

### ☐ Hoopers' Christmas Tree Ranch

John Hooper  
15813 Christmas Tree Road  
Cold Spring, MN 56320-9644  
Phone: 320-685-4489  
E-mail: yak-man@yak-man.com  
Web site: www.yak-man.com  
➔ Products: *Yak meat*

### ☐ Webster Farm Organics

Nett Hart and Tamarack  
PO Box 53  
Foreston, MN 56330-0053  
Phone: 320-983-2289  
➔ Products: *Community Supported Agriculture operation, Salad Days*  
✕ Also services: *Twin Cities*  
◆ Certified by: *Farm Verified Organic*

### ☐ Whole Farm Coop

33 2nd Street South  
Long Prairie, MN 56347  
Phone: 320-732-3023; 1-877-203-5273  
Fax: 320-732-0947  
E-mail: whlefarm@rea-alp.com  
Web site: www.wholefarmcoop.com  
➔ Products: *Meat, produce, dairy products, eggs, coffee, maple syrup, wild rice & more*  
✕ Also services: *Alexandria, Brainerd, Cambridge, Duluth, St. Cloud, Twin Cities, Wadena*  
✓ Volunteers/interns? *Yes*

## —Northeast MN—

### ☐ Finkes Berry Farm

Diane & Doug Finke  
2331 County Road 4  
Carlton, MN 55718-8147  
Phone: 218-384-4432  
E-mail: finkesbf@hotmail.com  
➔ Products: *Strawberries, pick-your-own*

### ☐ Food Farm

John & Jane Fisher-Merritt  
2612 County Road 1  
Wrenshall, MN 55797-8718  
Phone: 218-384-3356  
➔ Products: *Vegetables, Community Supported Agriculture produce operation, chicken, turkey, eggs*  
◆ Certified by: *Midwest Organic Services Association*  
✓ Volunteers/interns? *Yes*

### ☐ Ken's Lean Beef

Ken & Ina Peterson  
43138 110th Avenue  
Tamarack, MN 55787-4633  
Phone: 218-768-4116  
Fax: 218-768-4116  
➔ Products: *Grass fed beef—quarters, halves & USDA cuts*  
✓ Volunteers/interns? *Yes*

### ☐ Shary's Berries

Shary Zoff  
1651 Two Harbors Rd.  
Two Harbors, MN 55616-8013  
Phone: 218-834-5221  
➔ Products: *Tomatoes, raspberries, pick-your-own or pre-picked blueberries, basil & carrots*  
◆ Certified by: *Organic Crop Improvement Association*

## —Northwest MN—

### ☐ Native Harvest

White Earth Land Recovery Project  
32033 E. Round Lake Road  
Ponsford, MN 56575-9250  
Phone: 218-573-3448  
Fax: 218-573-3444  
➔ Products: *Organic wild rice, coffee, jams, jellies & maple syrup*

### ☐ Northern Light Farm

Paul Conklin & Rebecca Marty  
2048 Agate Lane NW  
Solway, MN 56678-4212  
Phone: 218-467-3584  
E-mail: paulconklin@sigmaxi.org  
➔ Products: *extracted honey, comb honey, bee pollen, beeswax, Community Supported Agriculture produce operation, brown & green free range eggs, pastured broiler chickens, Highland beef*  
✓ Volunteers/interns? *Yes*

## —South Central MN—

### ☐ Fischer's Purebred Hog Farm

Tim Fischer  
37784 100th St.  
Waseca, MN 56093  
Phone: 507-835-2524 507-351-9910  
➔ Products: *Pork, specialty lettuce, tomatoes & wheat flour*  
✕ Also services: *All of Minnesota, northern Iowa & western Wisconsin*

### ☐ Larry & Leslea Gooden

11897 640th Avenue  
Emmons, MN 56029-4065  
Phone: 507-297-5156  
E-mail: ldgooden@smig.net  
➔ Products: *Pork*

### ☐ Don & Rhonda Hermanson

44893 County Road 15  
Nicollet, MN 56074-4245  
Phone: 507-246-5335  
E-mail: drhermy@prairie.lakes.com  
➔ Products: *Produce & poultry*  
✕ Also services: *Gaylord & LeSueur Farmers' Markets*

### ☐ Hilltop Acres

Katy & Dave Wortel  
1411 Pohl Road  
Mankato, MN 56001-5751  
Phone: 507-345-4494  
E-mail: enviros@mninc.net  
➔ Products: *Tomatoes, pumpkins & other fall decorative items*

## —Southeast MN—

### ☐ Bramble Hill

Diane Crane & Bets Reedy  
21727 Randall Dr.  
Houston, MN 55943-8131  
Phone: 507-864-7585  
E-mail: bramble@acegroup.cc  
➔ Products: *Lamb*

### ☐ Cozy Meadows

Mike & Linda Noble  
53288 110th Avenue  
Kenyon, MN 55946-4330  
Phone: 507-789-6679  
E-mail: farm.on.wheels@juno.com  
Web site: www.cannon.net/~farmonwh  
➔ Products: *Beef, pork, chicken & eggs*  
✕ Also services: *St. Paul Farmers' Market & Northfield Farmers' Market*  
◆ Certified by: *Oregon Tilth*

### ☐ Dancing Winds Farmstay Retreat

Mary Doerr  
6863 Co. #12 Blvd.  
Kenyon, MN 55946  
Phone: 507-789-6606  
E-mail: dancingwinds@juno.com  
Web site: www.dancingwinds.com  
➔ Products: *USDA inspected grass fed chevon (goat meat) & farm stay retreat*  
✕ Also services: *Mail order available*



☐ **Dreamacres/Tillers Int'l/  
Flourish Camp**

Eva Barr & Todd Juzwiak  
RR-1, Box 1243  
Wykoff, MN 55990-9772  
Phone: 507-352-4255

E-mail: evalibarr@hotmail.com  
Web site: www.wmich.edu/tillers/

→ Products: **Community Supported  
Agriculture produce operation;  
farming/rural skills workshops (Tillers  
International), Arts & Agriculture  
Summer Camp (Flourish)**

✕ Also services: **Spring Valley,  
Rochester, Albert Lea**

✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**

☐ **Earth Be Glad Farm**

Mike, Jennifer & Johanna Rupprecht  
18828 Cty. Road 20  
Lewiston, MN 55952-9622  
Phone: 507-523-2564

→ Products: **Beef, chicken, pork, turkey,  
eggs, popcorn & flowers**

✕ Also services: **Twin Cities**

◆ Certified by: **Midwest Organic  
Services Association & Food Alliance  
Midwest**

☐ **Earthen Path Organic Farm**

Steven & Susan Schwen  
RR-1, Box 52BB  
Lake City, MN 55041-9312  
Phone: 507-753-2080  
Fax: 507-753-9902  
E-mail: fullcirc@clear.lakes.com  
Web site: www.oakcenter  
generalstore.com

→ Products: **Vegetables, herbs, berries,  
fruit, poultry, eggs & lambs**

✕ Also Services: **Southeast Minnesota**

✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**

☐ **Hershey Acres**

Melvin & Arlene Hershey  
13300 Green Acres  
St. Charles, MN 55972  
Phone: 507-932-3285

E-mail: hersheyacres@juno.com

→ Products: **Eggs, chicken, turkey, beef,  
ducks & specialty meats**

☐ **Hidden Stream Farm**

Lisa & Eric Klein  
RR-1, Box 15  
Elgin, MN 55932-9703  
Phone: 507-876-2304  
Fax: 507-876-2304

E-mail: hiddenstreamfarm@  
hiddenstreamfarm.com  
Web site: www.hiddenstreamfarm.com

→ Products: **Chicken, pork & beef**  
◆ Certified by: **Food Alliance Midwest**

☐ **Hill & Vale Farms**

Joe & Bonnie Austin  
RR-1, Box 152  
Wykoff, MN 55990-9750  
Phone: 507-352-4441

E-mail: jobon@hmtel.com

→ Products: **Lamb, beef, chicken & goat**

✕ Also services: **Twin Cities, MN, IA,  
WI, ND, SD, IL, MI, MO, KY, KS, NE,  
OH (1-2 day ground delivery)**

☐ **Michaelis Farm**

Roy, Carol, Andy & Justin Michaelis  
RR-1, Box 61  
Rollingstone, MN 55969-9707  
Phone: 507-523-3561

→ Products: **Brown chickens,  
lamb & pork**

☐ **Nature's Little Farms**

Larry & Diane Leonhardt  
100 Hwy. 42  
Kellogg, MN 55945-9605  
Phone: 507-767-4435

→ Products: **Chicken, beef, white and  
heritage turkey, bison, duck, geese,  
eggs, vegetables & fruit**

✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**

☐ **Ours For A Short Time**

Peggy Thomas & Larry Gates  
RR-1, Box 42  
Kellogg, MN 55945-9714  
Phone: 507-767-3202

→ Products: **Lamb, tanned hides, wool,  
wool woven rugs, hand-harvested wild  
rice & produce**

☐ **PastureLand Cheese**

A group of southeast Minnesota  
grass-based dairy farmers  
56330 State Highway 57  
Dodge Center, MN 55927-8077  
Phone: 507-635-5619; 507-251-1652  
E-mail: dcfrench@aol.com

→ Products: **Cheese & butter**

◆ Certified by: **Food Alliance Midwest**

☐ **Root Prairie Galloways**

Brad & Leslea Hodgson  
RR-1, Box 139  
Fountain, MN 55935-9750  
Phone: 507-867-4004  
Fax: 507-768-4004  
E-mail: hodgsonranch@aol.com

→ Products: **All natural grass finished  
beef, free range chicken, hay & produce**

