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# ALTERNATIVE ENTERPRISE AND AGRITOURISM: FARMING FOR PROFIT AND SUSTAINABILITY TOOL KIT

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For

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*Marketing Strategies For Farmers and Ranchers.* SARE, USDA. Several examples of farmers and ranchers are used to exhibit the different marketing techniques discussed in this 20-page publication. See Tab IX for a copy.

*Natural Resource Protection.* SARE. Report on an interdisciplinary study showing that what's good for the wetland and the birds also can be good for a farmer's bottom line. The report is written around farmers using the wetlands program to enhance the environment, their farm and their bottom line. Go to www.sare.org or 301-504-6245.

*Sustainable Agriculture...Continuing to Grow: Proceedings of the "Farming and Ranching for Profit, Stewardship and Community Conference, March 709, 2000."* Western SARE. Call 435-797-2257 or wsare@mendel.usu.edu. or go to www.wsare.usu.edu for producer profiles and presentation of abstracts. The conference addressed—the sustainable farm, disease, pests and weeds, the sustainable ranch, marketing in a sustainable economy and sustaining agriculture. Farmers and ranchers made several presentations on how they are sustaining themselves through alternative enterprises.

*Sustainable Agriculture:* NRCS Watershed Science Institute. Call 402-437-5178 x43 or email: saschmann@aol.com for more information. These four success stories address sustainable agriculture and the productivity, environmental quality, socioeconomic viability and sustainable characteristics.

*Pastured Poultry*. This publication describes the experiences of 35 Southern limited resource farmers who from 1996-99 participated in a project to produce and market pastured poultry. Information includes pen-building, brooding, feeding, processing, marketing, legal matters, economics, and several other topics. A copy can be obtained by calling 1-800-346-9140 or it can be obtained off the web at http://www.attra.org

*Developing Trails and Tourism on Private Lands in Texas:* Case Studies on Existing Enterprises. Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M. This publication discusses the use of trails and sponsoring of biking events as an income opportunity for ranchers. Six ranches activities are used to show this alternative enterprise. Email: For more information contact C. Scott Shafer email Sshafer@rpts.tamu.edu

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October 2000

**Alternative Farm Enterprises – Agritourism Success Stories**

# Pasture-Fed Broilers, Free-Range Eggs, and Veal

Interview with Lilly and David Smith, Springfield Farm, 16701 Yeoho Road, Sparks, MD 21152, 781-999-2690, ducky24u@earthlink.net

**What is the history of your farm and farming experience?**
This farm has been in our family since the early 1700's. It was originally part of a 5,000- to 10,000-acre farm granted by the King of England. My great grandfather was deeded this current farm (65 acres) in the mid-1800's. I grew up here. The farm has been leased since my Dad retired.

**Describe the alternative enterprise in which you are presently engaged.**
My wife Lilly and I raise pasture-fed chicken broilers using the Joel Salatin cage method. We also produce pastured free-range eggs and pink veal. We have a few ducks, geese, and a pair of peacocks for scenery.

**What made you decide to go into the present alternative enterprise(s)?**
I wanted to make this farm profitable again, and alternative enterprises are the only way this is possible. The farm is not big enough for us to make a living on corn, wheat and beans. We tried a vegetable garden the first year, about one-half acre. Everybody was doing that, and the work is very hard and time consuming. So I investigated and researched what small-scale enterprises were not being done in this area. Entrepreneurs had greenhouses, U-Pick, and forestry, etc. So I ended up with chickens and pink veal.

**How did you make the transition?**
I retired from the Army after a 23-year career and retired again after 13 more years in corporate America. In 1999, I started going to meetings and conferences, subscribed to magazines, went to on-farm workshops, researched the library and the Internet, visited other small farm entrepreneurs, and talked to a lot of neighbors and local farmers alike. We started with 75 layers, a few broilers, and four veal calves. Word of mouth sold the broilers and calves before they were ready for market. We were selling the eggs locally from the farm and through the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) venture of a neighbor. Then we met a chef who wanted to buy eggs for his restaurant. By January 2000, we had four regular customers buying 200 dozen eggs a week and six more restaurants waiting until our new layers started producing. In 2000 we have 10 veal calves, 1,000 layers, and 225 broilers.

**Describe your decisionmaking process.**
We do not have a formal business plan. My industry experience was in planning, production, and marketing. As a result, the business plan is in our heads. The demand far exceeds the supply, so this has delayed formal planning. We are investigating other alternative enterprises.

**How do you obtain financing?**
We have been able to provide all of our own financing. If we don't have the money to buy something, we wait until we do.

**What do you charge for your products?**
We sell small eggs for $1.50 a dozen and large/jumbo eggs for $2.00, mostly to restaurants. We sell pastured chicken for $2.50 a pound and pink veal for up to $9.60 a pound wrapped weight.

We could charge more, but we are making a good profit.

**What production methods do you use?**
I went to the ACRES-sponsored Joel Salatin workshop in July 1999 to study his pasture-fed operations and marketing techniques. Joel advised that your labor requirement should not exceed 6 hours per day in order to leave adequate time for marketing, management, and other farm work. Our labor requirement for the livestock and poultry we have now is 28 hours per week.

**What kind of modifications did you have to make at the farm?**
We remodeled the farmhouse, built a caged house and brooder house, and added refrigerators and now recently a walk-in cooler.

**What went wrong? and Why? How did you correct the situation?**
The veal calves had diarrhea and pneumonia the first year (we lost one), and we had to nurse them back to health. After I discussed my problem with a local rotational grazing and seasonal grazing dairy farmer using the New Zealand method—feeding the calves with a nipple attached to a hose in a barrel. The barrel is seldom cleaned, which allows bacteria to develop and the calves to become naturally immune, thus eliminating the pneumonia. The feeding of milk through the sucking of the nipples generates salvia, which is a natural antacid for the calf, which eliminated the diarrhea.

**What went right? and Why? How did you build on your success?**
I selected the right enterprises, and they are growing by themselves at this time. Word of mouth has sold everything that we have been able to produce. We have a nursery, so as soon as a chicken gets sick it is taken to the infirmary.

**What would you have done differently?**
Nothing.

**Where do you plan to go from here?**
We have discussed these enterprises with our daughters. One said that her husband is considering early military separation to become a partner. Another daughter's husband is a doctor, and he is thinking about quitting and also becoming a partner. Our plan for the year 2001 is to have 1,500 layers, as many as 13,000 broilers, and 25 pink vealers. This should gross us over $250,000, which would yield a profit of over 50 percent. We plan to produce pastured chickens for restaurants on a 12-month basis. This means we will need freezers and equipment to properly prepare and store the chicken for the winter months. I am also in the process of getting the farm organically certified by Maryland.

**What would be the five most important pieces of advice you would give other farmers considering an alternative enterprise?**

1. Learn how to market, the most important aspect of success. No customers = no sales
2. Know your limitations
3. Balance financing and overhead with income
4. Limit yourself to 6 hours per day on production
5. Become an involved observer of your animals so you can immediately spot needed corrections

**How did you handle the liability concern?**
We have a standard farm rider on our homeowner's policy. By year's end, we will have a company policy as a part of our incorporation process.

**Do you mind sharing your promotional material?**
We send out a newsletter to our customers at the beginning of the year. I have visited some restaurants and given them a few dozen free eggs. Otherwise, we have a roadside sign and rely on word of mouth. We do supply eggs to our neighbor's 30-member CSA subscription customers for 25 weeks during the year.

**What do you dislike the most and like the most?**
We especially like being on the farm, working with the animals and telling visitors about our activities. If there is anything we like least, it would probably be the time it takes to clean and grade the eggs.

**What groups or organizations do you belong to, and what presentations have you made?**
We joined the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), The American Pastured Poultry Association, Chesapeake Association for Sustainable Agriculture-Future Harvest (CASA), and ACRES. We order "Small Farm Today" in additional to the organization publications. I will be speaking at the Future Harvest workshop in January 2001.

**What conservation and education activities do you have on the farm?**
We overseeded a 15-acre pasture with a no-till drill that we rented from the Soil and Water Conservation District. I am in the process of getting the farm organically certified by Maryland and working with the USDA-FSA and NRCS to improve the pond and creek and better understand the soil characteristics of the farm.

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**Alternative Farm Enterprises – Agritourism Success Stories**

# Catering, Picnics, Weddings, and Meeting Facilities

Interview with Randy Nixon, 2800 Nixon's Farm Lane, P.O. Box 70, West Friendship, MD 21794, 410-442-2151, nixonsfarm@nixonsfarm.com

**What is the history of your farm and farming experience?**
My Dad and Mom purchased this farm of 165 acres in 1952 as a place to raise the family. It was a working, diversified farm. Today, we lease out about 90 acres for corn silage and all but 20 acres is used for hay. In 1952, we lived in the barn because the house was so old that it toppled down. Dad converted one part of the stalls in the barn into the living area, and the cattle were at the other end.

**Describe the alternative enterprise(s) in which you are presently engaged.**
We are a service business. We provide food, open space for entertainment, weddings, conferences, retreats, and seminars. There are basketball courts, swings, slides, and jungle jims, a water dunk tank, open space for soccer and ball games, and hiking paths. We mainly serve groups: church groups, corporate picnics, family reunions, other organizations. Last week we fed 2,000 people, and this coming week we are feeding 3,000 people. My Mom is the head chef but does not spend much time in the kitchen now. She is 74. I operate as a restaurant 4-5 times a year as a promotion for the business.

**What made you decide to go into the present alternative enterprises?**
My father died in 1972. My mother did some research and found the most valuable use of land is recreation. She said, "What can you do with a farm?" She developed the farm into a catering business and a recreational farm. As she said, "We are growing people!" And you can keep on growing people because they grow forever. This was her view, and in the late 1970's we started this service. We first started with church groups and just grew to where we are today with weddings, seminars, business meetings and conferences. My mother loved to cook. So she went to work.

**How did you make the transition?**
My Dad formed the Small Businessman's League of Baltimore. This League was formed because Black and Jewish businessmen could not join the Chamber of Commerce. As the group grew in size they migrated to the farm for meetings and a place to go on Sunday with the family. It became the League's Country Club, and a membership fee was charged. My mother loved to cook and so as the people began to come she felt a responsibility to feed them. The business just grew from there. I was a corporate lawyer for 5 years and quit to run and grow this people business. I do not have any formal training to operate and manage a service business such as this. I read, listen, and talk to people in the business. Most of all I listen to my customers. I have been operating this business for 13 years.

**Describe your decisionmaking process.**
We went through the strategic planning process with goals, objectives, and mission. That is important for the long run. But the "Battle Plan" is the important one. It shows every single aspect of this business. From the minute detail of how to

take a telephone call, to an inquiry about the use of the facility, to how to order food for the kitchen. Every staff position has a job description and what it entails. I have this in hard copy and in the computer. I have developed this over the years. This runs the business.

**How do you obtain financing?**
I just obtained a loan to build a "state of the art" kitchen, remodel the upstairs to the barn, septic, bathrooms, walk in freezer, etc., for $1.5 million. It was difficult to get the loan. I had a business plan and history of business activity. But it was still difficult to convey to them that I am a great manager and that this is a sound business.

**How do you price your products?**
School groups are charged $10.00 per person, and they get a meal and fun activities depending upon the season. Weddings are $50.00 per person. Retreats, seminars, and conferences cost $30.00 to $70.00. Corporate meetings are $20.00-$40.00.

**What went wrong? And Why? How did you correct the situation?**
When Mom first started the business, she hired caterers. Their quality was inconsistent, and several other catering problems arose. She kicked all the caterers off the farm and started to do her own cooking. A person needs to have firm goals but also to be flexible about achieving objectives to accomplish those goals. There is a Spanish saying, "Act boldly, and unforeseen forces will come to your aid." Or as they say in business, "Jump off into a business and build your wings on the way down."

**What went right? And Why? How did you build on your success?**
I make sure my staff and I deliver a very consistent service that will have a very good predictable outcome. I do a lot of teaching in my work to both the staff and the people who visit the farm. Consistency is the most important product. We do things one way when serving people, and that is *my* way. I have received comments from people that my staff speak and act as if I am sitting on their shoulder. I team up with entrepreneurs in the area—like rural golf courses. Businessmen come here for the meeting, then we take them to the golf course 10 minutes away and then they come back here for dinner. I train my staff in food service at a cost of $1,000 per person. This has gotten me several contracts because my competitors are not as fully qualified as I am. We have a rural setting to sell and we make the most of it! And, it is working.

**What would you have done differently?**
One needs to be sure to maintain the courage to succeed in your business. Don't get sidetracked. I hired a manager but did not have a clear set of plans and responsibilities developed, so the manager could not help me achieve my goals. It took several years before I was ready to jump in and take over the management myself. A plan must be in place to accomplish your goals; otherwise you will get sidetracked by others, including paid consultants. You need to process all the information you receive in the context of your goals.

**Where do you plan to go from here?**
My next step to begin government and institutional feeding. I plan to grow this business into a $16–20 million a year food and conference service business.

**What would be the five most important pieces of advice you would give other farmers considering an alternative enterprise?**
1. Market your product
2. Be consistent
3. Be efficient
4. Provide the service one way—*my* way!!
5. Have trained staff.

**How did you handle the liability concern?**
We purchase our insurance through regular agencies. I called several insurance agents in search of specialty coverage for a theme park or pick-your-own business. The prices varied

considerably. I have $2 million umbrella coverage today, and I plan to increase it. It costs me about $4,000 a year.

**Do you mind sharing your promotional material?**
I spend about 5-7 percent of the gross sales on marketing. About 95 percent of marketing is by word of mouth, and 5 percent by formal advertising. For the weddings, I work with the wedding and bridal coordinators. I have a mailing list of church groups and organizations. I have been working with corporations. I contact the human resources or promotion people and then go and make a laptop presentation that is very snappy and convincing. I spent $25,000 to develop the brochure. I ask my customers to make sure they are getting what they want. I do some media and print advertising. I direct mail on an occassional basis.

**What do you dislike the most and like the most?**
I like the ability to build something that goes beyond you. The people who work for you, the customers. I love the vision of the business. There are several issues I dislike—learning how to borrow money, construction of facilities, the financial and regulatory aspects. Regulatory aspects are the single biggest issue for me because there are warring factions among state, county, and local governments. Sometimes, I just ask the state or county inspectors what the objectives are in achieving compliance, then I do the thinking and take the actions necessary to comply rather than have someone else try to tell me how to run my business. Everyone has to be flexible.

**Would you start this alternative enterprise business today after learning what is inovlved?**
I would be doing exactly what I'm doing today!

**What groups/organizations/activities have you joined or become involved in because of the alternative enterprises?**
I am involved in several organizations and have been officers in most of them—the local Chamber of Commerce, Farm Bureau, YMCA, Heart Association, Farmland Preservation, Farm Marketing Groups, and Tourism Council. It is very important to be members of these groups so they understand that farming is a business and that the groups promote farming.

**What conservation and education activities do you have?**
I speak to the groups that come to the farm, especially the schoolchildren. I talk about farming, people's connection to the land, and the preservation of farmland. I have a theater system set up in the bank-barn—which I have turned into a conference hall—to do small plays. I am currently co-authoring a play called "The Harvest," which is about American agriculture. I am going to extend this education program nonprofit foundation that we are currently organizing. I plan to teach conservation as part of the education program. We do not have any special wildlife habitat planting. No pesticides are used around the public assembly and activity areas.

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# Direct Marketing of Dairy Products

Interview with William W. Lesher, Way-Har Farms, P.O. Box 325, Bernville, PA 19506, 610-488-1281, fax 610-488,9308, lolly@early.com

**What is the history of your farm and farming experience?**
The farm has been in the family for three generations. My father and uncle were diversified farmers, but dairy (about 70 cows) and crops (1,000 acres of corn and wheat) were the dominant enterprises. Their focus was crop production. Today, we own 265 acres and rent 100.

**Describe the alternative enterprise in which you are presently engaged.**
This business really got started in 1970 when my father and uncle installed a bottling unit to open an on-farm retail store. They increased the herd to 95 milking cows. Today we have four Jerseys and 91 Holsteins.

Our business is direct marketing of milk (chocolate and strawberry) and ice cream—40 flavors at an on-farm retail store and at four farmers' markets. Two of these markets are indoors and open year-round, and two are open from May to October. We have a small delivery route of 15 customers to whom we deliver once a week. We also have had a wholesale business since 1987; we deliver twice a week to 25 or 30 restaurants. In 1997, we added a mobile ice cream and milk store.

We also started farm visits in the 90's.

**What made you decide to go into the present alternative enterprise(s)?**
My father and uncle wanted to increase their income. Crop production could not easily be expanded. Thus, a higher price for the milk was the only alternative. There was a location advantage, as they lived on a very heavily traveled two-lane highway. Then, the papers advertised that farmers' markets were being opened and needed vendors, and we started that in the 90's. The mobile ice cream and milk store grew out of people asking for ice cream for special occasions. In 1997, we bought a covered trailer to which we added two sales windows, a freezer, a refrigerator, cabinets, a sink, and storage at a cost of $4,000.

About 1,000 children come to the farm each year, mostly from Reading, which is 25 miles away. We take the groups on a 2-hour tour of the farm and give a talk on milk production and the care of animals. There is a picnic area where the children can eat lunch. We charge $3 per person for groups, and the children get ice cream and a mug.

We also rent out the mobile unit to non-profit groups, who use it as a fundraiser. The only condition is that have to buy the ice cream and supplies from us. This builds relationships and is great advertising.

**How did you make the transition?**
The milk-processing firm that bought the milk this farm produced was a small one. When it went out of business in 1970, my father and uncle decided to sell directly to the consumer. They began marketing the ice cream and milk at the farm. They joined the Pennsylvania Producer Handlers Association to learn about direct marketing. I majored in Dairy Science and Marketing at Penn State, and when I graduated in 1987 I bought my uncle's share of the business.

Financing is very difficult for a farmer who wants to do direct marketing. We developed a business plan and pulled together all the farm records before discussing a loan with the banker. We had to educate the banker about the retailing business. Now, that banker is one of our biggest supporters.

**What are your goals for the operation?**
We want to keep this a family operation of high quality. We're proud of the products, the farm, and the animals. The health and treatment of the animals are a high priority for us. The cows are our pride!

**What went wrong? And Why? How did you correct the situation?**
Direct marketing is becoming more difficult. In 1970, there were 350 direct marketing dairies in Pennsylvania, and today there are 30. They've sold out to the big milk producers. The change in retailing where stores sell everything from clothes to food and milk has been a factor. Also, the gas-station stores are competitors. Many families want to do one-stop shopping. They don't have the time to drive out of their way to get milk and ice cream directly from the farmer. Our steadiest customers are price conscious people such as the Mennonites in the area.

Finding employees for an acceptable salary has really become a challenge. We hire high school and college students to help us. There are plenty of other things around the farm I'd rather do than address employee concerns.

**What went right? And Why? How did you build on your success?**
I enjoy the retail side. I like to meet my customers and see the satisfaction they get from eating a great, high quality product.

We also have a good location. We're on a main road leading into Reading. When mining stopped in the county up the road, the people there had to go to Reading for work and shopping, and we get most of our sales from this traffic.

The rule of thumb is that you need a dollar in gross income for every dollar in assets to be profitable. The dairy operation does that, as we sell about $1 million in products every year. The mobile ice cream and milk store does more than three times its cost/value of $4,000, so we push it as much as possible. Saturdays and Sundays are our busy days, and we use it to our advantage.

**Are there any other insights you would like to share?**
There is a considerable amount of work with this effort or any direct marketing enterprise. The quality of farm life and style offsets the hard work. We take two vacations every year to spend time together. Not having an adequate amount of family time together is probably the most difficult thing to accept. This could only change if hired labor increased—which has its associated problems and issues.

**Where do you plan to go from here?**
We plan to keep this a family business. We're trying to minimize the labor requirement through automation and maintain a good environment for the cows. One person can now milk, feed, and graze cows each day. My wife did it this morning. Our only part time help are in the bottling plant and staffing the mobile store. We hope to bring our children into the business as soon as they're old enough.

We've reduced purchased inputs by going to more rotational grazing. The heifers have always been on rotational grazing. Now, we placed the cows on 65 acres of rotational pasture. We've installed four watering troughs and broken the large field into 2-acre paddocks. The grazing provides half of the daily feed requirement, and the other half is concentrate feed.

Because we're in the Delaware Bay watershed, we're environmentally conscious. We used NRCS technical assistance and cost sharing to install buffers and waterers, which will be completed next year. We used to water the heifers on the creek, but now we have two watering

troughs, and we restored the buffer area with cost share.

**What would be the most important advice you would give other farmers considering an alternative enterprise?**

1. Have a high-quality product
2. Be prepared to work hard and long hours with direct marketing
3. Maintain a good environment for the livestock
4. Don't get too large
5. Minimize labor requirements
6. Build only as fast as income allows—pay as you go.

**How did you handle the liability concern?**
We purchased insurance from a local ag company called Old Guard—a $500,000 farm policy and a $2 million umbrella. This was required when we expanded to USDA farmers' market in Washington, D.C. We had no problem getting insurance.

**Do you mind sharing your promotional ideas?**
We had a very successful promotion in which we joined with a trucking company, a nursing home, and a furniture store and gave away free ice cream to everyone who purchased a ticket to get into a car race. On an ongoing basis, we advertise in two local weekly papers, and on radio. Our strategy is to advertise very frequently for 3 weeks and then stop for 2 months. This seems to work best for us.

We no longer use specials. We price our milk at $1.99 a gallon, compared to store prices of $2.40 to $2.75. Our ice cream and other products are competitively priced.

**What do you dislike and like the most?**
I dislike the lack of time to spend with the family. Both my wife and I are very busy. I like working with the cattle and the people I meet while selling ice cream and milk.

**Would you start this alternative enterprise today after learning what you know about direct marketing dairy products?**
Yes!

**What groups or organizations have you joined?**
Along with some other young farmers, I have joined our city planning commission. Our presence helps ensure that farmers' concerns get heard and that our county retains its rural character.

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# Notes on Alternative Farm Enterprises
## Case Study #1: Cool's Pond

*Contact: Sam & Barbara Cool, Smithsburg, Maryland, 410-___-____*

"Without that pond down there, we'd never have made it," says Sam Cool. Sam's wife, Barbara, adds, "That was our last resort. I laughed at him, and I said that'll never work. And I've really eaten my words."

Like many farmers, the Cools needed more income from their land. Their 100-acre farm in central Maryland produces fruits and berries—and now fish. Recognizing the need to diversify, Sam and Barbara stocked the pond with trout, catfish, and bass and opened it up for recreational fishing in 1986. Since then, Cool's Pond has become a local landmark. But the transformation did not occur overnight.

Cool's Pond is actually two ponds, the first built 50 years ago and the second just six years ago, both with assistance from the Soil Conservation Service [now Natural Resources Conservation Service]. The ponds provide emergency irrigation for the Cools' orchards. The older pond is about an acre in size, 15 feet deep, clear, and has never gone dry. A spring about 500 yards up the mountainside feeds the ponds with cool mountain water.

But with a growing family, the Cools began to see the pond as a potential source of income. As Sam puts it, "We had five kids, and they developed this strange habit of wanting to eat." Having a pond already in place was a big advantage, Sam says, digging a new one might have cost too much.

The Cools decided to raise trout in cages in the ponds for sale to local restaurants. But they soon found that they couldn't raise enough fish for the restaurant market. That's when Sam decided to open up the pond for fishing. He turned the trout loose, put a sign up next to the road—Sam believes firmly that the two best ways of advertising are a sign along the road and word of mouth—and put an ad in the local paper. Although nobody showed up the first day, local people soon began finding their way to the pond.

The Cools charged a modest fee to fish and a separate fee for each fish caught. But when they found that fishermen caught too many fish too quickly, they quickly changed to allow catch-and-release fishing.

The Cools have found that most people are careful with the fish they catch; thus, most fish can be released without harm. People can still keep the fish they catch for a fee, but they no longer have to. The Cools currently charge a $5 daily fee to fish and $5 for each fish kept.

The trout bite well in cooler weather, and the catfish and bass bite well in summer. The catfish and bass, but not the trout, reproduce in the ponds. Local bluegills and crappie also thrive. Sam keeps records of how many fish are caught and kept and of how many die so he can maintain the proper number of fish in the ponds. None of the fish are supplied by the state; this eliminates the need for state licensing. Sam renews his state fee-fishing permit annually.

The Extension Service helped the Cools obtain the necessary permits. But Extension's real strength, says Maryland regional Extension specialist Jonathan Kays, is providing information and education and helping with marketing and other business management aspects. The rest is up to the entrepreneur. Kays says that the Cools have succeeded because they are self-motivated, open-minded, and willing to put in the time to make things work.

"The Cools are always looking for ways to improve what they're doing," says Kays. "They'll visit somebody else's pond and make changes on their own place as a direct result of the visit. And they're always willing to share what they've learned."

The Cools can't always be at the pond, so they use an honor system to collect fees. People who fish the pond simply drop their money through a slot into a locked box, and the Cools retrieve the money when they can. They usually make $15-20, and they once returned from a 3-day weekend to find more than $200. The main problem they face is that some people still mistake the sign that reads "*fee* fishing" for "*free* fishing."

Next to the pond is a small building that houses Cool's Farm Market. At the market, the Cools sell fruits and vegetables from the farm in season, jellies made from farm-grown fruit, snack foods, rustic furniture made by a local craftsman, and miniature cityscapes and birdhouses that the Cools make themselves. The Cools also sell bait and rent fishing poles to visitors.

Although many of the people who fish in Cool's

Pond are repeat visitors, many are newcomers who learned about the pond through word of mouth, from the local visitor's bureau, and even in at least one case from the Internet. And because Cool's Pond increasingly attracts groups, the Cools offer group discounts. Although the Cools do not promote the pond to groups—again, they prefer word-of-mouth advertising—they are considering contacting groups that have already visited in order to make advance arrangements. In addition, Sam and Barbara are working with a fly-fishing instructor who wants to use the pond for teaching his students.

For his part, Sam thinks that the pond and the store have taught him a little about human nature. "People will spend money on recreation before they'll spend it on the basics," Sam says. "They'll go outside and pay to fish, come in to the stand and buy sodas, candy, and everything else and not question a thing."

Sam says that mortality among the fish in the pond is low—seldom more than five fish a week. A lesser problem is the loss of fishing rods. "When kids fish," Sam says, "sometimes they'll set their rods down. When those catfish hit, I've seen those rods fly right straight out into the water."

"You've just always got to keep coming up with something new," says Barbara. "Our goal has just been to survive in farming. This fee-fishing operation has been pulling this farm along. We could've gone out and got good jobs -- made good money. Honestly, we farm by choice. We love it!"

Sam and Barbara Cool offer this advice to anyone thinking about starting a fee-fishing operation:

1. Be sure you have a good source of water. If you want to raise trout, ensure that the water temperature stays below 65 degrees.
2. Do your research. The Cooperative Extension Service, the state university system, and the state agriculture department know the answers or can help you find them. The Natural Resources Conservation Service can provide both technical and financial assistance. Don't hesitate to talk to others who are already in the business.
3. Be realistic. Think about what you're getting yourself into. Recognize that the enterprise will demand a great deal of your time. Start-up costs may be significant. Ask yourself how the enterprise fits into your family goals.
4. Be flexible. You'll never develop the perfect plan, but you can change your plan to meet new conditions. Build and learn.
5. Maintain the water and the grounds to keep them neat and clean.
6. Buy your fish from a reputable supplier who will deliver them to you.
7. Keep good records. This will help you recognize what works and what doesn't.
8. Put out a logbook or a guest book. Ask people to write down their names and addresses, so you'll have a ready-made mailing list for any marketing materials you might develop.
9. Be sure your liability insurance coverage is adequate and up to date.
10. Help your customers make the most of their experience. Renting fishing gear and selling bait and snacks is profitable as well as easy, and these are services that people want.
11. Remember that your customers are also your guests. They've come to your place to enjoy themselves, and they're more likely to do that if you make them feel welcome.

*This series presents examples of successful, innovative ways of increasing farm or ranch income. For more information, contact the farmer directly or contact Jim Maetzold, Natural Resources Conservation Service, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013, 202-720-0132.*

Wetlands are an integral part of the agricultural landscape in the Northern Plains. The "prairie potholes" that dot fields across much of this semi-arid region play a big role in recharging groundwater and preventing flooding. They also provide rich habitat for wildlife, particularly migratory waterfowl.

To many farmers, however, wetlands remain a nuisance. It's tough to maneuver large tillage, planting and harvesting equipment around their perimeters. Adjacent cropping areas are slow to dry out in spring, often delaying planting. Venture too close, too early and the soggy soil can mire a big tractor up to its axles in mud.

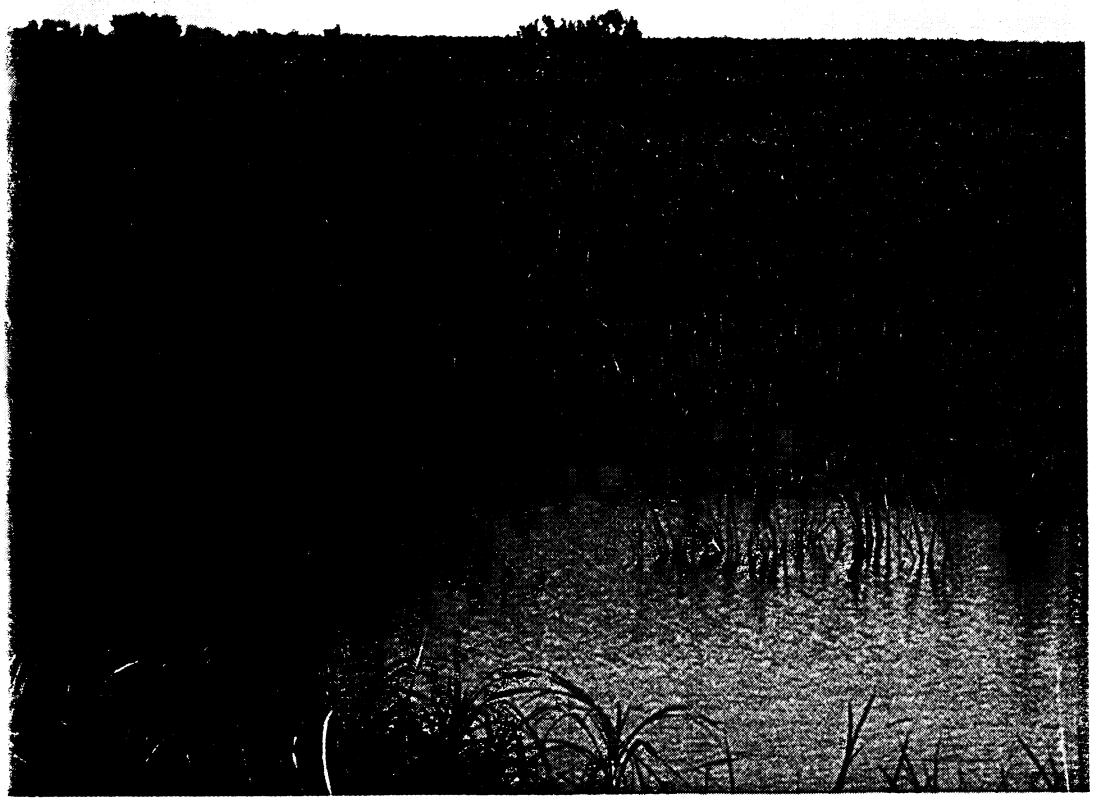
Fortunately, an interdisciplinary SARE-funded study is showing that what's good for the wetlands and the birds also can be good for a farmer's bottom line.

"Some people think that farm profitability and environmental concerns are always at odds," says Diane Rickerl, an agroecologist at South Dakota State University. "But in this case, they don't compete. They complement each other."

Rickerl headed up a study team that included agronomists, economists, wildlife experts, soil microbiologists and others who exhaustively analyzed the wetlands and farm management on three cooperating farms: a typical conventional farm, a farm in transition to no-till farming practices and an organic farm.

The species richness of waterfowl breeding pairs was greatest in wetlands on the organic farm, researchers found, with 78 bird species present on the organic farm compared to 57 in the conventional system. Wetland plant species also were more diverse.

"All in all, you can see what a wonderful pocket of diversity wetlands are," says Rickerl, who credits South Dakota for retaining about 65 percent of its original wetlands, when other agricul-



**CREATIVE FARMERS SEED A MIX OF FORAGES AROUND WETLANDS, ALLOWING FOR BIRD NESTING IN THE SPRING AND LATE-SUMMER GRAZING FOR LIVESTOCK. PHOTO BY DIANE RICKERL.**

**ALL THREE FARMS WERE LOSING MONEY ON LAND CROPPED WITHIN 75 FEET OF WETLANDS.**

tural states in the Midwest have dropped to less than 5 percent.

The nature of the wetlands themselves and the surrounding landscape probably had more effect on wildlife than the farming practices, Rickerl suspects. But the organic farm also benefits wildlife because of the greater diversity of crops that are found in fields adjacent to the wetlands.

Maintaining small fields of different crops in a patchwork pattern on his 1,200 acres preserves diversity for Charlie Johnson, an organic farmer near Madison, S.D., whose operation served as the project's organic test farm. A third of his land is in forages Johnson rotates with small grains, corn and soybeans. In many fields, rye cover crops protect soil that would otherwise be vulnerable to erosion over the snowy winters, and prairie potholes dot the landscape.

The study's economic analyses found that the organic farm is the most profitable of the three systems if the premium prices received by Johnson for his grain and beef are included. If the premiums are ignored, the organic system is the least profitable.

More importantly, it turns out that all three farms were losing money on land cropped within 75 feet of wetlands.

"Attempting to raise crops close to wetlands can be futile," Johnson says. "Rather than investing in a crop there year after year and watching it fail more often than not, a better alternative is to plant permanent vegetation."

Johnson did just that, seeding a forage mix of switchgrass, bromegrass and alfalfa around some of his wetlands. "We leave the spring growth for nesting habitat. Then we graze it or hay it later in summer when our other pastures have dried up," he says. "The wild hay makes excellent feed for our young beef stock."

Not only are those permanent wetland buffers more profitable for Johnson and good for wildlife, but the study team also found them to be effective nutrient filters. Forage vegetation trapped half of the nitrogen and phosphorus that would otherwise have ended up in the wetland, their study found.

"We usually think of wetlands as being the buffer that filters out the nutrients," Rickerl says. "But now we're seeing they're even more efficient if we buffer the buffer with permanent vegetation."

The study team also found that the smaller wetlands ducks prefer are better at filtering nutrients out of water. "That's important because it is the small wetlands that cause so much controversy in the Prairie Pothole Region," Rickerl says, referring to the reluctance of many to leave small pockets of wetland around which they need to drive their heavy equipment.

Where wetlands are farmed through, the soils can become so overloaded with phosphorus that the nutrient can move into groundwater, or flow out of the wetland to contaminate other surface waters, the team speculates. That situation is very unusual for phosphorus, which normally is bound tightly in the soil, Rickerl says.

"What's the effect?" she asks. "No one knows. But the point is that farmers are wasting money by adding phosphorus fertilizer to these areas that their crops can't retrieve."

Wetlands play an important role in storing water and replenishing both soil moisture and groundwater. Forty percent of the water entering wetlands either remained there or moved into the soil or groundwater, researchers found.

Water budgets from the study also showed that 60 percent of the water entering wetlands is runoff from surrounding fields, which has a tremendous potential to be contaminated with nutrients and other ag chemicals.

"That points out the tremendous role wetlands play in the water cycle," Rickerl says. "That's water that we should be using to recharge the soil and groundwater. Without the wetlands we'd be sending it down the river to cause flooding elsewhere."

Rickerl is continuing her efforts with educational programs to help farmers understand that wetlands and profits can go hand-in-hand. "Regardless of the wildlife benefits, our surveys show most farmers still want to drain wetlands," she observes. "We're trying to show that by managing wetlands properly, money and nutrients can stay on the farm."

Johnson already knows that from experience. "Sometimes we forget why the wetlands are there," he says. "With the forage borders, they can be good for wildlife, good for flood control and produce good feed for livestock. You can't ask for much more than that." — *Craig Cramer*

Do you think we're hitting 200 bushels?" shouted Norman Brittingham over the din of the combine as he maneuvered through one of the strips we had marked in his corn field.

I was riding shotgun with a map of the fertilizer treatments we were testing in a cover crop research project on his Maryland farm. We were measuring corn yields to find out if Brittingham's use of cover crops as a nonsynthetic fertilizer was an adequate substitute.

**EXTENSIVE RESEARCH AND FARM DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE SHOWN THAT A WINTER COVER CROP OF HAIRY VETCH CAN FIX MOST — AND SOMETIMES ALL — OF THE NITROGEN.**

Brittingham was one of 10 farmers who collaborated with University of Maryland researchers in a SARE-funded project studying cover crops as a tool to reduce nitrogen pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The bay, an estuary of national significance, had become a cause celebre among politicians, environmentalists and area residents looking to restore the once-productive fishery.

Morris Decker, a University of Maryland researcher, sought a possible remedy for one of the biggest suspected bay pollutants: nitrogen from crop/livestock farms. He was trying to determine whether Bay-area farmers could reduce their fertilizer use — thereby further lessening their impact on the watershed. My role, as a Ph.D. candidate at the university, was to assist Decker in designing, coordinating and analyzing studies throughout the state.

Brittingham volunteered to test the amount of nitrogen fertilizer we could replace by growing a winter cover crop of hairy vetch just before planting corn. By adding different amounts of fertilizer to the corn, we determined how much of the purchased nitrogen could be replaced by growing the vetch, a legume that "fixes" nitrogen without sacrificing crop yields.

Grass cover crops like rye, wheat and barley take up excess nitrogen in the fall and winter, preventing it from leaching and ending up in the bay. Legume cover crops such as crimson clover, winter peas and hairy vetch "fix" nitrogen by transferring it from air to soil via nodules on their roots.

Mixing grasses and legumes proved a great option. Farmers could realize multiple benefits, including guarding against erosion, preventing nitrogen leaching, adding low-cost nutrients for their crops and providing a water-conserving mulch that helped to increase yields during Maryland's typical hot, dry summers.

"Extensive research and farm demonstrations have shown that a winter cover crop of hairy vetch can fix most — and sometimes all — of the nitrogen required for maximum corn yields," Decker says. "The cover crop mulch conserves moisture, increasing yield by helping the corn use the nitrogen more effectively."

Most of the corn strips in Brittingham's irrigated field yielded 150 to 170 bushels per acre, whether we had applied low or high rates of synthetic fertilizer. That meant hairy vetch supplied most of the nitrogen needed by the corn crop. Brittingham could save on his fertilizer bills, and by applying the right amounts, would not send any extra nitrogen to pollute the bay.

WAITING UNTIL HAIRY VETCH FLOWERS TO INCORPORATE IT INTO THE SOIL MAXIMIZES THE AMOUNT OF NITROGEN THE LEGUME WILL SUPPLY FOR THE NEXT CROP. PHOTO BY ANDY CLARK.

Other cooperating grain or crop/livestock farmers in Maryland planted rye, wheat, barley, crimson clover, winter peas, hairy vetch or mixtures of grasses and legumes. Cover crops protect and improve the soil during a time when no other crop normally would be grown, such as during the winter in the Northeast.

"A vetch/rye cover crop mixture provides more benefits than either one alone," Decker says. "When residual fall soil nitrogen is high, rye will dominate the mixture, but when soil nitrogen is low, vetch will dominate, fixing more nitrogen. This provides producers an excellent management tool."

We had tested those cover crops in very small plots on university research farms and needed to validate our findings in the field. Cooperators used different rates of nitrogen fertilizer to help us tease out more information about how the cover crops affected nitrogen dynamics on a farm scale. Decker also took the opportunity to demonstrate to farmers the value of using cover crops in their operations.

The farmers helped us confirm it usually was best to wait until late April to kill the cover crops, especially legumes or legume/grass mixtures, in preparation for the cash crop. This allowed the legume to fix more nitrogen, and resulted in more cover crop mulch and better moisture conservation. Many farmers like to plant their corn at about this time, so we hoped to show them that corn yields often were better if they waited the extra week or two to realize the full benefit of the cover crop.

On the bay's western shore in Frederick County, Joe Hottel took the fertilizer test one step further. He dedicated more than 90 acres of his diversified crop/livestock farm to test three- to 10-acre strips of cover crops, different fertilizer rates and applications of sewage sludge.

Cover crops could play a role in managing the nutrients contained in the sludge—taking up excess nitrogen in the fall and releasing it back the following year for the corn.

"I like what cover crops do for my soil," Hottel says. "They keep the soil from eroding, which I really like when we get heavy rains. This farm was full of erosion gullies when I took it over. They're all gone now."

By season's end, Hottel's yields ranged from 130 to 160 bushels per acre, comparable to his usual take. Moreover, the combination of cover crops and sludge reduced his fertilizer bill by about $30 per acre. He also saved about $20 per acre in tillage costs and $10 per acre in lime costs.

Hottel was on board. Now he puts all of his 1,600 acres in cover crops and uses sludge where he can on his corn-soybean rotation.

"I grow cover crops on as much land as I can every year," he says. "When you have something that works, you don't change. And, if you don't take care of your ground, it's not going to take care of you." —*Andy Clark*

Jones Creek whips through John Briscoe's cotton field like a garter snake. During a rainstorm, water moves in sheets down the sloping field toward the bank, taking Briscoe's soil with it.