☐ **Simple Harvest Farm**

Theresa, Kathy & Nick Zeman  
11539 E. 200th St.  
Kenyon, MN 55946-2028  
Phone: 507-789-6375  
E-mail: zeman@cannon.net

→ Products: **Community Supported  
Agriculture produce operation; eggs,  
broilers, beef, pork, lamb, goat, meat  
rabbits, ducks, Icelandic wool, goat's  
milk soap & a farm retreat**

✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**

☐ **Sunfresh Foods**

Paul & Karen Schmidt  
RR-2, Box 155  
Preston, MN 55965-9545  
Phone: 507-765-4782

→ Products: **Beef & pork**

☐ **Sweet Meadow Farm**

Alice & Walter Field  
43104 145th Ave. Way  
Zumbrota, MN 55992-5071  
Phone: 507-732-7400; 1-800-584-5351  
Web site: www.dambgoodlamb.com

→ Products: **Lamb**

✕ Also services: **Minneapolis**

☐ **Valley Angus Farm**

Dan & Cara Miller  
Route 1, Box 241  
Spring Valley, MN 55975-1029  
Phone: 507-346-2261; 507-346-7875  
E-mail: dmiller@deskmedia.com  
Web site: www.mgt.org

→ Products: **Beef**

☐ **Valley Creek Community Farm**

Gene & Rose Ann Steenhoek  
15150 Giefer Ave.  
Northfield, MN 55057-4606  
Phone: 507-645-6414  
E-mail: genesteenhoe@hotmail.com

→ Products: **Community Supported  
Agriculture produce operation**

☐ **Whitewater Gardens**

Sandy & Lonny Dietz  
17485 Calaco Hill Road  
Altura, MN 55910-9752  
Phone: 507-932-5225  
E-mail: londietz@aol.com

→ Products: **Community Supported  
Agriculture produce operation**  
✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**

☐ **Wiebusch Valley View Farms**

Jerry & Kim Wiebusch  
RR-3, Box 86  
Lake City, MN 55041-9480  
Phone: 507-753-2754

→ Products: **Beef**

☐ **Yokiel Farm**

Leona & Gary Yokiel  
58653 190th Street  
Wells, MN 56097-6710  
Phone: 507-553-3008  
→ Products: **Beef, corn, oats & alfalfa**  
◆ Certified by: **Certified Organic Inc.**

# Farms

## —Southwest MN—

### ☐ Double D Natural Meats

Donald & Bev Struxness  
14015 Highway 40 NW  
Milan, MN 56262-2412  
Phone: 320-734-4877; 877-298-7442  
Fax: 320-752-4733  
E-mail: dbstruxness@fedteldirect.net  
→ Products: **Beef**

### ☐ Dry Weather Creek Farm

Mark & Wendy Lange  
8095 40th St. NW  
Milan, MN 56262-3003  
Phone: 320-269-9617  
Fax: 320-269-8445  
E-mail: dwcreek@fedteldirect.net  
→ Products: **Goat meat, stone-ground wheat products, flax & cornmeal**  
◆ Certified by: **Midwest Organic Services Association**  
✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**

### ☐ EarthRise Farm

Kay & Annette Fernholz  
2580 250th Street, Apt A  
Madison, MN 56256  
Phone: 320-752-4700; 320-752-4293  
E-mail: erfarm@hotmail.com  
→ Products: **Community Supported Agriculture produce operation; surplus produce may be purchased**

### ☐ Honey & Herbs

Marcia Neely  
155 60th Street NW  
Benson, MN 56215-1050  
Phone: 320-843-3363  
E-mail: marciagarden@yahoo.com  
→ Products: **Vegetables, apples, honey, medicinal & culinary herbs**

### ☐ Life Design Organics

Dale & Betty Noordmans  
39041 County Road 2  
Hancock, MN 56244-1215  
Phone: 320-392-5925  
Fax: 320-392-5925  
E-mail: organicfood30@hotmail.com  
Web site: www.ruralsolutions.com/lifedesignorganics/  
→ Products: **Whole wheat, whole wheat bread mixes, whole wheat pancake mixes, flaked or rolled oatmeal, coarse corn meal, rye, corn, beef, chicken, turkey; fresh dried tomato, basil & garlic; catering**  
◆ Certified by: **Organic Crop Improvement Association**

### ☐ Moonstone Organics

Audrey Arner & Richard Handeen  
9060 40th Street SW  
Montevideo, MN 56265-3136  
Phone: 320-269-8971; 320-269-2105  
Fax: 320-269-2105  
E-mail: aarner@maxminn.com  
Web site: www.prairiefare.com/moonstone  
→ Products: **Beef, PastureLand cheese & butter, turkey, popcorn, honey, flowers, "Farmstay" overnight lodging**  
✗ Also services: **St. Paul & western Twin Cities suburbs**  
✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**

### ☐ Morning Has Broken Farm

Larry & Carolyn Olson  
2931 480th Street  
Granite Falls, MN 56241-1601  
Phone: 320-564-2571  
Fax: 320-564-2571  
E-mail: mhbfarmolson@mymailstation.com  
Web site: www.prairiefare.com  
→ Products: **Beef, chicken, eggs, lamb & pork**  
✗ Also services: **All of Minnesota**

### ☐ Murphy's Organic Farm

Craig & Joanie Murphy  
51487 320th Street  
Morris, MN 56267-4313  
Phone: 320-392-5176  
E-mail: cjemurph@fedteldirect.net  
Web site: www.prairiefare.com  
→ Products: **Beef & golden flax**  
✗ Also services: **All of Minnesota**

### ☐ Pastures A' Plenty

Jim & Lee Ann VanDerPol  
4075 110th Avenue NE  
Josh & Cindy VanDerPol  
4077 110th Avenue NE  
Kerkhoven, MN 56252-9650  
Phone: 320-367-2061  
E-mail: vanderpol@prairiefare.com  
Web site: www.prairiefare.com  
→ Products: **Pork, chicken, eggs, beef**  
✗ Also services: **All of Minnesota**  
◆ Certified by: **Food Alliance Midwest**

### ☐ Prairie Lane Farm

Kent & Jane Goplen  
1670 270th Avenue  
Canby, MN 56220-3311  
Phone: 507-223-7910  
→ Products: **Beef**

### ☐ Prairies Past

Allen & Lisa Smith  
406 U.S. Hwy 75  
Pipestone, MN 56164  
Phone: 507-825-3845  
→ Products: **Vegetables, melons, herbs, dried flowers & pork**  
✗ Also services: **Pipestone Farmers' Market**

### ☐ Prairie Pride Farm Of Minnesota

Roger & Dawn Hubmer  
59597 185th Street  
Mankato, MN 56001-8472  
Phone: 507-245-3117; 866-245-PORK (7675)  
E-mail: rdhubmer@prairiepridefarm.com  
Web site: www.prairiepridefarm.com  
→ Products: **Breed specific Duroc pork, chicken, turkey, BBQ sauce, BBQ & hog roast catering**  
✗ Also services: **Burnsville, St. Peter, Lakeville, Mankato, St. Clair, Prior Lake Market, Twin Cities, on-line ordering**

### ☐ Prairie Wind Farms

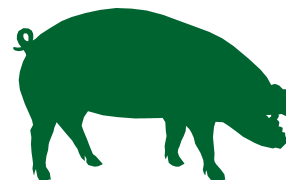
Gerard & Mary Radermacher  
1219 340th Street  
Bellingham, MN 56212-2051  
Phone: 320-568-2310; 320-568-2110  
Fax: 320-568-2110  
→ Products: **Beef, lamb, ducks, chicken, ground beef & wool**

### ☐ Red Tail Valley Beef

Terry VanDerPol  
235 7th Avenue  
Granite Falls, MN 56241-1423  
Phone: 320-564-1877; 320-269-2105  
Fax: 320-564-4542  
E-mail: redtailvalleybeef@yahoo.com  
→ Products: **Beef**  
✗ Also services: **Minneapolis**

### ☐ Romsdahls Butterfield Family Farm

Brian and Deb Romsdahl  
40747 640th Lane  
Butterfield, MN 56120-9630  
Phone: 507-956-2804  
E-mail: debandbrian@juno.com  
→ Products: **Beef**



☐ **Ron's Veggies**

Ron Hanson  
86750 150th Street  
Sacred Heart, MN 56285-1252  
Phone: 320-765-2379

→ Products: *Vegetables & cactus plants*

☐ **Soehren Farm**

David & Dianna Soehren  
3198 298 Street  
Appleton, MN 56208  
Phone(s): 320-752-4421; 320-289-2493

→ Products: *Pork & beef*

—*Twin Cities Metro Area*—

☐ **Ames Farm**

Brian Fredericksen  
11325 County Road 20  
Watertown, MN 55388  
Phone(s): 952-955-3348; 952-955-3348  
E-mail: info@amesfarm.com  
Web site: amesfarm.com

→ Products: *Varietal honey & bee*

*pollen; 20 varieties of apples & pears*

✕ Also services: *Minneapolis Farmers' Markets on Lyndale Avenue & Nicollet Mall; Twin Cities natural food co-ops & natural foods stores*

☐ **Anderson Farm**

Randy & Lynn Anderson  
N6501 Manore Lane  
Arkansaw, WI 54721-8603  
Phone: 715-285-5226  
E-mail: andersonfarm@nelson-tel.net  
Web site: www.andersonfarm.us

→ Products: *Beef, chickens & pork*

✓ Volunteers/interns? *Yes*

✕ Also services: *Western Wisconsin*

☐ **Axdahl Farms**

Brian & Leslie Axdahl  
17120 116th Street North  
Stillwater, MN 55082-8911  
Phone: 651-439-3134  
Fax: 651-439-2408  
E-mail: bnaxdahl@att.net

Web site: www.axdahlfarms.com

→ Products: *Sweet corn, green beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, peppers, pumpkins & squash*

✕ Also services: *Western Wisconsin*

◆ Certified by: *Food Alliance Midwest*

✓ Volunteers/interns? *Yes*

☐ **Badger Ridge Garden**

Ruth Viste  
N2041 430th Street  
Maiden Rock, WI 54750-8221  
Phone: 715-594-3196  
E-mail: rviste@redwing.net

→ Products: *Community Supported Agriculture produce operation*

☐ **BC Gardens**

20355 408th Avenue  
Belgrade, MN 56312  
Phone: 1-888-884-9766; 320-254-8820  
E-mail: bcgardens@willmar.com

→ Products: *Community Supported*

*Agriculture produce operation*

◆ Certified by: *Global Organic Alliance*

☐ **Big Woods Farm**

David & Laurie Hougen-Eitzman  
10752 Nerstrand Blvd.  
Nerstrand, MN 55053-2715  
Phone: 507-334-3335  
E-mail: bigwoodsfarm@ll.net

→ Products: *Community Supported*

*Agriculture produce operation*

☐ **Cedar Summit Farm**

Dave & Florence Minar  
25816 Drexel Avenue  
New Prague, MN 56071-8834  
Phone: 952-758-6886  
Fax: 952-758-6197

E-mail: orders@cedarsummit.com

Web site: www.cedarsummit.com

→ Products: *Chicken, pork, beef, turkey, cheddar & gouda cheese, milk, chocolate milk, yogurt, sour cream, ice cream & creme fraiche*

◆ Certified by: *Food Alliance Midwest*

☐ **Common Harvest Farm**

Dan Guenther & Margaret Pennings  
212 280th Street  
Osceola, WI 54020-4113  
Phone: 715-294-283

→ Products: *Community Supported*

*Agriculture produce operation*

✓ Volunteers/interns? *Yes*

☐ **Edgewood Farm**

Carl Schwermann  
40511 581st Avenue  
New Ulm, MN 56073  
Phone: 507-359-4567

→ Products: *Beef*

☐ **Ez Acres Farm**

Jon & Lisa Zweber  
25420 Natchez Avenue  
Elko, MN 55020-9562  
Phone: 952-461-3428  
E-mail: ezacre@integraonline.com

→ Products: *Pasture raised beef, chicken & pork*

☐ **Footjoy Farm**

Chad Forsberg  
7100 County Road 110 Ext A  
Mound, MN 55364  
Phone: 952-472-5693  
E-mail: footjoyfarm@yahoo.com

→ Products: *Vegetables, dairy goats & chickens*

✓ Volunteers/interns? *Yes*

☐ **Garden Farme**

Bruce Bacon & Peter Seim  
7363 175th Avenue NW  
Ramsey, MN 55303-3038  
Phone: 763-753-5099

E-mail: bbacon@mtn.org

→ Products: *Community Supported Agriculture produce operation, potted tree nursery & native shrubs*

☐ **Gullywash Gardens**

Roy Peterson & Barbara Pumper  
27404 Scenic Byway Road  
Belle Plaine, MN 56011-5097  
Phone: 952-873-2534

E-mail: gullygardens@aol.com

→ Products: *Vegetables, cut & dried flowers, subscription flower program*

✕ Also services: *Southwest metro area & New Prague Farmers' Market*

☐ **Hoch Orchard & Gardens**

Harry & Jackie Hoch  
RR-2, Box 114  
La Crescent, MN 55947-9530  
Phone: 507-643-6329

E-mail: hoch1@acegroup.cc

Web site: www.hochorchard.com

→ Products: *Berries, plums, apricots, apples & cider*

◆ Certified by: *Food Alliance Midwest*

✓ Volunteers/interns? *Yes*

☐ **Hog's Back Farm**

David & Melinda Van Eeckhout  
680 Hyacinth Avenue East  
Saint Paul, MN 55106-1911  
Phone: 651-778-1295

E-mail: david@hogsbackfarm.com

Web site: www.hogsbackfarm.com

→ Products: *Community Supported Agriculture produce operation*

☐ **In The Valley Community Farm**

Kurt Rentschler & Dean Stynsburg  
1615 Manning Avenue South  
Afton, MN 55001-9692  
Phone: 651-436-4795

E-mail: mail@itvfarm.com

Web site: www.itvfarm.com

→ Products: *Turkey & eggs*

☐ **Jacobson's Pine Tree Apple Orchard**

Bill & John Jacobson  
450 Apple Orchard Road  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110  
Phone: 651-429-7202

Web site: www.pinetreeappleorchard.com

→ Products: *Apples & strawberries*

# Farms

## ☐ Krauel Angus Ranch

Tom Krauel  
9438 Fawn Lake Drive NE  
Stacy, MN 55079-9702  
Phone(s): 651-462-8013; 651-429-8330  
Fax: 651-462-2735  
E-mail: tkrauel@krauel.net  
➔ Products: **Angus beef**  
✗ Also services: **Central Minnesota**

## ☐ Lost Creek Organics

Wayne & Jerri Cook  
W5060 489th Avenue  
Ellsworth, WI 54011  
Phone: 715-273-5979  
E-mail: info@lostcreekorganics.com  
Web site: www.lostcreekorganics.com  
➔ Products: **Community Supported Agriculture produce operation; sausage, bacon, maple syrup & ground flour**  
◆ Certified by: **Food Alliance Midwest; Certified Naturally Grown**  
✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**  
✗ Also services: **Menomonie, Wis.**

## ☐ Natura Farms

Paul Otten  
19060 Manning Trail North  
Marine on Saint Croix, MN 55047  
Phone(s): 651-433-5850; 651-225-8888  
E-mail: pmo@chof.net  
Web site: www.naturafarms.com  
➔ Products: **Blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, currants, gooseberries, grapes, apples, melons & vegetables**  
✗ Also services: **Wineries & processors in the Upper Midwest**  
◆ Certified by: **Food Alliance Midwest**

## ☐ Natural Harvest

Charlie & Tzeitel Kersey  
4634 Linden Trail North  
Lake Elmo, MN 55042-8542  
Phone: 651-351-1038  
E-mail: lafinca@earthlink.net  
➔ Products: **Community Supported Agriculture produce operation**

## ☐ Nature's Nest

Catherine Rose  
5412 Brighton Avenue SE  
Montrose, MN 55363-8007  
Phone(s): 763-972-2550; 763-972-6891  
E-mail: naturesnest@soncom.com  
➔ Products: **Bed & Breakfast, flowers**

## ☐ Pahl Farms, Inc.

Gary Pahl  
6885 160th Street West  
Apple Valley, MN 55124-6651  
Phone: 952-431-4345  
Fax: 952-431-4049  
E-mail: gary@pahls.com  
Web site: www.pahls.com  
➔ Products: **Sweet corn, green beans, pumpkins, winter squash, cabbage & cucumbers**  
◆ Certified by: **Food Alliance Midwest**  
Volunteers/interns? **Yes**  
✗ Also services: **Upper Midwest**

## ☐ Philadelphia Community Farm

Verna Kragens & Rick Hall  
PO Box 668  
Osceola, WI 54020-0668  
Phone(s): 715-294-3136; 715-294-4048  
Fax: 715-294-3136  
E-mail: pcomfarm@centurytel.net  
➔ Products: **Community Supported Agriculture produce operation, retreat house, lamb**  
✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**

## ☐ Riverbend Farm

Greg & Mary Reynolds  
5405 Calder Avenue Southeast  
Delano, MN 55328-8014  
Phone: 763-972-3295  
E-mail: riverbend@usinternet.com  
➔ Products: **Wholesale vegetables**  
◆ Certified by: **Midwest Organic Services Association**

## ☐ Spring Hill Community Farm

Michael Racette & Patty Wright  
545 1 1/2 Avenue  
Prairie Farm, WI 54762  
Phone: 715-455-1319  
E-mail: springhl@chibardun.net  
➔ Products: **Community Supported Agriculture produce operation**

## ☐ Svihel Farms, Inc.

John Svihel  
2935 Hwy 25 East  
Foley, MN 56329  
Phone: 320-968-7365  
Fax: 320-968-8944  
E-mail: jsvihel@msn.com  
➔ Products: **Strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, sweet corn, green beans,**

**tomatoes, squash, pumpkins & other fruits & vegetables**

◆ Certified by: **Food Alliance Midwest**  
✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**  
✗ Also services: **Benton County & Sherburne County**

## ☐ Whistling Well Farm

Carol & Charlie Johnson  
8973 St. Croix Trail South  
Hastings, MN 55033  
Phone: 651-998-0301  
E-mail: charlie@whistlingwellfarm.com  
Web site: www.whistlingwellfarm.com  
➔ Products: **Apples**  
◆ Certified by: **Food Alliance Midwest**  
✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**

## —Southwest WI—

### ☐ Elsie's Farm

Don Roberts & Joni Cash  
E5166 1370th Avenue  
Ridgeland, WI 54763-9575  
Phone: 715-949-1738  
E-mail: don@elsiesfarm.com  
Web site: www.elsiesfarm.com  
➔ Products: **Vegetables, herbs & ornamentals**  
✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**  
✗ Also services: **Twin Cities**

### ☐ Harmony Valley Farm

Richard DeWilde & Linda Halley  
S3442 Wire Hollow Road  
Viroqua, WI 54665-8078  
Phone: 608-483-2143  
Fax: 608-483-2151  
E-mail: harmony@mwt.net  
Web site: www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com  
➔ Products: **Community Supported Agriculture produce operation, Angus beef**  
◆ Certified by: **Midwest Organic Services Association**  
✓ Volunteers/interns? **Yes**  
✗ Also services: **Chicago, La Crosse, Madison, Twin Cities**