"Every year, two or three new ditches washed out too deep to cross with a picker," recalls Briscoe, who raises cotton, soybeans, corn and beef cattle on a third-generation family farm in north Mississippi. "One year we had an absolute gulley washer that left a hole big enough to put a house in. We had to use a 'dozer to fill it in and put a levee around it."

In 1995, he had only two choices to comply with Mississippi's erosion control rules: He could build terraces or convert to no-till farming. He opted to build a terrace. While it did slow the wash of topsoil from below the terrace, a year later ditches began forming above the structure.

This time Briscoe had a third choice for conservation compliance: He could plant an inexpensive vegetative barrier above the terrace to slow water flow and trap sediment.

In part thanks to SARE research headed by Seth Dabney, vegetative barriers—or grass hedges—have been added to the Natural Resources Conservation Service Field Office Technical Guide for Mississippi as an approved erosion control practice. Grass hedges also are eligible for cost share through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

An NRCS district conservationist recommended that Briscoe talk to Dabney about trying a hedge in his field. The researcher and the farmer walked the field together and reviewed the options.

Though he was skeptical about the effectiveness of a hedge, Briscoe opted to plant one rather than use more precious topsoil to build another terrace. It was a purely financial decision. At $6 a pound for switchgrass seed, Briscoe could sow a 10-foot hedge across his field for about $100. The terrace would have cost about $2 per foot, or $4,000 to cross the 50-acre field.

After evaluating the hedge for two seasons, Briscoe is convinced he made the right choice. A 10-

**RESEARCHER SETH DABNEY GESTURES TOWARD A $100 GRASS HEDGE THAT CONTROLS EROSION; CONSTRUCTING A TERRACE COSTS $4,000. PHOTO BY GWEN ROLAND.**

**IN PART THANKS TO SARE RESEARCH, VEGETATIVE BARRIERS—OR GRASS HEDGES—HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE NRCS' TECHNICAL GUIDE FOR MISSISSIPPI AS AN APPROVED EROSION CONTROL PRACTICE.**

foot swath of blue-green switchgrass waves across the sloping cotton field like a Mohawk haircut. At ground level, the space between thousands of reed-like stems is clogged with soil trapped on its way to the creek. But most telling of all, no new gashes are splitting the hillside.

"Not only is it working, but it takes up less space than terracing," says Briscoe, sweeping his arm over rows of cotton blossoms jostling against the hedge. At 50 feet wide, the terrace takes up about two and a half acres of his field. At only 10 feet wide, the hedge takes up about one-fifth that space.

Mowing once or twice a season is the only maintenance required once the hedge is well established, says Dabney, who has been researching vegetative barriers for nearly a decade. "During the first season there may be washouts in the hedge at the points of highest water flow," he says.

Such washouts can be fixed in a few minutes with a shovel. A terrace, on the other hand, needs regular maintenance often requiring earth-moving equipment.

Although many plants may make up a hedge, the ideal hedge grassplant is cold hardy with thick, woody stems and dense, erect growth. Dabney's research shows that Alamo switchgrass has those characteristics, so that's what is specified in the Mississippi standards. Switchgrass also has the advantage of being a native plant that doesn't invade the cash crop.

"It's not invasive because it is kind of a slow starter," says Dabney. "Crabgrass and other annuals can choke it out if given a chance, but John established an effective barrier the first season. By the second season, it is solidly established."

Farmers should not assume vegetative barriers can replace terraces in all situations, Dabney cautions, since there are areas of concentrated water flow where vegetation couldn't withstand the force. "Hedges can slow down runoff waters and trap sediment," he says. "They may even enhance infiltration, but they will not completely intercept and cut off runoff waters. As field sizes increase, hedges reach a limit where other technology is needed to handle the accumulated runoff."

The official acceptance of vegetative barriers doesn't mean the research is over. Far from it, says Dabney. Among other things the research team is looking into the pest management characteristics of the hedges. An Arkansas researcher determined hedges attract big-eyed bugs and other beneficial insects.

"It may turn out that there are enough benefits to work hedges into an IPM program," Dabney says.

The search for better varieties of switchgrass continues. Project cooperator Joel Douglas of the Jamie Whitten NRCS Plant Materials Center has been breeding switchgrass from wild collections since 1993. He hopes to develop a shorter switchgrass that would require less mowing, saving farmers time and money.

Douglas' research plots have reduced a slope at the Whitten Center from 7-percent grade to 5-percent grade in just four growing seasons. "All we did was plant them and leave them alone," he says. "In addition to the soil buildup and leveling, we also have improved filtration when it rains."

Even though vegetative barriers have been used for thousands of years in other countries, Mississippi is the first U.S. jurisdiction to officially recognize their effectiveness. The inclusion of vegetative barriers in Mississippi's interim standards also marks the first time a SARE project has directly influenced state agricultural policy.

Dabney, who is based at the ARS National Sedimentation Lab at Oxford, is now working with a committee revising the National Interim Practice Standard for grass hedges.

As for Briscoe, seeing how the hedges hold soil in place is encouraging him to consider additional changes on the family farm.

"In my lifetime I've seen ditches get bigger. That may be the result of so much timber being cut in the area—or it could be from our farming practices."

Briscoe, whose neighbor no-tills 2,500 acres of cotton, now is considering incorporating the practice. "The savings in just labor is enough to make you take it seriously," he says. —*Gwen Roland*

In a 39,000-acre national wildlife refuge that borders the California-Oregon state line, agricultural and wildlife habitat protection interests have maintained an uneasy relationship since the 1960s.

In 1964, the Kuchel Act set up the Tulelake National Wildlife Refuge to help preserve one of the nation's premier nesting sites for waterfowl, with a twist: It mandated that "optimum consideration" be given to agricultural enterprises in the area. Since then, farmers have leased land in the refuge to grow potatoes, small grains, alfalfa, onions and sugar beets.

The farmers are following in the footsteps of their parents and grandparents, who migrated to the fertile valley in and around the present-day refuge in the late 1800s. But their farms bordering and within the Tulelake Refuge, while yielding about three times more per acre than in less fertile areas, are part of a stop on the Pacific flyway that attracts 1 million waterfowl each year.

While such competing interests usually come to a head, a compromise of sorts has worked in the Tulelake Refuge since the Kuchel Act. That act recognizes the incredible soil fertility and importance of agriculture to the local economy as well as the vital source of food farming provides to the waterfowl. The complementary relationship worked for years until scientists discovered the wetlands were declining.

As opposing forces debate the future of the Tulelake Refuge, a group of researchers, refuge staff and farmers have devised a system to rejuvenate the wetlands while perpetuating agriculture. A key player in that work, SARE-funded researcher Carol Shennan, has helped set up a system that rotates wetlands and farming to rejuvenate the marsh and offer prime soil to participating farmers.

"The wetlands are no longer good habitat for birds," says Shennan, an agroecologist at the University of California-Santa Cruz. Studies have shown agricultural runoff is a not a major factor in that decline. Most of the refuge, governed by an old flood control plan that ended the alternating ebb and flow of water that occurs in a natural wetlands system, is stagnant.

"We have a very mature unproductive marsh where few new plants germinate because of stabilized water depths, and there is little habitat diversity," Shennan says. "Under rotational management, we can use agriculture as a disturbance to break the cycle and restore young stages of marsh development."

The project creates rotational land uses—wetlands or farms—that switch every three years. Farmland is flooded to create wetlands of differing water levels, while unproductive wetlands are drained to create farmland on soil untouched by a plow for decades, at least. The system promises more diverse wetlands and fertile farm soil that needs few, if any, amendments.

The complicated system already has brought results. In just the second year, a former farm in active production for 40 years sprouted diverse flora, with tules, bullrushes and cattails growing just months after flooding.

"It's been really astounding," says Dave Mauser, a wildlife biologist at the refuge. "In little marshes we've created, we're getting wetland vegetation the first year out of farming. It's a quick transition, and the bird use has really followed suit."

For farmers who lease land in the refuge, the project

**IN JUST THE SECOND YEAR AS WETLANDS, A FORMER FARM IN PRODUCTION FOR 40 YEARS SPROUTED DIVERSE FLORA JUST MONTHS AFTER FLOODING.**

GEESE RETURN TO TULELAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE'S REJUVENATED WETLANDS NEXT TO FARMS THAT PROVIDE A VITAL WATERFOWL FOOD SOURCE. PHOTO BY CAROL SHENNAN.

offers an unparalleled opportunity to reduce their use of purchased fertilizers and pesticides. The virgin soil hosts few, if any, soil-borne pathogens like nematodes.

Sid Staunton, who grows potatoes, small grains and onions on 1,500 acres both adjacent to and on refuge-leased land, hopes to secure a lease on the converted wetlands. He anticipates a big savings in input costs such as nematacides, which can run $250 an acre.

"We'd have a disease-free soil that's really rich in nutrients, so we wouldn't need to put in huge inputs," says Staunton, who serves on Shennan's 10-member farm advisory committee. "It's a good way to use a natural system to clean up some of the soil-borne problems that build up over time."

Rotating the two land uses for the mutual benefit of farming and wildlife habitat perfectly meets the intent of the Kuchel Act, Mauser says. The legislation creating the farm lease program provided surplus ag crops for birds while keeping them from the high-value rice crop in California's Central Valley.

Farmers leasing refuge land are used to bird pilfering, Staunton says. Most of that occurs on grain stubble because the birds migrate in fall after harvest or in spring before planting.

Shennan also is working with farmers to increase their use of cover crops to provide habitat for nesting birds, reduce soil loss through wind erosion, suppress weeds and improve soil organic matter. It's especially challenging in the basin because of a 4,200-feet elevation that can bring severe frosts year round.

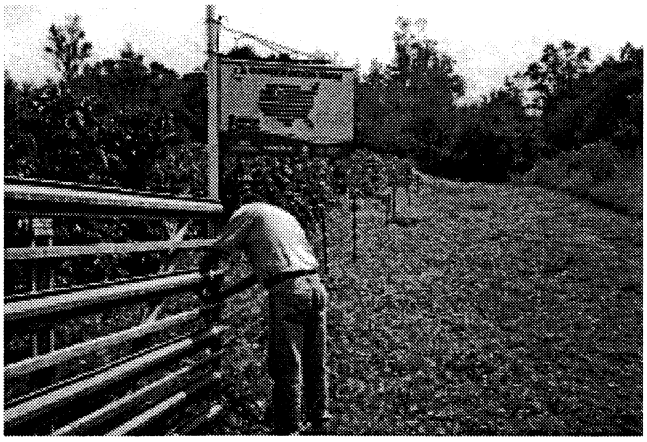
The project also establishes the long-term transition of farmland into what Shennan hopes will become a productive, mature marsh. Using computer modeling, she will study different rotation scenarios on a refuge-wide scale.

"We want to set up a framework to judge impacts of each potential rotation design on water quality, habitat diversity and economics," she says. "It involves looking at the system from multiple perspectives so we can use it as a tool with farmers, environmental groups, hunting groups and refuge managers to quantify benefits and tradeoffs. There's a tremendous amount at stake."

Some farmers remain skeptical about the future of farming in the Tulelake Refuge. Staunton, on the other hand, is optimistic the new system will lower costs for farmers while improving wetland and wildlife values.

"It's a real on-the-ground solution, and, for the amount of money invested, the dividends are incredible," he says. "This thing could solve this area's resource conflicts quickly, and we can continue to have good food value from this area." — *Valerie Berton*

## Case Study No. 1: Vicki and John Swift (Mother Goose Farms)



John Jeffredo, Soil Conservationist, opens the gate to Mother Goose Farms, Kona SWCD's Cooperator of the Year for 1995.

**Location**:
Honomalino, South Kona Soil and Water Conservation District, Hawaii

**District Conservationist**:
Steve Skipper
P.O. Box 636
Kealakekua, HI 96750-0636
Tel (808) 322-2484
Fax (808) 322-3735

**Farmed Acres**:
7 (2 locations - see site description)

**Enterprises**:
Sheep, Pigs, Coffee

**Sustainable Agriculture Issues**:
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION
Erosion
Cultural Requirements for Coffee
Weed Pressures
Insect Pests
SOCIOECONOMIC VIABILITY
Volatile Markets; Uncertain Yields

**Site Description**:
John and Vicki Swift own Mother Goose Farms, a 5-acre coffee orchard in South Kona, Hawaii. They own two additional acres of land where they live and raise a few pigs and process the coffee they grow. John also manages 77 acres of macadamia nut orchards for absentee owners. He has 50 breeding ewes, which he grazes under the macadamia nuts to control groundcover. Mother Goose Farms has been a certified organic coffee orchard since 1992. Requirements for organic certification vary by state, but in all cases, use of synthetic pesticides and inorganic nitrogen fertilizers is prohibited.

The farm is located at an elevation of approximately 2,000 ft above sea level. The climate in South Kona is very mild. Temperatures fluctuate little, but rainfall varies widely. Normal annual rainfall is 40 inches, but the past 3 years have been unusually dry with annual rainfall varying only from 13-21 inches. Acid rainfall is common due to the activity of nearby Kilauea Volcano. Except for the unpredictable rainfall, the climate in South Kona is ideally suited to coffee growing.

The farm lies on very young, shallow, rocky organic soils.

## ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION

**Erosion**:
All of the soils on this part of Hawaii are shallow and sloping, making erosion control a major concern. However, erosion is extremely low on Mother Goose Farms, since the land is never tilled and remains in permanent cover crop throughout the year. The cover crop provides an added benefit of protecting the soil from baking, a concern with bare soils in Hawaii.

**Coffee Cultural Requirements**:
In many parts of the world coffee is planted in shade to protect it against drought, erosion and wind. In South Kona, where cloud cover is not as reliable as in the northern part of the island, additional protection may be helpful. With assistance from NRCS District Conservationist, Steve Skipper, and the NRCS Plant Materials Center on Molokai, John and Vicki Swift have recently started an intercropping trial with the fast growing, leguminous tropical tree, *Gliricidia sepium*. They expect this tree to provide protection for the coffee, add nitrogen to the soil, and provide additional food for their geese (see **Weed Pressures** section). Tree cuttings and seeds were provided by the NRCS Plant Materials Center. If the trial plantings prove successful, John and Vicki plan to intercrop more of their orchard, perhaps experimenting with other tree species.

Gliricidia seedling planted for shade, forage and nitrogen mulch.

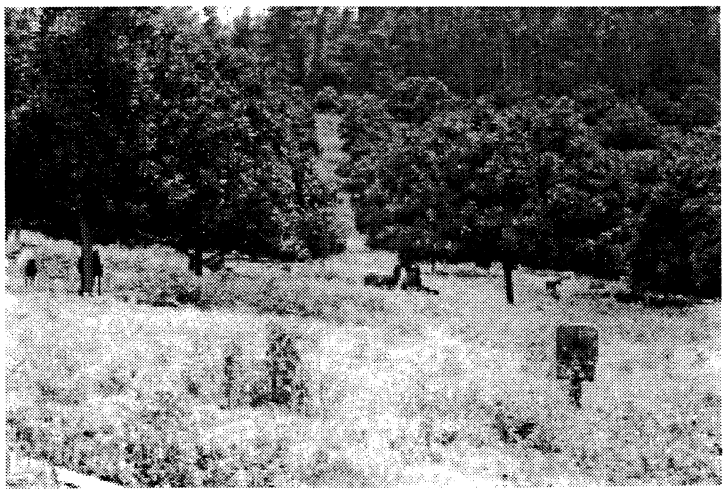
**Weed Pressures**:
Weeds are a serious problem for both coffee and macadamia nuts in Hawaii. Traditionally weeds are sprayed several times each year with herbicides. In 1989, the Swifts decided to try controlling the weeds in their coffee by non-chemical means (a necessary requirement for organic certification). Desmodium (*Desmodium* spp.), a trailing climbing perennial forage legume, immediately took over the orchard, and weed trimming soon became prohibitively expensive. The Swifts began experimenting with geese for weed control in 1991. First they fenced the orchard to keep out dogs and other potential predators. They bought 25 geese, which they raised on desmodium from four days of age. Once the feathers were developed (6-8 weeks), the Swifts moved the geese to the orchard. They immediately began eating the desmodium in the field and have been controlling its height to the point that it is now an acceptable nitrogen fixing cover crop. The Swifts currently have 60 geese that they move around in the

orchard weekly using portable electric poultry netting. The Swifts estimate they save $5,000 annually on weed control, as well as the energy and time saved by letting the geese do the work.

The use of sheep to maintain groundcover under macadamia nuts is a proven practice in Kona. However, John is using katahidn hair sheep, a breed not previously used for this purpose. These sheep were bred strictly for meat. They produce no wool, which has eliminated many of the typical problems associated with sheep in a warm climate. The katahidn sheep are maintaining the groundcover effectively.

Geese controlling groundcover.

**Insect Pests**:
The insect pests of greatest concern on Mother Goose Farms are ants and scale, which can lead to sooty mold, another pest of coffee. Ants have increased in the orchard since the irrigation system was installed. Still, Steve Skipper feels that the problem is not as severe as on many farms in the area, since the geese provide some insect as well as groundcover control. Some farms in the area have experienced problems with aphids and mites. These have not been a problem for John and Vicki. To control the scale on which the ants feed, the Swifts apply an ultra fine dormant oil.



Sheep controlling groundcover under macadamia trees.

## SOCIOECONOMIC VIABILITY

*When they started the coffee orchard 6 years ago, John and Vicki assumed it would take approximately 5 years to turn a profit. Coffee yields have increased steadily since they first began transplanting the trees, and costs for weed control have dropped dramatically. Last year was a profitable one and the Swifts anticipate even better profits in the future.*

**Uncertain Yields, Volatile Markets**:
John and Vicki Swift have taken several steps to sustain their operations in the face of uncertain yields and volatile markets. First, their coffee farm is organically certified. They are able to capture a niche market that is less volatile than the open market. Second, they process their coffee in-house and market directly to local consumers for a competitive price, thereby avoiding middle costs associated with conventional markets and saving transportation and processing costs. To date, marketing of Mother Goose Farms coffee has been primarily by word of mouth; however, Vicki is exploring more aggressive marketing strategies (though still focusing on a local niche market) as coffee yields increase. Third, they have a somewhat diversified operation with both sheep and pigs that can offset losses when coffee yields are low. The sheep are sold directly to a local restaurant. As the herd grows, more aggressive marketing will be needed. Pigs are grown primarily for family consumption. Excess pigs are sold to neighbors. District Conservationist Steve Skipper thinks there may be a commercial market for the weed eating geese. To date, however, they are not consumed. Fourth, John works as a fireman outside the farm, providing additional cash flow.

## Case Study No. 2: Ray Eck Farms

**Site Description**:
Ray Eck grows organic almonds in the San Joaquin Valley. The San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys comprise California's Central Valley, one of the most productive in the world, largely because of its mild climate, deep soils and available water resources. Ray has been farming in this valley for 25 years. His family grew almonds in the area before Ray began farming, so he has considerable experience with the crop.

The climate in Merced County is Mediterranean, with warm, dry summers and cool, moist winters. Average annual precipitation is approximately 12" and occurs almost entirely in the winter months. Frost is a concern here, especially in the spring when trees begin to flower.

The soils on Ray's farm are primarily Hilmar sands, 0-3% slopes. These are poorly or imperfectly drained, alluvial soils with a droughty surface layer but a generally high water table. Hilmar sands are primarily used for alfalfa and dairy production, but with proper management produce a reasonable almond crop, although the trees may be susceptible to fungal diseases and salt damage.

**Location**:
Merced County, CA

**District Conservationist**:
Malia Oritz
Merced Field Office
2135 Wardrobe Ave., Suite C
Merced, CA 95340
Telephone: (209)723-3714
FAX: (209) 725-2964

**Acres Farmed**:
120 (50 owned, 70 leased)

**Crops**:
Almonds (5 varieties)

**Sustainable Agriculture Issues**:
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION
Soil and Climate Constraints
Nutrient Cycling
Pest Management
SOCIOECONOMIC VIABILITY
Volatile Markets; Uncertain Yields
Social Acceptance

## ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION

**Soil and Climate Constraints**:
Ray maintains a cover crop under the almonds, protecting the soil from both wind and water erosion. The buried pipe sprinkler irrigation system he has installed on the land he owns and some of the land he leases causes less erosion than flood irrigation. The cost of buried pipeline is possible under a long-term lease but is difficult to justify financially under a shorter term lease.

The soils on Ray's farm require irrigation in the summer but may be excessively wet in the spring. Moist conditions encourage fungal infections that can lead to significant yield reductions. Salinity is also a concern. Ray's sprinkler irrigation system allows more accurate control of the water each tree receives. Thus he can ensure enough water in the summer to prevent stress but not so much that it promotes fungal disease. By managing water use more carefully, Ray also reduces the potential for nitrate leaching and the probability of salinity problems, that can reduce yield and nut quality.

Because the soils on this farm are sandy, fertility should be a concern, but Ray has noted that soil fertility is improving over time. Organic matter has accumulated on the soil surface since a permanent cover crop has been maintained. There has been a dramatic change in surface soil color, and the soil structure has changed over time from massive to granular. Even the cover crop is looking healthier.

Soil structure of Ray Eck's orchard with organic matter (dark material) overlying sand (light material).

As with most almond growers, Ray uses irrigation to reduce the potential for frost damage when the temperature drops below freezing.

**Cultural Requirements for Almonds**:
Almonds must be cross pollinated by honey bees each year. It is a common practice to rent bees during flowering to ensure pollination. Ray has a standing rental agreement with a local beekeeper to ensure that bees will be available when they are needed.

Almonds are relatively short-lived trees. They begin producing nuts after 4 years, reach peak production in 12 years, then begin to lose vigor and need to be replaced after approximately 25 years. Almond wood is generally not used in furniture making, though it makes excellent firewood. Ray thinks the best use for his old trees is to recycle them in the soil. He is experimenting with using a brush chipper or turning the trees into sawdust so they can be reincorporated into this agricultural ecosystem.

**Nutrient Cycling**:
Ray fertilizes with composted dairy manure and dried poultry manure from nearby animal operations. Supplemental micronutrients are foliar applied according to foliar tissue test recommendations. These tests indicate both macro and micronutrient requirements as well as leaf chloride concentration, a potential indicator of salinity in almonds.

Ray maintains a cover crop, consisting largely of annual legumes (vetches and clovers), under his almonds. It serves a variety of functions, including erosion control, pest management, moisture retention,

and nutrient cycling. The vetches and clovers also enhance the nitrogen status of the soil. Ray applies manure to benefit the cover crop and the soil microorganisms as well as the almonds. He estimates the water and nutrients provided to the cover crop this year will be returned to his almonds in the following year in the form of soil organic carbon and recycled nutrients.

**Pest Control (Insects and Rodents):** Ray admits he has a distinct pest control advantage over many other almond producers in that his orchard is located near the edge of the almond production area. The immediate neighbors do not grow almonds, so serious almond pests are less likely to invade and "take over" in his area. He is surrounded by a diverse set of crops, including alfalfa, corn and oats. These crops harbor different kinds of insects, helping keep the insect population in balance, a key to Ray's pest management strategy.

Traditional orchard without cover crop.

Ray believes that in addition to monitoring insect pest levels to determine when control measures will be needed, farmers should cultivate and monitor beneficial insect and animal habitat and they will keep insect pests in check. Ray has a *Field of Dreams* philosophy: "build it and they will come." The multi-species cover crop is primarily insect habitat. To help the process along he's released some beneficial insects into the orchard, although eventually this may not be necessary. He is also working with NRCS on a relatively new program to strategically install insectary plants (plants that provide habitat for insects) around the orchard. To control rodents, Ray has installed owl boxes. However, the orchard is not pest-free. You have to live with *some* pests to make the system work, he says. The beneficial predators would not stay around if all the pests were gone.

Ray Eck's orchard with annual legumes such as vetch and clover functioning as a cover crop to recycle nutrients and retain moisture.

*Ray is participating in the BIOS (Biologically Integrated Orchard Systems) program. BIOS was started as a pilot program by the Community Alliance with Family Farmers Foundation (CAFF) in Merced County in 1993, in response to public pressure to reduce chemical use on farms near urban populations. The mission of BIOS is to "build a community of farmers, other agricultural professionals and public institutions, dedicated to the voluntary adoption of a whole systems approach to farm management that is flexible, maintains long term profitability, and relies on less chemical inputs." (Community Alliance with Family Farmers, 1996) Ray was asked to serve on the BIOS management team because of his experience in biological control. He organizes field days, helps develop management plans, and provides technical assistance to farmers who participate. The program has been so successful in Merced County that it is spreading to other parts of California. Farmers participating in BIOS are eligible for Environmental Qaulity Incentive Program (EQIP) cost sharing through NRCS.*

**Pest Control (Weeds):**
According to Ray, organic farmers have no weeds, they have native vegetation. He admits that some kinds of vegetation are less desirable than others, but his cover crop controls these fairly well. He does not mind the extra water and nutrients needed to maintain the cover crop, since they are eventually recycled into the crop or the soil organic matter.

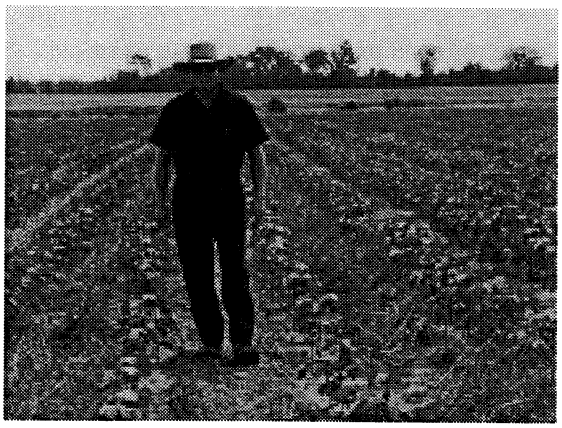
**Pest Control (Fungal Disease):**
Spring fungal diseases are the biggest threat to organic almonds. Ray uses copper and sulfur products to control fungi, but during wet springs these are not particularly effective. "The best control for fungal disease," says Ray, "is dry weather." Because of fungal disease his yields are often a bit lower than those of conventional neighbors.

## SOCIOECONOMIC VIABILITY

**Uncertain Yields; Volatile Markets:**
Ray has cornered an international niche market for organic almonds, which helps stabilize his cash flow. While paying others to process the almonds, he retains possession until they are sold to an exporter who repackages for the European market. Ray admits that the restrictions placed by organic certification can sometimes reduce yields, but in the long term, the price differential between organic and conventional almonds more than compensates.

**Social Acceptance:**
Urban encroachment into farmlands is occurring throughout the United States but is especially apparent in California. People living near agricultural land often fear the use of agricultural chemicals, are disturbed by odors and noises, and are irritated by slow-moving farm machinery on the roads. Urban populations need to understand the constraints under which farmers operate. Conversely, farmers need to understand the concerns of the urban population. Some farmers have found that selling their products directly to local consumers through farmers markets or other means can help them understand where food comes from. It can also increase net farm income by eliminating the "middle". For Ray this is not a viable option, since the volume of almonds he produces is too great for the local market.

## Case Study No. 3: Lamar Black



Lamar Black in a row of cotton crops he manages.

**Site Description**:
Lamar Black has been managing a 2,300 acre farm in Jenkins and Burke Counties in east central Georgia since 1982. The owner, while interested in the farming operations, relies on Lamar for management and marketing decisions.

The climate in this part of Georgia is generally warm and moist. Average annual precipitation is approximately 47" and is fairly evenly spaced throughout the year, although localized summer droughts may occur. Temperatures are generally quite warm, reaching $90^0$ F or more throughout most of the summer. Winter frosts are common here. The average frost free period is 235-240 days. The relatively high rainfall and temperature throughout this part of Georgia have contributed to rapid soil formation.

The cropped portion of the farm is dominated by Dothan loamy sands 0-2% and 2-5% slopes. These are well drained upland soils that formed in marine sediments. They are strongly acid except where limed and contain at least 5% plinthite (a highly weathered hardpan soil layer) below approximately 43 inches. This results in moderate to moderately slow permeability in the subsoil. While they are low in natural fertility and organic matter, they tend to have good tilth, and are well suited to cropping. The farm also contains Grady and Fuquay soils, which are far less suited to field crops. The Grady soils are poorly drained and tend to pond water in the winter and spring, while the Fuquay soils are extremely well drained and have a very low water holding capacity (Paulk, 1986). These soils are wooded.

**Location**:
Jenkins and Burke Counties, GA

**District Conservationist**:
Rafael Salazar
Burke County Office Park
715 West Sixth Street
Waynesboro, GA 30830
Telephone: (706) 554-5183
FAX: (706) 437-1516

**Acres Farmed**:
1000 acres arable cropland
1140 acres natural woodland
160 acres planted pine

**Crops**:
Cotton, Corn, Soybeans, Wheat, Peanuts, Grain, Sorghum

**Sustainable Agriculture Issues**:
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION
Erosion
Soil and Climate Constraints
Nutrient Cycling
Pest Pressures
SOCIOECONOMIC VIABILITY
Volatile Markets; Uncertain Yields

## ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION

**Erosion:**
A concern over wind and water erosion prompted Lamar to examine options for erosion control. His ultimate solution has been to minimize soil tillage. Using a system called strip-till on all fields. With this system all tillage occurs at the time of planting. Lamar uses a 180 horsepower tractor to pull the strip-till equipment, which consists of straight coulters followed by a subsoiler (required to break up the hardpan that forms under Dothan soils), and two fluted coulters per row. The strip-till system leaves the soil relatively undisturbed except for a narrow seed bed (10-12") through which the planter is pulled.

*Lamar began practicing strip-till on a limited basis in 1977 as an erosion control measure for corn. Gradually he learned to use this system with other crops. Cotton was the last, and four years ago his conversion to strip-till was completed.*

While Lamar began strip-till for erosion control, many other benefits from the system have been realized. The single pass operation has reduced the time needed to prepare a field for planting, so there is more planning time and thus better accuracy in determining the planting date. Strip-till requires far less fuel than multiple tillage operations, so the wear and tear on equipment has been significantly reduced. Lamar has also noticed that bobwhite quail have been increasing on his farm though they are generally declining in the southeast as a whole. The increase may in part be due to conservation tillage. Finally, water infiltration in the irrigated fields seems to have dramatically improved since switching to strip-till.

Cotton crops that have been strip-tilled to decrease erosion and increase infiltration.

A second technique Lamar employs to reduce erosion on the fields is a winter cover crop, common in this part of Georgia. Annual rye grass is typically used because it is fast growing and winter hardy. Lamar has also been experimenting with cahaba white vetch as a winter cover crop before cotton and has been very pleased with the initial results. The vetch provides excellent cover and residue, adds nitrogen to the soil and helps alleviate the root knot nematode problem .

**Climate Constraints**:
Soils and climate are moderate constraints on the farm Lamar manages. While rainfall is generally adequate for most crops, it can be spotty,

especially in the summer. Soybeans and wheat are seldom seriously affected by this; however, corn yields may be severely reduced if a dry period occurs between pollination and the soft dough growth stage; and cotton yields may be improved by irrigation. Lamar has two 150-acre center pivot irrigation systems, which are used on corn and cotton. While an adequate irrigation water supply has never been a problem, Lamar is frugal with irrigation water. He monitors soil moisture in the corn fields with tensiometers and irrigates accordingly. For cotton he uses a watering schedule established by the Georgia Cooperative Extension Service and irrigates only when rainfall is inadequate to meet the needs established by the schedule. In a typical year, 2 acre-inches may be applied to the cotton and 4-5 acre-inches to the corn. In a dry year up to 14 acre-inches may be used on the same crops.

Wheat left in the fields acts as a mulch for the cotton, retaining moisture and reducing erosion.

**Nutrient Cycling**:
Lamar works to minimize nutrient losses. He fertilizes according to annual soil test recommendations, which indicate that the vetch cover crop supplies approximately 70 units of nitrogen per acre for the cotton that follows. Lamar applies a starter fertilizer of 10-34-0 with the corn and cotton seed at planting. Subsequent fertilizer applications are surface broadcast. Petiole samples are used to monitor the nitrogen and potassium status of the cotton through the growing season. If a deficiency is noted these nutrients are foliar applied. Lamar plans to begin performing foliar analysis on corn and soybeans also. Jenkins County is largely a row crop county, and animal manures are generally not available for applying to fields. Lamar relies on winter cover crops and conservation tillage to improve soil fertility, an approach that seems to be working.

*Soil analysis performed by the University of Georgia Soils Laboratory indicates the organic matter content of the top 1/2 inch of soil in strip-till fields is 2.5-3%, compared with a typical content of 0.6% on conventionally tilled fields in this area.*

**Pest Control (Insects and fungi)**:
Lamar tries to minimize chemical inputs for pest control. He scouts soybeans regularly for pod feeders and worms that feed on foliage. Soybeans are not generally sprayed for these pests more than once during the growing season. A professional consultant scouts Lamar's cotton twice a week for boll worm and other cotton pests. Lamar plants bollguard cotton (cotton genetically altered for resistance to boll worm) on some fields, which has reduced the need to spray for boll worm.

*Lamar is also working with Dr. Joe Lewis of the USDA Agricultural Research Service to develop a pest management system for cotton that uses cover crops to harbor beneficial insects. The first year of the experiment, Lamar reduced his pesticide application frequency from 5 to 2 times per year. Eventually he and Dr. Lewis hope to develop a system where no pesticides will be needed.*

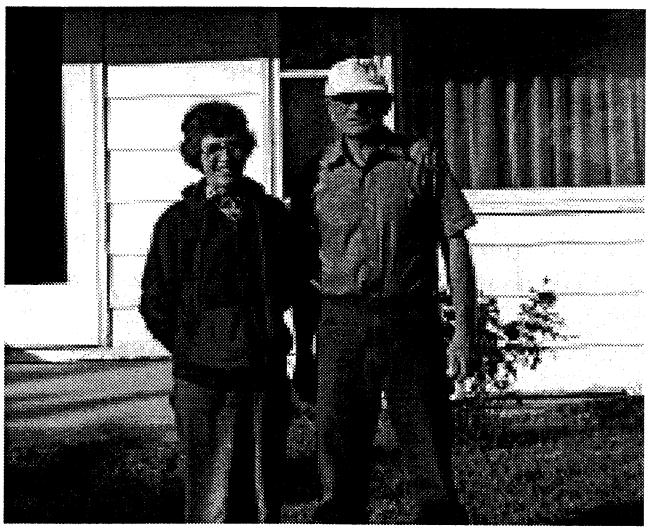
Insects are generally not a problem in corn or wheat, although the stink bug may be increasing in corn. Lamar plants Hessian fly resistant wheat. The warm moist climate of this part of Georgia encourages fungal growth, so Lamar often applies a fungicide to winter wheat at the boot stage. He also plants fungicide-treated corn and cotton seed.

**Pest Control (Weeds):**
Lamar applies herbicide to all crops, but no more than he did under conventional till and sometimes less. Cotton is slow to emerge after planting and is therefore the least able to compete with weeds. Lamar has been following the development of a technology called ultra narrow row cotton (<30" row spacing), to improve the cotton's ability to compete with weeds and reduce the need for herbicides. Lamar expects that once harvesting equipment becomes available he will be planting ultra narrow row cotton regularly.

## SOCIOECONOMIC VIABILITY

**Uncertain Yields, Volatile Markets:**
Lamar sells cotton through a regional cotton cooperative, which has been highly successful in obtaining competitive pricing for its members. The price of peanuts is established under government programs and is rarely a question. Lamar markets the other crops directly. Grain sorghum is sold to neighboring hog farmers. Wheat, corn and soybeans are sold to local grain elevators. The price of these crops fluctuates significantly. Lamar uses experience and intuition to determine when to sell and when to store crops. He would prefer to leave these decisions to a cooperative; however, there are no grain cooperatives in this part of Georgia. The one advantage Lamar has over neighbors is that he grows several different crops each year. When the price of one is low, he may make up for the loss with one or more other crops. In addition to the annual crops, Lamar has planted 160 acres of pine for timber production with a goal of long-term, future income. Diversification to stabilize short and long-term income can be an important consideration in developing a sustainable system.

## Case Study No. 4: Ed and Dorothy Kalin



Ed and Dorothy Kalin

**Site Description**:
Ed and Dorothy Kalin operate a 150-unit cow/calf operation on a 1,160 acre farm in Pawnee County, NE. The farm has been in Ed's family for three generations. He hopes to maintain and improve it for future generations. Ed and Dorothy work as a team, both actively participate in all aspects of the operation. They share common knowledge and goals, and work well together.

Pawnee County is located in the extreme southeastern part of Nebraska. The continental climate here is characterized by frequent and extreme weather changes. The average annual precipitation is 33.5 inches but may vary substantially from year to year. Most of the rainfall occurs in the spring and summer. Thunderstorms during this period are sometimes severe, and may be accompanied by local downpours, hail and damaging winds. Temperatures vary throughout the year. While the average late July temperature is $94^0$ F, and the average late January temperature is $14^0$ F, temperatures as high as $117^0$ F and as low as $-29^0$ F have been recorded in the county.

Most of the farm is on moderately steep, clay and clay loam soils that formed on glacial material. These include soils of the Buchard and Pawnee series (Sautter, 1976). Water erosion is the principal hazard, and many of these soils are sufficiently eroded to warrant separate mapping units in the Pawnee County soil survey.

**Location**:
Pawnee County, NE

**Resource Conservationist**:
Don Ulrich
USDA-NRCS
988 11th St. Suite B
Syracuse, NE 68446
Telephone: (402) 269-3446

**Acres Farmed**:
1160 acres (680 owned, 480 rented)
247 acres cropland
913 acres grass and native hay

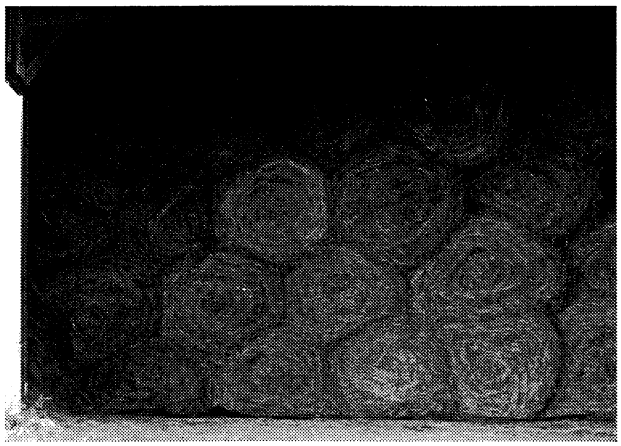
**Crops**:
Sorghum (Milo), Corn, Soybeans, Sorghum Silage, Alfalfa, Wheat

**Primary Enterprise**:
Cow/Calf production

**Sustainable Agriculture Issues**:
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION
Erosion
Climate Constraints
Nutrient Cycling
Pest Pressures
SOCIOECONOMIC VIABIILITY
Volatile Markets; Uncertain Yields
Information

## ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION

**Erosion**:
Erosion is one of the Kalins' primary concerns. Three quarters of the farm is in permanent grass and native hay. The farm's cropland contains 8-10 miles of terraces, and approximately 2 miles of waterways, of which a few thousand feet are tiled. Many of the terraces were installed in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps and by Ed's father. Ed is careful to maintain these terraces so they always function properly. Terraces installed in the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's were spaced at close intervals compared with modern terraces, which are designed to accommodate today's larger equipment. These closely spaced terraces are more effective at controlling erosion than modern terraces.



Most of the Kalins farm produces hay for the cattle operation.

The pasture land also contains about 12 ponds that trap both water and sediment. To reduce erosion and improve grazing efficiency, Ed is working with the NRCS to develop a rotational grazing system that will involve fencing of additional pastures and existing ponds, installation of several watering tanks, and construction of four new ponds. By fencing out the ponds and providing gravity flow livestock watering facilities, bank erosion is controlled. Water quality is also enhanced by keeping livestock out of the water system.

The Kalins farm on the contour. Not only does it help reduce erosion, it is easier than plowing up and down slope. According to Ed, in the old days, when horses pulled the plows, they wanted to go in a straight line and would just as soon go over a hill as around it. This made contour farming difficult. Today there is no excuse for not farming on the contour.

**Climate Constraints**:
The climate in this part of Nebraska can be severe, with subfreezing winter temperatures and wind chills as low as -50$^0$ F. Ed and Dorothy's farmstead and livestock wintering areas are well protected from harsh winter winds with a series of mature windbreaks and shelterbelts.

A major concern with any livestock operation is a reliable source of clean drinking water. Uneven rainfall and sub-freezing temperatures in the winter can sometimes make this difficult. By the year 2001 Ed and Dorothy plan to install 4 ponds in addition to the ones already on their property. These ponds will be used to water the livestock and provide fire protection for the farmstead. Water from these ponds flows by

gravity to a series of "energy free" watering facilities that use convection to prevent the livestock drinking water from freezing in the winter without the use of costly heating elements.

Calving on the farm currently occurs March through May; however, Ed and Dorothy have plans to switch their calving dates to late spring and early summer. By doing so they can take advantage of growing forage when the cows need the most nourishment (i.e., the last third of gestation). At the same time the young calves will not have to contend with the harsh Nebraska winter weather until they are several months old.

**Nutrient Cycling**:
Livestock manure is recycled on the fields. Ed and Dorothy have placed their feed barns at different locations on the farm so they can more easily spread manure on nearby fields. The rotational grazing system they are developing should also help cycle nutrients on their pastures.