## —Southeast WI—

### ☐ Amazing Grace Family F.A.R.M.

Janet Kassel  
1438 N. County Road H  
Janesville, WI 53545  
Phone: 608-876-6311  
➔ Products: **Beef & vegetables**



# Retailers

## —North Central WI—

### ☐ Igl Farms

Brian & Tom Igl  
W9689 Cherry Road  
Antigo, WI 54409-8734  
Phone: 715-627-7888  
Fax: 715-627-7888  
E-mail: bigl@gza.net  
→ Products: *Potatoes, beef, oats, yellow field peas*

Certified by: *Food Alliance Midwest*  
X Also services: *Wisconsin, northern Illinois & eastern Minnesota*

### ☐ Maple Hill Farm

Tom & Connie Cogger  
29745 S. Maple Hill Road  
Washburn, WI 54891  
Phone: 715-373-2108  
E-mail: northnug@hotmail.com  
→ Products: *Vegetables, honey, handcrafted soap, handmade wool wear (knit, felted and fleeced hats, mittens, slippers & socks)*

◆ Certified by: *Food Alliance Midwest*

## —Southeast SD—

### ☐ Johnson Farms

Charles & Bette Johnson  
45169 243rd Street  
Madison, SD 57042-7101  
Phone: 605-256-6784  
Fax: 605-256-6784  
E-mail: c-bjohnson@svtv.com  
→ Products: *Beef, pork, eggs*

## —North Central Iowa—

### ☐ One Step At A Time Gardens

Jan Libbey & Tim Landgraf  
1465 120th Street  
Kanawha, IA 50447-8060  
Phone: 641-495-6367  
Fax: 641-495-6367  
E-mail: libland@frontiernet.net  
→ Products: *Community Supported Agriculture produce operation, market garden*

## —Nebraska—

### ☐ Bow View Farm

Curtis & Donna Arens  
88664 - 550 Ave.  
Crofton, NE 68730-4075  
Phone: 402-388-4798  
E-mail: bowview@bloomnet.com  
→ Products: *Pork, birdseed & bird feeders*  
X Also services: *Ships anywhere in the U.S.*

## —Southeast MN—

### ☐ Blue Heron Coffeehouse

451 Huff Street  
Winona, MN 55987-3276  
Phone: 507-452-7020  
E-mail: bluheron@hbc.com  
Web site: www.blueheroncoffeehouse.com  
→ Products: *Coffeehouse and cafe that promotes local foods*

### ☐ Bluff Country Co-op

121 West 2nd Street  
Winona, MN 55987-3446  
Phone: 507-452-1815  
Fax: 507-457-0511  
E-mail: bccoop@chartermi.net  
Web site: www.bluff.coop  
→ Products: *Natural foods co-op grocery store*  
✓ Volunteers/interns? *Yes*

### ☐ Lorentz Meats & Deli

305 Cannon Street West  
Michael & Rob Lorentz  
Cannon Falls, MN 55009-1509  
Phone(s): 651-453-9617; 800-535-6382  
Fax: 507-263-2510  
E-mail: mike@lorentzmeats.com  
Web site: www.lorentzmeats.com  
→ Products: *Butcher shop & custom meat processing servicing local farmers*

### ☐ Southeast Food Network

Todd Lein, Coordinator  
15211 14th Street NE  
Dover, MN 55929  
Phone: 507-649-0663  
E-mail: todd@localfoodnetwork.org  
Web site: www.localfoodnetwork.org  
→ Products: *foods from nearly 40 regional producers, with products ranging from dairy and vegetables to meats & honey*

## —Southwest MN—

### ☐ Java River Cafe

210 South 1st Street  
Patrick & Mary Moore  
Montevideo, MN 56265-1413  
Phone(s): 320-269-9042; 320-269-7106  
E-mail: javariver@info-link.net  
Web site: www.javarivercafe.com  
→ Products: *Coffee & sandwich shop that promotes locally produced food*

### ☐ The Meat Center of Appleton

Alyce's Catering with Class  
Alyce & David Fust  
Hwy 7 / 250 West Snelling  
Appleton, MN 56208  
Phone: (meat center) 320-289-1012  
Phone: (catering) 320-289-2785  
E-mail: ainw@maxminn.com  
→ Products: *Deli, meat center & caterer featuring food from local farmers*

## —Twin Cities Metro Area—

### ☐ Auriga

1930 Hennepin Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55403  
Phone: 612-871-0777  
Web site: www.aurigarestaurant.com  
→ Products: *Restaurant that promotes locally produced food*

### ☐ Bobino Cafe and Wine Bar

222 Hennepin Avenue East  
Minneapolis, MN 55414  
Phone: 612-623-3301  
Web site: www.bobino.com  
→ Products: *Restaurant that promotes locally produced food*

### ☐ Broders Pasta Bar

5000 Penn Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55419  
Phone: 612-925-9202  
E-mail: bci@broders.com  
Web site: www.broders.com  
→ Products: *Restaurant that promotes locally produced food*

### ☐ Captains Select Seafood

Bill Young  
214 22nd Avenue North  
Minneapolis, MN 55411  
Phone: 612-522-7060  
Fax: 612-522-7159  
E-mail: captains@fishnet.com  
→ Products: *Wholesale & retail seafood*

### ☐ Clancey's Meats & Fish

4307 Upton Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55416  
Phone: 612-926-0222  
→ Products: *Butcher shop specializing in fresh, local meats*

### ☐ Heartland

1806 St. Clair Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105  
Phone: 651-699-3536  
Fax: 651-699-3539  
E-mail: heartland5@qwest.net  
Web site: www.heartlandrestaurant.com  
→ Products: *Restaurant that promotes locally produced food*

# Retailers

## ☐ JP American Bistro

2937 South Lyndale Avenue  
J.P. Samuelson  
Minneapolis, MN 55408  
Phone: 612-824-9300  
Fax: 612-824-9301

Web site: [www.jpamericanbistro.com](http://www.jpamericanbistro.com)  
→ Products: **Restaurant that promotes locally produced food**

## ☐ Lakewinds Natural Foods

1917 2nd Avenue South  
Anoka, MN 55303  
Phone: 763-427-4340  
Fax: 763-427-4020

→ Products: **Natural foods co-op**

## ☐ Lakewinds Natural Foods

17523 Minnetonka Blvd.  
Minnetonka, MN 55345-1009  
Phone: 952-473-0292  
Fax: 612-473-9834

E-mail: [lakewinds@lakewinds.coop](mailto:lakewinds@lakewinds.coop)  
→ Products: **Natural foods co-op**

## ☐ Lakewinds Natural Home

17515 Minnetonka Blvd.  
Minnetonka, MN 55345  
Phone: 952-742-1242  
Fax: 952-473-9834

→ Products: **Natural home cooperative offering household cleaners, paints, fair-trade gifts, etc.**

## ☐ Linden Hills Co-op

2813 West 43rd Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55410-1537  
Phone: 612-922-1159  
Fax: 612-922-5538

E-mail: [info@lindenhillscoop.com](mailto:info@lindenhillscoop.com)  
Web site: [www.lindenhillscoop.com](http://www.lindenhillscoop.com)  
→ Products: **Natural foods co-op**

## ☐ Livingstons

Melody Livingston  
2037 Riverside Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55454-1330  
Phone: 612-333-5692

→ Products: **Coffee & ice cream shop; ice cream is made on site with cream from a Minnesota family dairy farm**

## ☐ Lucia's Restaurant

Lucia Watson  
1432 West 31st Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55408-2605  
Phone: 612-825-1572

Web site: [www.lucias.com](http://www.lucias.com)  
→ Products: **Restaurant that promotes locally produced food**

## ☐ Mojito South American Steakhouse

4656 Excelsior Blvd.  
St. Louis Park, MN 55416  
Phone(s): 612-382-7316; 952-922-6656

→ Products: **Restaurant that promotes locally produced food**

## ☐ Sapor Cafe & Bar

428 Washington Avenue North  
Minneapolis, MN 55401-1317  
Phone(s): 612-375-1971; 612-375-1971  
Fax: 612-375-1974

E-mail: [tsiebenaler@mn.rr.com](mailto:tsiebenaler@mn.rr.com)  
Web site: [www.saporcafe.com](http://www.saporcafe.com)  
→ Products: **Restaurant that promotes locally produced food**

## ☐ Trotter's Bakery & Cafe

232 North Cleveland Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104  
Phone: 651-645-8950  
Web site: [www.trotters-stpaul.com](http://www.trotters-stpaul.com)

→ Products: **Restaurant that promotes locally produced food**

## ☐ W. A. Frost

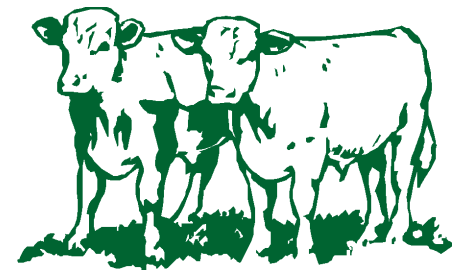
374 Selby Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55102  
Phone: 651-224-5715  
E-mail: [wafrost@wafrost.com](mailto:wafrost@wafrost.com)

Web site: [www.wafrost.com](http://www.wafrost.com)  
→ Products: **Restaurant that promotes locally produced food**

## ☐ Wedge Co-op

2105 Lyndale Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55405-3027  
Phone: 612-871-3993  
Fax: 612-871-0734

E-mail: [kitty@wedge.coop](mailto:kitty@wedge.coop)  
Web site: [www.wedge.coop](http://www.wedge.coop)  
→ Products: **Natural foods co-op**  
◆ Certified by: **Midwest Organic Services Association/Food Alliance**  
**Midwest retail partner**



## Community Supported Stewardship



...CSA, from page 1

season—usually June to October in the Upper Midwest. This turns the traditional model of producing food for a market that may or may not be there come harvest time on its head. Granted, a few thousand produce operations scattered around the nation are a mere collective bump on that elephant called the food and farm industrial complex. But it's a growing,

continually evolving system of food production that appears to be here to stay. As longtime CSA farmer Dan Guenther recently said: "This is our fifteenth year of CSA farming coming up and we have somewhere in the neighborhood of 75 to 80 families that have been with us from that very first year. So there's been a real solid core of people that have been with us through most of this time. It's exciting to see kids growing up as CSA members and to be marking time with them. This is not just a passing fad."

CSA farming is far from trouble-free. Some operations are finding members don't return from one year to the next, often because stressed-out families don't have the time or skills to deal with whole, fresh produce. In this age of the McDonald's drive-thru and the thousand-

mile tomato, preparing supper from a bag of veggies picked fresh that morning is truly a radical act—too radical for some. CSA farmers are also running into issues of making sure they charge enough for the shares to give themselves a fair standard of living and communicating with a group of consumers who want to know more about their source of food than the average shopper. Dealing with the intense labor and management requirements of CSA is an issue as well—agronomically, growing one or two vegetables for a wholesale market is easier than producing a dozen or more varieties for a select group of people.

However, several recent studies of CSA farming, including a survey released

CSA, see page 17...



in October called *CSA Across the Nation* ([www.wisc.edu/cias](http://www.wisc.edu/cias)), show that this form of agriculture is truly viable, particularly in this age when consumers are feeling less connected to their food, as well as the land and people who produce it. CSA's transparency becomes increasingly

attractive as the conventional food and farming system's opacity deepens.

On a frigid day in early February, the operators of 10 CSA farms from Minnesota and western Wisconsin came together for a Land Stewardship Project round-table discussion. The farmers talked about where they are at with their operations today and where they hope to be headed. An excerpt of that discussion

is printed here. For a full transcript, check out [www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org).

Future issues of the *Land Stewardship Letter* will explore various aspects of CSA, including the perspective of consumers who have joined these farms, the profitability of such operations, and their place in our communities. □

## The CSA round-table participating farmers

→ **Kay & Annette Fernholz, SSND, EarthRise Farm**

**Location:** Madison, Minn.

**Number of seasons:** 9

**Number of shares:** 25

**Membership:** "Very, very rural."

**Miscellaneous:** The sisters' CSA operation is located on a 240-acre farm that belongs to nine siblings whose parents are still living on the farm.

→ **Nett Hart, Webster Farm Organics**

**Location:** Foreston, Minn.

**Number of seasons:** 7

**Number of shares:** 60

**Membership base:** St. Cloud, Twin Cities

**Miscellaneous:** Nett farms with Tamarack, and the operation is certified organic

→ **Kate Stout, North Creek Community Farm**

**Location:** Prairie Farm, Wis.

**Number of seasons:** 11

**Number of shares:** 122

**Membership base:** Twin Cities

**Miscellaneous:** Kate utilizes interns in her operation

→ **Laurie Hougen-Eitzman, Big Woods Farm**

**Location:** Nerstrand, Minn.

**Number of seasons:** 12

**Number of shares:** 50

**Membership base:** Half from

Northfield, Minn., and the rural area

around Nerstrand; another half are in South Minneapolis.

**Miscellaneous:** Laurie farms with her husband David

→ **David Van Eeckhout, Hog's Back Farm**

**Location:** Arkansaw, Wis.

**Number of seasons:** 2

**Number of shares:** 60

**Membership base:** Twin Cities

**Miscellaneous:** David farms with his wife Melinda, and commutes 65 miles from his home in St. Paul to the farm

→ **Dan Guenther & Margaret Pennings, Common Harvest Farm**

**Location:** Osceola, Wis.

**Number of seasons:** 15

**Number of shares:** 220

**Membership base:** Twin Cities

**Miscellaneous:** Common Harvest is one of the oldest CSA operations in the region, and its members helped buy the land the farm is on

→ **John & Jane Fisher-Merritt, Food Farm**

**Location:** Wrenshall, Minn.

**Number of seasons:** 11

**Number of shares:** 150 summer shares, plus once-a-month winter shares, and poultry shares, making for a total of 240 households served

**Membership base:** Duluth, Minn.

**Miscellaneous:** John & Jane have two post-college age sons who are working into the

operation; they are also mentoring another couple who want to start a CSA farm

→ **Patty Wright & Mike Racette, Spring Hill Community Farm**

**Location:** Prairie Farm, Wis.

**Number of seasons:** 13

**Number of shares:** 140

**Membership base:** Twin Cities

**Miscellaneous:** Spring Hill's deliveries are done by its members

• **Charlie Kersey, Natural Harvest**

**Location:** Lake Elmo, Minn.

**Number of seasons:** 4

**Number of shares:** 120

**Membership base:** St. Paul, Stillwater

**Miscellaneous:** Charlie farms with his wife, Tzeitel; Natural Harvest is part of the Fields of St. Croix Conservation Community, a housing development centered around a working farm and natural landscapes

→ **Rhys Williams, Featherstone Fruits & Vegetables**

**Location:** Rushford, Minn.

**Number of seasons:** 7

**Number of shares:** 120

**Membership base:** Rochester, Winona, Lanesboro

**Miscellaneous:** Rhys farms with Jack Hedin; Featherstone is part of the 600-acre Zephyr Valley Community, which is owned by six families

→ **Also participating was LSP intern Marjorie Ross (see page 5)**

### Sharing the risk

*When consumers buy a share in a CSA operation, they are purchasing a right to share in the rewards of sustainable farming: fresh, naturally produced vegetables; knowing where their food comes from; and becoming part of a community that has deep roots in the land. But CSA members also share in the risks that come with farming, namely inclement weather, weed and insect pests, and various other agronomic curve balls.*

→ **Mike Racette:** When we first got started it was such a new idea, everybody was so excited and there were no standards out there. Nobody knew what to expect, farmers and members included. There was a lot of leeway for mistakes to be made for the first few years. But I think there's been not only a growth among the farms but members collectively about what should be expected from a CSA. I know our very first year we had a killing frost on June 21. We

only had 18 members and these were people we knew very well and all of those 18 households came back for year two. I wonder if we had a killing frost now what would happen. What kind of return rate would we see?

→ **Annette Fernholz:** We don't have irrigation. So after we had a dry summer

Round-table, see page 18...

## Community Supported Stewardship



...Round-table, from page 17

there was this minimal dip in membership. We are really dependent on the natural systems. It's a great courageous act when members sign up with you and say, "We will endure the risks with you." But I'm not sure that risk hits home until something happens.

→ **Margaret Pennings:** Dan and I have a saying that people will pay for philosophy for about one year.

→ **Annette Fernholz** [with a laugh]: Two if it's a good year.

### Why do people join CSA farms?

*The bottom line is if people only wanted organically produced vegetables, they could get them from a co-op or the local farmers' market. But it's become clear in recent years that CSA operations offer something beyond food.*

→ **Margaret Pennings:** We had an intern who used to say, "We don't know what these vegetables are telling these people." I think CSA members say to themselves, "I'm doing something more than just eating this vegetable."

→ **Laurie Hougen-Eitzman:** One thing the vegetables tell them when they look in their refrigerator is: "Oh my god I haven't used my kale from last week. I feel so guilty." I know we have a certain percentage of people who haven't come back to the farm because they feel guilty for not using all their food every week. One thing I think we really come up against is our members have so little time in their lives. Are their ways we can make this easier for them, without it costing us somehow or another? Over the years we've warned people this will require time from you; it's not like going to the grocery store and picking out what you want.

→ **Margaret Pennings:** I think it's how do you want to prioritize how you spend your time, how do you prioritize

how you spend your money? I think folks who stay with CSA longer start flowing into these patterns. They realize they're not making as many trips to the grocery store and that's a bonus. Or they aren't dealing with recycling packaging because there is no packaging. But I think it takes awhile. It's not just all there at first.

• • •

*"It's not just making peace with the earth—it's people making peace with the food."*

• • •

→ **Kate Stout:** My take on this is a little different. It doesn't come from a philosophy of sort of a larger moral thing or something. For me there is no job that I can imagine that I would love as much as farming. And I think some of my members like to be on my farm because I love it so much. And I think what I share with my members is a larger picture of agriculture. It's not organic versus conventional. I try to share an education of what's happened to farmers in general. All farmers are good farmers—they're trying to make a living for their family, they're trying to afford health care and they have made choices and so I don't set myself up as something that's more sustainable. When I first started farming I used all horses and that was more sustainable, I wasn't using fuel and other resources. But today when I drive an hour and a half to the Twin Cities in my truck to deliver vegetables I have to admit I don't feel that much more sustainable than conventional farmers. So I don't say to my members, "This is great—I do something that's so different." I don't feel that different from my neighbors that farm conventionally. What I share is what it's like to be a farmer, for all farmers, what my neighbors do, and the pressure of land prices going up, etc.

→ **John Fisher-Merritt:** I really resonate with what Kate said about there's really nothing I'd rather be doing than farming. Part of it is when you look at crop rotations and you're thinking about how to manage the soil without a bunch of chemicals and stuff. We pasture poultry and that's a big part of our rotation because it increases the nutrient cycling and builds humus. I remember once when we were harvesting carrots

and it was beginning to snow. We had on good rain gear. We had on good gloves. We were perfectly comfortable. And here's these guys driving by in their pickups saying, "Boy I'm glad I'm not out there doing that." But we were having fun. The people we are mentoring to start their own CSA were out there too and we were learning from each other.