Hay and silage are produced each year for winter feed. Silage is stored in bunker silos covered with plastic sheeting and weighted down with low quality hay. The hay keeps the plastic in place, reduces punctures, and sheds water more effectively than old tires, and other materials traditionally used to hold plastic in place over bunker silos. When no longer needed, the hay is recycled on cropland fields.

Bunker silo.

**Pest Control (Insects)**:
Insects have not recently been a problem for Ed and Dorothy. Ten years ago the farm was plagued by chinch bugs and green bugs that grew in winter wheat and later attacked sorghum. To solve the problem they stopped planting wheat for several years. Today they use longer rotations that seldom include wheat, and the insects have been brought under control. Ed and Dorothy have noticed that ladybugs are increasing since they stopped using pesticides on the chinch bugs. Ed has a great respect for ladybugs as beneficial insects. He once harvested a "swarm" of hibernating ladybugs from under a pile of small hay bales, kept them in the farm cave over winter so they wouldn't freeze, and spread them back on the field the following April as a pest control measure.

**Pest Control (Weeds)**: The Kalins have traditionally relied on herbicides to control weed infestations in their crops, but they continue to look for ways to reduce the need for herbicides. They have extended the length of the crop rotations, alternating crops with different growth habits and rooting patterns. This year they will experiment with more narrow row spacing to allow for earlier canopy closure, which should help the crops compete with the weeds.

Ed has also learned that fertilizing native prairie hay in late spring gives competitive advantage to the less desirable grasses. He applies no more than 25-30 pounds per acre of available nitrogen to these fields after June 1.

## SOCIOECONOMIC VIABILITY

*Ed and Dorothy also work to minimize their cash flow requirements by reducing waste (reusing and recycling materials wherever practical) and making efficient use of their assets. Keeping capital costs under control is another way of protecting themselves against major price drops. For example, most of the Kalins' equipment was purchased used. Repair and maintenance is done in-house. Equipment is kept until it is completely worn out or no longer meets their needs.*

**Uncertain Yields, Volatile Markets**:
Ed and Dorothy have been concerned but not threatened by the low beef prices that all cattle producers in the U.S. have been facing recently. In 1995 they were able to sell their stored corn and soybeans for a premium price, which helped offset the low price of livestock. Ed notes that when the price of beef is down the price of grain is usually up and vice versa. While Ed prefers to concentrate on the cow/calf production, he agrees it is good insurance to have grain crops for sale when the price of beef is low.

Ed and Dorothy also offset low beef prices by providing surrogate mothers for a breeder in Grand Island, NE. Once a year the breeder artificially implants a number of Ed and Dorothy's heifers with embryos of known lineage. When the calves are weaned they are sold back to the breeder at a premium price.

Ed and Dorothy have been implementing their own selective breeding program based on the "linear measuring method" since 1988. They now background calves that are 15% larger than the county average. While this does not entirely offset the low prices for beef, it helps.

**Information**:
Ed and Dorothy are always looking to improve their farming practices. They don't yet have access to the internet but expect that they will before too long. To get information about new, environmentally safer farming techniques, they attend trade shows, listen to radio programs, read books, take courses, work with NRCS, Cooperative Extension and other government agencies, and talk to their neighbors and other people who have implemented new ideas.

# VII. Decisionmaking and Business Planning

# ALTERNATIVE ENTERPRISE AND AGRITOURISM: FARMING FOR PROFIT AND SUSTAINABILITY TOOL KIT

***TABLE OF CONTENTS and ABSTRACTS***
For

## VII. DECISION MAKING AND BUSINESS PLANNING

*Farming Alternatives: A Guide to Evaluating the Feasibility of New Farm-Based Enterprises*. Small Farms Series, Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Services, Cornell University, 152 Riley-Robb Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853. Telephone: 607-255-7654. This publication is written for families and individuals interested in developing a new farm-based enterprise. It is especially helpful for those considering nontraditional enterprises. It contains worksheets to evaluate family goals, alternative enterprises, marketing, production, profitability, financial feasibility, and decision making. It also has an excellent list of resources. This is a workbook.

*Tilling the Soil Of Opportunity: Nx LeveL™ Guide for Agricultural Entrepreneurs.* University of Nebraska, US WEST Foundation and SARE. Call 1-800-873-9378 or 1-800-328-2851 to find out where the next course will be held your area. This training course was developed by more than 15 business writers, producers and consultants involved in successful direct marketing agricultural businesses. It covers assessing your resources, business planning and research, marketing, business management, legal considerations, budgets and financial management. During the course, each participant sets goals, objectives and prepares their own business plan. The goal is "Helping Producers Reach the Next Level of Success..."

*Entrepreneurial Training.* Contact Randy Williams, CSREES, at 202-720-0743 for the schedule.

*Ca$hing in on Business Opportunities: A Guide to Building a Home-Based and Micro Business Program.* Southern Rural Development Center. Call 601-325-3207. This curriculum is designed to be used by educators who work with home-based and micro businesses. The curriculum is comprehensive, covers a wide array of topics of interest to current or potential business owners. It can be used by educators or entrepreneurs. Overhead material and diskettes accompany the manual. It comes in two four-inch binders.

*You Can Make Money from Your Arts and Crafts*. Steve and Cindy Long. Contact Mark Publishing, 5400 Scotts Valley Drive, Scotts Valley, CA 95066 or 1-800 622-7372 for copies. This book describes the operation, management, marketing and planning of a value-added business that happens to be wood crafts. Guidelines and principles put forth are readily applicable to agricultural value-added products.

*Iowa Organic Farming Mentor Program*. Video outlines the structure of the program and highlights some of the successful practices of the mentor farmers. Copy can be obtained by sending $19.95 to Iowa Organic Farming Mentor Program, 610 South 4th Street, Fairfield, IA 52556.

*Ranking of Various Obstacles Facing Farm and Rural Entrepreneurs.* Source unknown. A bar chart shows the results of research about obstacles—lack of marketing skills and information (98%), lack of information on alternatives (80%), lack of business management skills (75%), lack of acceptable markets (70%), poor access to commercial credit (65%) , lack of facilities, equipment and land (55%), poor access to supply, service and distribution networks (52%), lack of ideas and models (50%), taxes (48%), regulations ((42%), and unsympathetic agribusiness environment (25%).

*The Feasibility of Agricultural Alternatives (Updated June 1996).* Forrest Stegelin, Extension Agribusiness Economist, University of Kentucky. Call 606-257-5762. This is an outline of what needs to be considered in developing an alternative enterprise. Twelve steps are presented in this detailed 11-page outline. Successes or failures in the farm business depend largely upon the soundness of managerial decisions.

*Source Book of Sustainable Agriculture for Educators, Producers and Other Agricultural Professionals: A Guide to Books, Newsletters, Conference Proceedings, Bulletins, Videos and More.* Sustainable Agricultural Network. To order call 802-656-0471 at a cost of $12.00 and go to www.ces.ncsu.edu/san/ for more information. This book contains 559 entries organized alphabetically by state, U.S. territory and foreign country and how to obtain those items of interest. It also has four pages of web sites and university centers relating to sustainability. (Located under TAB IV.)

*Rural Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development.* QB-93-38, NAL, USDA. Call 301-504-5755 or write USDA, National Agricultural Library, Document Delivery Branch, 6th Fl, 10301 Baltimore Blvd, NAL Bldg., Beltsville, MD 20705. This publication contains 45 pages of reference material on rural development and businesses.

*Guide to Evaluating and Choosing a Natural Resource-Based Enterprise.* By Jonathan S. Kays, Maryland Cooperative Extension. Contact Jonathan Kays, Western Maryland Research and Education Center, 18330 Keedysville Road, Keedysville, MD 21756 or at 301-432-2767 or email jk87@umail.umd.edu.

*National Council of State Agricultural Finance Programs: Biennial Directory of State by State Agricultural Loan Programs. (NCOSAFP)* This organization exists to keep its members informed on state programs being developed across the nation and on farm finance issues emerging in Washington, D.C. For information about your state, call Wayne Nelson 800-432-3276 or email: waynen@gwtc.net.

*Communicating for Agriculture and the Self-Employed, Inc.* It is an information source and works to strengthen both state and federal finance programs serving beginning farmers and ranchers, as well as other farm finance and agricultural development programs. For more information write 112 E. Lincoln Avenue, POBox 677, Fergus Falls, MN 56538 or phone 218-736-3241 or go to www.selfemployedcountry.org

*SBA Lender Weekly.* It is a free email newsletter on SBA lender news, SBA Procedural Notices, and SBA Federal Register Notices. If you are interested, contact Robert Coleman at email: robert.coleman@colemanpublishing.com

*Small Farms/School Meals Initiative: Town Hall Meetings.* A partnership among Food and Nutrition Service, Agricultural Marketing Service and Department of Defense has been promoting the buying of locally produced foods for local schools and other Federal facilities. This is a manual that provides a step-by-step guide of activities for groups to plan, conduct, and publicize a professional town hall meeting to encourage small farmers and local food officials to work together. For more information on the "farm-to-school" projects call 703-305-2000 or go to www.fns.gov/fns/ or email: webmaster@fns.usda.gov. This guide can also be expanded beyond just the food aspect to include agricultural education, agritourism and agritainment on farms at the local level with the local schools and other groups such as the senior citizens.

*Edible Schoolyard.* The idea came from Alice Waters, chef and owner of Chez Panisse Restaurant, Berkeley, CA. It's an amazing site to see elementary school-low-moderate income having such an amazing time planting and planning an Edible Garden. In CA, the children even dug a river and put in beaches in the middle of the garden. No contacts, just another business idea.

*Value-added Farmer Cooperatives.* These coops are designed to meet the modern day changes in the food manufacturing and distribution system as it adjusts to a rapidly changing global economy and the biotechnological and information-technology revolutions. For more information go to: http://www.rurdev.usda.gov.rds/index.html.

*Appropriate Technology Transfer For Rural Areas.* This center has information on production and marketing of many products. Information is available by calling 1-800-346-9140 or go to http:/www.attra.org and down load the information.

*State Food Inspections Web Site.* The names and addresses for the state food inspection officials are available on FDA web site www.fda.gov/ora/fed-state/directorytable.htm.

*Loans for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers and Farm Loans Fact Sheet.* FSA directs a program to assist beginning farmers or existing farmers to make transitions or improvements. Go to your local FSA Office for information about the eligibility criteria. Also, information about other beginning farmer/rancher programs is also available. Call Mark Falcone at 202-720-1632 for more information about other programs.

*Market Farm Forms: Spreadsheet Templates for Planning and Organization Information on Diversified Farms.* The program was developed by Full Circle Farms, a direct marketing gardener. ATTRA has been favorably impressed by the user friendly and very functional spreadsheet. The 95-page book and diskette cost "$45.00 plus $5.00 shipping. Order from Full Circle Farm, 3377 Early Times Lane, Auburn, CA 95603. Call 530-885-9201 or email: fullcircle@jps.net.

*Agritourism Workshop*. University of Illinois is developing a web based workshop. It has seven modules—agritourism/value added, marketing ideas, why public travels, business planning, is the business for you, enterprise fit and risk/liability with e-commerce being added later. Contact Bruce Wicks at 217-333-6160 for more information or email: b-wicks@uiuc.edu or go to the web site: www.leisurestudies.uiuc.edu/agritourism

*Small Farms @USDA: Creating Opportunities, Preserving Choices*. This is the USDA web site containing council information, database, events, people etc. Go to www.usda.gov/oce/smallfarm/sfhome.htm.

*Ideas for Alternative Agricultural Enterprises.* Missouri Alternatives Center. Call 573-882-1905 or www.ext.missouri.edu/agebb/mac for a copy. This 7-page fact sheet lists several alternative enterprise ideas and how they can be developed as well as three pages on developing a business plan.

*Sustainable Agriculture...Continuing to Grow: Proceedings of the "Farming and Ranching for Profit, Stewardship and Community Conference, March 7-9, 2000."* Western SARE. Call 435-797-2257 or wsare@mendel.usu.edu. or go to www.wsare.usu.edu for producer profiles and presentation of abstracts. The conference addressed—the sustainable farm, disease, pests and weeds, the sustainable ranch, marketing in a sustainable economy and sustaining agriculture. Farmers and ranchers made several presentations on how they are sustaining themselves through alternative enterprises.

*Organic Production: Recent Publications and Current Information Sources*. SRB 96-07. NAL, USDA. For copies email: afsic@nal.usda.gov or call 301-504-6559. Publication contains 30 pages of references on organic agricultural production.

*Alternative Crops*. QB 96-11, NAL, USDA. Call 301-504-6559 or email afsic@nal.usda.gov. This publication contains 40 pages of references on the production and marketing of alternative crops.

*Farming for Profit, Stewardship and Community.* SARE . Go to www.sare.org for a complete set of the tip sheets or call 202-720-5203. The 2-page tip sheets are devoted to identifying sources of information for following subjects:

- -TIP# 1: Improve Soil Quality
- -TIP# 3: Prevent Pest Problems
- -TIP# 4: Explore Organic Production
- -TIP# 5: Cut Livestock Costs
- -TIP# 6: Manage Weeds Wisely
- -TIP# 7: Plan for Profit
- -TIP# 8: Network
- -TIP# 9: Diversify Crops
- -TIP# 10: Use Trees

*Farmer's Guide to Processing and Selling Meat or Poultry: What are the rules? Where are the contacts? and Who are the Regulators?* Call John Berry, Agricultural Marketing Educator, PSU at 610-391-9840 or email: jwb15@psu.edu for a copy. This publication is intended to assist farmers and their advisors in understanding regulations affecting the processing and sale of meat and poultry.

*Doing Your Own Market Research: Tips on Evaluating the Market for New Farm-Based Enterprises.* Farming Alternatives Program, Cornell. Call 607-255-9832. This a 6-page tip sheet on steps to follow when evaluating a new business.

*Wildlife Management for Missouri Landowners, Third Edition*. Missouri Department of Conservation. It is a 90-page publication about developing a wildlife management plan, cropland, grassland, woodland, idle area, wetland, and species management. It lists wildlife management services and presents wildlife management practices. To order write to: Missouri Department of Conservation, POBox 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102. Also go to www.conservation.state.mo.us. (See TAB V)

*Your Guide to USDA's Rural Development-Related Activities.* Drafted by REACT. Contact Jim Vancura, Ore-Cal RC&D, 308 Main Street, Dorris, CA 96023 or call 530-397-7463 or email: orecal@cot.net. It contains funding sources and regional and state office names and telephone numbers.

*Access Minnesota Main Street: Electronic Commerce for Small Business.* University of Minnesota Extension Service. This course is taught in rural areas. The curriculum can be seen on www.ecommerce.umn.edu. For more information or to order call 800-876-8636. Or, contact William Bomash, Extension Educator, Communication and Educational Technology Services, University of Minnesota, 474 Coffey Hall, 1420 Eckles Ave.,St. Paul, MN 55108. 612-625-8776. email: willie@umn.edu

*A Wildlife Manager's Field Guide to the Farm Bill.* Wildlife Management Institute Report. It discusses what programs are available to help manage wildlife on private lands, organizational structure and technical information. Contact the Wildlife Management Institute, 1101 14th Street NW, Suite 801, Washington, D.C. 20005 or call 202-371-1808.

*Ponds—Planning, Design, Construction.* NRCS. AH590. Call 888 LANDCARE for a copy. This handbook describes the requirements for building a pond. It is useful to the landowner for general information and serves as a reference for the engineer, technician and contractor.

*Missouri Pond Handbook. Missouri Department of Conservation.* Call 573-751-4115 for a copy. The handbook discusses design, managing a new fish pond and an old fish pond, and common pond problems and recommendations.

*"Agritainment"—Farm & Ranch Recreation Resource Directory*. North Dakota Extension Service. It is a notebook containing information on creativity and quality, marketing strategies, feasibility—cash flow, insurance, starting a business, ND laws, regulations and telephone numbers, home business ideas, grants, and resources. Contact Kathleen Tweeten. Call 701- 328-5134 or email ktweeten@ndsuext.nodak.edu. Cost $25.00. It will be put on the web in the near future at www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/ced/communitypage.

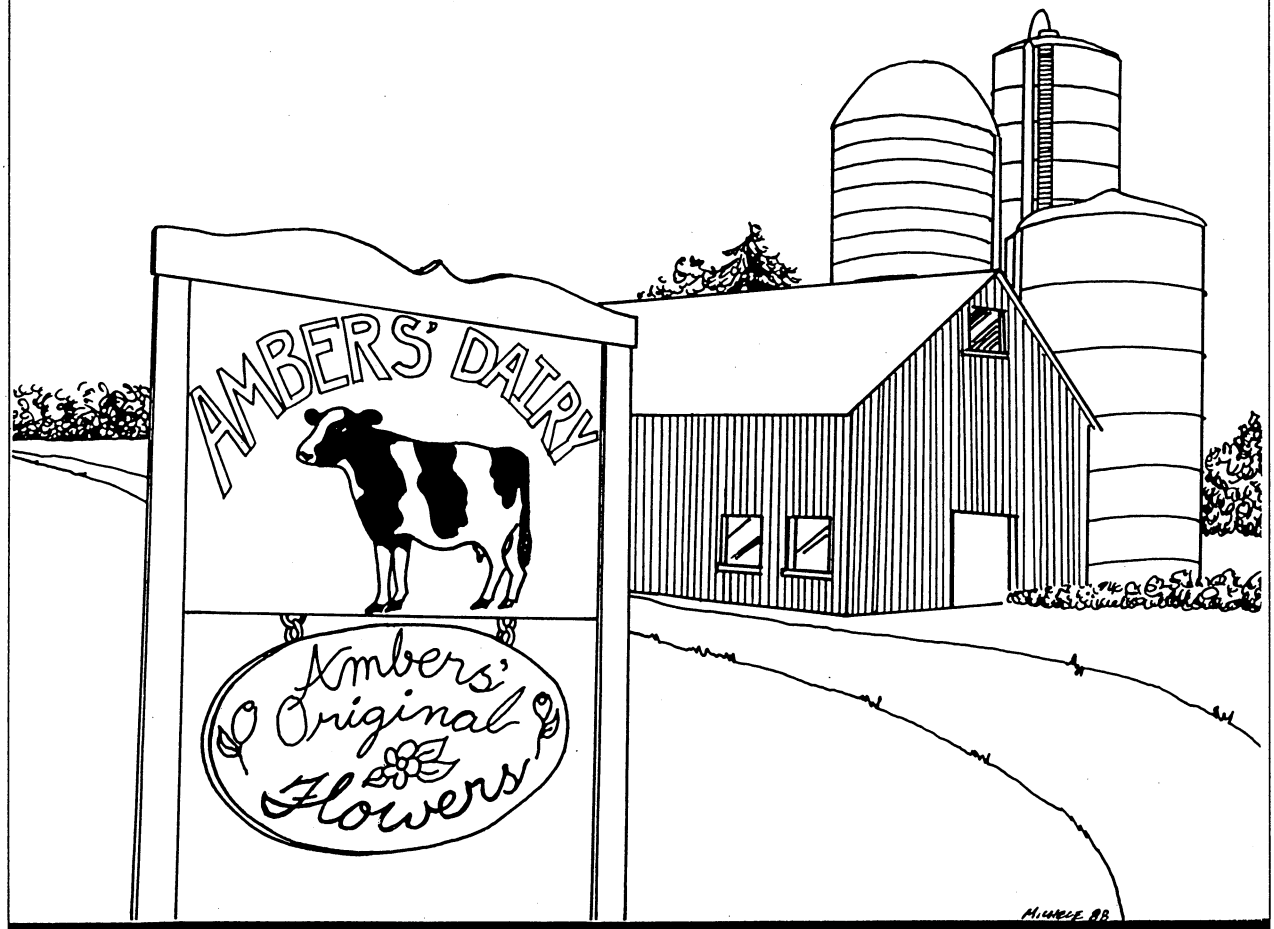
*Diversify Crops to Boost Profits and Stewardship.* Sustainable Agriculture Network, SARE. Go to www.sare.org/dan/htdocs/pubs/ for a copy or call 301-504-6559

There are 14 pages of tourism web sites listed in TAB IX to access online publications for the following areas—Getting Started, Liability Issues, Regulatory Issues, and Marketing. A category called Miscellaneous is also included. These web sites are NOT repeated in TAB XVI. Some of the information is applicable here.

NRAES–32

# Farming Alternatives

*A Guide to Evaluating the Feasibility of New Farm-Based Enterprises*




SMALL FARMS SERIES

Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Service

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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To simplify information, trade names have been referred to in this publication. No endorsement or criticism is intended of products or companies named or unnamed in this book.


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## Background of Project

The *"Tilling the Soil of Opportunity"* training course was developed by more than 15 business writers, producers and consultants involved in successful direct marketing agricultural businesses. The Center for Applied Rural Innovation and the NxLeveL™ Training Network teamed up to publish these materials. In 1999 the materials were first tested with more than 50 producers across the nation. The result is a highly practical, informative and successful training program for today's agricultural producer.

The development of the training course was funded in part by the University of Nebraska, NxLeveL™ Training Network, US WEST Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program



NxLeveL™

*"Helping Producers Reach the Next Level of Success..."*

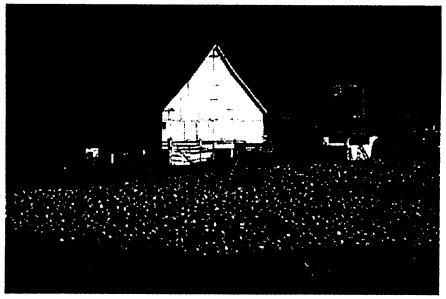
Center for Applied Rural Innovation
58 H.C. Filley Hall
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, NE 68583-0947

Phone: 800.328.2851
Fax: 402.472.0688
Email: mschlake@unl.edu

*"Helping Producers Reach the Next Level of Success..."*

# *"Tilling the Soil of Opportunity"*

## *NxLeveL™ Guide for Agricultural Entrepreneurs*



NxLeveL Training Network
**1.800.873.9378**
Center for Applied Rural Innovation
University of Nebraska
**1.800.328.2851**

# *A New Opportunity...*

Add up the cost of consultation, throw in free advice from guest speakers, multiply networking time with other successful business owners, and finally, add in a small amount for the materials. What you get is the *"Tilling the Soil of Opportunity"* — a large opportunity for today's innovative agricultural producers!

This 36-hour course is specifically designed to assist farmers, ranchers and other agricultural entrepreneurs wanting to diversify their agricultural business. During the course, producers will explore niche markets, distribution channels, production options, management controls, business structure, cashflow management and financing. The focus of the course is on the individual producer's interests, resources and needs.

## How to Participate

The "Tilling the Soil of Opportunity" training materials are available to producers through various host organizations across the nation. Most courses are offered when convenient for the producer — between harvest and spring planting.

If interested in participating in the course, contact either the Center for Applied Rural Innovation or the NxLeveL™ Training Network for a course location nearest you.

> "By the time the class was finished, I was surprised we had a 38-page plan of action for a fruit orchard and a commercial vegetable garden."
> —Linda Phillips, Arthur, NE

## Course Outline

1. Take Stock of Your Resources
2. Basic Equipment Required: Planning and Research
3. The Legal Terrain
4. Manage from the Ground Up
5. Plant It, Grow It, MARKET IT
6. Reap the Benefits — Marketing Strategies
7. Get Your Budgets in Line
8. Analyze THESE: Cash Flow and Financial Statements
9. Cultivate Your Money Resources
10. Harvest Your Future

## Hosting a Training Course

The NxLeveL™ materials are available to agricultural and business organizations interested in community-based agricultural development. All individuals providing instruction or coordination of the course must be certified through the NxLeveL™ Training Network.

Partnership with existing NxLeveL™ Training Network organizations or other agricultural and business organizations is essential to the success of this program. These partnerships or coalition members provide a support network to assist, mentor and finance the participating business. Contact the Center for more information on becoming a host organization.

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Phone: 800.328.2851
Fax: 402.472.0688
Email: mschlake@unl.edu

# CA$HING IN ON BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

## A Guide to Building a Home-Based & Micro Business Program ©

Produced by the National Home-Based & Micro Business Design Team for the Communities in Economic Transition National Initiative of the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service

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*The Southern Rural Development Center and Mississippi State University do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, handicap/disability, or veteran status.*

SRDC # 210

March 1998

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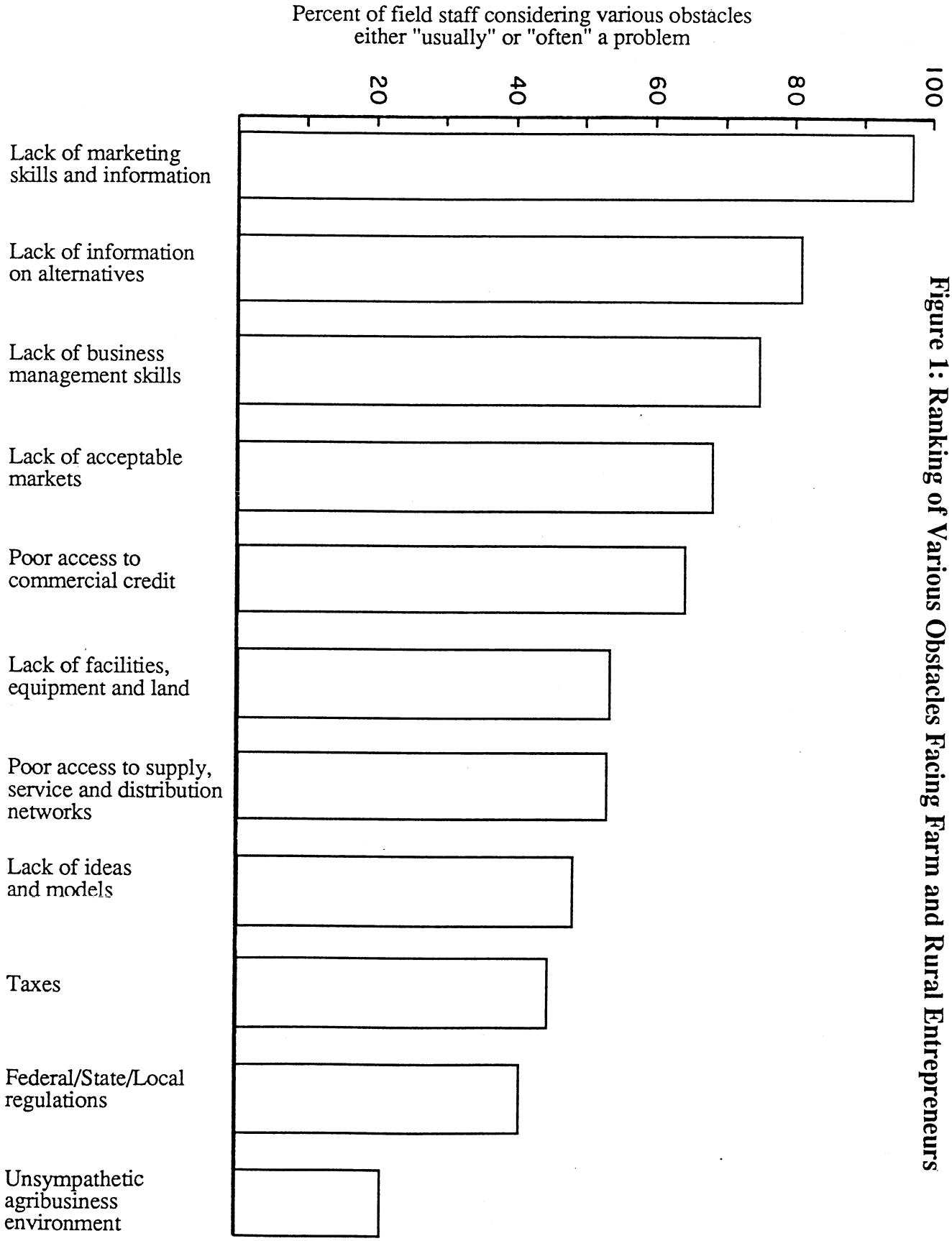



**Figure 1: Ranking of Various Obstacles Facing Farm and Rural Entrepreneurs**

**The Feasibility of Agricultural Alternatives** (Updated June 1996)

*Successes or failures in the farm business depend largely upon the soundness of managerial decisions.*

**What is an agricultural alternative?**

1. An alternative is doing something different than what one is currently doing? It may be taking a tradtional enterprise and adding a new twist such as butchering your own livestock and selling the meat or milling your own wheat and making baked goods.

2. Agricultural-farm or natural resource based.
   a. Includes products and services, such as fee hunting, bed and breakfast or a lawn care business.
   b. May be plants or animals, such as canola, amaranth, game birds or worms.
   c. May be different production or marketing methods, such as organic farming, hydroponics, greenhouses or aquaculture.
   d. An alternative for one person is not necessarily an alternative for another person. A lot of alternatives will not be profitable for a large number of producers. You need to look at your area and what sort of opportunities are available.
   e. Need systematic approach to determine feasibility, what sort of lifestyle are you looking for. Do you want an enterprise that only requires a part-time commitment? Do you have money to invest? Why are you wanting to go into an alternative enterprise?

**What are my alternatives:**

1. Nontraditional crops, livestock and other farm products. Such as: mushrooms, herb, floriculture, exotic livestock, poultry and fish (see the general alternative packet).
2. Service, recreation, tourism, food processing, forest/woodlot or other enterprises based on natural resources on the farm. Such as: farm and rach vacations, jelly/jam processing, Christmas trees or a wildlife refuge.
3. Unconventional production systems. Such as organic farming, aquaculture and raised bed gardening.
4. Direct marketing or other entrepreneurial strategies. Selling traditional or non-traditional agricultural products directly to consumers. Such as subscription farming, farmers market, and roadside stands.

**Alternatives Require:**

1. More intensive management required for many alternatives. Most alternatives require a larger time commitment because the producer is assuming more the the responsibility for produciton, processing and marketing. Are you willing tto invest a large amount of time to make the alterntive successful.
2. For any alternatives the producers needs management skills, physical resources and markets. There are very few alternatives with established markets. The producer must find or develop a marketing outlet.
3. Timeliness, quality, consistency are production traits but influence marketability of the product and therefore the price consumers are willing to pay the farmer.
4. Long-term business relationship promotes success. The producer needs to develop loyal customers by providing good products or services at a fair price.
5. Long-term commitment needed. Plan on a five year period or longer for your enterprise to make a profit. If you need a quick return on investment alternative agriculture may not be the best investment for your money.
6. Marketing and production aspects developed simultaneously. Since you will have to create your own market you will not want to start producing large quantities of product before you have lined up customers. It is much easier to expand your production to fill your orders than it is to sell a product you have over produced.

7. Diversity reduces risk. As the old saying goes don't put all of your eggs in one basket. One producer says that if you have lots of different enterprises one is bound to make a profit each year.

**Decisions:** There are two categories of decisions:

1. organizational evaluation of the total bundle of resources and allocation of them to different enterprises and phases of production in the most profitable way
2. operational-decisions on day-to-day tasks in operating the farm business

These decisions are influenced by two factors:

1. accuracy and appropriateness of data
2. procedures used in decision making

Decision making process

1. inventory resources (assets and liabilities)
2. establish goals
3. identify problems
4. analyze
5. decide
6. act
7. assume responsibility
8. control-attention to investments, costs, production efficiency
9. evaluate
10. adjust

**Planning:**

Long-range planning

1. budgets (manual or computer)
2. annual (one production cycle)
3. analysis of production and returns for one production period (a, b, and c are indicators of past performance)
   a. balance sheet
   b. P & L statement
   c. cash flow analysis

Annual planning (1,2, and 3 are indicators of potential performance)

1. projected cash flow
2. projected balance sheet
3. projected P & L statement

*Long-range planning procedures*

Long run profitability of the total farm business depends greatly upon choosing an overall plan most appropriate for the farm family and the resources available.

Systematic planning procedures

1) inventory resources
2) establish goals
3) identify and itemize major problems current and alternatives
4) summarize cropping system
5) summarize livestock system

6) summarize and evaluate income and profitability
7) evaluate economic feasibility of plan from standpoint of cash flow
8) compare results of alternative plans and choose one for long-run development
9) prepare new farm layout map-fields, lanes, water management, etc.
10) plan farmstead arrangement for efficient operation
11) start development of new plan (special attention to priorities for major changes and investments
12) adjust plans as needed from year to year

NOTE:
Steps 1-3 background
Steps 4-7 for each alternative analysis
Step 8 decision making continuous
Steps 9-10 act
Steps 11-12 evaluate and adjust

The Planning process requires that you look at the goals and objectives for the new enterprise.
Who wants to be involved?
What commodities/enterprises interested in
What are your goals - 1 year, 5 years
Why want new enterprise

While planning you should identify your opportunities
1. Inventory resources
2. Show limitations and opportunities
3. Look for under-utilized resources
4. Physical resources
   land-pH, fertility, soil type, map, photo, slope, water, water tests, machinery, buildings
5. Marketing resources
   a. may create market or use existing market
   b. processing facilities (meat/plants)
   c. wholesale (brokers, distributors, warehouses, etc.)
   d. direct markets (farmer's market, roadside stand, restaurants, supermarkets, etc.
   e. special events/attractions
6. Management and labor resources
   a. decision makers
   b. workers
   c. skills
   d. on farm (available) - labor pool (hired)
7. By-product resources
   include records/calls
8. Financial resources
   cash, savings, credit

Enterprise Ideas
check resources, talk to others, check for something in demand, visit markets-see what is selling (not just displayed) read-read-read, conferences/workshops, how do enterprises fit family resources?

**Things to consider before starting an alternative enterprise:**

Inputs to consider:

| **crops/plants** | **livestock/animals** |
|---|---|
| seed | animal |
| fertilizer | feed |
| lime | machinery |
| chemicals | veterinarian |
| machinery | utilities |
| repairs | interest/operating costs |
| misc.supplies | breeding charge |
| custom hire | labor |
| fuel, oil | repairs |
| labor hours | misc. supplies |
| storage | depreciation & interest |
| interest | oil and lube |
| depreciation & interest | taxes |
| taxes | land/buildings |
| land/interest & depreciation | |

Resources
Land-labor-capital-management

Guideline for determining feasibility
There are 3 answers to whether or not an alternative is feasible for your operation-**YES-NO-MAYBE**
or
It all depends on- - - (many different factors)
These may seem frivolous, sarcastic, silly on surface BUT they are serious and one of these answers always comes out.

You should look at your current situation
Are you satisfied with where are and where you are going? If satisfied-no need for alternative enterprise
-may want to check again in future
-may want to go through GOALS at least

What are your goals - 1 year, 5 years, 10 years
-How much do you want to earn? What lifestyle do you want? What are your interests?
-Put your goals in writing
-Be as specific as possible
-Consider personal, family, and farm goals

Look at your inventory resources
1. Tangible and intangible
2. Land-soil, buildings, machinery, water
3. Labor-yours, family, available hired labor
4. Capital-cash, savings, credit
5. Management-include all skills
6. Note strong points and weak points

Major problems to consider: What is your debt load? Do you need extra labor? Can it be hired? Are there prohibitive laws or regulations?

In-depth Analysis
-Current situation

-Alternatives being considered (current and projected)

| | |
|---|---|
| Enterprise budgets | Cash flow |
| Profit and loss | Balance sheet |

-May want to use weekly periods
-Identify all inputs and costs
-Look for conflicts in time utilization
-When are inputs required-especially labor

Profitability:
What if price is less than expected?
What if demand is less than expected?
When are the first returns expected?

**Business qualities checklist-personal qualities:**

1. Drive (self starter; perseverance; risk taker; work on own)
2. Clarity of thought (organized; seeks help if needed; can do two things at same time)
3. Imagination (creative; do things differently)
4. Leadership (work with people; like people; enjoy supervising)
5. Experience (proficient; managed a business before; keep records; know financial statements)

**Family needs and preferences:**

1. Satisfaction with current situation
2. Willingness to take risks
3. Hopes and concerns for future
4. Enterprise preference
5. Deal with conflict (differences of opinion)
6. Keep communications open
7. Involve all family members
8. Set limit on time devoted to business

**Production**

1. Sources of production information
2. Budgets
3. Trade organizations and producers
4. Publications

| | |
|---|---|
| climate requirements | soil requirements |
| water requirements | building/facility requirements |
| machinery requirements | management/labor requirements |
| other requirements | |

5. Production rate
6. Business size
7. Legal, regulatory, liability factors

8. Can the product or service be provided?
9. Is the quality and quantity adequate?
10. Total yield does not mean marketable yield.

Need both supply and demand
Producer takes most of the risk

**Profitability**

Value-cost=profile
Total receipts-total costs=net farm income

Income statement
Receipts - Expenses
Net farm income=return to operator's labor and management time, unpaid labor and equity capital
Sensitivity analysis-increase/decrease in yield, price, etc. change outcome

Underestimating demand had greater effect on profit than did **overestimating** demand being greater than expected

Price change can have a major effect
Labor-hired is more critical than price change, etc.
Vegetable prices highly volatile -- vary throughout state and can vary from grower to grower at same market
Constraints (limiting factors in priority) -- demand and land
Crop budgets not necessarily best indicator of profitability
Variable labor requirements
Long term endeavor-pay back start up costs
Labor major concern-availability and quality
Continuous supply need

**Financial Feasibility**

Cash Flow

| | |
|---|---|
| cash receipts | cash expenses |
| sale of assets | capital purchase |
| increase debt | decrease of debt |
| non farm income | family living |
| cash from personal account | |

Is financing available?
Loan proposal

| | |
|---|---|
| description of business | marketing plan |
| production system/schedule | income statement |
| cash flow analysis | net worth statement |
| resume | |

***Marketing Will It Sell***

Supply (opportunity to buy) = Demand (opportunity to sell)

1. Product or service-detail
2. Do market research -- primary-oneself and/or secondary-existing data
3. Describe target market -- demographics and lifestyles

4. Existing demand
5. Competition
6. Market trends
7. Expected price
8. Expected sales volume (marketable products)

Marketing - opportunity to sell (demand) vs. opportunity to buy (supply)
1. Is a market available or does one have to be created?
2. Market research needed -- some information available, do your own research-especially for many "alternative" ventures
3. Where are markets?
4. What are current prices?
5. Are prices volatile?
6. What are price trends?
7. Is there competition?
8. What does the customer want?

**"Marketable yield is key to profits"**
high yield, low quality - low returns
low yield, high quality - high returns

How will increased supply affect market prices?
Constraints on profits: increase input costs, rising wage rates, management, falling prices
Which regions have economic advantage for: location relative to market, weather/climate, soils
What labor rates ensure productivity?

**Management:**
**"Management is the key to successful vegetable production. There are many risks associated with vegetable production. The quality of vegetables influenced by many factors."** Weather (hail, wind, frost, freeze, drought, heat, water) fertilizer and weather interaction, soil, harvest handling, post harvest conditions, weeds, insects, disease.
1. Independent and interactive effect of factors influence outcome
2. Operator has some control over some factors and not others
3. Management starts with planning, goes through production, harvesting, marketing, end with analysis of performance-then start over

**An alternative enterprise can succeed or fail based on managerial decisions.**
-want information to be accurate and appropriate
-use good procedures in analysis
-information on many ventures limited or difficult to obtain-information may be abundant and easily obtained-How many others are attracted?
-can you be more efficient in production? marketing?

Good management is the key
-pulling together all the various aspects
-know when to "go for it" and when to " bailout" and when to "adjust"
-starts with planning-goes through production, marketing-then evaluation-start over (usually production cycle)

**An agricultural enterprise is feasible if all the pieces fit together-success YES**
Not feasible if some of the pieces are missing-failure NO May start out and overcome obstacles-success-maybe then YES May start out and have unexpected obstacle-failure YES then NO feasible-not feasible-maybe

**Decision Time**

1. Is alternative right for you? Whole farm-does the enterprises conflict or compliment the current situation.
2. Do you have doubts or reservations?
3. Act-make new plan including new enterprise -- assume responsibility, keep control (costs, efficiency, etc.), evaluate, adjust
4. You are in a NEW PRESENT SITUATION

*Investigating the economics of supplementing income on beef and grain farm in southeastern Oklahoma by adding vegetable enterprises:*

1. Determine enterprise mix to maximize profits with emphasis on cash flow and risks associated with alternative crops
2. Sensitivity of enterprise combinations to changes in product prices and labor charges
3. Representative farm-resources
4. Climate
5. Enterprise budgets-planning
6. Current inputs
7. Needed inputs for vegetables
8. Unused operator labor-indicates an alternative enterprise can be added
9. When cost of input increases, less of that input is used-could change which alternatives are selected-watch labor-farmers generally risk averse
10. Adding high value enterprise can substantially increase net income
11. More operating capital borrowed but less interest cost because of short cycle-opposite true if longer production cycle
12. Using low risk venture can reduce returns (may cause increase in interest costs and increased labor costs)
13. Decrease in prices reduces returns with same farm plan

The information presented above was compiled from the following sources:

**Missouri Farm Planning Handbook**, by Chuck DeCourley, University of Missouri-Columbia, College of Agriculture-Extension Division, Manual 75, Columbia, Missouri. Revised Sept. 1983.

Schuch, Nancy G., Wayne Knoblauch, Judy Green and Mary Saylor. **Farming Alternatives: A Guide to Evaluating the Feasibility of New Farm-Based Enterprises**. NRAES-32. Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Service, Ithaca, New York. October 1988.

Schatzer, Raymond J., Michael Wickwire and Daniel S. Tilley. **Supplemental Vegetable Enterprises for a Cow-Calf and Grain Farmer in Southeastern Oklahoma**. Agricultural Experiment Station Research Report P-874. Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. April 1986.

**Things to consider in a feasibility study**

I. Demand Analysis for product or products under consideration
   A. Identify market(s) for specific products (or services)
      1. Location of markets
      2. Size of markets
      3. Quality and Type of product demanded
   B. Substitute products

1. Size of market for substitutes
2. Price of substitutes
3. Is the substitute a new or older product?
   a. Natural product
   b. Synthetic product
4. Trend in market for substitute products/services

C. Competition--those firms producing similar products
1. Location of competitors
2. Size of competitors
3. Production costs of competitors
4. Old firms or new firms

D. Type of competition in market
1. Price competition
2. Non-price competition
3. Perfect competition, monopoly, can you enter market?

E. Trend in demand for product
1. Quantity of product marketing
2. Seasonality

F. Price trend for product
1. Level of price
2. Variation in price--seasonal and annual
3. Projected prices and trends

G. Services that accompany product

H. Complementary Products

I. Characteristics of buyers
1. Location
2. Type
3. Size and number
4. Time of purchases
5. Method of procurement
6. Type of suppliers
7. Level of service requirements

J. Type of marketing system
1. Brokers
2. Sales force
3. Contract sales
4. Own label
5. Private label
6. Independent distribution system

K. Conditions of market entry

L. Logistics system requirements
1. Storage for manufactured products
2. Transportation
3. Level of Service
4. Locational advantages and disadvantages

M. Product characteristics
1. Bulky
2. Perishable

N. Economics of scale in marketing program product(s)

II. Physical and Production Requirements for Products
   A. Site for facilities
   B. Water
   C. Sewage system
   D. Electricity, natural gas, other sources of energy
   E. Transportation--highway, rail, water, air
   F. Present facilities
      1. Plant
      2. Warehousing and storage

III. Raw Product
   A. Source
      1. Quantity
      2. Quality
      3. Seasonality
      4. Cost compared with sources of competitors
         a. Product
         b. Transportation
         c. Price trends and variability
      5. Dependability
      6. Alternative sources
      7. Locational advantages of raw material supply
      8. Procurement method of obtaining raw materials

IV. Local Business Climate
   A. Tax structure
      1. Property
      2. Income
      3. Other
   B. Zoning
   C. Investment incentives
   D. Leasing arrangements

V. Management Requirements
   A. The amount of local management available, and its cost
   B. The amount of management that must be imported, and its cost

VI. Labor
   A. Local (number, trained, untrained, cost)
   B. Imported (number, cost)
   C. Housing
   D. Labor Union
   E. General wage levels and incentives and fringes
   F. Special characteristics of labor pool

VII. Financial Requirements
   A. Capital Investment
      1. Buildings
      2. Machines

3. Payroll
4. Sales promotion
5. Inventory
6. Operating costs
7. Taxes and insurance

B. Sources of capital

C. Pro-forma statements
1. Operating schedules
2. Operating expenses
3. Operating statements
4. Balance sheets
5. Cash flows

D. Type of business organization

VIII. Feasibility

A. Project feasible
1. Profitable levels of production
2. Operation or project is competitive -- Short run and Long run
3. Degree of profitability
a. Return on investment
b. Net return as a percent of sales

B. Not feasible
1. Reasons
2. Degree of unprofitability
3. Things that could make the project feasible
a. Infrastructure
b. Investment incentives
c. Tax structure changes
d. Special innovations
e. Other

IX. Sensitivity Testing--Degree that profit is vulnerable to change

A. Labor costs
B. Raw product costs
C. Transportation costs and modes
D. Change in rate of production
E. Investment requirements
F. Special concessions
G. Other

X. Risk

A. High
B. Low

XI. Reports

XII. Final Note: Each study must be planned, NO TWO ARE ALIKE!

Prepared by: Forrest Stegelin, Extension Agribusiness Economist, University of Kentucky

# Rural Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development

January 1980 - January 1993

Quick Bibliography Series: QB 93-38
Updates QB 92-49

295 citations in English from AGRICOLA

Patricia La Caille John
Rural Information Center

Rural
Information
Center

National Agricultural Library Beltsville, Maryland 20705-2351 June 1993

# Rural Information Center

National Agricultural Library
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Beltsville, Maryland 20705

The **Rural Information Center** (RIC) is a joint project of the Extension Service and the National Agricultural Library (NAL). RIC provides information and referral services to local government officials, community organizations, health professionals and organizations, cooperatives, libraries, businesses, and rural citizens working to maintain the vitality of America's rural areas. The Center combines the technical, subject-matter expertise of Extension's nationwide educational network with the information specialists and resources of the world's foremost agricultural library.

The Office of Rural Health Policy in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the NAL jointly created a Rural Information Center Health Service (RICHS) as part of the RIC. RICHS collects and disseminates information on rural health issues, research findings related to rural health, and innovative approaches to the delivery of rural health care services.

SERVICES:

**Provide** customized information products to specific inquiries including assistance in economic revitalization issues; local government planning projects; rural health issues; funding sources; and other related issues for the purpose of monitoring the quality of rural life.

**Process** a broad array of general and funding information requests on such topics as:

- Successful strategies, models, and case studies of community development projects
- Small business attraction, retention, and expansion
- Tourism promotion and development
- Recycling programs
- Community water quality
- Technology transfer to rural areas
- Closures, restructuring and diversification of rural hospital and clinics
- Agricultural health and safety
- Health programs, services, personnel issues
- State initiatives concerning rural health delivery issues

**Refer** users to organizations or experts in the field who can provide additional information.

**Perform** brief database searches of requested topics on a complimentary basis.

**Furnish** bibliographies and Rural Information Center Publication Series titles.

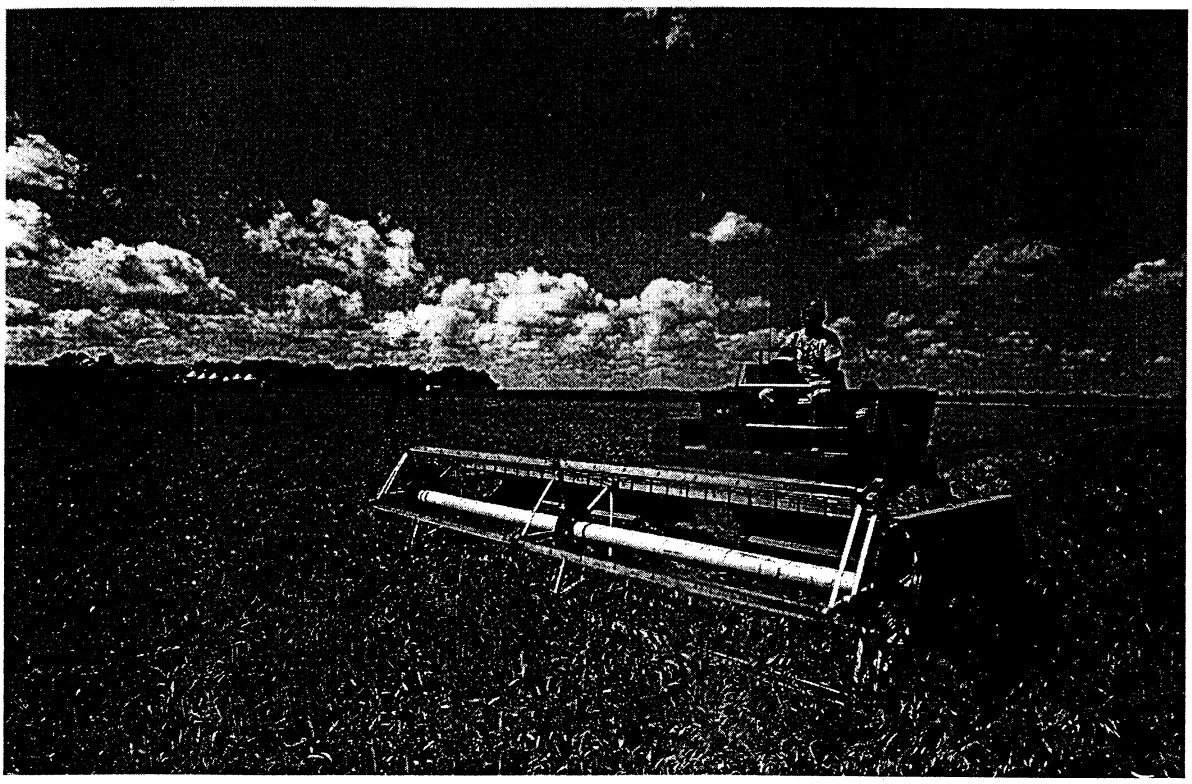
**Identify** current USDA and DHHS research and Cooperative Extension Systems programs.

ACCESS:

| | |
|---|---|
| ***Telephone** | **1-800-633-7701 (nationwide) or 1-301-504-5547** |
| ***Mail** | **Rural Information Center**<br>**National Agricultural Library, Room 304**<br>**Beltsville, MD 20705-2351** |

*Electronic Mail through INTERNET (RIC@NALUSDA.GOV)
*NAL Bulletin Board (RIC/RICHS Conference) 1-301-504-6510

# National Council of State Agricultural Finance Programs



## Biennial Directory
## State By State Agricultural Loan Programs

*September 2000*

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# National Council of State Agricultural Finance Programs

**What is it?**

The National Council of State Agricultural Finance Programs (NCOSAFP) was organized in November 1984 to represent states with agricultural finance programs. It is an informal organization, whose affairs are conducted by a Steering Committee selected from the NCOSAFP membership, that keeps its members informed on state programs being developed across the nation and on farm finance issues emerging in Washington, D.C.

The NCOSAFP also is involved in promoting and supporting rural economic development programs. Member states have developed and implemented individual programs to assist beginning and first-time farmers, existing family farm operations, and agribusiness firms.

**National Council Goals**

- To represent the interests of state agricultural finance programs in the development of legislation, regulation and consideration of other issues that affect the ability of such programs to meet the intended public purposes.
- To facilitate continuing communication and educational programs among the membership.
- To explore and evaluate new ideas in agricultural financing.
- To offer assistance to states that may be interested in developing state agricultural finance programs.

# Establishing State Agricultural Finance Programs

One of the NCOSAFP goals is to assist states that may be interested in developing state agricultural finance programs. For additional information or assistance, feel free to contact any of the following NCOSAFP Steering Committee members or the respective states listed in this booklet:

| ***STATE*** | ***CONTACT*** | ***TELEPHONE*** | ***E-MAIL ADDRESS*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| California | Herb Aarons | 831-424-1099 | Herb_Aarons@calcoastal.org |
| Illinois | David Wirth | 217-782-5792 | dwirth@mail.state.il.us |
| Iowa | Steve Ferguson | 515-281-6444 | sfergus@max.state.ia.us |
| Missouri | Tony Stafford | 573-751-2129 | tony-stafford@mail.mda.state.mo.us |
| North Carolina | Frank Bordeaux | 919-733-0635 | frank.bordeaux@ncmail.net |
| South Dakota | Thad Olsen | 605-773-5436 | thad.olsen@state.sd.us |
| Communicating For Agriculture (Technical Advisor) | Wayne Nelson | 800-432-3276 | waynen@gwtc.net |

# Overview of State Agricultural Finance Programs

## Aggie Bonds / Beginning Farmer Loan Program

The purpose of Aggie Bonds is to provide an effective means for federal-state-industry linkages whereby "government" can assist beginning and first-time farmers to purchase land, farm equipment, farm buildings and breeding livestock. The bonds offer limited tax incentives and allow credit decisions and financial risk to remain with local lending institutions.

Agricultural loan programs based on the use of tax-exempt bonds began in 1980 with the passage of legislation to create pilot Aggie Bond programs in Georgia, Alabama and Iowa. Activity peaked in the mid-eighties and abruptly leveled off in response to interest rate adjustments and other limiting factors contained in the 1986 tax bill. In the peak year of 1984, 24 states had tax-exempt bond agricultural loan programs or capabilities.

In 1988, commercial lenders renewed their interest in the use of Aggie Bonds as a way to support rural economic development efforts in their communities as well as support agriculture. The 1993 tax bill granted a permanent extension for the use of Aggie Bonds. This action greatly improved the availability of the program to eligible participants and allowed beginning and first-time farmers, lenders and state agencies to use the program more fully.

The Aggie Bond program was further expanded on August 20, 1996 to allow state loan programs to finance beginning farmer purchases of agricultural property from their grandparents, parents and/or siblings. The definition of first-time farmer also was revised, so someone may own as much as 30 percent of their county median farm size and still be eligible for a beginning farmer loan.

## Guarantee Loan Programs

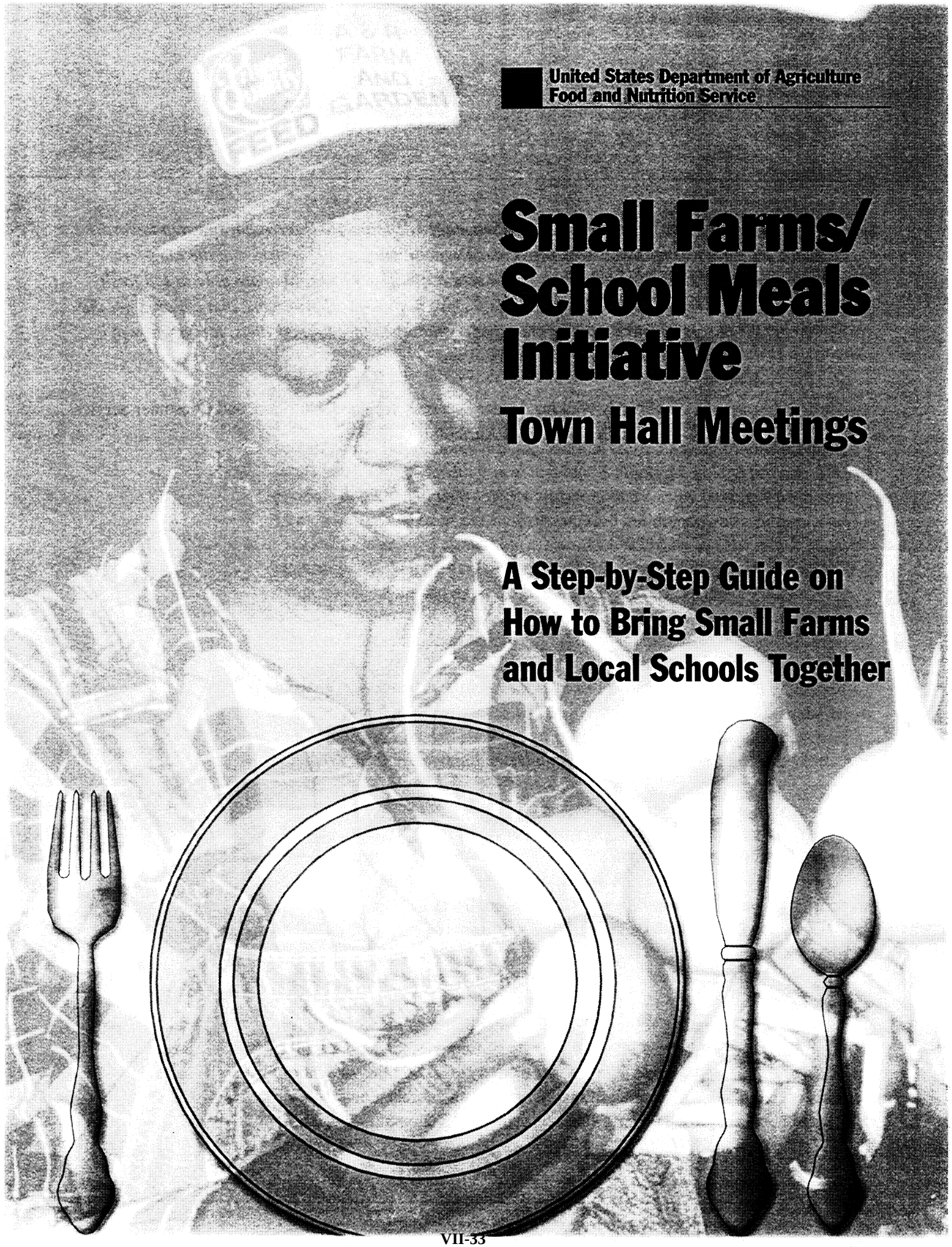
Several states have established state-backed guarantee loan programs to revitalize and promote the states' farmers and agricultural and industrial businesses. Loans are made by local lenders who receive up to 85 percent guarantee of principal and interest. Several states originate and service loans through a statewide agency using federal guarantees of 90 percent of principal and interest provided by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

## Direct Loan Programs

Many state legislatures have appropriated funds so that direct financial assistance, in the form of direct loans, can be provided by the state agricultural agencies or authorities. The purposes of these loans include ethanol production facilities, value-added agricultural products, livestock expansion, agricultural production, aquaculture development and others.

## Loan Participation Programs

These programs help low equity farmers and ranchers obtain agricultural loans when the state agency/authority purchases a portion of a loan from a local lender. The procedural guidelines are similar to the guarantee loan programs, but in these instances, the state disburses funds to buy a portion of the loan instead of guaranteeing loan payments.



United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

# Small Farms/ School Meals Initiative

## Town Hall Meetings

### A Step-by-Step Guide on How to Bring Small Farms and Local Schools Together

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Fact Sheet

August 1999

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

# Loans for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides direct and guaranteed loans to beginning farmers and ranchers who are unable to obtain financing from commercial credit sources. Each fiscal year, the Agency targets a portion of its direct and guaranteed farm ownership (FO) and operating loan (OL) funds to beginning farmers and ranchers.

A beginning farmer or rancher is an individual or entity who (1) has not operated a farm or ranch for more than 10 years; (2) meets the loan eligibility requirements of the program to which he/she is applying; (3) substantially participates in the operation; and, (4) for FO loan purposes, does not own a farm greater than 25 percent of the average size farm in the county. (Note: all applicants for direct FO loans must have operated a farm for at least 3 years.) If the applicant is a business entity, all members must be related by blood or marriage, and all stockholders in a corporation must be eligible beginning farmers.

### *Maximum Loan Amounts*

Maximum amounts of indebtedness are:

- Direct FO or OL: $200,000
- Guaranteed FO or OL: $700,000

### *Downpayment Farm Ownership Loan Program*

FSA has a special downpayment FO loan program to assist beginning farmers and ranchers to purchase a farm or ranch. This program also provides a means for retiring farmers to transfer their land to a future generation of farmers and ranchers.

To qualify:

- An applicant must make a cash downpayment of at least 10 percent of the purchase price.
- FSA may provide a maximum amount equal to 30 percent of the purchase price or appraised value, whichever is less. The term of the loan is 10 years at a fixed interest rate of 4 percent.
- The remaining balance may be obtained from a commercial lender or private party. FSA can provide up to a 95 percent guarantee if financing is obtained from a commercial lender. Participating lenders do not have to pay a guarantee fee.
- The purchase price or appraised value, whichever is lower, may not exceed $250,000.

### *Sale of Inventory Farmland*

FSA advertises acquired farm property within 15 days of acquisition. Eligible beginning farmers and ranchers are given first priority to purchase these properties at the appraised market value for the first 75 days after acquisition. If more than one eligible beginning farmer or rancher offers to purchase the property, the buyer is chosen randomly.

### *Joint Financing Plan*

Beginning farmer or rancher applicants may choose to participate in a joint financing plan that is also available to other applicants. In this program, FSA lends up to 50 percent of the amount financed, and another lender provides 50 percent or more. FSA will charge a reduced interest rate on the loan.

### *Where to Apply*

Applications for direct loan assistance may be made at the FSA county office serving the county where the operation is located. Local FSA offices are listed in the telephone directory under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency. For guaranteed loans, applicants must apply to a commercial lender who participates in the Guaranteed Loan Program. Local FSA offices have lists of participating lenders.

For more information about this or any other FSA program, contact your local county office, or visit us on the world wide web at: www.fsa.usda.gov

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.

*Fact Sheet*

*August 1999*

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

# Farm Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, makes and guarantees loans to family farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural production. These loans were formerly administered by the Farmers Home Administration.

FSA maintains its headquarters in Washington, D.C. Offices are located in each state, usually in a state capital or near a state land-grant university, as well as in most agriculturally productive counties. Farmers may apply for direct loans at FSA local offices or USDA Service Centers. Guaranteed loans are available from local commercial lenders who apply for loan guarantees from FSA. Although general information may be obtained from headquarters and state offices, all programs are administered through local offices.

### *FSA Farm Loans*

FSA's loan programs are designed to help family farmers who are temporarily unable to obtain private, commercial credit. In many cases, these are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for commercial credit. In other cases, they are farmers who have suffered financial setbacks from natural disasters, or who have limited resources with which to establish and maintain profitable farming operations.

Some farmers obtain their credit needs through the use of loan guarantees. Under a guaranteed loan, a local agricultural lender makes and services the loan, and FSA guarantees it against loss up to a maximum of 90 percent in most cases. In certain limited circumstances, a 95-percent guarantee is available. FSA has the responsibility of approving all loan guarantees and providing oversight of lenders' activities.

For those unable to qualify for a loan guarantee from a commercial lender, FSA also makes direct loans, which are serviced by an FSA official. FSA has the responsibility of providing credit counseling and supervision to its direct borrowers by making a thorough assessment of the farming operation. The agency evaluates the adequacy of the real estate and facilities, machinery and equipment, financial and production management, and the farmer's goals. The weaknesses in all phases of the operation are identified and prioritized. An FSA official then works one-on-one with the farmer to develop a plan of supervision that will help overcome those weaknesses and ultimately result in the farmer's graduation to commercial credit.

Unlike FSA's commodity loans, most farm loans must be fully secured and can only be approved for those who have repayment ability.

### *Farm Ownership Loans*

Eligible applicants may obtain direct loans up to a maximum indebtedness of $200,000. Maximum indebtedness for guaranteed loans is $700,000. The maximum repayment term is 40 years for both direct and guaranteed farm ownership loans. In general, loan funds may be used to purchase farm real estate, to enlarge an existing farm, to construct new farm buildings and/or improve structures, and to improve the environmental soundness of the farm.

### *Farm Ownership Downpayment Loans*

Eligible beginning farmer applicants may obtain a direct loan for up to 30 percent of the purchase price of a family-size farm, or the farm's appraised value, whichever is less. Applicants must provide at least a 10 percent downpayment on the purchase. The interest rate on the 30 percent portion is fixed at 4 percent, and it must be repaid in 10 years or less. The remaining balance may be guaranteed by FSA if financed by an eligible lender. The purchase price or appraised value of the farm, whichever is lower, may not exceed $250,000.

### *Farm Operating Loans*

Eligible applicants may obtain direct loans for up to a maximum indebtedness of $200,000, and guaranteed loans for up to a maximum indebtedness of $700,000. The repayment term may vary, but

typically it will not exceed 7 years for intermediate-term purposes. Annual operating loans are generally repaid within 12 months or when the commodities produced are sold. General purposes of this type of loan include normal operating expenses, machinery and equipment, real estate repairs, and refinancing debt.

### *Emergency Loss Loans*

These loans are available only as direct loans from FSA. Emergency loans assist farmers who have suffered physical or production losses in areas declared by the President or designated by the Secretary of Agriculture or the FSA Administrator. For production loss loans, applicants must demonstrate a 30-percent loss in a single farming or ranching enterprise and may receive loans up to a maximum of 80 percent of total production losses. Loan purposes include both operating and real estate, and repayment terms depend on the loan purpose and type of collateral securing the loan. The maximum indebtedness under the emergency loan program is $500,000.

### *Rural Youth Loans*

These are available as direct loans only and have a maximum loan amount of $5,000. Rural youth loans may be made to individuals who are sponsored by a project advisor, such as a 4-H club, FFA, or local vocational instructor. Individuals must be at least 10 but not more than 20 years old to be eligible.

### *Targeted Funds to Beginning Farmers*

Each year the Congress targets a percentage of farm ownership and farm operating loan funds to beginning farmers. Beginning farmers must have been in the business less than 10 years and meet certain other requirements.

### *Loan Servicing and Supervised Credit*

The Farm Service Agency's mission is not limited to providing just credit — it is to provide supervised credit. This means that FSA works with each borrower to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in farm production and management, then works with the borrower on alternatives and other options to address the weaknesses and achieve success. Effective supervised credit is the difference between success and failure for many farm families.

To help keep borrowers on the farm, FSA may be able to provide certain loan servicing benefits to borrowers whose accounts are distressed or delinquent due to circumstances beyond their control. These benefits include:

- Reamortization, restructuring, and/or deferral of loans;
- Rescheduling at the Limited Resource (lower interest) rate;
- Acceptance of conservation easements on environmentally sensitive land in exchange for reduction of debt;
- Writing down the debt to its current market value (delinquent borrowers only).

If none of these options results in a feasible farming operation, borrowers may be offered the opportunity to purchase their debt at its current market value. If this is not possible, other options include the following:

- Debt settlement based on inability to repay;
- In some cases, where a successful operation cannot be developed, FSA works with the borrower to help him or her retain the homestead and up to 10 acres of land.

Farms that come into FSA ownership are sold at market value, with a preference to beginning farmers and ranchers.

The eventual goal of FSA's farm credit programs is to graduate its borrowers to commercial credit. Once a farmer is able to obtain credit from the commercial lending sector, the Agency's mission of providing temporary, supervised credit is complete.

Additional information may be obtained at local Farm Service Agency offices.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

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# Agritourism Workshop

University of Illinois Web Based Class
Bruce Wicks, 217-333-6160
Email: b-wicks@uiuc.edu
www.leisurestudies.uiuc.edu/agritourism

The content of this workshop is being developed and assembled at this time. Presently there are seven modules that are in various stages of completion and with additional resources others may be added in the future. A likely addition would be a module on e-commerce but many others have been suggested as possibilities and the availability of resources will determine their inclusion.

Module 1: Introduction to Agritourism/Value Added Production
Module 2: Great Marketing Ideas
Module 3: Why People Travel and The Tourism System in Illinois
Module 4: Testing Your Idea - The Business Plan
Module 5: Looking Inward - Is This Kind of Business For you?
Module 6: Will the Farm System Support the Enterprise?
Module 7: The Important Issues of Risk and Liability

## Module 1: Introduction to Agritourism/Value Added Production

This introductory module explores the basic concepts that underlie the workshop, establishes out perspective or philosophy and outlines the general direction of all the other modules. (Bruce Wicks)

## Module 2: Great Marketing Ideas

There is nothing like seeing what has worked for others and this module will show and discuss a variety creative approaches to alternative ag enterprise development. (Bruce Wicks)

## Module 3: Why People Travel and The Tourism System in Illinois

There are a number of similarities between agriculture and tourism industries, but it is unlikely many members of the farming sector would be knowledgeable about tourism nor be comfortable operating within it. Participants will gain a basic understand of the travel market and the familiarize themselves with the agencies in Illinois supporting tourism development and the services and grants they can provide. (Bruce Wicks and agency staff)

Module 4: Testing Your Idea - The Business Plan

Business plans are at the heart of any new successful enterprise and the key to securing financing. This section will take through the process in a step-by-step fashion so you can make an informed business decision. (Norma Turok)

Module 5: Looking Inward - Is This Kind of Business For you?

Inviting people to your farm, making sales calls, and conducting direct marketing activities may not be the kind of things you are well suited to do. In this module you will be asked to take an honest look at the human resources needed for such a new enterprise and examine what makes a good experience for the customer.

Module 6: Will the Farm System Support the Enterprise?

A great business idea and matching personal skills are two essential elements for launching a new farm enterprise but there is a third element. The farm system must support the enterprise and issues such as location, layout, amenities and visual appeal all must be taken into consideration.

Module 7: The Important Issues of Risk and Liability

Selling on-farm experiences or food grade crops and produce to customers opens many new exposure for liability. Protecting the farm resources from catastrophic losses are of utmost concern and this module will address ways to limit such exposure and protect yourself.

*Welcome to*

# Small Farms @ USDA

Creating Opportunities • Preserving Choices



## In the Spotlight


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4. Advisory Committee
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13. Upcoming Events
14. E-mail Us


USDA Progress Reports & Small Farms Database

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moac@umsystem.edu • http://www.ext.missouri.edu/agebb/mac

# Ideas for Alternative Agricultural Enterprises

## Missouri Alternatives Center

Revised November 1996

Sponsored by University of Missouri Outreach and Extension, Lincoln University, MU Extension Division
MU College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, Missouri Department of Conservation

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# ALTERNATIVES FOR THE NEW FAMILY FARM

## Aquaculture

There are approximately 350,000 farm ponds in Missouri, or about 250,000 acres of water. This existing resource has the potential to support a substantial food-fish industry. Cage culture of catfish is one popular aquacultural enterprise, because aquaculture uses existing water bodies, reduces capitalization costs and makes otherwise unsuitable ponds usable for fish production. Other aquaculture opportunities include fee fishing; cage culture of trout, catfish and other species; fingerling production; carp; bass, bluegill; minnows and other bait fish; raceway culture, crawfish; tilapia; mosquitofish; aquaponics; and paddlefish.

## Beekeeping

With a little marketing, beekeeping can be a profitable part of a diversified small farm. Honey, beeswax and other products can be direct marketed through farmers markets, roadside stands, door-to-door, through the local paper, to local health food and stores, and by other methods.

## Direct Marketing

Most specialty and alternative crops and livestock have few, if any, established markets. There aren't any catfish sale barns. So the producer must rely on either selling to local retailers, selling through cooperatives, or direct marketing. Some types of direct marketing include pick-your-own, farmers markets, roadside stands, mail order and subscription marketing.

## Dogs

Breeding dogs for sale as pets, especially unusual ones like the Chinese Shar-Pei, is a possible rural enterprise. Other possibilities include breeding and training stock dogs or livestock guardian dogs, or operating a boarding kennel.

## Exotic Livestock

Increasing demand for exotic animals has led many small-size agripreneurs to find it profitable to raise exotic livestock. Some popular animals include llamas and alpacas, ostriches and other flightless birds, pygmy goats, elk, fallow deer, axis deer, water buffalo, bison, potbellied pigs, mouflon and aouded sheep, miniature animals, watusi, and exotic birds.

## Fee Hunting

Charging money to let people hunt on your land is the simplest form of fee hunting. At the other extreme, you may breed either game birds or big game and provide hunting dogs and guides to hunters.

## Field Crops

Field crops don't have to mean corn, wheat or soybeans. Some more familiar alternatives are sunflowers, barley, buckwheat, and oats. Examples include: *Amaranth*, a little-known crop native to the Americas, is grown either as a grain crop or as a leafy vegetable. As a grain, it can be found in some multi-grain crackers, cereals and other items produced by small companies. In the garden, it can provide fresh greens in the heat of the summer. Amaranth grows vigorously, resists drought, heat and pests, and adapts readily to new environments. *Crambe*, a mustard-like crop, is a potential replacement for imported high-erucic rapeseed oil used in manufacturing polyethylene, waxes and nylons. Its low cost of production is attractive to growers in the East, the Corn Belt and the Southern Delta; however, unproven commercial yields and a low world market price for rapeseed are limitations. *Canola*, low erucic acid rapeseed, is used for vegetable oil. It has traditionally been the domain of Canadian growers. However, low cost of production and increasing demand from processors has made it more attractive to US growers.

## Floriculture

Flowers and ornamental plants make a good combination with a market gardening program. Fresh flowers can be sold to local florists; dried flowers are in demand by craftspeople. Edible flowers and wild flowers are also possibilities.

## Forages

There are many alternative opportunities in grazing livestock, such as controlled grazing and other intensive rotational grazing methods for cattle and sheep; using warm-season native grasses; honey locust pods, acorns and other tree crops to feed livestock; grazing lambs on cowpeas; using Angora goats to control brush in pastures; and others.

## Forestry

Many small farmers virtually ignore their woodlot. However, with proper management and marketing, an existing woodlot can be a source of revenue from veneer-quality wood, firewood, etc. Christmas trees are also a forestry product with potential for Missouri.

## Fur

Mink, fox and chinchilla are possible alternatives for those interested producing furs.

## Game Birds

Pheasants, Chukar and Quail can be raised in Missouri to supply gourmet meat, eggs, exotic breeding stock, or to supply hunting preserves.

## Ginseng and Goldenseal

Digging and selling ginseng and goldenseal roots has been a traditional source of income for many Ozarkians. Some Missourians are discovering profits in cultivating ginseng under forest canopy. Ginseng is prized in China as an herbal medicine.

## Goats

Commercial dairy goat milk producers encounter serious marketing problems, as goat milk cannot be sold for human consumption except through a Grade A Dairy. However, dairy goats can be a welcome addition for milk, cheese and meat for home use.

Some people sell young goats for their meat, (chevon), which, because it is very lean, may have an increasing market in today's health-conscious environment. The tender meat of young goats -cabritos in Spanish -- is beginning to get recognition from gourmet restaurants. This requires some marketing.

Angora goats raised for mohair production have been making profits for farmers in Texas, Michigan, Oklahoma, Missouri and other states. Mohair prices range from S 1.75 to $7.25 a pound, depending on quality. USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) also helps by matching the price with a substantial subsidy under the Wool Act.

A topic of recent interest is the beginnings of a cashmere industry in the United States. Cashmere is produced from the downy undercoat of certain types of goats. Currently most cashmere is produced in Asia, the Middle East and Australia.

## Herbs

Growing fresh herbs to sell to local restaurants and grocery stores, to wholesalers or through direct marketing, is a horticultural alternative. Fresh herbs are in increasing demand.

## Home-Based Business

Arts and crafts, candy and other food production, custom sewing, bed and breakfasts, and many other enterprises can be run from your home or farm. Adding value to what you produce, such as selling flavored popped corn from popcorn you grow, is an excellent way to build profits.

## Horses

Draft horses are finding their way back onto many small farms as an economical and enjoyable alternative to tractors for field work, feeding , forestry work, hauling hay, etc. Horse breeding, whether draft horses or saddle breeds, is also a viable farm enterprise.

## Hydroponics

Many Missourians are interested in the hydroponic production (without soil) of fruits, vegetables, flowers, house plants and herbs. Hydroponics allows you to exert greater control over your plants, ensure more uniform results, and grow more plants in a limited space.

## Sustainable Agriculture

The term "organic" used to conjure up visions of hippie love beads and health food stores. However, as more consumers are demanding fresh, chemical-free foods, and as more farmers are rebelling against the ever-increasing costs of chemicals, organic, low-input, or sustainable agriculture is gaining ground. Many grocery stores now have organic produce sections. "Natural" branded beef is appearing. People flock to farmers markets for farm-fresh produce and come back for better-tasting organic fruits and vegetables.

## Minor Breeds

Until fairly recently in the history of agriculture, the rural landscape was rich in a diversity of livestock breeds. Many were all-purpose animals that fulfilled a variety of needs for small family farms. However, as agriculture has become more industrialized and production-oriented, it has encouraged the development of highly specialized animals. Today there is increasing interest in the minor breeds ignored by agribusiness. Most minor breeds are hardy, and some carry unique traits that would be forever lost if the breed died out. Minor breeds also can play an important role in crossbreeding programs. The Texas longhorn cattle, for example, which once came close to extinction, is now popular in crossbreeding programs for leaner beef.

Beef Cattle: Beef Devon, Belted Galloway, Red Poll, White Park, Scottish Highland.
Dairy Cattle: Dutch Belted, Milking Devon, Canedienne, Dexter, Guernsey, Milking Shorthorn.
Donkeys and Mules: Poitu, Spotted, Miniature; all donkeys and mules.
Draft Horses: Canadienne, Cleveland Bay, Shire, Suffolk Punch, Clydesdale.
Goats: Nigerian Dwarf, Spanish, San Clemente, Tennessee Fainting.
Horses and Ponies: Exmoor, Lipizzan, Bashkir Curly, Hackney.
Poultry: Ancona, Black Jersey Giant, White Jersey Giant, Black Minorca, Brown Leghorn, Delaware, White Wyandotte, Khaki Campbell Ducks, Pilgrim Geese
Sheep: Barbados, Border Leicester, Cotswold, Karakul, Lincoln, Navajo-Churro, Tunis, Vermont Merino, Delaine Merino, Shetland, Mouflon, American Jacob, Oxford, Shropshire, Southdown, Wiltshire Horn, Dorset Horned.
Swine: Mulefoot, Gloucester Old Spot, Tamworth, Red Wattle.

## Mushrooms

Shiitake mushrooms, or Japanese forest mushrooms, have received much attention recently as an agricultural alternative. They grow on hardwood logs and sell for $7 to $8 a pound fresh, $4 to $5 a pound dried. A major export in Japan, shiitake production is a relatively new and small industry in the United States. Like

many specialty crops, there are no established markets. However, consumer demand is growing. White button mushrooms and oyster mushrooms may also hold promise as agricultural alternatives.

### Nuts

Black walnuts, pecans and hicans (a cross between hickory and pecans) are all grown in Missouri. Butternuts and Japanese walnuts or heartnuts may also have possibilities.

### Poultry

At one time, almost every farmer had some chickens, guinea hens, ducks or turkeys. Today, commercial egg and chicken operations have taken over the market. However, there are opportunities in supplying small homestead poultry flocks, locally-marketed country fresh eggs, exotic and fancy breeds, gourmet meat (squab, goose, capon), organic free-range chickens, etc. These, like most alternative enterprises, will require marketing skills.

### Rabbits

The meat rabbit industry has faced problems with a lack of markets. Rabbit meat is high in protein and low in fat, so you can find a market niche with good marketing skills. Other opportunities in rabbits include Angora rabbits for Angora fiber, Rex rabbits for fur, and Dwarf rabbits for pets.

### Sheep

Sheep can be profitable with good management and creative marketing of meat and wool. The relatively low investment required is an advantage for the small farmer. Some potential specialty markets include colored wool, which commands premium prices, and dairy sheep for milk, cheese and yogurt for gourmet markets. Direct marketing methods such as subscription marketing can be used for sheep products. Hair sheep, which have hair like a goat instead of wool, are an alternative for those who are only interested in meat production.

### Small Fruits

Strawberries, grapes, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, gooseberries, etc., provide good opportunities for direct marketing (pick-your-own, farmers' markets, roadside stands, subscription marketing, etc.). They can also be sold to local grocery stores or through cooperatives. Grapes can be grown to supply wineries. Hardy kiwi is a new fruit that may have possibilities.

### Tree Fruits

Apples and peaches are two tree fruit crops common in Missouri. Dwarf fruit orchards are an interesting alternative.

### Vegetables

There are many opportunities in vegetable production: traditional crops like tomatoes and carrots, newly popular colored bell peppers, Chinese vegetables, baby vegetables, heirloom varieties and so forth. Direct marketing and organic production are both applicable to vegetable production.

### Worms

Worms can be produced by themselves or under rabbit hutches for sale to fishermen and gardeners.

# How to Evaluate An Alternative Enterprise

I. What start-up capital is required?
   A. How soon can I get a return?
      1. Radishes-21 days
      2. Snap beans--50 to 60 days
      3. Blueberries--2 to 3 years

II. What are the labor requirements?
   A. Hand labor
   B. Harvest with machinery
   C. Pick-Your-Own

III. How will you market the product and where?
   A. Wholesale
   B. Retail
   C Farmers' Market
   D. Pick-Your-Own
   E. Contract
   F. Roadside Stand
   G. Route Sales
   H. Home Processing

IV. Is there a market already established, or will you have to create a market?
   A. Is there a farmers' market in your area?
   B. Will local chain stores buy from local producers, or do they have their own warehouses
   C. Are speciality crops being contracted in you area, such as popcorn?

V. What kind of industry support is available?
   A. Sources of plants, seeds, breeding stock?
   B. Sources of specialized equipment?
   C Is there research or management support for your alternative crop?
      1. Production budgets on vegetables, fruits, fish farming, snails, buffalo, etc.
      2. Are there experts available for consulting in your area?
      3. Can you get help from Extension or University personnel?

VI. Are there permits and regulations for your product?
   A. Shipping in and out of state-nursery
   B. Permits to operate--hunting preserve

VII. What are the social and economic impact to your neighborhood?
   A. Pick-Your-Own operation--parking up and down narrow country road?
   B. Fee Fishing-may bring lots of strangers to the area, how do neighbors feel about this?
   C. Processing plants--smell, pollution, waste disposal.

## Alternative Enterprise Plan

1. Date-start-up time

2. Goal--how many acres, how much income, etc.

3. Soil test-might determine crops to be grown; for instance, blueberries like acid soil.

4. Market potential-get population figures for areas within a 10-mile, a 25 mile, and a 50-mile radius of your farm. How many potential customers are in these areas?

5. Competition--How many other producers are there within those 10-mile, 25 mile and 50-mile radius of your farm?

6. What crop mix is the most profitable?
   a. all annuals, like vegetables?
   b. annuals and some perennials, like blueberries?
   c. season extenders like greenhouses
      1. foliage plants
      2. bedding plants
   d. seasonal crops, like pumpkins and Indian corn

7. Machinery Requirements
   a. roto tiller
   b. tractor
   c. special planters or harvesting equipment

8. How will you water the crop?
   a. flood irrigation
   b. soaker hose
   c. drip irrigation
   d. sprinklers

9. Water Sources
   a. well
   b. spring
   c. pond
   d. rural water district
   e. cost

10. Production methods
    a. conventional
    b. organic
    c. raised bed
    d. rows
    e. staked
    f. trellised

11. Cash flow budget-determine cash needs during different periods of the year.

12. Make a budget for each enterprise--gross income minus all expenses equals net income

13. Experience--how much do you have?
    a. are you willing to learn?
    b. do you like dealing with the public?
    c. can you be a salesman?