→ **Patty Wright:** I think it's that relationship aspect of Community Supported farming that sets us apart. Yes, even though we do have more in common than not with our fellow farmers, the concept of Community Supported Agriculture is about relationship, and it's the relationship that you have with your members that is the key I think.

→ **Rhys Williams:** I also think it's the trust that they put in us, that they don't get anywhere else anymore. There are so few things people can count on, and we're one little thing you know we're not messing with you—we're growing this, harvesting it, and it's going nowhere but to you. I think that's part of it.

→ **Nett Hart:** We see every member every week—part of that for us is that's how they want it. We set it up that way to start with. We do pre-packaged boxes but we customize them—we have a name tag on returnable bags because if someone has a food allergy or has something they aren't going to use we don't want them to feel guilty about it. We will substitute where we can. Since we see them every week they can say, "You know, what did I do wrong with this such-and-such vegetable when I tried to cook it a certain way?" So then we can talk about how to prepare the food. We have a lot of people who don't spend a lot of time in the kitchen or haven't before. And we're good resources for that. I love to farm. I love to cook too. People are loyal because they get ideas and they start to feel good about what they're doing with the food too and they're building that relationship. It's not just making peace with the earth—it's people making peace with the food.

→ **Marjorie Ross:** I think it's really important that the consumer doesn't just have this good feeling and like, "Oh I'm part of this thing that's environmental," or "I buy only organic for my family because it's healthy." That can be such a

Round-table, see page 19...

fad. But when they walk away from their experience as a CSA member, they go to the grocery store a different person and they think of the agriculture system differently. I think that's a really important role for the CSAs. The co-ops can make it easy to be just a normal grocery shopper and feel good about it without really knowing why.

→ **Margaret Pennings:** I think we're this conduit to a bigger relationship with the land. It might first start out, "I'm going to do this for my health." But then I think it becomes a little bigger.



The Round-table participants: "I think it's that relationship aspect of Community Supported farming that sets us apart," says farmer Patty Wright. (LSP photo)

### Sustainability & labor

*The intensity of the labor involved in CSA farming has served as a source of burnout for some CSA farmers. In recent years, farmers have been seeking ways of easing the labor burden while maintaining efficient operations.*

→ **Mike Racette:** We have a high school daughter right now so by extension there's lots of high school kids we know who can work on the farm. We are trying to position ourselves in the community as offering a reasonable part-time job for junior high-high school kids that pays better than anything else they can get in the community. We want to say this is not meaningless, menial work. This has value, this has importance and this is not demeaning. And then there's the age-old connection of higher pay and

• • •  
*"One thing the vegetables tell them...is: 'Oh my god I haven't used my kale from last week. I feel so guilty.'"*  
• • •

higher expectations. When you pay well you can expect a lot.

→ **Kay Fernholz:** We've been connecting with a woman from town who has to get volunteer community service from those who get into trouble. What we tell her and the people who are assigned

to us is that this is not a punishment. We don't want it to become something that is a negative experience. Sometimes that's what those kids need more than anything is a kind of relationship where you care about them. And they also have done some good work for us. Some have connected back with us after their hours are served. We also have had interns as well. We've had quite a few that have come through our farm and we have continued to be in touch with them. They feel like our children. They maybe have farms of their own now or they're going to college and are taking subjects that are preparing them more and more for work in this area.

### Who owns the land?

*As with farmers of all types, access to land is a major issue for CSA producers.*

→ **Dan Guenther:** We have a conservation easement on our farm. We sold the development rights on our farm to our members and the Western Wisconsin Land Trust, formerly the Wisconsin Farmland Conservancy. It holds the easement, and monitors it. That was a way for our members to make those contributions tax deductible. So our members basically bought the land but it's privately owned. We can sell the house, but the easement is permanently affixed to the deed. The easement says this land will be farmed organically. Another way of looking at it is that it's a covenant. You can write anything you want into your covenant within certain legal parameters. Working with the

Western Wisconsin Land Trust we also set up something called an equity share. When our farm is sold, instead of being sold at market rate it will be sold at market rate minus what we've already generated in this market share arrangement. We've set up a 15 percent equity share that our members can buy so that if we ever sell the farm it would be sold at 15 percent less than the market value. This is another layer for us to offset that inflated value and make it more affordable to another farmer. Hopefully we won't ever have to sell it, and maybe one of our kids will farm it. But it's essentially an investment vehicle we've set up for our members. It is an investment in the idea and the future of sustainability of farms. In terms of dollars and cents it's an investment for the members as well because they get a tax deduction.

### CSA as a way to get into farming

*CSA farming has proven attractive to beginning farmers because of its relatively low start-up costs and the manner in which marketing is taken care of through the subscription system. However, several of the round-table participants expressed concerns about jumping into CSA farming feet first.*

→ **Rhys Williams:** I'm involved with the Farm Beginnings program at LSP down in Lewiston and a lot of emphasis is put on the CSAs as a way into farming for vegetable growers. But I'm seeing a pretty high turnover rate among CSA farmers in some areas, and we're just

wondering if that's the right avenue to go at this time.

→ **Mike Racette:** The management level is so intense. We've been taking part in this vegetable production course taught through the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems at the University of Wisconsin and the conclusion there pretty much is: Don't do a CSA year one. Learn some growing techniques, learn some marketing techniques, understand the standards that are out there.

→ **David Van Eeckhout:** The first farm I worked for was a very intensive market garden operation. I knew that wasn't necessarily the way I wanted to go. I then worked for two different CSA operations before starting one on my own. I really like the idea of CSA. I like the idea of working with people. That can happen at a farmers' market too, but with CSA there's just another connection that appealed to me. It's also a good financial way to go about it. Especially starting out with raw land in this day and age.

→ **Charlie Kersey:** For someone who is getting started, there's a lot of start-up costs. There's the whole question of whether a CSA is the best way to start and in some ways I don't think it is. But financially I don't know how else I could have done it. We sell at the farmers' market too but I could not have gotten established in farming based solely on what we make at that market—not with five acres of land. It doesn't work out financially, at least with the prices at the farmers' market we sell at.

• • •

*“...when they walk away from their experience as a CSA member, they go to the grocery store a different person and they think of the agriculture system differently.”*

• • •

→ **Laurie Hougen-Eitzman:** The people I can think of who did start a CSA from the very beginning I know they had a harder time doing it successfully. For us we started doing it at the farmers' market in Northfield for a year and then we had just a few CSA shares, and we really grew into it. Then we made the transition

into being only CSA. I think that's an important thing for new people to know—don't jump in not knowing what you're doing, how to grow. You're managing so many different species—you want to try to have this diverse basket or box for your members. It's not just corn or soybeans.

→ **Jane Fisher-Merritt:** John and I have been gardening together since 1973. So by the time the idea of CSA came around we knew pretty much how to



grow food. And we had tried so many different ways of selling the food we grew. We started a farmers' market and did Booker T. Whatley's clientele membership thing for a few years. We did just all kinds of stuff. So when we started out in CSA we didn't grow one bit more than we had been growing. We just got to deliver it all. It was so wonderful. It was the first year we had ever taken a salary out of the farm and we had been doing it for almost 20 years. It was just a dream.

### A new generation

*CSA farming has now been around long enough that some of its practitioners are looking toward the time when they retire from active vegetable production and pass the torch onto the next generation. John and Jane Fisher-Merritt discussed how they are starting to smooth the way for their two sons, Janaki and Benjamin, to take over the operation.*

→ **Jane Fisher-Merritt:** We're a sole proprietor—so the land, all the assets, everything is just in our name. And seeing that both Janaki and Benjamin are going to continue farming with us we know we need to move into some sort of incorporation or something that in some way can separate our personal liabilities, if we have any, from the farm enterprise. And the land around Duluth is getting more expensive for development, but it's more reasonable around us. So the issue of preserving that land in agriculture is real important to us. We do not want to sell the farm in order to retire, in order to

take care of us in retirement. And so to find a business form I think we're going to have to do at least three different instruments so that we can receive income from the farm even when we are not as physically productive or contributing as much as we have been. So this winter we gave ourselves an assignment to do research on those areas. And we just started out getting familiar with the terms like what's a trust, what's a living trust, what's a land trust, what are different forms of a corporation and things like that. We're making some headway and realizing that there isn't going to be one simple answer, or even one complex answer to it. I think we're going to have to do several different things. Part of the generational transfer as I see it is our mental energy, our vision for how we provide more of the food resources to the members we already have rather than getting larger and larger and larger. As well as transferring ownership to the next generation of farmers, we also need to be able to transfer the vision of the creative ideas for how they're going to bring in more income without selling out their values. We need to invest that vision in the next generation, rather than figure it out all out for them ahead of time. □

### Want to join a CSA farm?

Twin Cities-area consumers who want to receive fresh, naturally-produced vegetables on a weekly basis during the 2004 growing season should reserve a share in a Community Supported Agriculture farm now. At least 21 CSA farms have sprung up in the Twin Cities-western Wisconsin region within the past 14 years, providing consumers a wide variety of choices.

For a free LSP guide describing CSA farms that serve the Twin Cities region, log onto [www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org) (click on **Food & Farm Connection**). For a paper copy, call LSP at 651-653-0618.

For listings of CSA operations in other regions of the country, contact the Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association at 1-888-516-7797 or [www.biodynamics.com](http://www.biodynamics.com). The USDA has also compiled a nationwide listing of CSA farms. Go to [www.sare.org/csa/index.htm](http://www.sare.org/csa/index.htm) to access the list. You can also receive the free listing by writing to: CSA/CSREES, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Stop 2207, Washington, D.C. 20250-2207 (when writing, please specify whether you want the entire directory or just a list for your state).