14. Liability Insurance
    a. Pick-Your-Own
    b. Roadside Stand
    c. other

15. Will you sell by volume or weight?

16. Advertising
    a. Cost
    b. Media used
        1. newspapers
        2. magazines
        3. radio
        4. television
        5. direct mail

17. Pricing
    a. cost plus percent profit you need
    b. What will the market stand? If you're the only guy around with blueberries, you have a monopoly.
    c. 10 percent to 20 percent below retail store prices

18. Records
    a. production records
    b. tax records-sales tax, etc.
    c. corporation records

19. Strive for monthly income

20. Labor
    a. family
    b. hired

# *Sustainable Agriculture...Continuing to Grow*

## A Proceedings of the "Farming and Ranching for Profit, Stewardship & Community" Conference

## March 7-9, 2000

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The Western Region includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming and the Island Protectorates of American Samoa, Guam, Micronesia and the Northern Mariana Islands.

For information about Western SARE grant programs, educational resources or funded project results, contact the headquarters office at (435) 797-2257 or wsare@mendel.usu.edu.

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# Organic Production: Recent Publications and Current Information Sources

*Special Reference Briefs Series* no. SRB 96-07

*Compiled By:*
Mary V. Gold
Alternative Farming Systems Information Center

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# ORGANIC PRODUCTION: RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND CURRENT INFORMATION SOURCES

Compiled by Mary V. Gold, Assistant Coordinator
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Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education

Part of USDA's efforts to help small-scale farmers and ranchers.

# Farming for Profit, Stewardship & Community

## TIP #1: IMPROVE SOIL QUALITY

**Build soil fertility, tilth and biological activity — using cover crops, minimum tillage, compost and other organic amendments — to yield profits and long-term value in the land.**

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This handbook by Grace Gershuny and Joseph Smillie offers the serious home or market gardener practical concepts that facilitate sound soil management decisions based on ecological principles.

**How to order**: $16.95 to Chelsea Green Publishing Co., 205 Gates-Briggs Bldg., PO Box 428, White River Junction, VT 05001; 800-639 4099; http://www.chelseagreen.com

*The tools listed here can help you apply this tip to improve your farm or ranch. See the "How to order" section under each reference to obtain your free or low-cost copy. This partial list was compiled by USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program in March 1999. Other resources not listed may also be suitable. See the "Education" link at http://www.sare.org for a complete set of tip sheets.*

## SUSTAINABLE SOIL MANAGEMENT

This ATTRA publication contains information on soil composition; soil health assessment; organic matter and humus management; soil testing for chemical properties and plant nutrients; use of fertilizer; and tillage.

**How to order**: Free from ATTRA, 800-346-9140; http://www.attra.org

## USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE/SOIL QUALITY INSTITUTE AGRONOMY TECHNICAL NOTES SERIES

Includes information on cover crops, crop rotation effects on soil quality and effects of residue managment & no-till on soil quality, and legumes and soil quality.

**How to order**: Free from NRCS Soil Quality Institute, 2150 Pammel Drive, Ames, IA 50011; (515) 294-4592. http://www.statlab.iastate.edu/survey/SQI/agronomy.shtml

## CREATIVE COVER CROPPING IN PERENNIAL/ANNUAL FARMING SYSTEMS

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**How to order**: $15 each to Univ. of California, DANR Communication Services, 6701 San Pablo Ave., Oakland, CA 94608-1239; 1-800-994-8849; 510-643-547 (fax)

## FARM-SCALE COMPOSTING

This booklet from ATTRA offers information on the basics of composting—process, materials, methods and equipment—to help recycle nutrients back to the soil.

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## NO-TILL VEGETABLES: A SUSTAINABLE WAY TO INCREASE PROFITS, SAVE SOIL AND REDUCE PESTICIDES

This video by 15-year no-till veteran Steve Groff covers the basics of sustainable no-till vegetable production, detailing methods to control weeds and improve soil using cover crops or plant residue on his 175-acre Cedar Meadow Farm.

**How to order**: $21.95 + $3 s/h to Cedar Meadow Farm, 679 Hilldale Rd., Holtwood, PA 17532; (717) 284-5152

Administered by USDA-CSREES, SARE has funded more than 1,400 projects looking at ways to farm more sustainably. To learn more about project findings by category, search SARE's national database on the web at www.sare.org/san/htdocs/research/ or contact Kim Kroll at (301) 405-5717. To obtain print versions of SARE research by region, contact a SARE regional office and request a copy of their most recent annual report or project list.
North Central SARE, (402) 472-0266; ncrsare@unl.edu
Northeast SARE, (802) 656-0471; nesare@zoo.uvm.edu
Southern SARE, (770) 412-4787; kberry@gaes.griffin.peachnet.edu
Western SARE, (435) 797-2257; wsare@mendel.usu.edu

### RELEVANT WEB SITES

**USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program/ Sustainable Agriculture Network.**
*Features on-line books and a database of more than 1,400 research projects funded by USDA-SARE.*
**http://www.sare.org**

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)
*Bulletins, production guides and technical notes are among the information products offered by this national sustainable agriculture information service.*
**http://www.attra.org**

UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SAREP).
*Educational resources on various soil quality topics.*
**http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu/soil**

Alternative Farming Systems Information Ctr's Alternative Soil, Crop, and Pasture Management
*Bibliographies on composting, manure management, earthworms, green manures/ cover crops and soil testing.*
**http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/sbjscpm.htm**

Sustainable Farming Connection
*Offers a forum for farmers to find and share information, including a diverse collection of resources and links on improving soil health.*
**http://metalab.unc.edu/farming-connection/soilhlth/home.htm**


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Part of USDA's efforts to help small-scale farmers and ranchers.

# Farming for Profit, Stewardship & Community

## TIP #3: PREVENT PEST PROBLEMS

**Farms & ranches designed to minimize pest pressures — through variety selection, rotations, cover crops and farmscaping — are less dependent on costly inputs.**

### BUILDING SOILS FOR BETTER CROPS, 2ND EDITION

This practical guide to building and maintaining soil organic matter from the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) was written for farmers, extension specialists and others interested in integrated, alternative approaches to controlling pests and enhancing soil quality.

**How to order**: $19.95 + $3.95 s/h to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, Box 10, Hills Bldg., Univ. of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082. http://www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs

### FARMSCAPING

This technical guide offers information on designing a cropping system that increases plant diversity, disrupts pest life cycles and confuses insect pests,. Describes use of hedgerows, insectary plants, cover crops and water reservoirs to attract and support populations of beneficial organisms such as insects, bats and birds of prey.

**How to order**: Free from ATTRA, 800-346-9140; http://www.attra.org

### INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

Meant to provide a basic understanding of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for individuals interested in agriculture at all levels, this publication includes the steps that need to be taken prior to IPM implementation, the tools used and some ideas about future trends for IPM.

**How to order**: Free from ATTRA, 800-346-9140; http://www.attra.org

### SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES FOR VEGETABLE PRODUCTION IN THE SOUTH

This 174-page book has been called the bible for southern vegetable producers looking for alternative growing methods. Features information on integrated pest management, cover crops, soil management, conservation tillage and specific tips to raise common southern crops.

**How to order**: $28.95 + $4.50 s/h to Focus, c/o PBS, Box 390, Jaffrey, NH, 03452, 800-848-7236. http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/sustainable/peet/

*The tools listed here can help you apply this tip to improve your farm or ranch. See the "How to order" section under each reference to obtain your free or low-cost copy. This partial list was compiled by USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program in March 1999. Other resources not listed may also be suitable. See the "Education" link at http://www.sare.org for a complete set of tip sheets.*

## THE REAL DIRT

Provides information on organic and sustainable farming in the Northeast, based on interviews with more than 60 farmers in eight states. Summarizes practical methods for ecological soil, pest, disease, crop, greenhouse and livestock management.

**How to order**: $13.95 + $3.95 s/h to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, Box 10, Hills Bldg., Univ. of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082

## MANAGING COVER CROPS PROFITABLY

This 212-page book from the Sustainable Agriculture Network explores how and why cover crops work and provides all the information needed to build cover crops into any farming operation. This is the most comprehensive book ever published on the use of cover crops to sustain cropping systems, break up pest cycles and build soil.

**How to order**: $19 + $3.95 s/h to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, Box 10, Hills Bldg., Univ. of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082; http://www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs/

## BENEFICIAL INSECTS IN FIELD CROPS: INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

This eye-catching fact sheet features photos and descriptions of beneficial insects in crop fields.

**How to order**: $1.50 + $3.50 s/h from Midwest Plan Service, 122 Davidson Hall, ISU, Ames IA 50011-3080. (515) 294-4337. Specify ISU Extension pub IPM-34. http://www.exnet.iastate.edu/Pages/pubs/

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North Central SARE, (402) 472-0266; ncrsare@unl.edu
Northeast SARE, (802) 656-0471; nesare@zoo.uvm.edu
Southern SARE, (770) 412-4787; kberry@gaes.griffin.peachnet.edu
Western SARE, (435) 797-2257; wsare@mendel.usu.edu

### RELEVANT WEB SITES

USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program
*Features on-line books and a database of more than 1,400 research projects funded by USDA-SARE..*
http://www.sare.org

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)'s pest management series
http://www.attra.org/attra-pub/pest.html

Alternative Farming Systems Information Center's Alternative Disease, Pest, and Weed Control
*Includes bibliographies on crops with pest resistance, biological pest controls and legumes in crop rotations.*
http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/sbjdpwc.htm


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# Farming for Profit, Stewardship & Community

## TIP #4: EXPLORE ORGANIC PRODUCTION

**Protect natural resources and take advantage of a growing organic market that offers price premiums for those willing to try a new system.**

### ORGANIC CERTIFICATION

This ATTRA publication includes information on organic farming and certification, who should apply, legal requirements, choosing a program and references.

**How to order**: Free from ATTRA, 800-346-9140; http://www.attra.org

### RESOURCES FOR ORGANIC MARKETING: A MARKETING & BUSINESS GUIDE

Organic growers often find that the hardest part of successful farming is securing buyers for their products. This ATTRA technical note provides some starting points.

**How to order**: Free from ATTRA, 800-346-9140; http://www.attra.org

### SUCCESSFUL SMALL-SCALE FARMING: AN ORGANIC APPROACH

This 144-page book by Karl Schwenke offers information on soil, crop rotations, small-scale equipment and improving yields. With the information here and a little current market research, you can write a complete farm business plan.

**How to order**: $14.95 + $3 s/h to Storey Communications; 800-441-5700

### THE NATIONAL ORGANIC DIRECTORY

This "yellow pages" of the organic industry by the Community Alliance with Family Farmers lists more than 1,000 farmers, wholesalers, farm suppliers, support businesses, and certification/resource groups, and provides details about state and federal laws.

**How to order**: $47.95 + $3 s/h to CAFF, 1-800-852-3832, http://www.caff.org/caff/publications/nod_1997

### ORGANIC FARMING RESEARCH FOUNDATION INFORMATION BULLETIN

This quarterly bulletin by the Organic Farming Research Foundation fosters improvement and widespread adoption of organic farming practices. Features results of OFRF-funded research and education projects.

**How to order**: Free from OFRF, PO Box 440, Santa Cruz, CA, 95061; (408) 426-6606; http://www.ofrf.org

*The tools listed here can help you apply this tip to improve your farm or ranch. See the "How to order" section under each reference to obtain your free or low-cost copy. This partial list was compiled by USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program in March 1999. Other resources not listed may also be suitable. See the "Education" link at http://www.sare.org for a complete set of tip sheets.*

## THE ORGANIC PAGES: 1998 N. AMERICAN RESOURCE DIRECTORY

This annual directory covers the entire organic industry, listing growers, manufacturers, brokers, importers/exporters and their contact information. Includes sections on suppliers, consultants, certifiers and web sites.

**How to order**: $44.95 + $6 s/h to Organic Trade Association, P.O. Box 1078, Greenfield, MA 01302; (413) 774-751; (413) 774-6432; http://www.ota.com

## THE REAL DIRT

Provides information on organic and sustainable farming in the Northeast, based on interviews with more than 60 farmers in eight states. Summarizes practical methods for ecological soil, pest, disease, crop, greenhouse and livestock management.

**How to order**: $13.95 + $3.95 s/h to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, Box 10, Hills Bldg., Univ. of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082

## FARM SUPPLY CATALOGS

The following examples of commonly used suppliers should not imply that USDA endorses specific commercial products. Catalogs, however, can be a great source of information about organic production practices. We suggest you check with local companies first when buying supplies.

**Peaceful Valley Farm Supply.** 200 seed varieties, 60 fertilizers, soil test options, kelps and foliar feeds, soil, compost and seed inoculants, pest controls, row covers and season extenders, propagating supplies and more. P.O. Box 2209, 125 Springhill Blvd., Grass Valley, CA 95945; (530) 272-4769

**Harmony Farm Supply.** This organic farm supplier specializes in drip- and sprinkler-irrigation design and sales, organic fertilizers, ecological pest controls, books, horticultural supplies and wildflower and cover crop seeds. 3244 Highway 116 North, PO Box 460, Groton, CA 95444; (707) 823-9125.

**Fedco.** This catalog divides information into: seeds, moose tubers and organic growers supply, trees and bulbs, and sends out three catalogs annually. Each is packed with information about varieties and planting methods, with indexes to lead you to the information you seek. Fedco Seeds, P.O. Box 520, Waterville, ME 04903-0520; (207) 873-7333.

Administered by USDA-CSREES, SARE has funded more than 1,400 projects looking at ways to farm more sustainably. To learn more about project findings by category, search SARE's national database on the web at www.sare.org/san/htdocs/research/ or contact Kim Kroll at (301) 405-5717. To obtain print versions of SARE research by region, contact a SARE regional office and request a copy of their most recent annual report or project list.
**North Central SARE, (402) 472-0266; ncrsare@unl.edu**
**Northeast SARE, (802) 656-0471; nesare@zoo.uvm.edu**
**Southern SARE, (770) 412-4787; kberry@gaes.griffin.peachnet.edu**
**Western SARE, (435) 797-2257; wsare@mendel.usu.edu**

### RELEVANT WEB SITES

Organic Farming Research Foundation
*Showcases research related to organic farming practices, disseminates research results to organic growers and farmers interested in adopting organic production systems.*
**http://www.ofrf.org**

USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program
*Features on-line books and a database of more than 1,400 research projects funded by USDA-SARE.*
**http://www.sare.org**

Alternative Farming Systems Information Center
*Includes directories, guides and electronic sources on certification, soil and crop management, pest management, economics and marketing, and associations and organizations.*
**http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/sbjorgfd.htm**

Organic Farmers Marketing Association
*Includes informational bulletins, a calendar of events, information on certification and public policy updates.*
**http://web.iquest.net/ofma/**

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)
*Bulletins, production guides and technical notes are among the information products offered by this national sustainable agriculture information service.*
**http://www.attra.org**


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# Farming for Profit, Stewardship & Community

## TIP #5: CUT LIVESTOCK COSTS

**Switch to management-intensive grazing and other cost-reduction strategies — along with innovative marketing — to restore profits in beef, dairy, poultry and hogs.**

### THE SMALL DAIRY RESOURCE BOOK : INFORMATION SOURCES FOR FARMSTEAD PRODUCERS AND PROCESSORS

This annotated bibliography of books, periodicals, videos and other resources on farmstead dairy processing offers a wealth of information for family farmers interested in adding value to dairy products.

**How to order**: $8 + $3.95 s/h from the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN), Box 10, Hills Bldg., Univ of VT, Burlington, VT 05405-0082; http://www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs/

### PROFITABLE DAIRY OPTIONS

This free, eight-page publication presents practical information about grazing, marketing strategies and nutrient management, highlighting techniques successful graziers use in intensively managed rotational grazing systems.

**How to order**: Free from the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN), Box 10, Hills Bldg., Univ of VT, Burlington, VT 05405-0082; http://www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs/

### GREENER PASTURES ON YOUR SIDE OF THE FENCE: BETTER FARMING WITH VOISIN GRAZING MANAGEMENT

This 385-page book explains how to use management-intensive grazing for most kinds of livestock. Author Bill Murphy covers producing milk, beef, and lamb on pasture alone, nutrient cycling, grounding energizers, recovery periods and economics.

**How to order**: $30 + $2.50 s/h to Arriba Publishing, 212 Middle Road, Colchester, VT 05446

### SALAD BAR BEEF

This 368-page how-to guide by Joel Salatin leaves nothing to your imagination, from choosing breeds, building fences and setting up a rotation to marketing. Explains how a cattle-poultry rotation breaks up parasite cycles and helps produce superior beef.

**How to order**: $30 from ACRES U.S.A. 1-800-355-5313

### STRATEGIES OF RESOURCEFUL DAIRY FARMERS

This collection of farmer interviews and research results explores grass-based dairying, manure management, low-cost facilities, fly control alternatives and renewable energy.

**How to order**: $10 to Ctr for Rural Affairs, PO Box 406, Walthill, NE 68067; (402) 846-5428

*The tools listed here can help you apply this tip to improve your farm or ranch. See the "How to order" section under each reference to learn how to obtain your free or low-cost copy. This partial list was compiled by USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program in March 1999. Other resources not listed may also be suitable. See the "Education" link at http://www.sare.org for a complete set of tip sheets.*

## PASTURE PROFITS WITH STOCKER CATTLE

This 224-page book by Allan Nation features information about animal health; cash flow versus inventory valuation; running cows and stockers together; how to determine the correct stocking rate; and finishing cattle on pasture.

**How to order**: $24.95 + $4.70 s/h to Green Park Press, 800-748-9808

## PASTURED POULTRY PROFITS

This how-to, hands-on 330-page manual by pasturing expert Joel Salatin tells you how to raise poultry on pasture, from constructing a pen to relationship marketing.

**How to order**: $30 from ACRES U.S.A.; 1-800-355-5313

## FREE-RANGE POULTRY PRODUCTION & MARKETING

This folksy, 120-page three-ring binder offers a guide to raising, processing and marketing chicken, turkey and eggs by producer Herman Beck-Chenoweth. Includes field production, range considerations, processing facilities and slaughter procedures.

**How to order**: $39.50 + $4.50 s/h from Back Forty Books, 26328 Locust Grove Road, Creola, OH 45622; (740) 596-4379

## HOOPED STRUCTURES FOR GROW-FINISH SWINE & SWINE SYSTEM OPTIONS FOR IOWA

Learn more about outdoor alternatives for raising swine, including details on hog feeding, animal health, housing, bedding and marketing.

**How to order**: $4 + $3.50 s/h from Midwest Plan Service, 122 Davidson Hall, ISU, Ames IA 50011-3080.;(515) 294-4337. Specify ISU Extension pub AED-41

## ATTRA LIVESTOCK SERIES

These ATTRA publications offer information about a variety of low-cost alternative livestock systems: Sustainable Chicken Production, Sustainable Beef Production, Grass-Based & Seasonal Dairying, Sustainable Pasture Management, Hooped Shelters for Finishing Hogs, Sustainable Sheep Production, and Meeting the Nutritional Needs of Ruminants on Pasture.

**How to order**: Free from ATTRA, 800-346-9140; http://www.attra.org

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Northeast SARE, (802) 656-0471; nesare@zoo.uvm.edu
Southern SARE, (770) 412-4787; kberry@gaes.griffin.peachnet.edu
Western SARE, (435) 797-2257; wsare@mendel.usu.edu

### RELEVANT WEB SITES

American Farmland Trust Grass Farming web site
*A comprehensive information site on grass-based farming systems, including grazing tools & grazing economics.*
**http://www.grassfarmer.com/**

USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program
*Features on-line books and a database of more than 1,400 research projects funded by USDA-SARE.*
**http://www.sare.org**

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA).
*Bulletins, production guides and technical notes are among the information products offered by this national sustainable agriculture information service.*
**http://www.attra.org**

Animal Welfare Information Center
*Includes bibliographies of housing, husbandry and welfare for all farm animals.*
**http://www.nal.usda.gov/awic/farmanimals/farm.htm**

Sustainable Farming Connection
*Offers a forum for farmers to find and share information, including a diverse collection of resources and links pertaining to livestock, grazing and pastured poultry.*
**http://metalab.unc.edu/farming-connection/livestoc/home.htm**


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# Farming for Profit, Stewardship & Community

## TIP #6: MANAGE WEEDS WISELY

**Reduce reliance on herbicides by perfecting use of implements, crop rotations and cover crops**

### STEEL IN THE FIELD: A FARMER'S GUIDE TO WEED MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Weed control demands time, labor and expense for every farmer. This 128-page book shows how today's implements and techniques can control weeds while reducing or eliminating herbicides.

**How to order**: $18 + $3.95 s/h to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, Box 10, Hills Bldg., Univ. of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082

### PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE WEED MANAGEMENT

This free publication includes information on how to control weeds without excessive use of agri-chemicals.

**How to order**: Free from ATTRA, 800-346-9140; http://www.attra.org

### VEGETABLE FARMERS AND THEIR WEED CONTROL MACHINES

A 75-minute video demonstrating the diversity of tools — from sweeps and rotary hoes to flame weeders and homemade tools — available to vegetable farmers. Features nine farmers from three New England states.

**How to order**: $12 to the University of Vermont Center for Sustainable Agriculture, 590 Main St., Burlington, VT 05405-0059.

### SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES FOR VEGETABLE PRODUCTION IN THE SOUTH

This 174-page book has been called the bible for southern vegetable producers looking for alternative growing methods. Features information on weed control, cover crops, soil management, conservation tillage and tips to raise common southern crops.

**How to order**: $28.95 + $4.50 s/h to Focus, c/o PBS, Box 390, Jaffrey, NH, 03452, 800-848-7236; http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/sustainable/peet/

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## MANAGING COVER CROPS PROFITABLY

This 212-page book from the Sustainable Agriculture Network explores how and why cover crops work and provides all the information needed to build cover crops into any farming operation. This is the most comprehensive book ever published on the use of cover crops to sustain cropping systems, manage weeds and build soil.

**How to order**: $19 + $3.95 s/h to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, Box 10, Hills Bldg., Univ. of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082

## BUILDING SOILS FOR BETTER CROPS, 2ND EDITION

This practical guide to building and maintaining soil organic matter from the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) was written for farmers, extension specialists and others interested in integrated, alternative approaches to controlling pests and enhancing soil quality.

**How to order**: $19.95 + $3.95 s/h to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, Box 10, Hills Bldg., Univ. of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082. http://www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs

## CROP-WEED INTERACTIONS: INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

This eight-page Extension bulletin from Iowa State University explores ways to manage weeds from a whole-farm perspective.

**How to order**: Fifty cents + $3.50 s/h from Midwest Plan Service, 122 Davidson Hall, ISU, Ames IA 50011-3080. (515) 294-4337. Specify ISU Extension pub IPM-35

## NO-TILL VEGETABLES: A SUSTAINABLE WAY TO INCREASE PROFITS, SAVE SOIL AND REDUCE PESTICIDES

This video by 15-year no-till veteran Steve Groff covers the basics of sustainable no-till vegetable production, detailing methods — such as selecting the proper cover crop mix or plant residue — to control weeds and maintain production on his 175-acre Cedar Meadow Farm.

**How to order**: $21.95 + $3 s/h to Cedar Meadow Farm, 679 Hilldale Rd., Holtwood, PA 17532; (717) 284-5152

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Sustainable Practices for Vegetable Production in the South.
*View this informative book on the web.*
http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/sustainable/peet/index.html

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)'s pest mgmt series
http://www.attra.org/attra-pub/pest.html

Iowa State University Extension Publications
http:/www.exnet.iastate.edu/Pages/pubs/

Alternative Farming Systems Information Center
*Includes bibliographies on crops with pest resistance, biolgocial pest controls and legumes in crop rotations.*
http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/sbjdpwc.htm

Cedar Meadow Farm's New Generation Cropping System
*Details ways to incorporate cover crops to control weeds.*
http://www.cedarmeadowfarm.com

Sustainable Farming Connection
*Includes a diverse collection of weed control links and resources.*
http://metalab.unc.edu/farming-connection


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# Farming for Profit, Stewardship & Community

## TIP #7: PLAN FOR PROFIT

**Set goals and monitor changes — on the land, in the balance sheet and in your family & community — to achieve success on *your* terms.**

### MONITORING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE WITH CONVENTIONAL FINANCIAL DATA

This report from the Land Stewardship Project can help farmers and ranchers evaluate their sustainability using farm records and tax reports. Transfer your data to worksheets and draw your own conclusions.

**How to order**: $7 to Land Stewardship Project, 2200 4th St., White Bear Lake, MN 55110, (612) 653-0618

### THE MONITORING TOOLBOX

This 115-page practical guide for farmers interested in monitoring the impact of management decisions on their land, finances and family describes how to monitor quality of life and farm sustainability with financial data, wildlife, soils and streams.

**How to order**: $35 + $7 s/h to Land Stewardship Project, P.O. Box 130, Lewiston, MN 55952, (507) 523-3366. (includes Close to the Ground video and newsletter)

### HOW TO ESTABLISH GOALS: A GROUP PROJECT FOR FARMERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Setting goals is the place to start planning for the future of your farm. This 14-page instructional booklet makes establishing goals easy. Includes a tear-out self-assessment worksheet and a reference list.

**How to order**: $3 to The Minnesota Project, 1885 University Avenue West, Suite 315, St. Paul, MN 55104; (651) 645-6159; http://www.misa.umn.edu/~mnproj/wfp

### SUCCESSFUL WHOLE FARM PLANNING

Whole farm planning as a tool to make decisions about environmental, economic and production concerns continues to gain momentum. This guide from The Minnesota Project includes information about what should be part of the planning process, contents of a whole farm plan and how to measure whole-farm planning successes .

**How to order**: Available on The Minnesota Project web site, http://www.misa.umn.edu/~mnproj/wfp or call (651) 645-6159 for a free copy.

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## HOLISTIC MANAGEMENT: A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR DECISION-MAKING

This 567-page book by Allan Savory introduces people to the concept of holistic management, from a summation of the decision-making process, to setting holistic goals, to testing decisions toward those goals, to monitoring.

**How to Order**: $30 +$3 s/h to Center for Holistic Management, 1010 Tijeras NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102; (505) 842-5252; http://www.holisticmanagement.org/ (Excerpts available in a 24-page special "Intro" issue for $7.)

## FARMING ALTERNATIVES: A GUIDE TO EVALUATING THE FEASIBILITY OF NEW FARM-BASED ENTERPRISES

This award-winning workbook from Cornell University's Farming Alternatives Program will help you plan and evaluate a new enterprise. Includes chapters on setting goals, assessing markets and determining production and financial feasibility.

**How to Order**: $8 +$3 s/h to "Cornell University," Farming Alternatives Program, 17 Warren Hall, Cornell U., Ithaca, NY 14853; (607) 255-9832; http://www.cals.cornell.edu/dept/ruralsoc/fap/fap.html

## MAKING THE TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABLE FARMING

A key element of success in more sustainable farming is your ability to monitor both progress toward the goal and the overall health of the system. This farmer-oriented report from ATTRA's Fundamentals of Sustainable Agriculture Series will help.

**How to order**: Free from ATTRA, 800-346-9140; http://www.attra.org/attra-pub/trans.html

## WHOLE-FARM PLANNING FACT SHEET SERIES

Evolving from a SARE-funded project helping farm families develop whole-farm plans to balance production and quality of life goals with sustained resource use, this series of fact sheets outlines various whole-farm planning tools and concepts and gives ideas for applying the concepts to farm businesses.

**How to order**: Free from the Sustainable Agriculture Team, OSU Extension, Courthouse-119 Public Square, Carrollton, OH 44615-1498; (330) 627-4310

## FARMING SYSTEMS CRITERIA: TEN PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY

This two-page brochure offers a way to conduct a holistic evaluation of your farming system.

**How to order**: Free from The Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture, P.O. Box 588, Poteau, OK 74953; (918) 647-9123

Administered by USDA-CSREES, SARE has funded more than 1,400 projects looking at ways to farm more sustainably. To learn more about project findings by category, search SARE's national database on the web at www.sare.org/san/htdocs/research/ or contact Kim Kroll at (301) 405-5717. To obtain print versions of SARE research by region, contact a SARE regional office and request a copy of their most recent annual report or project list.
North Central SARE, (402) 472-0266; ncrsare@unl.edu
Northeast SARE, (802) 656-0471; nesare@zoo.uvm.edu
Southern SARE, (770) 412-4787; kberry@gaes.griffin.peachnet.edu
Western SARE, (435) 797-2257; wsare@mendel.usu.edu

## RELEVANT WEB SITES

The Minnesota Project
*Working with rural people learning new ways to experience and celebrate community with each other and with the earth.*
http://www.misa.umn.edu/mnproj.html

The Vermont Dairy Profitability Project: An Analysis of Viable Grass-Based Options for Vermont Farmers
*Examines several grass-based management scenarios that could be used by a dairy farm to improve profitability with little or no additional investment.*
http://farm.fic.niu.edu/cae/caepubs/dairy/vt.dairy.html

The Center for Holistic Management
*The Center serves as the "hub" of information, gleaning and synthesizing real-life lessons learned world wide in the practice of Holistic Management. Publishes newsletter, books and financial planning software.*
http://www.holisticmanagement.org/

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA).
*Bulletins, production guides and technical notes are among the information products offered by this national sustainable agriculture information service.*
http://www.attra.org


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# Farming for Profit, Stewardship & Community

## TIP #8: NETWORK

**Learning from other producers or tapping the experts pays off with new strategies to improve farming practices, enhance quality of life and strengthen the bottom line.**

### SOURCE BOOK OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

This comprehensive resource lists free and low-cost books, newsletters, conference proceedings, bulletins, videos, reports and web sites about sustainable agriculture—and how to order them. Includes lists of university centers studying sustainable agriculture and relevant web sites.

**How to order**: $12 +$3.95 s/h to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, Box 10, Hills Bldg., Univ. of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082. http://www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs

### SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE DIRECTORY OF EXPERTISE

The third edition of this popular list of experts is somewhat dated, but still contains valuable information connecting readers with groups and individuals who are changing the way America farms. Soon to be updated on the web at http://www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs/

**How to order:** $12 + $3.95 s/h to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, Box 10, Hills Building, Univ. of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082.

### EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, 11TH EDITION

The institutions, organizations and farms listed in this directory were selected based on their involvement in organic, alternative or sustainable agriculture and a willingness to provide education and training or share information. Includes university courses, intern opportunities, sustainable agriculture centers and farmer organizations.

**How to order**: Free from Alternative Farming Systems Information Center, (AFSIC), National Agricultural Library, Rm 304, 10301 Baltimore Ave., Beltsville, MD 20705-2351; (301) 504-6559; www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/AFSIC_pubs/edtr11.htm

*The tools listed here can help you apply this tip to improve your farm or ranch. See the "How to order" section under each reference to obtain your free or low-cost copy. This partial list was compiled by USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program in March 1999. Other resources not listed may also be suitable. See the "Education" link at http://www.sare.org for a complete set of tip sheets.*

## SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Includes comprehensive list of farmer groups and organizations working in sustainable agriculture. Features key resources and publications available from each group.

**How to order**: Free from ATTRA, P.O. Box 3657, Fayetteville, AR 72702; 800-346-9140; www.attra.org/attra-rl/susagorg.html

## SANET-MG INTERNET MAILING LIST

This on-line discussion group moderated by the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) includes farmers, researchers, activists, policymakers and others who share news, events listings, production tips and electronic publications.

Address to subscribe/unsubscribe: majordomo@ces.ncsu.edu
Message body to subscribe: subscribe SANET-MG Your Name
Message body to unsubscribe: unsubscribe SANET-MG
E-mail to group: SANET-MG@ces.ncsu.edu

## NEW CROPS INTERNET MAILING LIST

This on-line discussion group centers on alternative crop production.

Address to subscribe/unsubscribe: listserv@vm.cc.purdue.edu
Message body to subscribe: subscribe NEWCROPS your name
Message body to unsubscribe: unsubscribe NEWCROPS
E-mail to group: newcrops@vm.cc.purdue.edu

## GRAZING INTERNET MAILING LIST

This on-line discussion group is for people interested in management-intensive rotational grazing, seasonal dairying and closely related topics. http://grazel.taranaki.ac.nz/grazel/join.html

Address to subscribe/unsubscribe: majordomo@taranaki.ac.nz
Message body to subscribe: subscribe GRAZE-L
Message body to unsubscribe: unsubscribe GRAZE-L
E-mail to group: graze-l@taranaki.ac.nz

Administered by USDA-CSREES, SARE has funded more than 1,400 projects looking at ways to farm more sustainably. To learn more about project findings by category, search SARE's national database on the web at www.sare.org/san/htdocs/research/ or contact Kim Kroll at (301) 405-5717. To obtain print versions of SARE research by region, contact a SARE regional office and request a copy of their most recent annual report or project list.
North Central SARE, (402) 472-0266; ncrsare@unl.edu
Northeast SARE, (802) 656-0471; nesare@zoo.uvm.edu
Southern SARE, (770) 412-4787; kberry@gaes.griffin.peachnet.edu
Western SARE, (435) 797-2257; wsare@mendel.usu.edu

### RELEVANT WEB SITES

USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program/ Sustainable Agriculture Network
*Features on-line books and a database of more than 1,400 research projects funded by USDA-SARE*
**http://www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs**

Alternative Farming Systems Information Center
*Includes bibliography on sustainable agriculture institutions, organizations and farm training opportunities.*
**http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/AFSIC_pubs/edtr11.htm**

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)
*Resource list of sustainable agriculture organizations and publications*
**http://www.attra.org/attra-rl/susagorg.html**

Sustainable Farming Connection
*Includes a list of contacts to help you find information "just down the road." Listings by state.*
**http://metalab.unc.edu/farming-connection/localcon/home.htm**


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# Farming for Profit, Stewardship & Community

## TIP #9: DIVERSIFY CROPS

**Improve profit & protect natural resources by adding new crops and retaining natural features on the landscape**

### DIVERSIFY CROPS TO BOOST PROFITS AND STEWARDSHIP

As farmers and ranchers contend with low commodity prices, it's an apt time to consider diversifying. This 12-page, color publication encompasses alternative cash crops, cover crops and agroforestry — and how producers have used these strategies to increase profits. Featured producers also explain how they've improved their stewardship of natural resources by introducing rotations to help fix nitrogen, reduce pest pressures and slow erosion. A detailed list of expert sources round out the publication.

**How to order:** Free from the Sustainable Agriculture Network, c/o AFSIC, 10301 Baltimore Ave., Beltsville, MD 20705-2351; (301) 504-6422. http://www.sare.org/san/diversify/

### MANAGING COVER CROPS PROFITABLY

This 212-page book explores how and why cover crops work and provides all the information needed to build cover crops into any farming operation. This is the most comprehensive book ever published on the use of cover crops to sustain cropping systems and build soil.

**How to order:** $19 + $3.95 s/h to Sustainable Agriculture Publications, Box 10, Hills Bldg., Room 12, Univ. of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405-0082. http://www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs/

### ALTERNATIVE FIELD CROPS

Considerations before diversifying, marketing alternative crops and source of additional information from ATTRA.

**How to order:** Free from ATTRA, 1-800-346-9140. http://www.attra.org

### NEW CROP COMPENDIUM CD ROM

This CD contains full text proceedings of three national new crops conferences.

**How to order:** $75 to the Center for New Crops and Plant Products, Purdue University, 1165 Horticulture Building, West Lafayette, IN 47907-1165; (765) 494-1325

*The tools listed here can help you apply this tip to improve your farm or ranch. See the "How to order" section under each reference to learn how to obtain your free or low-cost copy. This partial list was compiled by USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program in March 1999. Other resources not listed may also be suitable. See the "Education" link at http://www.sare.org for a complete set of tip sheets.*

## ALTERNATIVE FIELD CROPS MANUAL

This detailed guide provides information on production methods and management strategies for more than 50 alternative crops in an easy-to-reference three-ring binder.

**How to order**: $45 to the Center for Alternative Plant and Animal Products, University of Minnesota, 352 Alderman Hall, St. Paul, MN 55108; (612) 624-4217

## THE FLOWER FARMER: AN ORGANIC GROWER'S GUIDE TO RAISING AND SELLING CUT FLOWERS

This 207-page book by Lynn Byczynski presents information on growing, harvesting and marketing both fresh and dried flowers. Includes detailed description of 95 recommended varieties and an appendix with sources for seeds and supplies.

**How to order**: $25.95 to Chelsea Green, Publishing, 205 Gates-Briggs Bldg., PO Box 428, White River Junction, VT 05001; 800 639-4099; http://www.chelseagreen.com

Administered by USDA-CSREES, SARE has funded more than 1,400 projects looking at ways to farm more sustainably. To learn more about project findings by category, search SARE's national database on the web at www.sare.org/san/htdocs/research/ or contact Kim Kroll at (301) 405-5717. To obtain print versions of SARE research by region, contact a SARE regional office and request a copy of their most recent annual report or project list.
North Central SARE, (402) 472-0266; ncrsare@unl.edu
Northeast SARE, (802) 656-0471; nesare@zoo.uvm.edu
Southern SARE, (770) 412-4787; kberry@gaes.griffin.peachnet.edu
Western SARE, (435) 797-2257; wsare@mendel.usu.edu

### RELEVANT WEB SITES

Center for New Crops and Plant Products, Purdue University
http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/
*To subscribe to the Purdue New Crops Listserve, visit* http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/ListServ/listserv.html

Center for Alternative Plant and Animal Products
http://capap.coafes.umn.edu

Missouri Alternatives Center
http://agebb.missouri.edu/mac/

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program
*Features on-line books and a database of more than 1,400 research projects funded by USDA-SARE..*
http://www.sare.org

Alternative Farming Systems Information Center
*Comprehensive bibliographies on alternative farming systems.*
http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA).
*Bulletins, production guides and technical notes are among the information products offered by this national sustainable agriculture information service.*
http://www.attra.org


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# Farming for Profit, Stewardship & Community

Part of USDA's efforts to help small-scale farmers and ranchers.

## TIP #10: USE TREES

**Integrate agroforestry practices to increase profits and protect your land.**

### AGROFORESTRY FOR FARMS AND RANCHES: AN INTRODUCTION TO USING TREE AND SHRUB PRACTICES IN SUSTAINED AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS

Agroforestry is the intentional growing of trees and shrubs in combination with crops or forage. Properly designed agroforestry systems protect crops and forage, increase their production, protect soil and water resources, conserve energy, improve ecosystem "richness," create additional wildlife habitat and increase landscape diversity. They also provide additional farm or ranch products, such as: timber, pulpwood, firewood, posts, fruit, nuts and fodder. This technical note from the National Agroforestry Center provides an introduction to using tree and shrub practices in sustained agricultural systems.

**How to order**: Free from the National Agroforestry Center, East Campus-UNL, Lincoln, NE 68583-0822; http://www.unl.edu/nac/pubs.htm

### AGROFORESTRY TECHNICAL NOTE SERIES

Five main practices make up agroforestry. Several technical notes describing their application are available from the National Agroforestry Center, including:

- Alley Cropping: Growing annual crops between rows of trees;
- Riparian Forest Buffers: Protecting waters for nutrients, pesticides and sediments;
- Forest Farming: Producing specialty products like ginseng or shiitake mushrooms;
- Windbreaks: Providing conservation plus protecting crops, livestock and communities;
- Silvopasture Systems: Integrating timber production with livestock grazing; and
- Special Applications: Growing hybrid poplars; better managing wastewater and wildlife

**How to order**: Free from the National Agroforestry Center, East Campus-UNL, Lincoln, NE 68583-0822; http://www.unl.edu/nac/pubs.htm

*The tools listed here can help you apply this tip to improve your farm or ranch. See the "How to order" section under each reference to obtain your free or low-cost copy. This partial list was compiled by USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program in March 1999. Other resources not listed may also be suitable. See the "Education" link at http://www.sare.org for a complete set of tip sheets.*

## AGROFORESTRY WORKING TREES SERIES

Trees can perform many jobs for communities, farms and ranches. They can increase farm or ranch income as well as promote conservation of land, water and wildlife. Brochures illustrating a variety of uses for trees in those settings include: Working Trees for Agriculture, Working Trees for Communities, Working Trees for Wildlife, and Working Trees for Livestock.

**How to order**: Free from the National Agroforestry Center, East Campus-UNL, Lincoln, NE 68583-0822; http://www.unl.edu/nac/pubs.htm

## ATTRA'S NUT CROP SERIES

Learn how to raise black walnuts and pecans using these free resources from ATTRA.

**How to order**: Free from ATTRA, 1-800-346-9140; http://www.attra.org

## SHELTER AND SHADE: CREATING A HEALTHY AND PROFITABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUR LIVESTOCK AND TREES

This 160-page book by John and Bunny Mortimer details how to use trees and landscape features as shelter belts, fodder and beneficial habitats for livestock.

**How to order**: $20 + $4.70 s/h to Stockman Grass Farmer, PO Box 2300, Ridgeland, MS 39158, (800) 748-9808

## DIVERSIFY CROPS TO BOOST PROFITS AND STEWARDSHIP

As farmers and ranchers contend with low commodity prices, it's an apt time to consider diversifying. This 12-page, color publication encompasses alternative cash crops, cover crops and agroforestry — and how producers have used these strategies to increase profits. Featured producers also explain how they've improved their stewardship of natural resources by introducing rotations to help fix nitrogen, reduce pest pressures and slow erosion. A detailed list of expert sources round out the publication.

**How to order**: Free from the Sustainable Agriculture Network, c/o AFSIC, 10301 Baltimore Ave., Beltsville, MD 20705-2351; (301) 504-6422. http://www.sare.org/san/diversify/

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North Central SARE, (402) 472-0266; ncrsare@unl.edu
Northeast SARE, (802) 656-0471; nesare@zoo.uvm.edu
Southern SARE, (770) 412-4787; kberry@gaes.griffin.peachnet.edu
Western SARE, (435) 797-2257; wsare@mendel.usu.edu

### RELEVANT WEB SITES

National Agroforestry Center
*Develops and applies agroforestry technologies, publishes "Inside Agroforestry" newsletter and informational fact sheets.*
http://www.unl.edu/nac/

Natural Resources Conservation Service
*Technical notes and briefs on a variety of agroforestry topics.*
http:/www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/BCS/forest/tnote1.html

USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program/ Sustainable Agriculture Network
*Features on-line books and a database of more than 1,400 research projects funded by USDA-SARE.*
htttp://www.sare.org

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA).
*National sustainable agriculture information service.*
http://www.attra.org

Alternative Farming Systems Information Center's Agroforestry Bibliographies
*Includes information on alternative tree crops.*
http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/sbjagrof.htm

Sustainable Farming Connection
*Offers a diverse collection of resources and links on agroforestry.*
http://metalab.unc.edu/farming-connection/agrofore/home.htm


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# Farmer's Guide to Processing and Selling Meat or Poultry

*What are the rules?*

*Where are the contacts?*

*Who are the regulators?*

*Food safety standards for beef, pork, sheep, goat, poultry, rabbit, game and exotic meats*

The "Farmer's Guide to Processing and Selling Meat or Poultry" was funded through the Extension Program Priority Initiative.

Several people and organizations contributed in the effort to produce this guide. Some asked a question that required research, some provided the research and some assisted with updates and edits. All comments, ideas, references, contacts, interpretations and reviews were valuable. Most were used in some way during the evolution of this publication.

Dr. Cutter, Food Science, College of Agricultural Sciences, PSU; Dr. Becker, Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, College of Agricultural Sciences, PSU; Jeff Feirick, Graduate Research Assistant, Dickinson School of Law, PSU; Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Laboratory Services; and especially, John Snyder, USDA, Food Safety Inspection Service, Philadelphia District, are recognized as significantly contributing their time and talent to this project.

I thank Diane, Sheri, Jonas, Ed, Barb, Earl and Karen for their interest and enthusiasm.

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farming alternatives

443 Warren Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. 14853 (607) 255-9832

Resource Sheet #6
November 1988

# DOING YOUR OWN MARKET RESEARCH

**Tips on Evaluating the Market for New Farm-Based Enterprises**

by Judy Green

Innovation, experimentation, and change are not new to farmers. Over the years most farms have been through many changes in production, marketing, and management strategy. However, the level of interest in new markets and nontraditional agricultural enterprises has risen dramatically in recent years as farmers look for new ways of generating income from their farm resources. Consider these examples:

The Evans family has been in the dairy business for 48 years. "When my dad started in dairy," says son Paul, "he was milking 40 cows. Now we milk 85, and we do a good job. But with folks moving out here from the city and property taxes going up all the time, we've been thinking about ways to diversify and keep the farm in business. We're thinking about putting in a roadside vegetable stand to take advantage of all that traffic that goes by here nowadays. But we've got a lot of competition already - we don't know whether the area can support one more roadside stand or not."

Bill and Colleen Ryan have been raising free range chickens on a small scale for the past few years. This year they have been selling broilers along with their market vegetables down at the Farmers' Market every Saturday. "It seems we just can't begin to meet the demand for fresh, locally raised chicken," says Colleen. "We're considering building a small scale slaughter facility next year and tripling our production of broilers. We're just not sure if we'll be able to sell that many birds at Farmers' Market alone."

Don Delevan raises beef cattle on his 400 acre ranch, and sells them at the auction house 50 miles away. He's interested in developing his own label and marketing his beef as high quality, lean, and chemical-free to customers who will pay a premium price. "I need to find out where my customers are and how I can get my product to them. I know they're out there somewhere."

## EVALUATING NEW IDEAS

You may also be faced with evaluating a new idea - one you think may generate higher profits for your farm business. But before launching any new enterprise, it is essential to look carefully at all the factors involved in starting up and developing the idea. There are five key questions that should be answered before committing dollars and time to a new venture:

1) Is there a market for this new enterprise? Will you be able to sell enough of your new product or service at a price above your cost of production? In each of our examples, there are critical questions about the market that need to be answered before we can judge the feasibility of the idea.

2) Is the new enterprise consistent with your family's goals and your farm business goals? If you don't know what your goals are, or if family members disagree about goals, you'll need to sort this out before going much further with the idea.

3) Do you have the resources needed to be successful in this enterprise? A complete inventory of your resources should include not only land, soils, water, buildings, and equipment but also skills, labor and management time, sources of information, assistance and credit, input suppliers, processors and distributors. Try to take advantage of underutilized resources, and be wary of enterprises whose peak labor requirements coincide with existing labor needs.

4) Will it be profitable? You will need to carefully project income and expenses for an "average future year" to determine whether revenues will be higher than projected costs of production.

5) Can you afford to get into this business? Initial investment and cash flow may be problematic even if the enterprise is a profitable one. A new enterprise may take some time - up to several years - to become profitable.

It is surprising how often people jump into a new venture without taking a good, hard look at feasibility. Unfortunately, many end up wasting precious resources that could have been put to good use with proper planning. Answering each of the questions listed above does require quite a bit of homework. But remember that the time spent in planning is one of the best investments you can make in your farm business.

## WHY DO MARKET RESEARCH?

Perhaps the most challenging problem in developing new enterprises is assessing the market. Part of the challenge arises simply from the fact that marketing is new and somewhat intimidating for many farmers who may not have had an active role in marketing their products in the past.

The first step is to understand that there is no magic to market research. It is not a crystal ball that can predict future markets with certainty. However, it can provide information that will make our projections about the future far more accurate, and it can help immeasurably in developing a successful marketing strategy.

It is also important to know that you don't need any esoteric knowledge or advanced technical training to do useful market research. Like any other information gathering process, it is a matter of asking the right questions and looking in the right places for the answers. The goal of market research is twofold:

1) to project the volume of sales and the price you might reasonably expect to achieve with a new enterprise, which is information you will need to analyze profitability and cash flow potential; and

2) to gather information about potential buyers and competitors that will help in developing a marketing strategy.

Some important questions that can be answered through market research include:

What is the Total Market Size presently for this product (or service) within a given area?

How many Competitors are there for this market? What are their strengths and weaknesses? What type of buyer are they targeting?

What Prices can you expect to receive for a given level of quality?

What Trends do you see in consumption, competition, and pricing?

What are the Characteristics of Buyers of this product or service? Age? Income level? Lifestyle? What are they looking for? Where are they looking for it? And how can you do a better job than your competitors in meeting their needs?

What proportion or Share of the total market might you expect to capture?

## MARKET RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

There are two general types of market research: primary and secondary. Primary research is anything that involves going out into the real world and gathering information for yourself - by observing people, by counting cars or pedestrians, by surveys, interviews or other direct means. Secondary research involves studying data that has already been collected and published by somebody else. Chances are you will need to use both primary and secondary research to understand the market for your particular enterprise.

### Secondary Research: Using Existing Data

Despite the name "secondary", this type of research is described first because it is often the easiest and cheapest way to obtain market information. There are several important types of information you can obtain through secondary research:

1) Population and demographic data provides information about the number of people within a given geographic area and their characteristics, such as income level, age distribution, level of education, household size, etc. This is important in estimating the total size of the market, and in knowing how many of what type of customers you have access to. Demographic trends within your area can also be analyzed.

2) Information about your local and regional economy is usually available, which can tell you the numbers of various types of business establishments, availability of support services, credit sources, zoning and other regulations which may affect your marketing strategy.

3) Production data can sometimes be found which will show the existing level of production of the product or service you are considering, as well as production trends. However, if your idea is new or simply not a major commodity for your region, there may be little information available.

4) Consumption data shows the per capita level of purchases by consumers for a given product or service. Again, this information may not be available for your particular enterprise.

There are numerous sources of secondary data - public libraries, Census Bureau, Chambers of Commerce, universities, local transportation departments, planning boards, economic development agencies, state departments of agriculture, and so on. Extremely useful information can often be found in the most unlikely places. In fact, the most difficult aspect of secondary research is figuring out where to find the information you need.

Primary Research: Do It Yourself

Because you are unlikely to find all the answers to your marketing questions using secondary data, plan on rolling up your sleeves for some real do-it-yourself, primary market research. Primary research is especially important when you are considering an innovative enterprise, a new market, or a very local market for which there isn't much published data.

Good primary research can be extremely elaborate, sophisticated, and expensive but it can also be very simple and inexpensive. Having a small budget is no excuse for not doing your marketing homework. It just means you will need to be creative in developing the most cost-effective method for collecting the information you need. Some common methods for conducting primary research include the following:

1) OBSERVATION - Observation involves counting the number of things or events that may be relevant to your marketing situation. For example, the Evans family in our examples might want to collect the following information by observation and counting: the number of roadside stands within a 30 mile radius of their farm; their specific locations; product lines; number of customers per hour; rate of traffic flow past the stands; the rate of traffic flow past their own farm at various times of the week, etc.

2) WRITTEN SURVEYS - Surveys can be used to solicit information from potential buyers about individual buying patterns, preferences, unfulfilled needs and wants, and other questions that may have an impact on your marketing success. For example, Bill and Colleen Ryan would do well to survey their present Farmers' Market customers to find out how often and in what quantity they would like to purchase fresh broilers next year. They might also use the survey to find ways to improve their service to customers.

   A survey must be very carefully designed to yield useful information and distribution of the survey must be well planned to avoid biasing your results. Some tips for good survey design are:

   a) Keep it short. A single sheet of paper printed on two sides is usually plenty.

   b) Phrase your questions so that you receive clear-cut and meaningful answers. For example, instead of asking "Would you buy more broilers from us next year if they were available?" the Ryans might ask "How many three pound broilers would you expect to purchase from us each month between June and October?"

   c) Use multiple choice questions rather than open-ended questions wherever possible. This makes it easier both to fill out the survey and to analyze the results.

d) Don't be afraid to request personal demographic information. For example, information about your respondents' ages, income levels, and areas of residence can be very valuable. You may even want to ask for an address for your mailing list. However, most people are sensitive to the way in which this information is solicited. Be sure to ask for, not demand the information, and explain how it will be used (e.g. "to serve you better"). Provide multiple-choice categories of ages and income rather than asking people to reveal their exact age and salary.

e) The procedure used to distribute the survey is critical in determining how to interpret the results. For example, if Don Delevan wants to find out about consumer interest in purchasing lean, chemical-free beef, he is likely to get very different responses depending on whether he surveys shoppers at the local health food store or at the supermarket. Either approach would be valid -- Don simply needs to be careful about interpreting his results and making projections based on his particular sample.

f) Test your survey on a small number of "guinea pigs" first. You will be surprised at how often your questions are misunderstood. A simple test usually results in great improvements in the survey's usefulness.

3) TELEPHONE SURVEYS are increasing in popularity. A good phone survey can yield much information quickly and can be relatively inexpensive. Don Delevan might use a telephone survey, for example, to reach 50 supermarket meat buyers within a 200 mile radius and inquire about their interest in lean, chemical-free beef, their delivery schedules, packaging requirements, and so on.

In designing a telephone survey, follow the same principles described for written surveys, but include only the most critical questions and keep them short. Work from a written script so that you are sure to ask questions consistently. Before calling, prepare a form for recording responses efficiently and, as always, test your survey and make adjustments if needed.

4) PERSONAL INTERVIEWS can be extremely informative and are the method of choice when dealing with a limited number of potential buyers. A market research interview will often be your first step in establishing working relationships with wholesale buyers. An interview will not only provide you with detailed information on the buyer's policies and preferences, but will provide the buyer with that all-important first impression of your professionalism and commitment. Be prepared with a list of specific questions and with solid information about the product or service you are proposing to provide. Be sure to leave a calling card. But, above all, don't make any commitments you can't live up to! There is nothing that will ruin a good marketing relationship faster than a broken promise.

Personal interviews can also be used to sample potential consumers in a variety of situations. For example, the Ryans could conduct personal interviews with their Farmers' Market customers rather than having them fill out a written survey. Again, the method of selecting people to interview will affect the results.

5) TEST MARKETING involves offering your product or service on a limited basis in order to evaluate potential sales. Test marketing is especially important when your product is new and unfamiliar to most of your customers. Don Delevan might conduct a market test as simple as offering tastes of his lean beef to customers at the fair, or as elaborate as a three month sales campaign in cooperation with a regional supermarket chain.

Test marketing will obviously be impossible until you are producing a product or service in some quantity. The best use of test marketing is as a follow-up to some of the previously discussed market research techniques, to fine tune your marketing strategy or to provide better information on costs and returns. It is also a useful strategy when evaluating minor changes in your enterprise, or when attempting to tap into a new market with a product or service you are already providing.

## EVALUATING THE COMPETITION

A necessary component of any market research is a thorough assessment of the competition. Studying your competition will help to determine the volume of similar products and services already in the marketplace, the strengths and weaknesses of your competitors, and the various "segments" of the market -- that is, the specific types of buyers -- that are being served by each competitor. This information may help you identify a "niche" in the marketplace where you can gain a foothold by outdoing your competition in serving a particular market demand.

There are a number of ways you can learn about your competition. Visit your competitors' businesses, use their products or services, survey their customers, or interview them directly if possible. Some competitors may refuse to share any information with you, but you may be surprised to find some that are quite helpful. They may have suggestions that can decrease direct competition, or that can even be of mutual benefit.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN -- PLAN YOUR MARKET RESEARCH STRATEGY

Market research can be simple or complex, cheap or fantastically expensive, depending on your needs and your budget. Make sure your research is targeted and cost-effective by following these guidelines:

First, allocate a reasonable amount of your time and money to this effort, and plan to work within that allocation. What is "reasonable" depends of course on your judgment of the risks and rewards involved. Second, develop a list of specific questions about your market which you feel you <u>must</u> answer before proceeding to develop the new enterprise. Third, define the specific type of data that you need to collect in order to answer those questions. Fourth, determine which of that data is already available from secondary sources. Fifth, determine what primary research technique(s) you will use to collect the data which isn't already available.

If your plan appears to fit within your research budget, you are ready to implement it except for one important step: SEEK ASSISTANCE! You can save a tremendous amount of time and energy by enlisting the aid of competent professionals, and you need not spend a dime to do so. You should be able to find a small business development program in your area whose staff can review your market research plans, suggest tactics, and even help in developing and analyzing surveys. You should be able to find a librarian who can help track down the secondary data you need. Your local Chamber of Commerce or Cooperative Extension office can help identify the local resources available to help you in designing and carrying out your market research.

Of course, unless you are able to hire a consultant, you will have to do most of your own marketing homework yourself. But with some planning, some assistance, and some hard work, do-it-yourself market research will pay off in improving the odds for your new enterprise. And it is a skill that you will use over and over as your farm business grows into the future.

# Your Guide to USDA's Rural Development-Related Activities

draft

Drafted by:
Rural Economic Development Action Team

Your comments/suggestions would be
very valuable in helping us make this a useful document.
Please use the enclosed comment form and
drop it in the box at USDA's publication displays
in Aisle 400
or mail it to the return address.
Thank you.

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FUNDING INFORMATION

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FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES FOR RURAL AREAS: 1996. Includes information on current federal programs that focus on rural areas.
Accessible by Internet at <http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/funding/federalfund/ff.html> or available from the Rural Information Center by calling 1-800-633-7701

A GUIDE TO FUNDING RESOURCES. Includes information from both governmental and private sources on funding opportunities available to
local governments, small businesses, organizations, and individuals. Accessible by Internet at <http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/funding/fundguide.html> or available from the Rural Information Center by calling 1-800-633-7701

RURAL HEALTH SERVICES FUNDING: A RESOURCE GUIDE. Includes information for beginning a funding search in addition to federal, state, and private funding sources. Accessible by Internet at <http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/ric41.html> or available from the Rural Information Center by calling 1-800-633-7701

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE. Compendium of federal programs, projects, services, and activities which provide assistance or benefits to the American public. Accessible by Internet at <http://www.gsa.gov/fdac/> or may be purchase from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office SSOM, Washington, DC 20402. The Catalog may also be available at your closest Federal Depository Library.

## Requirements

Basic computer skills, including keyboarding and mouse operations are required of all participants. Participants should be able to use an Internet browser software program.

## Sponsors

The University of Minnesota Extension Service developed the Access Minnesota Main Street program. The program is delivered in Minnesota communities in cooperation with local public and private organizations. For more information about Access Minnesota Main Street, send e-mail to: mainstreet@extension.umn.edu or contact the project directors: Bill Bomash (612) 625-8776 or Rae Montgomery (612) 624-2773



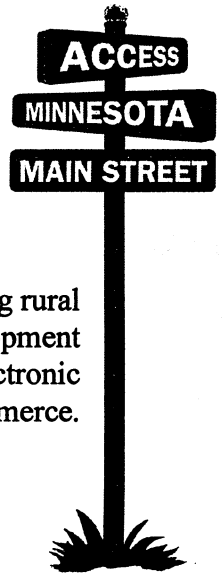
**Curriculum and additional information is available at:**

**www.ecommerce.umn.edu**

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Extension
SERVICE

# Access Minnesota Main Street

## Classroom Instruction on Electronic Commerce




**It's about...**

enhancing rural development through electronic commerce.

## What is Access Minnesota Main Street?

Access Minnesota Main Street is electronic commerce education for owners of small businesses.

Learn what you need to know about electronic commerce for your small business:

- Learn to use the Internet as a business research tool to find new markets or suppliers or to check out the competition
- Decide if a web presence is right for your business
- Learn steps in planning your website
- Learn techniques to effectively promote your website
- Learn how to incorporate the Internet into your business plan.

## Who Should Attend?

The material is relevant to those who are wondering what electronic commerce is all about, those who are thinking about developing an electronic commerce website, and those who have a website and want to make better use of it. The course is geared to businesses with fewer than 50 employees. Past participants have included owners of existing retail and service businesses, people wanting to start an internet business, people operating businesses from their homes, retired persons seeking new challenges, farmers and others considering alternative employment.

## Class Format

This course is taught in an easy-to-understand format in an informal classroom setting. The course is held in a computer lab and a substantial portion of the course consists of hands-on exploration of the Internet. Each of the 4 half-day sessions is taught by skilled instructors from the University of Minnesota Extension Service.

## Course Agenda

**Session 1: Introduction to Electronic Commerce**

- What is electronic commerce
- Internet demographics
- Finding new markets and suppliers
- Finding your competition
- Evaluating e-commerce websites

**Session 2: Planning Your Website**

- Do you really need a website?
- Website development stages
- Web hosting service and domain names
- Developing a website budget
- How to make your website a winner

**Session 3: Promoting Your Website**

- Developing an internet marketing plan
- Generating traffic to your website
- Getting listed by search engines
- Log analysis

**Session 4: Your Internet Business Plan**

- Key pieces of an internet business plan
- Case study of a small business entering into electronic commerce

# A Wildlife Manager's Field Guide to the Farm Bill

by
Donald F. McKenzie

Published by the Wildlife Management Institute, Washington, D.C.

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# Missouri Pond Handbook

Written by Ken Perry
Illustrated by Diana Jarrell
Edited by Frank Ryck and Joan McKee

Missouri Department of Conservation

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# FARM & RANCH RECREATION RESOURCE DIRECTORY

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# North Dakota State University
# NDSU Extension Service
## As A Resource for
## Community / Economic Development Assistance

North Dakota State University (NDSU) - Fargo is a land-grant university. It has a special obligation to assist North Dakota's communities by providing Extension and Outreach services to carry out research and education.

The NDSU Extension Service is a network of county extension agents, and area and state extension specialists who are committed to helping youth and adults to enhance their lives and communities through education.

For more information on NDSU Extension Service and NDSU community resources see our web pages:

http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu - North Dakota State University
http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu - NDSU Extension Service
http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/ced/communitypage - Community, Economic and Leadership Development

Kathleen Tweeten, Community Economic Development Specialist
NDSU Extension Service
4023 N State Street
Bismarck, ND 58503
(701) 328-5134
Fax: (701) 328-5123
E-mail: ktweeten@ndsuext.nodak.edu

Resource Directory can be purchased for $25.
To order: Please make check payable to: **NDSU Extension Service**
and mail to - Kathleen Tweeten at the above address.

This resource directory will be available in the near future on our website -
http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/ced/communitypage

# VIII. Marketing

# ALTERNATIVE ENTERPRISE AND AGRITOURISM: FARMING FOR PROFIT AND SUSTAINABILITY TOOL KIT

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For

## VIII. MARKETING

*Alternative Enterprises--Value-added Agriculture.* Technical Note Draft. NRCS. Reproduce as needed.

*Consumer Supported Agriculture.* Information Sheet. NRCS. Call 888-LANDCARE or reproduce as needed

*Consumer supported Agriculture.* Technical Note Draft. NRCS. Reproduce as needed.

*Dynamic Farmers' Marketing: A Guide to Successfully Selling Your Farmers' Market Products.* Jeff Ishee, Bittersweet Farmstead, P O Box 52, Middlebrook, VA 24459. Telephone 540-886-8477. Cost $14.95 plus $2.50 shipping. This book addresses effective planning and income potential, farmers' market organization, products that sell, role of quality, and specialty products, and being successful at selling your products. It contains a large amount of information about relationships and customers.

*The New Farmers Market: 1001 Ways to Make Market Sales Sizzle.* by Eric Gibson. Book to be published the summer of 2000. Write to New World Publishing, 11543 Quartz Dr. #1, Auburn, CA 95602

*"Innovative Marketing Opportunities for Small Farmers: Local Schools as Customers,"* Agricultural Marketing Service. To order go to web site <usda.ams.gov>. The study covers how limited resource minority farmers organized a small cooperative to supply vegetables to the local schools. Steps involved and an evaluation of the process is included in the report along with case studies of the farmers participating in the cooperative effort.

*Adding Value for Sustainability: A Guidebook for Cooperative Extension Agents and other Agricultural Professionals*. Kristen Markley and Duncan Hilchey, Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, PO Box 419, Millheim, PA 16854, Telephone: 814-349-9856. Cost $8.50 plus $3.00 shipping. It is an excellent publication on management considerations, community support and case study examples of value-added industries. It has a very good list of resources and information on small scale food processing.

*Sharing the Harvest: A Guide to Community-Supported Agriculture.* Elizabeth Henderson and Robyn Van En, Chelsea Green Publishing, POBox 428, White River Junction, VT 05001. Telephone 800-639-4099. The book presents information on the

goals and focus of CSA, getting started, getting organized, types of food to grow, many CSA models from community organized and operated to subscription where the farmer organizes and operates. Guidelines for planting, harvesting, operations, and organizations are very well presented.

*Marketing Strategies for Farmers and Ranchers.* SARE, USDA, CSREES. Available on www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs or call 202-720-5203. This is an overview of alternative value-added marketing strategies with a few case studies. It provides a good insight into value-added agriculture by selling through farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture and new cooperatives. It contains a list of resources for general information, business planning and management, web site, books, periodicals, and video's.

*Farmer's Market.* A complete listing of marketing publications available October 2000 is shown in Tab V. or go to attra.org web site for a copy.

*Direct Marketing.* Go to attra.org web site for a copy.

*Community Supported Agriculture.* Go attra.org web site for a copy.

*Resources for Organic Marketing.* Go to attra.org web site for a copy.

*What do I need for...Getting Started at a Farmer's Market?* A 2-pager on how to organize yourself, display area and equipment needs. Reproduce as needed.

*Smart Marketing Bulletins.* A two page list of bulletins prepared by Cornell Extension Specialists. To obtain a copy, go to www.cals.cornell.edu/dept/arme/hortmgt/pubs/smartmkt/index.html

*The Economic Impact of Birding Ecotourism On Communities Surrounding Eight National Wildlife Refuges*. by Paul Kerlinger. Call James A. Maetzold at 202-720-0132 for a copy.

*Farmer Direct Marketing Program.* Agriculture Marketing Service brochure on assistance. Call 1-800-384-8704 or go to:

http://www.ams.usda.gov

*Cider Mill and Petting Farm.* Agritourism enterprise marketing brochure example. It shows a spring program of events of fun, education and other agritourism activities. It contains telephone number and web site.

*Tailwinds Farm.* Agritourism, education, training and boarding stable with a bed and breakfast brochure. It contains a wide range of activities that aids in marketing the business.

*Pennsylvania Retail Farm Market Association*. There are video's and written material that are used regularly for farm market skills development efforts. This sets the stage for

good discussion. Some financial arrangement can be made for its use or rental. Go to web site www.PaFarm.com or contact the president-Rob at farm@phillychile.com, treasurer-Dave at dhodge@excite.com, secretary-John jwb15@psu.edu. For more information on marketing, write John Berry, Agricultural Marketing Agent, PSU Extension, Lehigh County, 4184 Dorney Park Road, Allentown, PA 18104 or call 610-391-9840.

*Establishing a Shared Use Commercial Kitchen*. The publication is published by NX Level. It can be ordered at www.nx.level.org/ag.htm. Another source for information is Anna Dawson, Fresh Beginning, 362 Eichybush Road, Kinderhook, NY 12106, or call 518-758-7342 or email annadawson@berk.com.

*Restaurants of the Future Conference.* This conference brought together chef/owners, hotel and club chefs, supermarket executives, contract food operators, caterers, food growers, and producers. It was held at The Culinary Institute of America main campus in Hyde Park, NY. For more information about the conference and the Chefs Collaborative, who sponsor the conference, go to <http://www.ciachef.edu/ce/ceconf/html>

*New York Harvest for NY Kids Week.* Each year the NY state assembly officially designates the week each year. It is designed to encourage children, their schools and their families to purchase, consume and learn about local foods and agriculture. For more information, contact Bob Stern, NYS Assembly Task Force on Food, Farm and Nutrition Policy, Room 547 Capitol, Albany, NY 12248. Call 518-455-5203. Email: sternr@assembly.state.ny.us.

*Understanding Cooperatives: Agricultural Marketing Cooperatives, Cooperative Information Report 45, Section 15.* A 4-page information sheet about marketing cooperatives functions, organization, operations and the new flexibility. Go to www.rurdev.usda.gov for more information or call 202-720-7558.

*Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.* Farmers Markets and Direct Marketing information. A "Farmers' Market" coloring book is also available. For more information go to: www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing or call 202-690-0531..

*Farmer Direct Marketing Bibliography.* A 75-page bibliography of publications, reports, guides, surveys, production issues, marketing and small business manuals. Go to www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing to order call 202-690-0531 for free copies.

*National Directory of Farmers Markets 2000.* It lists the known farmers markets by state, location, contact and phone number. It is on the web at www.usda.gov/directmarketing or call 202-690-0531 to get a copy.

*Entertainment Farming and Agri-tourism*. A one-page marketing idea for farmers and ranchers. Go to www.sare.org/market99/entertain.htm for a copy and more information.

*Community Supported Agriculture: Making the Connection.* University of California Cooperative Extension/Placer County. Call 916-889-7385 or write 11477 E Avenue, Auburn, CA 95603. This workbook is designed with a narrative text and examples of CSA farms. It is designed to make you think about your farm, business and situation. There are several worksheets that can be used or modified.

*Marketing Crafts and Tourist Products.* North Central Regional Publication #445. Call 402-472-3023 to order the publication. A summary of the research findings from 1,400 responses shows that almost 70 percent of the tourists buy gifts as can be seen in the summary.

*Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Resources for Producers*. Compiled by Mary Gold, October 1999. Alternative Farming Systems Information Center, NAL. For more information go to www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/csa, call 301-504-6559 or e-mail: mgold@nal.usda.gov

*Direct Marketing and Related Topics.* QB 97-02, NAL, USDA. Send requests to USDA, National Agricultural Library, Document Delivery Services Branch PhotoLab, 10301 Baltimore Ave., NAL Bldg. Beltsville, MD 20705. This publication contains 40 pages of references for direct marketing.

*Farming for Profit, Stewardship and Community.* SARE . Go to www.sare.org for complete set of the tip sheets or call 202-720-5203. The 2-page tip sheets are devoted to identifying sources of information for following subject:

-TIP# 2: Add Value Through Marketing

*Direct Farm Marketing and Tourism Handbook.* For more information, contact Russ Tronstad, Extension Economist, 520-621-2425, or email: tronstad@ag.arizona.edu to obtain a hard copy for $25.00. Or, go to: http://ag.arizona.edu/arec/pubs/dmkt/dmkt.html for online access.

*Adding Value with Small-Scale Food Processing and Specialty Dairy Products, Resource Packet.* Farming Alternatives Program, Cornell University. This publication contains information handed out at the Farming for the Future Leadership conference. Call 607-255-9832.

*Developing New Markets to Support Local Agriculture, Resource Packet.* Farming Alternatives Program, Cornell University. Call 607-255-9832. This publication contains information handed out at the Farming for the Future Leadership conference.

*Farmers' Markets and Community Development.* Farming Alternatives Program, Cornell University. Call 607-255-9832. This is a study of farmers' market vendors and host communities that measured the economic and social impact on farmers and communities.

*Rural Business-Cooperative Service.* Call 202-720-7558 or go to www.rurdev.usda.gov. Several information reports are available. Some of these are:

-Understanding Cooperatives: Legal Foundations of a Cooperative.
-Understanding Cooperatives: Who Runs the Cooperative Business?
-Understanding Cooperatives: Agricultural Marketing Cooperatives.

*The Food Alliance.* The Food Alliance of Washington is an independent third party. They endorse farms that meet their strict requirements and allow the farm's products to carry the Food Alliance seal of approval. The products are marketed at stores, roadsides, restaurants, and farmer markets. The standards are: conserving soil and water, pest and disease management and human resources. They publish a quarterly newsletter and hold an annual conference. For information call 503-493-1066 or go to www.thefoodalliance.org.

*Linking Farms and Public Schools.* Iowa State University and Department of Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management. A 4-page extension publication. Go to www..exnet.iastate.edu/publication/pm1853A.pdf or email pubdist@exnet.iastate.edu and include publication number 1853A.

*Produce Handling for Direct Marketing. NRAES-52* and *Roadside Marketing Series and Facilities for Roadside Markets. NRAES-51.* These publications are available by calling 607-255-7654.

*North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association (NAFDMA).* This is a network group that organizes annual conferences, publishes a quarterly newsletter and organizes tours among other activities. The proceedings of each annual conference is published. For 2000, 160 packed pages of information is available. They have also established a liability insurance program for its members. Call 888-884-9270 or go to www.nafdma.com.

*Texas Nature Tourism Initiative: Marketing Natural Resources Through Recreation and Tourism Enterprises*. TAMUS, Southwest Texas State University and Texas Parks and Wildlife, NRCS, Texas Nature Tourism Association and Texas Department of Economic Development-Tourism. These groups developed a Facilitator's Resource Manual for use in assisting lands to assess the potential market and resource base for recreation/tourism enterprises. The goal is on maximizing return on investment during the workshop. Contact Carson Watts for more information at Carson Watt,Texas A&M University 212 Francis Hall, College Station, TX 77843-2261. Phone: 409-845-5419 email: cwatt@rpts.tamu.edu.

*Successful Marketing Research: The Complete Guide to Getting and Using Essential Information About Your Customers and Competitors.* Edward Hester. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Professional Reference and Trade Group, 605 Third Avenue, New York, NY. 10158.

*Innovative Marketing Opportunities for Small Farmers: Local Schools as Customers.* Agricultural Marketing Service. Call 202-690-0531 or www.ams.usda.gov. The steps and procedures followed in establishing a school lunch program market is presented. The farmers involved in the production and marketing is also presented.

*Reap New Profits: Marketing Strategies for Farmers and Ranchers.* Sustainable Agricultural Network, SARE. Go to nal.usda.gov/afsic or call 301-504-6559 for a copy of the CD. This is a PowerPoint presentation for educators. It has 61 images along with the presentation script.

USDA NRCS
United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

# Alternative Enterprises – Value-Added Agriculture

How to use your land's legacy to benefit the public
And boost your bottom line

## What is value-added agriculture?

Value-added agriculture means getting more income from your commodity and the natural resources on your farm in a sustainable way. Value-added agriculture works by (1) changing the way a commodity is marketed; (2) changing the form of the commodity before it is marketed; (3) changing the way the commodity is packaged for market, (4) growing the commodity for a special market, or (5) adding a new enterprise. In many cases, the value-added alternatives can be combined to yield an even higher income to the farmer or rural community.

*1. **Changing the way a commodity is marketed:*** You add value when you market a raw agricultural product in a non-traditional way to command a higher price. You might, for example, direct-market your product at a farm stand, to special processors or users, to the local community, to schools or restaurants, or through farmers' markets or other outlets. Commodities that require special production methods or harvesting techniques, that reach specialty markets, or that fill another market niche can be grown under contract for a much higher net return. But you need to seek out these market alternatives or in some cases "sell the purchaser" that a higher value product is being offered for sale because of management, production and harvesting techniques, or product uniqueness.

*2. **Changing the form of the commodity before it is marketed:*** You also add value when you change the raw agricultural products through processing. Costs are incurred during processing; however, the "processing margin" covers the cost plus a margin that yields a higher profit. This also provides you the opportunity to market the product differently—for example, slaughtered and packaged beef that you sell directly to consumers, or whole-hog sausage to neighbors, friends, local organizations, or restaurants and institutions. Other product changes include selling flour instead of wheat, or corn meal instead of corn; your customer can be the bakery, the consumer, or someone else. Selling vegetables and fruits directly to the consumer rather than to wholesalers or processors requires cleaning, packaging, and displaying the commodity. But because you now do the processing, distribution, and packaging, you now have the opportunity to capture 100 percent of the consumer dollar.

*3. **Changing the way the commodity is packaged for market:*** Value-added marketing through packaging provides a great opportunity to increase profit. Package design is the first thing the consumer sees; *it is the basis for almost all first-time purchases.* Package size, for example, must meet the consumer's need. If he or she wants to buy a single tomato, one must not sell only by the basket. Consumers are willing to pay the price differential because they do not want to buy more than they need.

Beauty, special occasion, or gift-ready packages provide a competitive edge. A special basket full of apples with a bow or a fall arrangement attached will sell faster and for a higher price to the customer who is looking for a gift. Some other ideas include honey with a bow or attractive label, a jam/jelly box, or special sauces. Packages with informative labels may also be a reward because they are gift-ready. In today's society of trending towards "ready-to-go," the seller does the thinking about how to add value to a basket of apples, that jar of honey or bunch of grapes, or those jams and jellies. The buyer is ready to pay for that service and more. Farmers have a special marketing opportunity in that many consumers want to

connect with the land and bring it back to their friends, neighbors, and home. In addition, value-added products complement tourism goals by giving visitors a tangible "piece" of place to take back home and share with others. This is an underrated and underutilized method of showcasing and earning revenue for the community.

*4. **Growing the commodity for a special market:*** Ethnic- or culture-oriented consumers are the fastest growing value-added markets today. The growth in diversity through immigration has opened up strong ethnic markets in many areas of the country. A viable market exists in every metropolitan area today—not just in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Miami.

The special markets include not only the foods with which these recent immigrants grew up, but also organic, pasture-fed production because it meets their tastes and dietary needs. The immigrants have also influenced the diets of other Americans to the point that the market can be much larger than the specific immigrant group.

*5. **Adding a new enterprise:*** A new enterprise is defined as any change in a product or service. This includes *growing the commodity for a special or niche market*. A change in the production process, for example, might involve switching to organic production practices; it might mean changing corn or soybean varieties to produce a special crop for a special industry such as cosmetics, industrial oils, or textured vegetable protein. A new enterprise or activity might include adding mushroom or herb farming, goat production, or pasture-fed chickens. It could be "agritainment": petting zoos, bed-and-breakfast operations, fee hunting and fishing, nature walks, wedding facilities, farm/ranch stays, or picnicking. The most common new enterprise market is the organic consumer. Almost every farmers' market or food fair has several organic growers marketing various products.

Uniqueness is a vital part of selecting value-added enterprises. Most of the literature and successful entrepreneurs note not only that you need to identify a product that no one else is producing, but also that your test market wants to purchase what you're selling.

In summary, it can be asked, "Why consider five different alternative approaches in value-added agriculture?" when some appear to be very similar. The answer is to get us to think more broadly about our alternatives and who our customers might be. Such thinking expands the range of possibilities and includes them in a business plan. You may have listed completely different enterprises under alternative 3, *"Changing the way the product is packaged for market,"* alternative 4, *"Growing the commodity for a special market,"* and alternative 5, *"Adding a new enterprise"* may be completely different. Whatever alternative you select, however, must be driven by marketing opportunities and matched to your goals.

## Why develop a value-added enterprise?

Adding value to agricultural production contributes the economic and environmental sustainability of both farm and community. Adding value to an agricultural product offers farmers the opportunity to receive a bigger share of the consumer's food dollar. (The farmer's share has dropped from 46 percent in 1913 to 20 percent in 1998, according to the USDA Economic Research Service.) Why? Consumers buy more "ready-to-eat" or "ready-to-cook" food while farmers continue to produce and market the same raw agricultural commodities. By the year 2005, it is projected that people will only be spending an average of only 15 minutes to prepare a meal, half as long as today. These meals are being called "home replacement meals," and value-added enterprises need to be looking at these changing consumption patterns.

Value-added products can open new markets, create recognition and appreciation for the farm and extend the marketing season. By changing the way a farmer markets commodities and how it works, value-added products can dramatically increase a farmer's income.

Value-added agriculture is very important to any local economic development strategy. Secretary Glickman stated at the Outlook Forum 2000, February 24, 2000, that "a new farm policy must go beyond just the wheat, rice and cotton programs … by providing more rural economic opportunity, whether it's in farming, retail, tourism or Internet start-ups."

## How do value-added enterprises contribute to sustainability?

There are many aspects to sustainability. It begins with having one's own food supply in your backyard or community. Over the past several decades this has changed drastically to the point where regions of the country, as well as individuals, have become almost incapable of producing their own food. For example, the New England states produced over 80 percent of their own food supplies at the turn of the century. Now, more than 85 percent is imported into the region.

Value-added agriculture—

- sustains the farm by capturing a larger share of the consumer food dollar through direct marketing;
- creates an enterprise that is a logical extension of the current farm business;
- provides an innovative business strategy that allows small farms to compete with large farms;
- contributes to rural community development by attracting more food consumers and small-scale processing businesses that create new employment opportunities and new markets for high-value agriculture products;
- sustains the local community through activities generated that tend to add to the amount of activity in the local economy; and
- provides a key local economic development strategy.

## What are some of the keys to success?

Following are some general points identified by Keith Richards and Debra Wechsler, as summarized from interviews of successful value-added entrepreneurs in *Agricultural Technology Transfer for Rural Areas.* These include:

- *Choose something you love to do.* It's hard work under the best of circumstances. If you are doing it just for the money, it's unlikely that the energy, creativity and satisfaction necessary for success will be adequate.

- *Follow demand-driven production.* Produce what your customers want. Get to know your customers. Keep adjusting your products according to their tastes and purchases.

- *Create a high-quality product.* Quality is the single most important element that will differentiate your product from mass-produced alternatives. More and more, consumers want fresher, better tasting, healthier products than those available from large retailers.

- *Start small and grow naturally.* Invest your ingenuity first, labor second, and money third. If you start small, the effort you put in and the income you generate are more likely to be matched. Let the market dictate your growth.

- *Make decisions based on good records.* Base business decisions on what is, not what you hope or guess the situation to be. Even if everything else is right, poor financial management and decision-making can still kill the business.

- *Establish a loyal customer base, preferably local.* In addition to high quality and meeting customer demand, focus on your niche. Personal contact, exceeding expectations, providing steady supply, and community involvement will help secure a strong base of repeat customers.

- *Provide more than just food or a product.* People are hungry for a connection the rhythms of the earth and for a sense of community. Provide your customers with an experience of the satisfactions and spiritual rewards of your farm life. Provide them with some fun, peace, and relaxation.

- *Get the whole family or all the partners involved.* Value-added processing takes additional energy and skills. When several family members are involved, each person can contribute his or her unique talents and specialize for efficiency.

- *Keep informed.* It is important to keep informed about your customers, your competition, the laws concerning your business, and other producers like yourself.

- *Plan for the future.* To be successful, you have to know where you are headed. Each path requires

different courses of action. Set goals for your business and a plan of actions to achieve them.