## Local Flavors

### Cooking and Eating from America's Farmers' Markets

By Deborah Madison  
2002; 408 Pages; \$39.94 (hardcover)  
Broadway Books (Random House)

### Recipes from America's Small Farms Fresh Ideas for the Season's Bounty

By Joanne Lamb Hayes & Lori Stein,  
with Maura Webber  
2002; 285 pages; \$16.95 (paper)  
Villard Books (Random House)

Random House Publishing Group  
1745 Broadway, 18th Floor  
New York, NY 10019  
www.randomhouse.com

Reviewed by Dana Jackson

So—you've resolved to serve your family more fresh, locally produced vegetables during the 2004 growing season. Maybe you've purchased a share in a Community Supported farm for the first time. Or perhaps a new farmers' market is opening up in your neighborhood one evening a week, and you plan to buy vegetables there.

If microwaving frozen peas and corn, baking potatoes and serving sliced tomatoes is the extent of your experience with vegetables, you will need some information and some recipes. Here are a couple of books that can help you. Even if you're not a novice, these two books can add to your appreciation of farmers' markets and small farms, and enhance your enjoyment of their bounty with new ideas for preparing delicious dishes.

### In praise of farmers' markets

Deborah Madison's book, *Local Flavors: Cooking and Eating from America's Farmers' Markets*, is clearly about cooking with fresh vegetables and fruits found in farmers' markets, and the recipes are all in the context of what one can find during various stages of the

growing season in different localities. Her local farmers' market is in Santa Fe, N. Mex., but the book is full of recipes for foods one would find in the many farmers' markets she has visited across the country. She points out that 25 years ago there were only about 25 such markets in the nation, and now there are nearly 3,000. More are opening every year.

The introduction could be called "In Praise of Farmers' Markets." Madison describes the farmers' market as more than a place to buy food. It is "about culture, regionalism, and having a healthy sense of pride in one's work and one's land." It is "where family farmers actually have a chance to make a living and make their small farms work." For the consumer, she says that the farmers' market is "about the only place left in our lives where we can interact with someone who makes something we use. And it's hard to imagine what is more vital or intimate than the food we consume, for it becomes our health, our pleasure, our nourishment, who we are, in fact." Madison praises the slowing down of



people's lives when they shop in farmers' markets, and the joyful social interaction among growers and between growers and shoppers. The introduction concludes with 10 great practical tips for shopping in farmers' markets.

In this beautifully designed book, special boxes of information about certain vegetables pop up among the recipes, such as "Wild and Unusual Greens," "Radishes," and "Chiles and Peppers," as do interesting essays on topics such as "Weather," and "Children at the Market." Madison also includes short pieces describing the unique qualities of particular farmers' markets in New Mexico, California, Ohio, Hawaii, and of

particular interest to me, St. Paul, Minn., and Madison, Wis.

This cookbook is about buying and cooking fresh food, so the reader must be conscious how the recipes are keyed to particular localities at particular times of the year when the ingredients are in season. Some chapters cover citrus and subtropical fruits. Since we won't find such treasures in the Upper Midwest, we'll just have to drool over recipes calling for passion fruit, cream of coconut milk and figs, and turn the pages to find the apple and pear recipes, or the chapter on berries and grapes. But that's what the book is about—local flavors.

Anyone seriously trying to eat seasonally has wondered what to do with the copious greens of early spring, and Madison provides some help in her very first chapter. One little paragraph with the heading "Cooking Greens in the Pan" on the first page can take you through an entire season, but more advanced cooks can also find elaborate recipes with many ingredients in the rest of the chapter. Restaurant chefs might find "Chard and Cilantro Soup with Noodle Nests" worth

their time to prepare, but in my kitchen, this is the kind of recipe that has too many ingredients and takes too much time.

*Local Flavors* is a gorgeous book, one that you will leaf through to look at the color photos while being intrigued by the information and recipes.

### Small farm recipes

*Recipes from America's Small Farms: Fresh Ideas for the Season's Bounty* is a book designed to help people know what to do with those boxes of produce from their Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm each week. Its simple graphics and two-color design make it easy to look at and read. Right under the title on the cover of the book is the statement: "Farmers, chefs, and members of community supported agriculture invite you to share the harvest." Indeed, they supplied the recipes and are described in introductions to recipes. Special "Meet the Farmer" stories sprinkled throughout the book connect the food to the land and make the recipes even more appealing.

The introduction outlines the history

**Fresh Food**, see page 22...

and principles of CSA, describes the Chefs' Collaborative and explains some important concepts in a special box labeled "Organic, Sustainable, Biodiversity: What and Why?"

I like the practicality and simplicity of this as a cookbook. It would be especially helpful to someone who needs an orientation to cooking vegetables from a CSA, as it starts right out with chapters titled "Basic Techniques" and "Basic Recipes." The following nine chapters focus on specific categories, such as "Roots and Tubers," "Cooking with Fresh Herbs" and "The Cabbage Clan." This latter chapter is particularly helpful, providing good ideas for preparing those early and late season vegetables seemingly overabundant in most CSA shares, including not just green and red cabbage, but napa cabbage, bok choy, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, kale and

collard greens.

If you have my cooking heritage, which meant cooking vegetables to death, you remember turning up your nose at cabbage, and for good reason. The directions for cooking in this book will save you that experience, and your children may even grow to like the Brassica vegetables. I think mine might have liked Swiss chard with golden raisins and pine nuts, although pine nuts were too expensive to store in my pantry in those days.

Chapter 10, called "Beyond Produce," takes readers beyond the simplistic assumption that one must be a vegetarian to be ecologically responsible. It introduces sustainable alternatives to industrial meats, eggs and seafood by describing the benefits of pastured poultry and grass-fed beef. A list of seafood to look for and what products to avoid is included. The box on cooking meat is very helpful to cooks whose experience with

marbled, grain-finished beef is not relevant when preparing grass-fed beef. There aren't many recipes in this category however, and pork and lamb, except for broth made from lamb bones, are completely ignored.

CSA farms usually provide a couple recipes in their weekly newsletters for vegetables that are ripening that week. Others omit the weekly recipes and just give all members a cookbook developed for CSA shareholders. I recommend that CSA farmers consider *Recipes from America's Small Farms* for that purpose, or just tell their members about it. Opening up that bag or box of vegetables each week from a CSA share can be intimidating. Opening up this cookbook every week can make it easier to use all those vegetables while enriching that food and farm connection. □

Dana Jackson is LSP's Associate Director and resident fresh food expert.

## Opportunities



## Resources

### Alternative swine position

The University of Minnesota is looking for an alternative swine scientist to do research and outreach at its West Central Research and Outreach Center in Morris. In recent years, the alternative swine facilities at Morris have served as the center of Minnesota research into such cutting edge production systems as hoop house finishing and deep-straw farrowing. LSP members and staff were instrumental in getting these research facilities established. For more information on research taking place at the Research and Outreach Center, check out the July/August/September and October/November 2003 issues of the *Land Stewardship Letter* ([www.landstewardshipproject.org/news-lsl.html](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/news-lsl.html)).

The alternative swine scientist will coordinate and facilitate a research program designed to evaluate animal welfare in alternative and conventional swine production systems. Research will be done at the experiment station and other university facilities, as well as on private farms. The scientist will also respond to requests for information and assistance from farmers, extension educators and others.

Applicants must send a letter of application that includes a statement of interests relevant to this position, vita, copies of all college transcripts, and have three letters of reference sent independently to: Dr. Lee Johnston, c/o Terry Beseman, West Central

Research and Outreach Center, 46352 State Highway 329, Morris, MN 56267. Inquiries can be directed to Johnston at 320-589-1711 or [johnstlj@mrs.umn.edu](mailto:johnstlj@mrs.umn.edu). □

### Grass-based dairy support

Farmers interested in organic or grass-based dairying can get help from the Sustainable Farming Association (SFA) of Minnesota and the Minnesota Dairy Initiative. The SFA has hired Jeremy Lanctot to deliver support to organic and grazing dairy farms throughout Minnesota. Lanctot can visit farms for a no-obligation assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to identify areas where farmers would like assistance in reducing costs and labor, improving animal health, increasing net profit, enhancing quality of family life, or protecting the environment. Often, a first step is to link a farmer with an experienced organic and/or grass-based farmer who can come to the farm to give an objective view of the entire operation.

Lanctot can be contacted at 320-278-2002 or [jeremylanctot@direcway.com](mailto:jeremylanctot@direcway.com). □

### 'Public Seeds-Public Goods'

A special Land Stewardship Project report describes the critical role public plant breeding plays in American agriculture and how this resource is threatened by privatization. "Public Seeds—Public Goods," a compilation of articles that have

appeared in the *Land Stewardship Letter* during the past few years, describes how the increased privatization of our germplasm poses a significant threat to farmers, the public and scientific research itself.

A free pdf copy of this 11-page report is available at [www.landstewardshipproject.org/pr/04/newsr\\_040228.html](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/pr/04/newsr_040228.html). Paper copies are available for \$5 (to cover postage and handling) by contacting Louise Arbuckle at 651-653-0618.

On a related topic, the Union of Concerned Scientists has released a study showing that U.S. crops are "pervasively contaminated" with DNA from genetically modified versions of those crops. *Gone to Seed: Transgenic Contaminants in the Traditional Seed Supply* is available at [www.ucusa.org](http://www.ucusa.org). □

### Keep current with

**LIVE  WIRE**

Sign up for *LIVE-WIRE* for regular e-mail updates and news from the Land Stewardship Project. Stay current on information and activities related to land stewardship, local food and grassroots organizing. To subscribe, visit [www.mnforum.org/mailman/listinfo/lsp\\_live-wire](http://www.mnforum.org/mailman/listinfo/lsp_live-wire). You can also subscribe by calling Louise Arbuckle at 651-653-0618 or e-mailing [atlspwbl@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:atlspwbl@landstewardshipproject.org) and put in the subject line "Subscribe LIVE-WIRE." □



# Membership Update



## Member citizens

By Cathy Eberhart

With politics in the air, I've been doing a lot of thinking about what it means to be a citizen in a democracy.