## What are the added risks with value-added agriculture products?

Any activity or enterprise that requires the public to come onto your farm, such as a U-pick enterprise, or around your premises, such as a booth at a farmers' market, also requires additional insurance. Most farm insurance policies will cover this type of enterprise for an additional cost. However, an agritainment activity such as petting zoos, hay rides, corn maze, and the like will generally require an additional policy other than the one that covers the farm. Also, value-added processing of fruits, vegetables, or meats increase safety risks and require understanding and satisfying Federal and state rules and regulations. You need to consider these factors in your business plan as it pertains to business responsibilities and marketing options.

## How successful are value-added processing enterprises?

There is no one formula for a successful value-added small scale processing enterprise. Nationally, only about 8 percent of the people who start a value-added processing enterprise are successful.

Of entrepreneurs who follow the University of Nebraska Food Processing Center phase I and II programs, over 80 percent remain in the food manufacturing business. However, 80 percent of those who completed the phase I program decided to drop the value-added processing enterprise before taking the phase II program.

Several small business centers located throughout the United States are available to assist farmers and other small entrepreneurs to help them determine what are successful enterprises for them.

The best way to identify what type of assistance is available in your state or a neighboring state is to call the office of the State Extension Director. This office should be able to provide names and telephone numbers of the Small Business Administration Centers, food processing centers, Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), consultants, or organizations that could assist you.

## What are the typical value-added start-up management considerations?

Following are five areas identified by Kristen Markley and Duncan Hilchey in the publication "Adding Value for Sustainability." These points are discussed extensively in 25 pages of the publication. Only the management considerations discussed by the authors are presented here.

### *Quality Products*

- Decide to explore a value-added business endeavor after receiving enthusiastic response from family friends and from customers when the product was test-marketed at a farmers' market.
- Discuss product development with university food science Extension specialists.
- Subscribe to specialty food journals, purchase books on the topic, and spend time in the reference and periodicals sections of a public library.

### *Good Marketing and Management*

- Develop a business plan, market research plan, and bookkeeping records using a system such as Cornell's Farming Alternatives guide, assistance from the local Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), the county Cooperative Extension office, NxLeveL™, or other economic development agencies.
- Determine the most appropriate market distribution channels (based on market research) such as farmers markets, restaurants, gourmet food stores, mail-order catalogs, supermarkets, web sites, or wholesalers.
- Research brokers and distributors.
- Attend trade shows, talk with vendors, and research their products and marketing channels.
- Hire a qualified graphic designer to help with labeling, packaging, and sales literature design ideas.
- Use sales literature and sampling demonstrations at local gourmet food shops and farmers' markets to test the product.
- Send out press releases to local newspapers to encourage articles.

*Sufficient Capital*

- Research co-packers and food processing incubators.
- Research sources of capital.
- Keep capital costs down.

*Food Safety*

- Research and comply with Federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
- Contact appropriate local, state, and Federal food safety regulators regarding processing, packaging, and labeling.
- Become familiar with the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) programs by purchasing the New England Cooperative Extension Consortium's handbook and through attending industry or university training.

*Other Legal Issues*

- Determine the business legal structure, and if there is more than one business partner, develop a business partnership agreement.
- Purchase sufficient product liability and other necessary insurance coverage.
- Research registration of trademarks.

## Does value-added agriculture increase the role of management?

As one takes on more aspects of marketing and distribution in the value-added enterprise, the need and use of a total business plan becomes more apparent and important. The more aspects there are to a business, the more crucial it is to have a five-year long-range plan, a one-year plan, and a daily management and business plan. Value-added agriculture and agritainment increase the complexity of a farm operation, especially in many areas with which farmers or other small businesspeople may not be familiar. You should develop a business planning process that requires you to contact other businesspeople or farmers. This process makes you more likely to include all the steps and requirements for determining the feasibility of your new enterprise.

Business planning processes and workbooks are available through the Small Business Administration, universities, farm management firms, Cooperative Extension service, and in your local library. "Farming Alternatives: A Guide to Evaluating the Feasibility of New Farm-Based Enterprises" is a very useful workbook developed by the Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Services. Call 607-255-7654 for more information on this publication.

## What are some of the added-value marketing alternatives?

Think about some of the more common marketing alternatives: U-pick, farmers' markets, gourmet and specialty shops, health-food stores, local food cooperatives, mail order, restaurants and catering businesses, roadside stands, supermarkets, community-supported agriculture, upscale delis and grocers, and the web. These are just the value-added marketing enterprises for agricultural products. Then, add processing of the agricultural products. Finally, add the agritainment enterprises, which are value-added because one is using natural resources for hayrides, fee fishing or hunting, bird watching, bed-and-breakfast operations, farm/ranch stays, pumpkin picking, or many others. The NRCS technical note "Agritourism, Alternative Enterprises, Conservation, Sustainability, and Partnerships for Farms, Ranches and Rural Communities" lists more than 150 alternative enterprises for ranches, farms, or communities.

## How does one get started in an added-value enterprise?

- Do extensive research.
- Talk to friends, neighbors, and other entrepreneurs who run value-added agricultural enterprises.
- Learn the marketing side of value-added agriculture; marketing will make or break a value-added enterprise.
- Visit fairs, trade shows that spotlight value-added enterprises.
- Start small and simple by producing your favorite vegetables for farmers' markets and/or a roadside stand.
- Build a customer base before venturing into the "product process" phase of value-added enterprise.
- Develop a long-range plan.
- Develop a management and budget plan.
- Join associations and other value-added groups

Kim Knorr-Tait, a value-added farmer in Pennsylvania, says, "We are small. We can adapt to market trends. We can be flexible. We do what is needed.... A business has to do what no one else is doing in order to succeed. A key to success is being unique and able to differentiate yourself."

**What are some recommended references?**

*Adding Value for Sustainability: A Guidebook for Cooperative Extension Agents and other Agricultural Professionals*, Kristen Markley and Duncan Hilchey, Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, PO Box 419, Millheim, PA 16854, Telephone: 814-349-9856. Cost $8.50 plus $3.00 shipping.
Excellent publication on management considerations, community support, and case study examples of value-added industries. It has a very good list of resources and information on small-scale food processing.

*Adding Value to Farm Products: An Overview*, Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA), Telephone: 800-346-9140. Available at www.attra.org.
Introduces the concept of value-added farm products, outlines keys for success, and provides resources for additional information.

*Small-Scale Food Dehydration: A Resource List (Value-added Technical Note)*, ATTRA. Telephone: 800-346-9140, Web www.attra.org.
Lists a variety of resources, including Extension and general publications, that describe dehydration processes, equipment, and designs for growers who would like to construct their own dehydrator.

*Small-Scale Oilseed Processing (Value-added and Processing Guide)*, ATTRA, Telephone: 800-346-9140. Web www.attra.org.
Describes the basic processes involved in small-scale oilseed processing. It describes different low-cost techniques and provides a good list of resources for more information.

*SoyFoods: Adding Value to Farm Products (Value-added Systems Guide)*, ATTRA, Telephone: 800-346-9140. Web www.attra.org.
Provides an overview of food products made from soybeans: tofu, miso, natto, soymilk, soy flour, and soy oil. It also provides resources for specific information on soyfood production and marketing.

*Marketing Strategies for Farmers and Ranchers*, SARE, USDA, CSREES. Available on www.sare.org/san/htdocs/pubs or call 202-720-5203.
An overview of alternative value-added marketing strategies with a few case studies. It provides a good insight into value-added agriculture by selling through farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture and new cooperatives as well as business planning. It contains a list of resources for general information, business planning and management, web site, books, periodicals, and videos.

*Farming Alternatives: A Guide to Evaluating the Feasibility of New Farm-Based Enterprises*, Small Farms Series, Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Services, Cornell University, 152 Riley-Robb Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853. Telephone: 607-255-7654.
A workbook written for families and individuals interested in developing a new farm-based enterprise. It is especially helpful for those considering non-traditional enterprises. It contains worksheets to evaluate family goals, alternative enterprises, marketing, production, profitability, financial feasibility, and decisionmaking.

*Dynamic Farmers' Marketing: A Guide to Successfully Selling Your Farmers' Market Products*, Jeff Ishee, Bittersweet Farmstead, P O Box 52, Middlebrook, VA 24459. Telephone 540-886-8477. Cost $14.95 plus $2.50 shipping.
Addresses effective planning and income potential, farmers' market organization, products that sell, the role of quality, and specialty products. Examines relationships and customers in depth.

*Sharing the Harvest: A Guide to Community-Supported Agriculture*, Elizabeth Henderson and Robyn Van En, Chelsea Green Publishing, P.O. Box 428, White River Junction, VT 05001. Telephone 800-639-4099.

Presents information on the goals and focus of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): getting started, getting organized, types of food to grow. It describes the many CSA models, from the community-organized and -operated model to the subscription model, which the farmer organizes and operates. Guidelines for planting, harvesting, operations, organizations are very well presented.

*CSA Farms in the United States 1999-2000: A new partnership between farmers and consumers,* USDA, SARE. Telephone: 202-720-5203.
A listing, by state, of farmers and Community Supported Agriculture ventures with addresses, e-mails, and telephone numbers.

*Making Your Small Farm Profitable,* Ron Macher, publisher of Small Farm Today, Storey Books, Pownal, VT 05261, Cost $19.95.
Discusses 25 guiding principles, development of new crops and new markets, and ways to maximize net profit per acre. It suggests planning, management, and 44 enterprise budgets for livestock, poultry, crops, fruits, and vegetables. It also contains a guide on equipment costs, operation costs, and other factors for budgeting purposes.

*South Dakota Farm and Ranch Vacation: Resource Directory,* South Dakota Department of Tourism. South Dakota Tourism, 711 E. Wells Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501, FAX: 605-773-3256.
A checklist and presentation of the steps one needs to follow when considering an agritourism or other added-value enterprises. The focus is on South Dakota, but the steps are applicable anywhere.

*Backyard Market Gardening: The Entrepreneur's Guide to Selling What You Grow*, Andrew W. Lee, Good Earth Publications, 1720 Mountain View Road, Buena Vista, VA 24416. Cost $20.00. Telephone: 540-261-8775.
The author has over 30 years' experience as a market gardener, homebuilder, small business owner, and international speaker. He discusses how you can earn $36,000 per acre from your backyard. The author discusses garden siting, preparation, tools needed, marketing, new ideas, business planning, and production management. He ends with a chapter on eco-farming.

*Small Farm Today: The Original How-to Magazine of Alternative and Traditional Crops, Livestock, and Direct Marketing,* Subscriptions cost $21.00 per year. Telephone 800-633-2535.
Founded for and is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of small farming, rural living, sustainability, community, and agripreneurship. The October/November/December 1999 issue included feature articles on greenhouses, turkeys, hogs, miniature Herefords, herbs, dry beans, oxen, and market gardening plus 24 other articles.

*Small Farm Digest,* USDA, CSREES, Small Farm Program, Free, Telephone 202-401-6544.
Articles on USDA activities, small farm success stories, small farm studies, and calendar of events.

*You Can Farm: The Entrepreneur's Guide to Start and Succeed in a Farming Enterprise,* Joel Salatin, Good Earth Publications, Telephone 800-499-3201.
A basic book for people interested in becoming farmers. It has a substantial amount of information on production, management, marketing, and planning for a small farm operation that direct markets pasture-fed chickens, beef, and vegetables. Production methods minimize cost of materials and other inputs.

*Agritourism in New York State: Opportunities and Challenges in Farm-Based Recreation and Hospitality,* Duncan Hilchey, Farming Alternatives Program, Cornell University. Telephone: 607-255-9832.
A detailed examination of farm-based tourism enterprises. Five case studies are reported as well as management considerations/skills, potential demand, and a sample agritourism farm activity and budget.

*Developing New Markets to Support Local Agriculture: Tapping New Markets, Creating a Regional Product Identity and Promoting Local Wholesaling,* Farming Alternatives Program, Cornell University, Telephone 607-255-9832.

Contains a complete listing of resource material available through the Alternative Farming Programs.

*Adding Value: With Small-Scale Food Process and Specialty Dairy Products, Farming Alternatives Program,* Cornell University, Telephone 607-255-9832.
A handout from the "Farming for the Future Leadership Training Workshop."

*Income Opportunities for the Private Landowner through Management of Natural Resources and Recreational Access: Proceedings from the Conference,* West Virginia University Extension Service, Morgantown, WV.
Proceedings of a 3-day conference held in 1989. It includes more than 407 pages containing 55 articles. A number of these articles are published as separate publications. Contact James Maetzold, 202-720-0132 or jim.maetzold@usda.gov, for a copy of the table of contents to determine articles of interest.

*Farmers Direct Marketing Program,* USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service, www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing, or Telephone Errol Bragg 202-720-8317.
The focus is on direct marketing through farmers' markets and Community Supported Agriculture ventures.

*Tilling the Soil of Opportunity: NxLeveL™ Guide for Agricultural Entrepreneurs,* University of Nebraska, US WEST Foundation and SARE. Call 1-800-873-9378 or 1-800-328-2851 to find out where the next course will be held in your area.
Training course developed by more than 15 business writers, producers, and consultants involved in successful direct marketing agricultural businesses. It covers assessing your resources, business planning and research, marketing, business management, legal considerations, budgets, and financial management. The goal is "Helping Producers Reach the Next Level of Success."

*Entrepreneurial Training Program,* USDA, CSREES, Telephone: Randy Williams 202-720-0743.
New program designed to train agricultural entrepreneurs and other rural small business owners in the planning, management and operation of a small business.

*AgVentures,* published bimonthly, cost $21.00 per year. Telephone 888-474-6397.
Publishes articles on livestock, crops, aquaculture, niche markets, wildlife, herbs, and other topics. The articles are based on actual alternative enterprise success stories. Good resources are identified at the end of each article.

### What steps do I take to get started?

1. Research at the library, university, Internet.
2. Talk to other farmers/ranchers, entrepreneurs, university, extension, foundations, and non-profit organizations.
3. Attend conferences, meetings.
4. Contact the Small Business Development Center and the appropriate county, state, and tourism bureaus.
5. Join organizations that serve both your new peer group and your new or prospective customers.
6. Develop business and marketing plans.
7. Identify your customer.
8. Identify your product. Is it unique?
9. Form partnerships with your neighbors. Work together.

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Natural Resources Conservation Service

AE-2

# Alternative Enterprises – Community-Supported Agriculture

How to provide healthful food to local consumers and strengthen your bottom line

## What is Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA)?

Unlike conventional food marketing systems in which farmers sell to wholesalers or other intermediaries, Community-Supported Agriculture allows farmers to sell "shares" of their fresh fruit and vegetable production directly to local consumers over a growing season. Consumers pay farmers in advance of production for weekly delivery of fresh, locally grown produce at a later date. Some CSA's supplement shares of fruits and vegetables with meat, eggs, poultry, or other value-added items purchased from other farmers. Depending on the CSA, customers can pay for their share in cash, or they can work on the farm in exchange for reduced share costs.

CSA's can be organized in different ways:

**Subscription Farming**: Growers sell "shares" of their production directly to consumers, but maintain control over all production and management decisions.

**Shareholder Driven**: A group of consumers organizes a CSA and seeks out farmers to grow the produce of their choice.

**Cooperatives**: The grower and the consumers jointly own the land and production resources, work together to produce the food, and share in the management decisions.

## Why Community-Supported Agriculture?

Under this direct marketing approach, consumers get the freshest seasonal food possible, often at reduced prices and better quality, while gaining greater control over the way their food is produced. Many CSA's produce food using organic or low-input production systems that consumers increasingly demand.

Meanwhile, CSA's provide small-scale farmers with profitable production opportunities that return 100 percent of the consumer's dollar. And because consumers pay for their produce in advance, farmers have income well before harvest, reducing the need for operating loans. Meanwhile, consumers share much of the production risk with the grower.

## What Should You Consider?

***Natural Resource Assessment:*** Are your land, soil, and climate suitable for quality fresh fruit or vegetable production demanded by local consumers? Do you have enough acreage to generate sufficient income? Studies show that CSA's need at least 100 members in order to maintain a minimal income; how much land that requires depends on what is being grown.

***Labor Supply:*** CSA's are labor intensive. Do you have access to an adequate seasonal labor supply? If not, will shareholders be willing to provide labor? Do you have the time to devote to planning and implementing a CSA?

***Knowledge and Experience:*** Growing fruits and vegetables differs greatly from producing commodity-type crops; it requires different equipment, facilities, and production practices. Do you have the know-how? Research on CSA's suggests that to be successful, growers need at least 18 months to plan their CSA and 2 to 4 years of experience growing produce for farmers' markets or other outlets.

***Financing:*** How will you finance your start-up costs before you've built your membership base?

***Customer Base and Marketing:*** Are you located close enough to your customer base to sell enough shares to keep your business profitable? Have you developed a clientele and reputation through sales at local and regional farmers' markets? What local organizations or businesses can you

partner with to help market your CSA to consumers and promote its growth? Some CSA's offer variable rates to low-income consumers.

***Legal Matters:*** What unique insurance needs might your CSA have? What are your legal obligations and liabilities under your proposed CSA venture?

## Where To Get Help

There are a number of information resources that can help you get started on your new venture. A few of those resources are listed below. For more information, contact your USDA Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council area office. For a national listing of RC&D offices, see http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/RCCD/rc&dstate.html on the web or call your local U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Center (in the phone book, under "Federal Government").

For a national listing of alternative enterprises and agritourism liaisons, see http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/RESS/econ/ressd.htm.

### *U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)*

USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program and its Sustainable Agriculture Network, in collaboration with the National Agricultural Library's Alternative Farming Systems Information Center, has created a new resource dedicated to providing farmers with information on Community-Supported Agriculture. For comprehensive information on planning, developing, and marketing CSA's and for other sources of information, see http://www.sare.org on the web or call (202) 720-5203.

### *Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)*

ATTRA offers extensive information on initiating and maintaining successful CSA's and provides links to CSA organizations that can help you. See http://www.attra.org/attra-pub/csa.html on the web or call (800) 346-9140. ATTRA is sponsored by USDA's Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

### *University of California Cooperative Extension and UC Small Farm Center*

The University of California publishes a CSA how-to manual, *Community Supported Agriculture...Making the Connection,* that is available for purchase. Call 530-889-7385 or write UCCE, 11477 E Ave., Auburn, CA 95603.

### *Farming Alternatives Program (FAP), Cornell University*

FAP produces a step-by-step workbook to help you plan and evaluate a new enterprise. The workbook, *Farming Alternatives: A Guide to Evaluating the Feasibility of New Farm-Based Enterprises,* can be ordered by calling (607) 255-9832. Also see http://www.cals.cornell.edu/dept/ruralsoc/fap/fap.html on the web.

For additional copies of this information sheet, AE-2, call 1-888-LANDCARE or see the website at http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda/RESS/econ/ressd.htm.

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# COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA):
## A Value Added Alternative Enterprises

**What is Community Supported Agriculture?** A new partnership between farmers and consumers. Consumers and farmers working together on behalf of each other to sustain the environment and the farm. It is local farmers producing the food for local people. Farmers produce the food and the consumers share the costs of supporting the farm and share the risk of variable harvests. Most CSA's focus on organic or reduced input agriculture. CSA's are groups that comprise customers reaching out to farmers and saying we will share the risk.

*CSA = "food producers" + "food consumers" + annual commitments*

CSA's are often described as "food with the farmer's face on it."

**What does CSA mean to the small farmer?** CSA is a direct marketing alternative for small-scale growers. It is a way a farmer can get his money before he/she produces and delivers the crop. You sell it before you grow it. It is a way the farmer can get the consumer to share in the risk of agriculture production. It is a way the farmer can show the consumer how their food is grown in a safe environmental way. It is a way for a farmer to obtain a larger share (100 percent) of the consumers dollar (In 1998, the farmer received 20 cents versus 37 cents in 1980 of the consumer food dollar. The other 80 cents goes to the middleman.) It is a way for the farmer to have an established market for his product. It is an opportunity to be called "That is my farmer" by your customer.

**What does it mean to the consumer?** Consumers have access to high quality, wholesome, fresh food (24 hours or less old). The consumer has the opportunity to be part of choosing what food is grown. People have an opportunity to establish a connection with the land that many people feel they have lost. Consumers get high quality food at a low price. Consumers concerned about the environment can be part of the growing of the food in a safe way.

**What is the CSA origin?** The CSA movement began in Europe and Japan about 30 years ago. CSA's are based on community involvement in the social, economic and environmental conditions of the people. Local consumers formed a partnership with local farmers to produce food in a very environmentally friendly but profitable way. In addition to buying good, healthy (chemical free), wholesome food, the consumer groups were also very concerned or involved in the total welfare of the community and especially people who did not have an adequate food supply. These groups formed food distribution networks so everyone could share in the food bounty produced by the local farmers.

This concept began in the United States in the mid-80's. It grew to about 500 CSA farms by the mid-90's and reached 1,000 today. It is estimated more than 100,000 people are being fed by CSAs.. The U. S. trend is for the farmers to organize the CSA with the goal

of adding adequate value to food production from a few acres so they can make an acceptable living. Many CSA's have 200 to 300 shareholders with some in the 600 to 800 range and a few approaching 1000 shareholders.

**How are CSA's organized?** Typically, there are three groups involved: farmers, core group and consumers. The *farmers* develop the annual garden plan, grow and harvest the crops. The *core group* is about 5 to10 members, which include farmers and consumers, that are responsible for the distribution, promotion, fiscal arrangements, legal issues, etc of the organization. *Consumers* (shareholders) include all the people who purchase a membership or share in the CSA. The shareholders underwrite the harvest for the entire season.

There are four basic types of CSA's ranging from single farmer subscription to community based and focus.

1. Subscription or farmer-driven. The farmer organizes the CSA and makes most of the decisions. The shareholder or subscriber (member) is not involved in the farm management or production decisions. This model is becoming the most popular.
2. Shareholder or consumer-driven. Consumers organize the CSA and hire a farmer to grow what they want. The consumers make most of the decisions. This model is found more frequently in the Northeast. This could be a community-based group, church, regional food bank or a group of citizens wanting to eat healthy and wholesome fresh fruits and vegetables.
3. Farmer cooperative or alliance. A farmer driven CSA comprised of two or more farmers who supply the CSA shareholders or consumers. In most cases, this allows a wider variety of products of fruits and vegetables plus including eggs, milk, dairy, poultry and meat, even cut flowers, potted plants, and bedding plants resulting in a year around supply of food and products.
4. Farmer-consumer cooperative. The farmer and consumer co-own land and other resources and work together to produce the food. This is very much of a community effort.

**What are some of the unique features of a CSA?** Generally the food is organically grown. However, many of the farmers only use organic practices, but are not organically certified. Food wholesomeness, freshness, and chemical free is a higher priority than price which is generally the lowest priority. No herbicides, pesticides or artifical fertilizers are used that could affect water quality or leave toxic residues on the food. Members (farmers and consumers) feel a real commitment to protecting and the proper tending of the environment. CSA's give consumers the unique chance to choose how their food is grown. Consumers can participate in the preparing, planting, cultivation, growing, harvesting, and distribution of the crop. CSA is about the community. Some CSA's address important community issues of feeding the low income and poor people while others are part of a regional food bank. Some CSA's are formed by church groups or other community-based organizations to serve their goals and objectives. CSA's are about family and fun. Most CSA's have family days, festivals, and other social gatherings. Others are very family worker-based.

The following two quotes help explain the purpose and role of community supported agriculture. CSA's use the wholelistic conservation approach as stated in Sharing the Harvest… "Joining together in community supported agriculture is another step towards nurturing the interdependence among humans, the soil, and plants and other creatures." Also, "Is the CSA concept worth the trouble?" "Yes, it is significant to be involved—even a little--with growing food in a healthy way and seeing it through from ground to the kitchen."

**How does a farmer start a CSA?** A farmer needs to be known for quality products and must understand the consumer needs. A customer base must initially be established through Farmer's Markets, community groups, church groups, and neighbors or a combination of these. Many resources are available on how to organize, plan, and operate a CSA. Each CSA is unique. It is described by Elizabeth Henderson, co-author of "Sharing the Harvest"…"like having a baby—your unleash biological and social forces that may take you in directions you never expected. The are many common elements but each birth is unique." Resources are cited at the end of this note on how to organize, plan and operate a CSA. Here are some pointers from experienced CSA farmers:

1. Start small by growing 4 to5 of your favorite crops and marketing them at several local and nearby Farmers' Market for a couple of years to become familiar with production, marketing and customer techniques. One can increase the number of crops and packaging techniques each year.
2. Research and plan the CSA concept for at least 18 months before beginning.
3. Marketing is the more important than the production side of a CSA or a Farmers' Market and needs to be well understood.
4. You need an outlet to market your surplus food when operating a CSA such as a Farmers' Market or a food bank.
5. MOST IMPORTANT DECISION: Choosing the level of technology that is appropriate for you, your skills, and preferred lifestyle is one of the most important decisions you have to make.
6. A strong "core group" for policy, work, and communications from the farmer side and/or the consumer side is needed to guide the CSA unless it is a subscription only CSA.
7. A CSA of 40 members covers the cost of production, marketing and distribution, but leaves no living expenses for the farmer. A 100 member CSA will only provide income for a minimal level of living to the farmer.

**What makes a CSA a Success?** These tips are from a survey of experienced CSA operators.

1. Talk to other CSA farmers;
2. Start small;
3. Be prepared to work very hard;
4. Try to set up a core group;
5. Research consumer base in area;
6. Depend on many marketing outlets;
7. Try to carry on through the winter; and

8. Cooperate with other farmers.

Source: Cognition, Summer 1997, Vol. 21.No.3

**Why do CSA's fail?** The following pitfalls have been set forth as reasons why a CSA will fail for the benefit of those just starting out. These are:

1. Tendency of the farmer being to much production orientated and not enough consumer-orientated.
2. Farmer is not flexible enough in addressing the needs of members.
3. CSA is not large enough to supply the farmer's income need and the farmer's time is spent on other ventures.
4. There are few sources to obtain other food produced in a socially responsible manner, like organic meat, to expand the CSA.
5. Farmers are still undercharging for what they produce. Prices are set by what the market will bear rather than the actual costs of production which does not communicate the true needs of the farmer to the consumer. Resource material listed below has this information on pricing.
6. CSA's need to involve the shareholders to retain them.
7. Farmers' are not open to different opportunities.
8. Farmers are afraid to join together to provide more variety in vegetables, meats, dairy, and eggs which strengthens the CSA.
9. Consumers do not get sufficient information about the vegetables, preparation, and demonstrations.
10. Farmers providing too much food each time and too much variety.

**Where is there more information?** It is not a question of where do I get the information but what information do I want or need to look at. There is a tremendous amount of written material currently available from non profit, governmental agencies and farmers. There are three principle sources of information. CSA farmers and CSA coordinators, books and publications, and web sites. A list of some of those currently available is shown below.

***Resource Material***

CSA Farms in the United States 1999-2000 (A list of about 1,000 farms .), USDA Sustainable Network and Alternative Farming Information System Center (See web site below)

Sharing the Harvest: A Guide To Community Supported Agriculture, Elizabeth Henderson and Robyn Van En, Chelsea Green Publishing Company, White River Junction, VT, 800-639-409

Bio-Dynamic Farming and Gardening Association, 800-516-7797
www.prairienet.org/psca
www.biodynamics.com/csa.html
chat room csa-L@prairienet.org

California Certified Organic Farmers
www.ccof.org

Future Harvest/Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture, 301-405-8762

Resource Guide for Producers and Organizers, Iowa State University, 515-294-0887

Community Supported Agriculture, Appropriate Technology for Rural Areas (ATTRA),
A collection of papers, articles and publications.
800-346-9140
www.attra.org

USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE), 202-720-5203
www.sare.org

USDA' Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC), 301-504-6559
www.nal.usda.gov/afsic or afsic@nal.usda.gov for personal requests

National Organic Growers
North American Direct Farmers Marketing Association

Iowa Network for Community Agriculture

Madison Area CSA Coalition, 608-226-0300 ext. 204
www.wisc.edu/cias/macsac

The Michael Fields Institute (Upper Midwest), 262-642-3303
mfai@mfai.org

Northeast Organic Food and Farm Alliance, 810-632-7952
hnccinc@ismi.net
www.moffa.org

Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society, 701-883-4304
tpnpsas@drservices.com
www.npasa.org

Ohio Ecological Food and Farming Association, 614-267-3663
Oeffa@iwaynet.net
www.greenlink.org/oeffa

Oregon Tilth, 503-738-0690

Robyn Van En Center, Wilson College, 717-264-4141, ext 3247

Sustainable Earth, 765-463-9366
sbonney@iquest.net

Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (Southern Region), 501-587-0888
Ssfarm@juno.com

Tilth Producers, 206-442-7620

Just Food (NY) 212-6771602

Madison Area CSA Coalition
606-226-0300
www.wisc.edu/cias/macsac

USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service and state land grant universities state and local extension offices under Federal government in your phone book.

Prepared by James A. Maetzold, National Alternative Enterprises and Agritourism Leader, USDA/NRCS, October 2000.

*Foreword by Joel Salatin*

**Including Stories From the Frontlines of The Marketplace!**

# Dynamic Farmers' Marketing

A Guide to Successfully Selling *Your* Farmers' Market Products

*by Jeff Ishee*

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# Adding Value for Sustainability

## A Guidebook for Cooperative Extension Agents and Other Agricultural Professionals

By
Kristen Markley
*Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture*

and Duncan Hilchey
*Farming Alternatives Program, Cornell University*

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# *SHARING THE HARVEST*

## A Guide to Community Supported Agriculture

Elizabeth Henderson with Robyn Van En

Foreword by Joan Dye Gussow

CHELSEA GREEN PUBLISHING COMPANY
White River Junction, Vermont
Totnes, England

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## What do I need for . . . Getting Started at a Farmers' Market?

So you've decided to try selling at a farmers' market. The gardens are weeded, the harvest is starting, and it's time to sell. What equipment and techniques will you need to help sell your produce?

### *Car, Pickup, Van or Truck*

Is your vehicle large enough? This is a major consideration, for not only will you have your produce and the containers you intend to display it in, but you'll also need tables or some kind of structure to keep your displayed food off the ground. Don't forget that you'll need room to transport a sign with your name and farm location, and maybe a chair to sit in. Practice packing before you actually are about to head out to market.

### *Display*

How will you be displaying your produce? Some people use leftover boxes from the local supermarkets; these may not hold up well in damp conditions and don't look especially attractive to potential customers. Used *wooden* boxes such as apple crates can be painted or left unfinished to make an attractive display. Baskets can be purchased in bushel, half-bushel, peck and half-peck sizes. Unpainted wood stays wet and cool longer when watered than painted wood or plastic. Remember to bring all sizes of baskets and containers, as this helps keep your display looking full. Display containers should blend well with and enhance your produce's appearance, not steal attention from it. Browns, brick reds, dark greens, dark blues and natural wood colors will contrast well with the many different colors of produce in your display.

Physical characteristics of your farmers' market display are vital to the success of your effort. *All* displays should have the following common features:

@ - A distinct sign with your name or the name of your farm.
@ - All items should be clearly visible and easy to reach.
@- *Everything* must have the price clearly marked.

### *Protect your Produce*

Choose containers that protect tender produce from drying wind and sun. A spray mister bottle is the best way to keep your produce moist and fresh; bring plenty of cool, fresh water. Once wilted, your produce won't come back. Lettuce and radish tops wilt fast. Too long in the sun, and beans no longer snap when bent. Cukes and zucchini will eventually soften in direct sun. Raspberries should be kept in a cooler with a thick layer of ice on the bottom.

Tip your baskets and containers slightly so that it appears produce is so plentiful that it is spilling out. This illusion of plenty creates a "bigger choice" for the customer, which is what all people want . . . more choices.

### *Shade*

Where is your market located, under the trees or in the open parking lot? Shade is very important because limp, sunburned produce does not sell well. Since many farmers' markets are held rain or shine, investing in a tarp or cover is practically essential. Many clever home-made designs for supporting tarps look quite attractive, but make sure your structure can withstand the wind. Stay away from blue tarps unless the product you are selling looks good under blue light; most produce does not. Beach umbrellas work well for small setups, but may be especially troublesome on breezy days. A square canopy is a great investment.

### *Volume or Weight?*

How will you be selling your produce? A legal scale will be required if you are to sell by weight. Depending on local tradition, some products sell better by weight, and some better by unit. Customary methods include corn by the dozen, green beans by the pound. You can even sell by the bagful, or by the quart. Transferring small fruit or cherry tomatoes from pint containers into a bag at the point of purchase allows you to re-use the more expensive berry box over and over.

### *Listing Prices*

The average customer is shy, and will not ask a price. A large, attractive chalkboard or individual price signs for each container of produce is welcomed, especially for shoppers new to the market or new to your stand. Develop a kit that comes to market with you. You should include chalk and an eraser; tags (blank business cards are perfect), 5x8 un-ruled index cards, markers, scissors, tape and pens.

Rubber bands come in handy when you bunch products like radishes or asparagus.

Include a pad of note paper for jotting down new marketing ideas or special order requests from customers, or to give your name and phone number to a customer.

### *Bags*

Always be on the lookout for bags of all sizes. Many customers are glad to recycle or donate their paper and plastic grocery bags. Always express your gratitude while accepting them, as there may be a time you'll run out of bags. Check out your community recycling center for an endless source of bags.

If need be, bags can be purchased at many of the larger "wholesale-type" stores. Trays made from soft drink boxes are efficient for transporting large numbers of seedlings.

### *Handling Cash*

How will you handle your cash at the market? A cash box for bills and change keeps everything centralized and orderly. Some vendors use aprons, or wear clothes with big pockets so that they may roam about the stand and yet be able to make a sale from any point without having to run back to the vehicle. Others work out of a cash box they keep on a table or in the back of the vehicle. Keep bills out of sight and where they will not likely to be blown away by wind. Some farmers find it useful to record every sale in writing for reconciliation at the end of the day.

Bring plenty of change! The day you forget to bring sufficient small bills and coins will be the day your first two customers will only have $20 (or $50) bills! Bring enough change to cover at least your first two customers handing you a $20 bill. (Remember, if YOU are the farmer breaking the big bills, that means the shoppers are going to your stand first!) Most other sellers at market will be glad to help out if you run short of change, and you should be happy to do the same for them; but, don't become a pest by relying on your neighbors to bring enough change for your operation!

### *Setting your Prices*

There are entire books written on this subject, but I'll include here just a few tips. The "Farmers' Market Report" published by the Virginia Department of Agriculture can give you current prices in their listing of farmers' markets around the state. Call 1-800-552-5521 and listen to the menu, press numeral [5], wait, then press numeral [8].

Other guides are local supermarket prices, other sellers at market, or whatever you feel you can justify charging. Walking the market to note what other members are charging and even asking them about their pricing is *not* price collusion, it is simply trading information. Getting together with other members to "set" prices, however, is illegal.

Bear in mind that supermarkets often make no money on produce! To them produce is an attraction to get customers into the store; they offer "loss-leaders" knowing shoppers will probably purchase more than they intended. Be honest about the value of what you are offering. Don't be afraid to charge more if your customers agree that it is of superior quality. (And vice versa, of course.) If an item is selling very fast and you will soon sell out, you may have priced it too low for that situation. Learn to judge the market by how things are selling and adjust your prices accordingly. Note, however, that a day of slow sales usually indicates not enough customers at market, and this can not be improved by lowering prices. Hold firm to your price, and give extra to the customers that do come out.

Remember that it is your responsibility to begin the process of educating consumers that what they are getting from you is NOT what they would get at the supermarket. This *really is* "**farm fresh**," and therefore comparison pricing is somewhat irrelevant. Cutting your price often results in only marginally more sales, and it generates in many buyers a distrust of the product being offered at "fire sale" pricing. Offering a volume discount on greater *quantities* works better than lowering prices on small unit sales.

### *Clean, Attractive and Orderly*

Simple things like misting and rotating your produce can make the difference between making and losing a sale. Produce with soil on it sends most shoppers to buy elsewhere. This may mean you need to wipe your cukes and tomatoes with a damp cloth after a rainy day to remove dirt spots. Many farmers may have good healthy produce, but axle grease under their nails. That will not encourage people to buy your produce. It's a free country, but think twice before sitting down on the tailgate to read the newspaper with a cigarette dangling from your mouth. Surveys have proven that tobacco use is a "turn off" to many customers. Keep moving, chatting with fellow vendors. Customers love the "hum" of a good market. Above all, smile and talk to your prospects. Learn their first name. This will, more often than not, bring repeat sales in the future.

### *Know What You Are Selling*

You'll find that some customers will quiz you on what variety of produce you are selling, what pesticides were used, when it was picked, how long it will last, and how to prepare it. People who ask questions are your most valuable target market - they care about their food supply. When you can, engage each customer in conversation for at least 60 seconds. If you can do that, they'll buy something. Also, let your customers pick out what *they* want. Just hold the bag and continue your conversation. Nine times out of ten, they'll fill it up!

### *For more help*

The Virginia Farmers' Direct Marketing Association offers help and advice to markets and farmers. Write to:

VA FDMA
P.O. Box 1163
Richmond, VA 23218

Jeff Ishee is V.P. of the VA FDMA and Farm Director for WSVA Radio in Harrisonburg. He is also a columnist and author of the book *"Dynamic Farmers' Marketing: A Guide to Successfully Selling Your Farmers' Market Products."* The book is available via Amazon.com, or by sending $22.45 (ppd.) to:

Jeff Ishee
Bittersweet Farmstead
P.O. Box 52
Middlebrook, VA 24459

# Horticultural Business Management and Marketing Program

## SMART MARKETING BULLETINS

2000
1999
1994
1993
1992
1991
1990
1989
1988

The following bulletins are in PDF format. You will need a PDF file reader to view them. If you do not already have a PDF reader, you can download a free copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader.

| Date | Title | Author(s) | File Size |
|---|---|---|---|
| May 2000 | Ways to Add Value to Farm Milk | M. Stephenson | 32 KB |
| Mar. 2000 | Adapting to Changing Markets with New Products | K. Rowles | 29 KB |
| Feb. 2000 | Impact of Generic Milk Advertising on New York State Markets | H. Kaiser | 29 KB |
| Jan. 2000 | A Growing Dilemma | K. Park | 17 KB |
| Dec. 1999 | Travel the Road to Success with a Marketing Plan | W.L. Uva | 37 KB |
| Nov. 1999 | What is Marketing? | M. Brunk | 16 KB |
| Jan. 1994 | New Competition in Food Retailing | R. Hawkes | 15 KB |
| Dec. 1993 | Your Most Important Asset | D. Perosio | 15 KB |
| Oct. 1993 | Know Your Customer's Income | E. Figueroa | 12 KB |
| Aug. 1993 | Smart Marketing Can Help the Environment Too | R. Hawkes | 28 KB |
| July 1993 | Can Labels Increase Sales of Perishable Products? | E. Figueroa | 13 KB |
| Mar. 1993 | Service with a Smile is Good Business | W. Lesser | 12 KB |
| Sept. 1992 | Know Your Competitors -- They Know You! | D. Perosio | 15 KB |
| Aug. 1992 | Cooperation is Essential to Compete Abroad | E. Figueroa | 13 KB |
| July 1992 | Quality is the Key to Success for Food Marketers | R. Hawkes | 13 KB |
| June 1992 | Consider Using Export Markets | E. Figueroa | 13 KB |

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| May 1992 | Farm Direct Marketers Should Band Together | E. Figueroa | 13 KB |
| Apr. 1992 | Market Research .... Who, Me? | D. Perosio | 14 KB |
| Mar. 1992 | Some Fresh Foods are Convenient, Too | W. Lesser | 13 KB |
| Mar. 1992 | Dairy Product Sales Determined by More Than Price | D. Russo and E. McLaughlin | 13 KB |
| Feb. 1992 | Opportunities for Local Producers Will Expand in Coming Decade | D. Russo | 14 KB |
| Dec. 1991 | What is in a Price? | B. Anderson | 15 KB |
| Nov. 1991 | Strategic Market Planning Can Work for You | D. Perosio | 13 KB |
| Sept. 1991 | Be Creative When Marketing Your Business | D. Perosio | 15 KB |
| Aug. 1991 | Smart Marketing Means Keeping Customers Happy | D. Perosio | 15 KB |
| June 1991 | Produce Packaging Poses Disposal Dilemma | E. Figueroa | 12 KB |
| May 1991 | Consumer Attitudes on bST Reflect Lack of Information | H. Kaiser | 16 KB |
| Apr. 1991 | Farmers Can Get Bigger Share of Food Dollar | D. Russo and E. McLaughlin | 14 KB |
| Mar. 1991 | Dairy Farmers Bargaining in Unfavorable Market | B. Henehan and B. Anderson | 15 KB |
| Oct. 1990 | Fresh and Frozen Markets Take More NY Apples | E. Figueroa | 13 KB |
| July 1990 | Small Farm Businesses Can Compete with the Big Guys | J. Green | 13 KB |
| May 1990 | Time Not Ripe for Labeling Produce | E. Figueroa | 13 KB |
| Feb. 1990 | Supermarkets Use Varied Tactics to Entice Consumers | J. Mackin | 14 KB |
| Jan. 1990 | What is a Dairy Surplus? | M. Keniston | 13 KB |

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| Dec. 1989 | Dairy Promotion Seems Worth the Cost | M. Keniston, A. Novakovic and O. Forker | 14 KB |
| Nov. 1989 | What Will Food Customers Want in the 1990s? | G. German | 14 KB |
| Oct. 1989 | Get Ready for More Competitive Markets | B. Anderson | 15 KB |
| Aug.-Sept. 1988 | Cheese Production Takes Growing Share of NY Milk | M. Keniston and A. Novakovic | 13 KB |
| July 1989 | Farmers Weigh Cooperatives Against Private Firms | B. Henehan and B. Anderson | 14 KB |
| June 1989 | When Prices Are High, Nobody Cares About Marketing | W. Lesser | 12 KB |
| May 1989 | Break Into New Markets Well Informed | J. Green | 14 KB |
| Apr. 1989 | Food Marketers Must Be Alert to Lifestyle Changes | R. Hawkes | 14 KB |
| Apr. 1989 | Are Dairy Farmers Getting Their 15 Cents Worth? | H. Kaiser | 15 KB |
| Mar. 1989 | A Global Look at Food Prices | R. Hawkes | 13 KB |
| Dec. 1988 | Achieving a Desired Gross Margin Through Retail Sales | G. German | 15 KB |
| July 1988 | Use Marketing Research to Gauge Product's Potential | W. Lesser | 15 KB |
| June 1988 | Seasonality is a Problem for NY Dairy Industry | H. Kaiser | 13 KB |
| May 1988 | FAX Machine Is Good Marketing Tool | E. Figueroa | 13 KB |
| Apr. 1988 | Fruit and Vegetable Producers Should Pool Resources for Promotion | E. Figueroa | 13 KB |
| Mar. 1988 | Consumers' Food Choices: Implications for Marketers | E. McLaughlin | 13 KB |
| Feb. 1988 | Make Sure Your Cooperative Is Working For You | B. Anderson | 17 KB |

## Purposes and Aims

Cider Mill is a functioning apple cider mill and farm on the Howard County Inventory of Historic Places. It stands on about 59 acres of fields and woods. The purpose of our tours is to educate children and adults in traditional cider making, farm animals and pond life in an informal, hands-on atmosphere supplementing the classroom. We aim to coordinate our offerings with school curricula. We will be pleased to work with teachers and other group leaders prior to their visit so as to maximize the value of an experience at the Cider Mill Farm.