It's something Land Stewardship Project believes in passionately: that citizens should have a say in the future of their communities, and that we live in a society where the people hold the power to govern. LSP works hard to foster the skills of citizenship. As a member of LSP, you have access to the tools you need to be an effective citizen.

Citizens of Dodge County in southeastern Minnesota experienced this firsthand when they contacted LSP to help fight a 3,000-cow factory farm being proposed in their area. LSP member Evan Schmeling, a farmer near Hayfield, invited organizer Adam Warthesen to speak with him and his neighbors about their options. Schmeling says, "Land Stewardship knows the ins and outs of what your rights are as a citizen. We don't practice that every day. Adam and his fellow workers have lots of ideas and could answer our questions. They have been a great resource."

Seventy-four-year-old Dodge Center resident and LSP member Lois Nash says, "We were grasping at straws and it [LSP's assistance] sure has been a help. We haven't had to deal with anything like this. They have given us the knowledge we needed to push forward."

The citizens of Dodge County have quickly relearned the tools of democracy. Between October 2002 and October 2003, they organized petition drives, conducted educational sessions for township leaders and citizens, wrote numerous letters to the editors of area newspapers and farm magazines, and attended many, many meetings. "I kept hoping this would be the last meeting," jokes LSP member Brad Trom, who works on his dad's Blooming Prairie, Minn., farm. "But the fight isn't over."

As difficult and time consuming as this factory farm battle has been, it has helped to bring the community together.

"We found out we're not alone," Schmeling says. "A lot of people feel the same way we do." They have also been better able to help each other out when they needed it. Nash gives examples of neighbors helping with snow plowing, transportation for medical treatments, and moving.

Trom echoes these thoughts: "We have met some of our neighbors we had never met before. You find out that a lot of our concerns are not just ours but shared. Support for factory farms seems to be coming from the top down, not from the grassroots level." In fact, through their petition drives in Ashland and Ripley Townships, they discovered that 70 to 80 percent of township residents were in opposition to large-scale factory farms.

As a result of this fight, Trom says he and a lot of other farmers and rural residents have become more involved in their community. They have studied the issues, read farm newspapers like *Agri-News* more carefully, and encouraged their neighbors to get involved and become LSP members. Schmeling and another Ripley township resident traveled to St. Paul in early February to meet with legislators and attend a hearing on interim ordinances. Both Nash and Trom

attended the Citizen's Day at the Minnesota capitol on Feb. 25 to speak against weakening township rights. Nash and Trom attended their party's precinct caucuses and were both elected as representatives to their county caucuses. Nash said she brought another family to the caucuses who had never attended before.

"Everybody has a chance to be involved," says Trom. "Farmers are usually quite busy. If they don't take the time to do it, there are people quite busy at the capitol that are trying to put family farmers out of business and so it is important to take the time, to attend township meetings. As a farmer, rural resident or farm worker, you need to be active in what is going on."

Nash agrees: "I would highly recommend that people become members of Land Stewardship Project and get involved in their community. People need to get politically involved at the grassroots level. Land Stewardship is grassroots." □

*Cathy Eberhart is LSP's Membership Coordinator. See page 3 for an update on the 2004 Minnesota Legislative session.*

## Support LSP in your workplace

The Land Stewardship Project is a proud member of the Minnesota Environmental Fund (MEF), 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

- 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.

A PROUD MEMBER OF



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, call 651-653-0618 or e-mail [lsppwb@landstewardshipproject.org](mailto:lsppwb@landstewardshipproject.org).

## STEWARDSHIP CALENDAR

- **MAY 20—On-Farm Dairy Processing**, New Prague, Minn. (see page 6)
- **MAY 22—Pastured Poultry Farm Tour**, Walz farm, St. Cloud, Minn.; Contact: 320-963-3690; pclahr@yahoo.com
- **JUNE 2-3—LSP's George Boody will participate in a Washington, D.C., meeting on habitat conservation**; Contact: 651-653-0618
- **JUNE 4—Milking Time Open House at Big Woods Grass-Based Dairy**, Big Woods State Park, Nerstrand, Minn.; Contact: 507-333-4840
- **JUNE 6—Organic Vegetable Production & CSA**, Wykoff, Minn.; Contact: 507-352-4255; www.wmich.edu/tillers/
- **JUNE 9—Developing Pastures for Beef**, Morris, Minn., area; Contact: Dennis Johnson, WCROC, 320-589-1711; dairydj@mrs.umn.edu
- **JUNE 8-9—2-Day Grazing School**, west-central Minnesota (see page 6)
- **JUNE 10-13—LSP's Dana Jackson will speak at the Ag, Food & Human Values Society Conf.**, Hyde Park, N.Y.; Contact: 352-392-2084, ext. 316; http://web.clas.ufl.edu/users/rhaynes/afhvs
- **JUNE 11—LSP Policy Program Open House**, 2919 42nd St. E., Minneapolis, Minn.; Contact: 612-722-6377; mcmahon@landstewardshipproject.org
- **LSP's Dana Jackson will give MEF talk for the Lion's Club**, Owatonna, Minn.; Contact: 651-653-0618
- **JUNE 12—Organic Beef Grazing**, Clearwater, Minn. (see page 6)
- **JUNE 16—Dairy Grazing & Birds**, Minneiska, Minn. (see page 6)
- **JUNE 18-20—Midwest Renewable Energy & Sustainable Living Fair**, Custer, Wis.; Contact: 715-592-6595; www.the-mrea.org
- **JUNE 19—Pasturing Hogs & Dairy Heifers**, Kerkhoven, Minn. (see page 6)
- **JUNE 21—CSA & Mulching**, Garden Farme, Ramsey, Minn.; Contact: 320-963-3690; pclahr@yahoo.com
- **JUNE 23—Organic Field Plot Bus Tour**, Red Lake Falls, Minn., area; Contact: 218-281-8688; kande001@umn.edu
- **JUNE 26—LSP's Southeast Minnesota Annual Meeting** (see page 6)
- **Pork & Organic Crop Production** (see page 6)
- **JUNE 26-27—Solar for Farmsteads**, DreamAcres, Wykoff, Minn.; Contact: 507-352-4255; www.wmich.edu/tillers/
- **LATE JUNE-EARLY JULY—Town Hall Meeting on Rural Development & Ag** (location & details to be announced); Contact: LSP's Policy Program, 612-722-6377
- **JULY 7—Organic Field Plot Tours**, Moorhead, Minn., area; Contact: 218-281-8688; kande001@umn.edu
- **JULY 14—Pasture Walk on Avoiding the Mid-Summer Browns**, Morris, Minn., area (see June 9)
- **JULY 15—Farm Beginnings Field Day on CSA**, North Creek Community Farm, Prairie Farm, Wis. (see page 6)
- **JULY 19—Hayride & Farm Tour at Homeplace Organic Beef**, Clearwater, Minn.; Contact: 320-963-3690
- **JULY 20—Herb Walk**, Don Popp Farm, Hutchinson, Minn.; Contact: 320-963-3690; pclahr@yahoo.com
- **JULY 23—Annual Meeting of LSP's Board of Directors**; Contact: Jo Anne Rohricht, 651-645-6043
- **JULY 26-28—Presentations on the Multiple Benefits of Ag Project by LSP staff & members at the Soil & Water Conservation Society Annual Conference**, St. Paul, Minn.; Contact: 515-289-

- 2331; www.swcs.org
- **JULY 27—Gardening the Organic Way**, SWROC, Lamberton, Minn.; Contact: 507-752-7372; kronb003@umn.edu
- **JULY 27-29—Upper Midwest Grazing Conference**, La Crosse, Wis.; Contact: Larry Tranel, 563-583-6496, ext. 14; www.wisc.edu/cias/uppermidwest
- **JULY 28-AUG. 1—Renewable Energy & Sustainable Ag Fair**, Little Falls, Minn.; Contact: rlentner2981@yahoo.com
- **JULY 31—Field Day on CSA & Draft Animals**, Wykoff, Minn. (see page 6)
- **AUG. 7-14—Flourish Summer Camp: An Experience in Arts & Ag for ages 12-18**, DreamAcres, Wykoff, Minn.; Contact: 507-352-4255; www.wmich.edu/tillers/
- **AUG. 9—Demonstrating & Publicizing Organic Ag Methods in Minn.**, Webster Farm Organics, Foreston, Minn.; Contact: 320-269-9617
- **AUG. 11—Pasture Walk on Irrigated Grazing**, Morris, Minn., area (see June 9)
- **SEPT. 8—Pasture Walk on Winter Forage Storage**, Morris, Minn., area (see June 9)
- **SEPT. 9-10—The Role of Farmers' Markets in America's Food System**, Des Moines, Iowa; Contact: 515-271-2065; www.statefoodpolicy.org/new\_developments.htm
- **SEPT. 11—2004 Northeast Minnesota SFA Harvest Festival**, Bayfront Festival Park, Duluth, Minn.; Contact: 218-727-1414; sfanortheast@yahoo.com
- **OCT. 13—Pasture Walk on Extending the Season**, Morris, Minn., area (see June 9)
- **NOV. 10—Pasture Walk on Preparing Pastures & Livestock for Winter**, Morris, Minn., area (see June 9)

Check [www.landstewardshipproject.org](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org) for the latest on upcoming events.



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