## Policies

**Late Arrivals:** Being on time helps us in giving the best quality tour possible. Late arrivals may be charged a late fee or have their tour modified to fit the time available.

**Minimum Groups:** A minimum of 10 children is required for all guided tours.

**Rain:** The Cider Mill is always open and our tour guides are ready, rain or shine. If you wish to postpone your trip due to rain, please call early on the morning of your trip to reschedule.

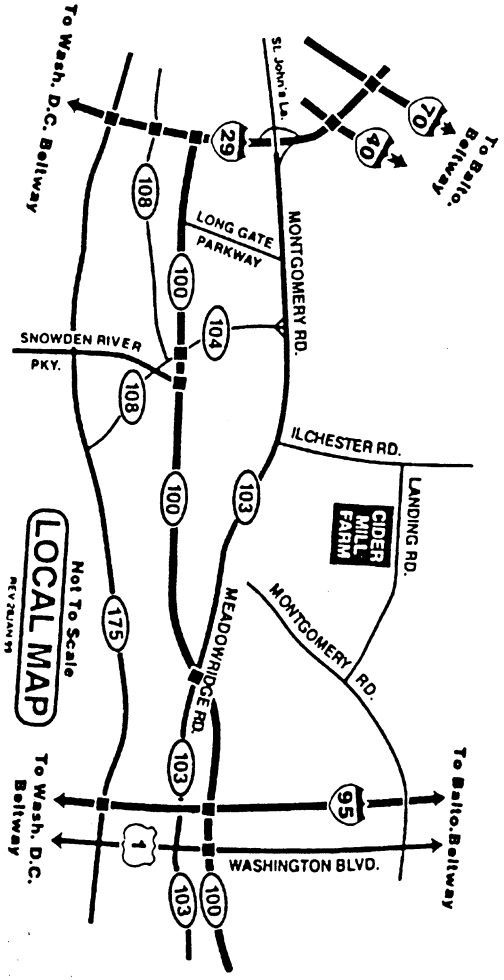
**Payment:** Payment is due the day of the tour by cash or check.

**Also Available:**
Petting Farm walk-through-$1.50 per person
Pony Ride (Weekends only)-$2.00 per child



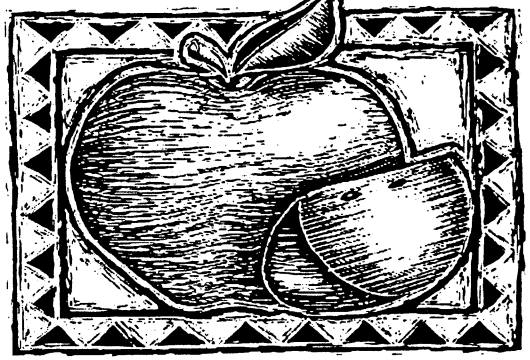
# BEING ON TIME IS IMPORTANT!

Please note our location and call **410•788•9595** or visit our website at **www.FarmMd.com** if you need further assistance with directions.




Open 7 days a week, 9am-4pm

# THE HISTORIC



# CIDER MILL AND PETTING FARM

5012 LANDING ROAD • ELKRIDGE • MARYLAND • 21075

## 2000 SPRING PROGRAM

**Choose from TWO Exciting & Educational Field Trips!**

**Tours Available**
April 10 through June 9, 2000

Open 7 days a week, 9am-4pm

**Call 410•788•9595**
visit our website at www.FarmMd.com
email: Cider@FarmMd.com

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# CIDER MILL FARM, Ltd.

## BAKERY & PETTING FARM, Ltd.

**5012 Landing Rd., Elkridge, MD 21075** **(410) 788-9595**
**EMAIL** Cider@FarmMd.com **WEB** http://FarmMd.com

## 1999 FALL WEEKEND ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE
### Open 7 Days, 10AM-6PM

**SEPT. 11-12 Early Apple Press Days and Grandparents Day.** Cider Mill season opens with free cider and apple for grandparents accompanied by grandchildren. **Goat World opens.** Hayrides on the hour, pony rides, bakery, country store, petting farm, apples, pies. Open 10am-6pm.

**SEPT 18-19 Founders Day.** Square dancing (1-2pm both days), petting farm, pony rides, Goat World, hayrides on the hour, baked goods, cider, apples. Open 10am-6pm.

**SEPT. 25-26 Harvest Days.** Storytelling Weekend: **Sat.:** Ann Loar Brooks, **Sun.:** Tracy Radosivec (1-3pm both days). Sheep shearing demo (1-3pm both days). Pumpkin patch opens. Scarecrow making begins (noon-4pm). Decoy making with Richard and Frances Gick, petting farm, hayrides, Goat World, pony rides, cider, pies, bakery. Open 10am-6pm.

**OCT. 2-3 Apple Days.** Footnotes (formerly Calico Cloggers) (1-2pm both days). The Thomas Sisters sing country-gospel (2-3pm both days). Fresh made caramel apples, pumpkins, cider, scarecrow making (noon-4pm), Goat World, pony rides, hayrides, pumpkin patch, bakery. Open 10am-6pm.

**OCT. 9-10 Teddy Bear Farm Visit.** Teddy bear contest and hayrides (1 & 3 pm). Bring your bears! Folk singing with Tony McGuffin (noon-4pm), petting farm, Goat World, pony rides, pumpkin patch, hayrides, apples, pumpkins, pies, scarecrow making (noon-4pm). Open 10am-6pm.

**OCT. 16-17 Apples & Pumpkins! Sat.:** Pop musicians Jim & Mike Carothers (noon-2pm). **Sun.:** fiddler Terry O'Neill (1-3pm), basket weaver Susan Gribble (1-3pm). Cider, bakery, store, petting farm, Goat world, pony and hayrides, scarecrow making (noon-4pm), fall decorations, pumpkin patch. Open 10am-6pm.

**OCT. 23-24 Kangaroo Kids Weekend.** Professional jumprope team (1-1:45pm both days). **Sun.:** Fiddler Drew Vervan (2-4pm). Caramel apples, bakery, store, apples, cider, pumpkins, petting farm, pony rides & hayrides, Goat World, pumpkin patch, scarecrow making (noon-4pm). Open 10am-6pm.

**OCT. 30-31 Halloween Weekend.** Costume contests 12:45 and 2:15pm–prizes for all! **Sat.:** Students from Catonsville Elementary School (noon-12:45pm). **Sat. & Sun.:** Footnotes professional cloggers (1-2pm). Cider, apples, store, bakery, petting farm, pony rides, hayrides, Goat World, pumpkin patch, scarecrow making (noon-4pm). Open 10am-6pm.

**NOV. 6-7 Living History–Colonial Days.** Interpreter Jim Roane (1-3pm both days). Apples, petting farm, pony rides, hayrides on the hour, Goat World, cider, bakery, store. **Place order for a Thanksgiving pie.** Open 10am-6pm.

**NOV. 13-14 Living History–Pilgrim Times** See and learn about Pilgrim homes, their diet, games and chores (1 & 3pm). Order Thanksgiving pies, cider, store, Goat World, petting farm, hayrides on the hr., pony rides. Open 10am-6pm.

**NOV. 20-21 Living History–Pilgrim Times** Same as above, *plus*: free hayride to every person bringing a canned good donation. All food is donated to Elkridge Food Bank. Petting farm, pony rides, Goat World, cider, pies. Order Thanksgiving pies! Open 10am-6pm.

**NOV. 24 Our Last Full Day Open for the Season.** Pick up pie orders and apple cider (great to freeze!). Shop early for Christmas gifts! Open 10am-6pm.

**NOV. 25 Thanksgiving Day.** Open 10am-2pm. Pick up pie orders and last minute cider!

Over 83 years in Howard County.

Rev. 17Jul99

VIII-40

**CALL FOR INFORMATION • BRING YOUR CAMERA! • CHERYL NODAR**

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CIDER MILL FARM, Ltd.

BAKERY & PETTING FARM, Ltd.

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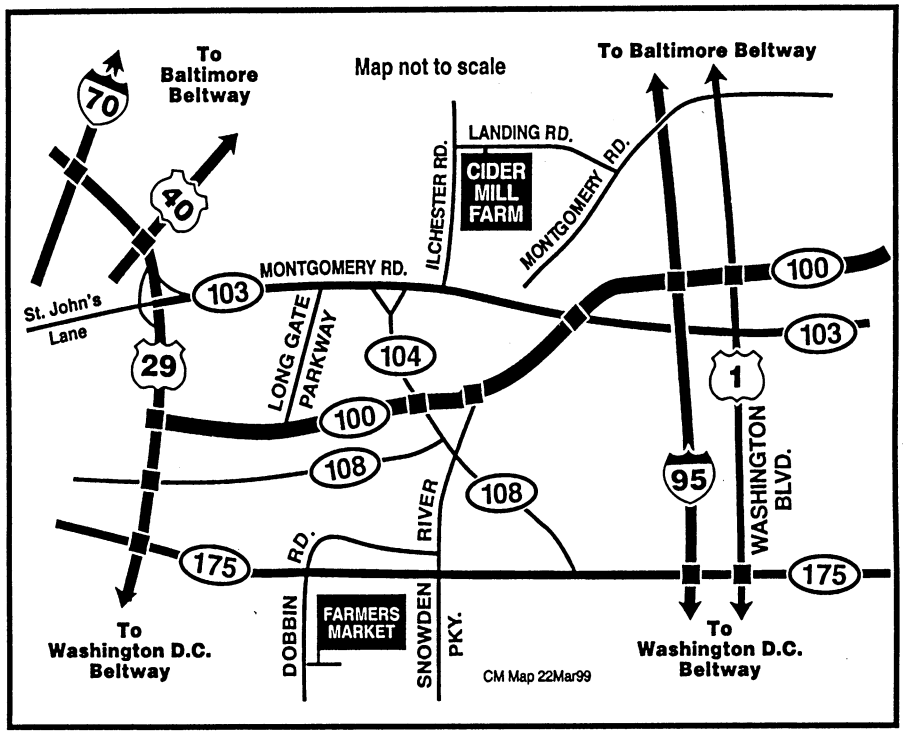
**Petting Farm, Hayrides, Pony Rides, Cider Making, Scarecrow Making, Goat World, Pumpkin Patch, Educational Programs, Pictures, Country Store & Bakery: Cold and Hot Cider, Hot Pies, Cookies, Bread, Muffins, Honey, Jams, Jellies, Pumpkins, Herbs**

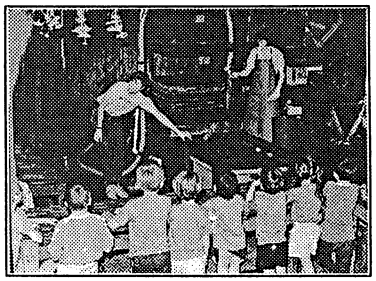



OPEN: SEPTEMBER 11 TO NOVEMBER 25, 1999

**Crisp, Juicy Apples**

***See Fresh Cider Pressed!***

***Bring a jug if you like***



Cider Making, historic rack & cloth method

Rev. 17Jul99

# FIELD TRIP 1
## "A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FARMER"

Your personal guide conducts a hands-on educational experience that teaches children all about our many farm animals. The children help feed the sheep and goats and learn to milk our cow! There is also a brief explanation about the importance of farming and where our food comes from. All children receive their own seed, soil and a pot for a take home project. The tour winds up with a fun hayride.

**TOUR TIME: 80 MINUTES**

**COSTS:** $6 per child ($5.50 w/o hayride)
$3 Adults
Free to Teachers

**OPTIONAL PONY RIDES:** $1 per child

# FIELD TRIP 2
## "OUR POND AND THE CREATURES IN IT"

Your personal guide will walk you down to our farm pond and teach the children about the web of life that exists within the pond. Then each child will take turns using an aquatic net to catch a variety of pond life. After this very "hands-on" experience, you will go on a fun hayride for a grand conclusion to this special tour.

**TOUR TIME: 80 MINUTES**

**COSTS:** $6 per child ($5.50 w/o hayride)
$3 Adults
Free to Teachers

**OPTIONAL PONY RIDES:** $1 per child

**CALL ABOUT OUR NEW SUMMER PROGRAM**
**JUNE 26 - JULY 28 2000**
**410 • 788 • 9595**

## **RESERVATIONS** ARE BEING TAKEN **NOW!**

Call 410•788•9595 or apply online at www.FarmMd.com/forms.html

**Ask us about the special discounts we offer!**

- A minimum of **10 children** is required for all guided tours
- Our **country store** offers fresh homemade baked goods, jams, jellies, honey and much more!
- Bring a lunch and make use of our **large picnic fields.** Plenty of **free parking.**

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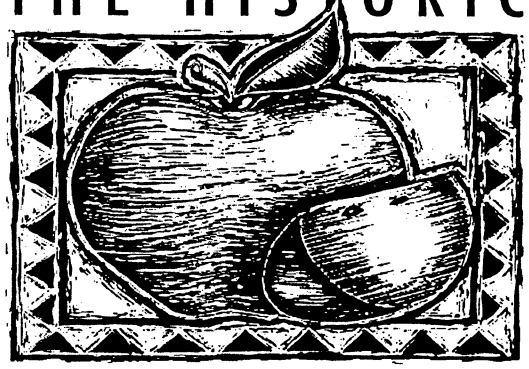

**CIDER MILL** AND **PETTING FARM**

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## *Tailwinds Bed & Breakfast*

Relax in country comfort in our restored Victorian farmhouse; watch horses graze from your window, visit with Jeepers the goat, and help gather the eggs from the henhouse. After a hearty farm breakfast, take a riding lesson or go fishing at Tailwinds, or follow us to Fair Hill for a trail ride or carriage ride.

Horse Owners: Bring your horses and stable them overnight in our beautiful 17-stall barn. Ride in our indoor ring or trailer 10 minutes to Fair Hill for unlimited riding on 5,000 gorgeous acres. We are minutes away from special attractions in Maryland, Delaware and Pennsylvania.

$75.00/room/night

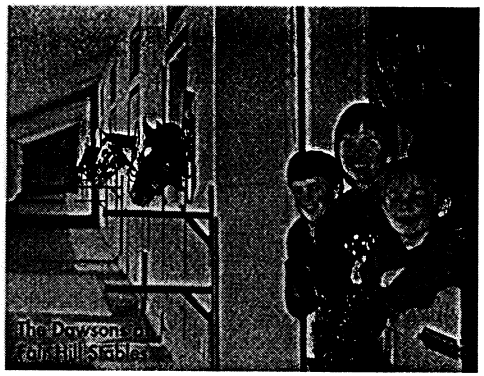
$25.00/stall/night (includes hay, grain, turnout.)

Check-in time: 3:00 - 8:00 pm. Check-out time: 11:00 am
No deposit required. Cancellations 7 days prior to arrival requested. Children 8 and over welcome.

## *Fee Fishing & Fish Tournaments*

A great family activity! On the pond at Tailwinds, beginning in the summer of 2000. Call (410) 658-8187 for details.





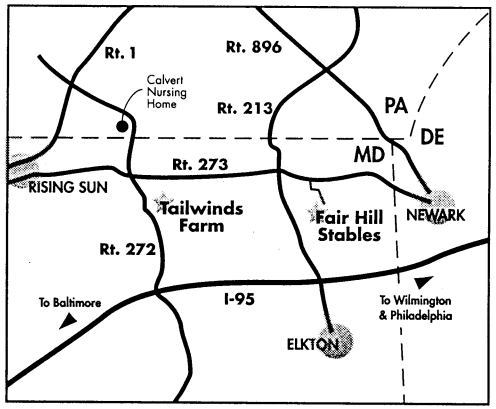

## *About The Dawsons*

Ted and JoAnn Dawson combine years of business and horse experience, first as owners of Fairview Follies, a carriage and pony ride business, then as managers of Carousel Farm & Riding Stables in Wilmington, DE from 1986 to 1998.

JoAnn has a B.S. degree from the University of Delaware in Animal Science/Ag Education and a Masters Degree in Education and has taught Animal Science and Equine Science at both high school and college levels. She has successfully competed at local and regional hunter shows and events and sits on the board of the Delaware Horse Show Association. She is a member of the Maryland Horse Council, the Maryland Tourism Committee, the North American Horseman's Association and a board member of the Fair Hill Nature Center. Through her membership in the Screen Actors Guild she works in film and television as an actress and horse wrangler, most recently on *Beloved*, *The Sixth Sense*, and *America's Most Wanted*.

Ted holds a B.S. degree from the University of DE in Business Administration and Finance. He has an extensive farming background, including dairy, crops, livestock and fish farming. He is a member of the Farm Bureau as well as the North American Horseman's Association.

The Dawsons' two boys, Zachary and Nicholas, enjoy all sports, including horseback riding!




We are only minutes from Newark or Wilmington, DE & Elkton, MD; one hour from Philadelphia and Baltimore!

*Open daily year round!*
*Gift certificates available.*

Please call for reservations for any of our services.
Same-day reservations accepted for trail rides and carriage rides.

(Subject to availability.)

Services at Fair Hill Stables are in cooperation with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

Cash or checks accepted.

**All prices subject to 6% Maryland amusement tax.**

FairWinds Farm & Stables, Inc.
*Providing services at:*

## *Fair Hill Stables*

Fair Hill State Park
Route 273, Entrance 3
Fair Hill, MD

**(410) 620-3883**

*and*

TAILWINDS FARM
NORTH EAST, MARYLAND

41 Tailwinds Lane
North East, MD 21901

**(410) 658-8187**

www.fairwindsstables.com

Trail Rides ♦ Riding Lessons
Horse-drawn Carriages ♦ Hay Rides
Pony Rides ♦ Summer Camp
Horse Shows ♦ Special Events
Bed & Breakfast

Ted & JoAnn Dawson
*Owners/Operators*

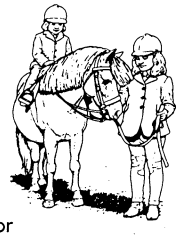
Another group heading out for a trail ride at Fair Hill.

## Guided Trail Rides

Our one-hour trail rides on quiet, dependable horses through breathtaking woods and fields will help you get away from it all. You'll see why Fair Hill was chosen as the film location for Oprah Winfrey's "Beloved." And you may be riding one of the horses used in the film! Children must be at least 8 years old.

1 hour trail ride . . . . . .$25.00 per person
Children (8-12) . . . . . .$20.00 per person
Organizations . . . . . .$20.00 per person

## Pony Rides



For the little ones!! At Fair Hill Stables we offer pony rides every Sat. & Sun. 12-3pm or for weekday groups by reservation.

$2.00 per ride
$25.00 per 1/2 hour
$50.00 per hour

**To book ponies at your location for birthday parties, fairs, events, etc. please call Tailwinds Farm.**

$90.00/hour . . . . . .One pony
$75.00/hour (each) . . .Two or more ponies

## Carriage Rides

Great for special occasions! Your choice of a 1/2 hour ride to the Fair Hill Inn for dinner (we drive your car over for you!), a 1 hour ride through the park or a "Carriage Picnic" which includes a 1/2 hour ride to the Covered Bridge, a picnic lunch on a blanket by the pond, and a 1/2 hour ride back to the stable. What could be more romantic?

1/2 hour ride to the Inn . . . .$40.00
1 hour ride . . . . . .$75.00
Carriage picnic . . . . . .$125.00
Driving Lessons . . . . . .$35.00 per hour

**To rent carriages for weddings, festivals, etc., call Tailwinds Farm.**

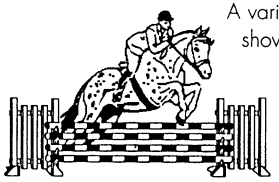
We also offer sleigh rides when there's enough snow! Call for availability.

## Hayrides

A one hour tractor-drawn hayride through woods and fields at Fair Hill followed by a cozy bonfire is a great activity for your group or organization. Hayrides of up to six wagons (25 people per wagon) are offered year round.

$75.00 per wagon (includes bonfire)
$65.00 per wagon (no bonfire)
$100 per wagon per hour off premises at your location

## Horse Shows



A variety of spring and summer shows are offered including Paper Chases, Dressage and Schooling shows in "The Big Ring." Call for a prize list. Fall Series of shows to be held in the indoor ring at Tailwinds Farm.

## Riding Lessons

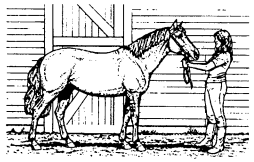
Beginner through advanced lessons are taught by qualified instructors both at Fair Hill Stables and in the indoor ring at Tailwinds Farm.

Group lesson . . . . . .$25.00 per hour
Semi-private lesson . . . .$30.00 per hour
Private lesson . . . . . .$35.00 per hour

## Birthday Parties

Your choice of a trail ride, hayride and/or pony rides at Fair Hill will make your birthday party fun for all ages. Must be over 8 years old for trail rides. Parties also held at Tailwinds with pony rides, a petting zoo and fishing in the pond. Call for prices and reservations.

## Summer Camp



Children ages 8-13 learn all about safety, riding and horse care through hands-on experience. Then kids can show off what they've learned at our Friday camp show and bar-be-que. Residential camp offered the last two weeks of August.

Day Camp: Mon. - Fri. 9am - 4pm . . . . .$220.00
Extended hours: 8am - 5pm . . . . . .$5.00/hr.
Residential Camp: Sun. - Fri. . . . . .$435.00

## Horse Covers Program

Originally developed for Girl Scouts to earn their badge, this program is offered to other groups as well, covering grooming, tacking and horse care with a hands-on approach. Followed by a mounted demonstration and ride in the ring. May also include a one hour trail ride upon request.

$15.00 per person (lecture & ring lesson)
$35.00 per person (includes trail ride)

## School Trips

Teachers choose one or a combination of six different activities: carriage rides, pony rides, hayride, grooming and saddling demonstration, ring riding at a walk or a trail ride. Plans may be made at the stables only, or begin at the stables and continue at the Fair Hill Nature Center where we transport the children via hayride.

$2.00 per child each activity except:
$4.00 per child for ring riding
$20.00 per child for trail ride (must be 8 or older)

## Horse Sense Class

If you love horses, want to know more about them, or are thinking of buying one, this 10 week class is for you. Hands-on experience in selection, conformation, feeding, stabling, first aid, breeds, colors, markings, etc. is taught by JoAnn on Tuesdays in the Spring and Fall from 6pm - 8pm at Tailwinds Farm. Call (410) 658-8187 for exact dates and to register.

## Special Events

We love Christmas. **Santa** spends a weekend in his sleigh at Fair Hill Stables, listening to the little one's requests. Afterwards, take a pony ride and carriage ride and visit with the horses in their stalls. Second weekend of Dec., 12-3 pm.

At Tailwinds, we remember the reason for the season: A **Live Nativity** in the stable, with music, the reading of the Christmas story, Bible characters in costume and, of course, the animals. Third weekend of Dec., 6:00-8:00 pm.

In April, Tailwinds Farm presents **"Horseplay - A History of Man and Horse."** This one-of-a kind drama chronicles the age-old relationship between man and horse with music, characters in costume, and live horses in action. A must-see for horse lovers! Call 410-658-8187 for date and time.

Don't miss these special events!

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

August 2000

# Farmers Market Coloring Book

## "How to Buy" Guides!

Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA publishes a series of "How to Buy" guides which are geared towards consumers. Some producers like to distribute them to their farm direct marketing customers at the farmers market or at their farm stand.

The "How to Buy" guides are available free of charge. If you would like to receive copies to distribute please indicate the quantity below and your mailing address.

_____ How to buy fresh fruits
_____ How to buy fresh vegetables
_____ How to buy canned and frozen fruits
_____ How to buy canned and frozen vegetables
_____ How to buy meat
_____ How to buy poultry
_____ How to buy dairy products
_____ How to buy butter
_____ How to buy cheese
_____ How to buy eggs
_____ How to buy potatoes

Send your request to /fax/email it to:

Denny Johnson
USDA/AMS/TM/WAM
Room 2644 South
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0269
Phone: (202) 690-0531
Fax: (202) 690-0031
Email: denny.johnson@usda.gov

## Wholesale and Alternative Markets Publications

Orders should be submitted by post, e-mail or fax to:
Velma R. Lakins
Wholesale and Alternative Markets Program - USDA
Room 2644 - South
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250-0269
Fax: (202) 690-0031
Phone: (202) 720-8317
Email: velma.lakins@usda.gov

Please check the publications that you would like to receive. All of them are available free of charge:

___ Marketing Alternatives for the Revitalization of the Lynchburg Farmers Market, Lynchburg, VA 5/1983.
___ Proposed Master Plan, Montgomery State Farmers' Market, 12/1983.
___ Virginia Wholesale Farmers Market. Feasibility Study, 10/1984.
___ Improved Food Distribution Facilities for Southern New Jersey, 1/1986.
___ Expansion Planning for the Connecticut Regional Market at Hartford, 12/1986.
___ Improved Wholesale Food Marketing Facilities for Buffalo, NY, 5/1987.
___ Plans for Improved Wholesale Food Distribution Facilities for San Diego, CA, 8/1988.
___ Feasibility of Establishing a Farmers' Market in Tupelo, Mississippi, 9/1988.
___ Feasibility of Establishing a Wholesale Farmers' Market Upstate South Carolina, 12/1988.
___ Revitalization of Marketing Facilities for Syracuse, New York, 1/1989.
___ Wholesale Food Distribution Center Growth Development (Maryland Wholesale Food Center at Jessup, MD), 9/1989.
___ The West Harlem-Hudson Piers Meat Study, New York, NY, 1/1990.
___ The Southwestern Michigan Fruit and Vegetable Industry, A Marketing Facilities Analysis, 3/1990.
___ Wholesale Marketing Facilities for Maricopa County, Arizona, 9/1990.
___ Refrigeration Systems for Wholesale Food Distribution Centers, 12/1990
___ The Importance of Wholesale Produce Markets, 1/1991
___ Regional Farmers' Markets, A Marketing and Design Study (Missouri), 1/1993.
___ A Model for Determining the Maneuvering Space Requirements for Tractor-Trailers at Loading Docks, 2/1993.
___ 1994 National Farmers Market Directory, 1994.
___ Toledo (Ohio) Fresh Food Public Market, A Feasibility Analysis, 1/1994.
___ New Agricultural Marketing Facilities for Northern Kentucky, 1/1995.
___ Survey of Interest in Creating an Agribusiness Park for Selected Maine Resource-based Industries, 2/1995.
___ Green Book/Produce Market Information Directory, 1995.
___ Farmers' Market Survey Report, 6/1996.

___ Thomasville, Georgia, Regional Market Facility Feasibility Study, 6/1996.
___ The Feasibility of a Mid-Hudson Valley Wholesale Fresh Product Facility, 8/1996.
___ Horticultural Shipping-point Market Project for Southwest Virginia, 8/1996.
___ Redevelopment Plans for the North Market, Columbus, OH, 9/1996.
___ 1996 National Farmers' Market Directory, 12/1996.
___ Floral Product Marketing in Greater Los Angeles, California, 4/1997.
___ Evaluation of the Feasibility of a Centralized Marketing Facility for Maine's Agricultural Industries, 8/1997.
___ Southwest Virginia Shipping-Point Market Project Cooperative Development and Facility Design, 1/1998.
___ Boston Public Market Facility and Business Development Plan, 4/1998.
___ How to Establish a Farmers' Market on Federal Property, 4/1998.
___ Public Markets: Development and Management of Satellite Markets in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 8/1998.
___ 1998 National Farmers Market Directory
___ Farmer Direct Marketing Bibliography, 12/1998
___ A Review of Little Rock's River Market Public and Farmers Market Operations, 8/1999
___ The Burlington Public Market: Phase I - Producer Survey and Analysis, 9/1999
___ Brochure: Farmer Direct Marketing Program, 10/1999
___ Direct Marketing Today: Challenges and Opportunities, 2/2000
___ 2000 National Farmers Market Directory, 7/2000
___ USDA Farmers Market Coloring Book, Forthcoming

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**United States Department of Agriculture**

Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Agricultural Marketing Service

Transportation and Marketing

Wholesale and Alternative Markets

BLA-132

# Farmer Direct Marketing Bibliography

Jennifer-Claire V. Klotz, Economist

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## Executive Summary

Direct marketing continues to grow in the United States as a method for small and medium-sized producers to increase their profits. Early results from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Farmers Market Directory show an approximate 10-percent increase in the number of farmers markets since 1996. All forms of direct marketing, farmers markets, public markets, roadside stands, community supported agriculture (CSA), and pick-your-own operations, are becoming increasingly popular with consumers who seek fresh and healthful agricultural products.

One way the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) can support farmer direct marketing is to facilitate access to resources for all participants: producers, vendors, market managers, consumers, academics, extension educators, as well as Federal and State employees. This bibliography is an example of that support.

A large body of information exists concerning farmer direct marketing. This bibliography represents the work that has been done since approximately 1980. While some pre-1980 publications have been included, the cut-off date of 1980 was selected based on resource constraints. Twenty-four functional categories are used to divide the references from various resources including private industry, academia, and State and Federal Governments. References were compiled primarily from bibliographies of individual publications as well as inquiries distributed on various Internet list servers. The bibliography will be maintained through regular updates on the USDA Farmer Direct Marketing web page (http://www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing).

# Direct Marketing and Related Topics

## January 1991 - December 1996

*Quick Bibliography Series* no. QB 97-02

235 citations in English from AGRICOLA

*Compiled By:*
Mary V. Gold
Alternative Farming Systems Information Center
Information Centers Branch
National Agricultural Library
Agricultural Research Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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# National Directory of Farmers Markets 2000

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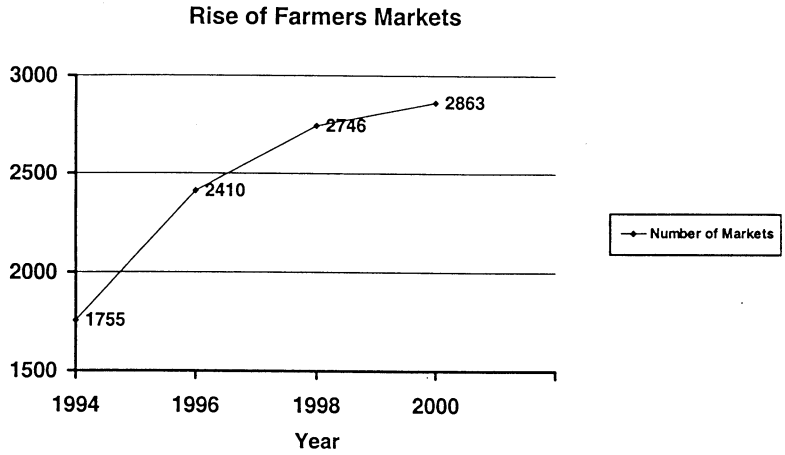
## Introduction

Direct marketing of farm products through farmers markets continues to be an important outlet for small agricultural producers nationwide. Farmers markets, now an integral part in the urban/farm linkage, have continued to rise in popularity, mostly due to the growing consumer interest in direct marketing. Through this type of direct marketing, both farmers and consumers benefit. While farmers are afforded the opportunity to thrive in their businesses by supplementing their farm income, consumers have access to locally grown, farm-fresh products and the opportunity to personally interact with the farmer who grows the produce.

The number of markets operating in the United States has continued to increase since this data was last reported in 1998. The **2000 National Farmers Market Directory** documents 2,863 farmers markets now operating in the United States, an astonishing increase from 1,755 markets in 1994 when USDA began collecting the data.




Farmers markets, as presented in this directory, are defined as a group of farmers and vendors leasing or renting space in a common facility/site on a temporary basis with an emphasis on the sale of fresh farm products and other locally produced items. This directory is intended to provide an informative resource for farmers, operators, consumers, and the general public. The directory lists markets by name, location, contact person, telephone number, and type of operation (open-air/seasonal or year-round) and points out markets that accept WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) coupons. Year-round generally (but not always) denotes that some type of covered facilities exist at the market site. The address of a market listed in this publication usually depicts market location and does not necessarily represent a complete mailing address. Therefore, attempts to contact markets listed in this directory should be made by telephone or e-mail, if possible. The reader may note that, in some instances, either the names of contact persons are missing or no phone number is listed. However, all information received from State departments of agriculture and farmers market organizations has been included in the directory.

The directory will be published biennially and updated continuously on the website. Suggestions, comments, or market data corrections may be submitted to the following address:

**USDA/AMS/TM/W&AM**
Room 2642-South
P.O. Box 96456
Washington, DC 20090-6456

For more information, call
1-800-384-8704
or visit us on our website at:
http://www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets

# Entertainment Farming and Agri-Tourism

Pairing farms with entertainment can draw families -- and their recreational dollars. Seasonal festivals, hayrides, petting zoos, on-farm classes and workshops bring more potential customers to your farm. Another option for recreational farming is leasing wooded land or marginal cropland for hunting, fishing or hiking.

You can weave farm entertainment events with regional tourism efforts. The Archway Regional Tourism Association (ARTA) in eastern Kentucky links local farmers with Natural Bridge State Park. For small farmers looking for alternatives to tobacco, agri-tourism in this region -- known for its scenic resorts and parks -- has been a godsend.

Growers sell at a farmers market inside the park each summer as part of the Mountain Market Festival. Widely publicized by ARTA, the event features chef presentations and live music. Every farmer who participates sells out.

"We wanted to help the agri-tourism organization become self-sustaining, and it has done that," says Karen Armstrong-Cummings, who works with area farmers as a staff member of the Commodity Growers Cooperative. The cooperative received a SARE grant in 1997 to help it build markets for local farm products.

Tree growers have helped spawn popular "Christmas in the Mountains" weekends. Participants receive coupons for a Christmas tree from a local farm and a gift from a local craftperson or artist.

The coupons were a strong draw, Armstrong-Cummings says, bringing people from as far away as Louisville.

The partnership, which includes Extension agents, farmers, craftsmen and parks officials, helped the Commodity Growers Corporation create a statewide agritourism award to recognize projects that bring together farmers and tourism. The first $500 award went to Owensboro orchardist Billy Reid, whose apple festival brings 20,000 people to the city.

If you're interested in entertainment farming or agri-tourism, keep in mind:

- Agri-tourism ends farmer isolation and offers the opportunity to make new friends and build stronger links to the community.
- Some disadvantages could include interference with main farm activities, potential low financial return and high liability risk.
- In the tourist business, you are never really off duty. Holidays likely mean a full workday. Be prepared for late-night calls.
- Social skills and a scenic, clean, attractive farm are crucial for success in agri-tourism and can overcome a location that is less than ideal.
- Call tour bus companies and your local or regional tourism and convention bureau for information on attracting tour buses to your farm.
- State Departments of Agriculture often offer assistance in setting up farm festivals and similar activities. State tourism bureaus also can offer a wealth of ideas and information.

# MARKETING CRAFTS AND TOURIST PRODUCTS

*A research team...compiled information from 1,400 individuals on marketing crafts and tourists' shopping habits... After meals and lodging, tourists spend most of their dollars on clothing, crafts, and local food products.*

If you sell crafts, a study on tourists' shopping habits, by the North Central Regional Extension Service, may give you ideas for meeting consumer desires and increasing sales.

A research team from Iowa, Minnesota, and Nebraska compiled information from 1,400 individuals on marketing crafts and tourists' shopping habits. Shopping is an important activity for tourists. After meals and lodging, they spend most of their tourist dollars on clothing, crafts, and local food products. Almost 70 percent buy gifts for future events and for mementos.

**Tourists want crafts** to use and display in their homes. They enjoy seasonal items. Their favorite craft medium is wood, followed by items made from other natural materials and fabric. They appreciate appealing colors, design, high quality workmanship, a fair price, and innovation. They look for items that can be used (not just displayed) in their homes, things to add to collections, and jewelry. Their craft purchases often have symbolic value; they may become valued reminders of the places they visited, especially if the crafts reflect local sites or events. Tourists appreciate neatly arranged displays that show how to use the crafts. They appreciate written information on care, safety, and materials used. The tourists surveyed indicated there were not enough crafts made from leather and glass, hand-crafted toys, jewelry, and clothing. They said there were too many crafts made of fabric, paint, and paper and crafts for display (not to use).

Tourists find places to buy crafts by reading state travel office-generated information; newspaper and magazine articles; guidebooks; talking to friends, hotel personnel and local residents; and from local newspaper ads.

Tourists spend from $5 to $30 per item, depending on for whom they are buying.

They value sales personnel who are pleasant and knowledgeable, but will let them browse.

**The most successful craft producers** promoted themselves and their products by providing business cards and hang tags, signing their work, using logos, and providing written data. They worked an average of 55 hours a week, concentrated on one particular medium, had few items in a product line, identified themselves as artist or designer rather than artisan, craftsman, folk artist, or hand crafter. Over 65 percent were male. Males charged two to four times the amount that women charged.

The average craft producer was 47 years old, from a rural community, educated through or beyond high school, had been in business nine years, contributed 25 percent of the household's income. Primary media used were wood, fabric, and clay. They sold most products at art and craft fairs and from their own homes.

**The researchers suggested** that to increase income, crafts producers should:

- Review promotional practices.
- Review prices.
- Provide tourist items for which demand exceeds availability.
- Continue to create original designs.
- Review professional work habits.
- Stay alert to tourist interests.
- Consider "value added services"—gift wrap, shipping, monogramming, accepting credit cards.
- Provide written information on care, safety, and use.
- Display crafts to show possible uses.
- Localize products by incorporating a name or design motif.
- Be friendly, but let people browse.
- Explain craft techniques and ways to use the crafts.
- Explain which items make good gifts.

**For more information:**

**Marketing Crafts and Other Products to Tourists: A Guide for Craft Producers, Craft Retailers, Communities, Tourist Attractions, and Hospitality Services.** 1992. North Central Regional Extension Pub. #445. University of Nebraska, IANR Communications and Computing Services, Lincoln, NE 68583-0918; (402) 472-3023.

# Community Supported Agriculture

# ...*Making the Connection*

## A 1995 Handbook for Producers


University of California Cooperative Extension
Placer County

Presented by:

Small Farm Center
University of California, Davis

Community Supported Agriculture ...*Making the Connection*

# CSA Handbook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**University of California COOPERATIVE EXTENSION/Placer County**
11477 E Avenue, Auburn, California 95603 **(916) 889-7385** • FAX (916) 889-7397

# How to Use this Handbook

This handbook has been designed as a workbook. In addition to the narrative text and examples from CSA farms, there are places that ask you to think about the material, consider how it applies to your situation, and write down your thoughts.

The handbook is divided into chapters, each covering a general subject. The chapters are divided into sections. Several sections end with worksheets that pose questions about you and your farm. The answers will help you develop your CSA. At the end of several chapters are blank charts and forms. Use them for running your CSA or adapt them so they fit your project. Places in the text which refer to one of the worksheets, charts or forms are marked with an icon:

The appendix of this handbook treats a number of subjects in greater detail. Topics in the main text which are further explained in the appendix are also marked with an icon:

Finally, this material has been published in a binder so that you can easily remove and insert items, and so that copying material will be easier.

In using this handbook, if you find something which is wrong, doesn't work for you, or ought to be changed, please contact Placer County Cooperative Extension *(11477 E Avenue, Auburn, CA 95603)* at **(916) 889-7385** or FAX (916) 889-7397, in order that future editions of this publication can be improved.

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Community Supported Agriculture



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Alternative Farming Systems Information Center
National Agricultural Library, USDA, ARS
10301 Baltimore Avenue, Room 304
Beltsville, Maryland 20705-2351

# Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Resources for Producers

Compiled by Mary Gold,
October 1999

## Introduction

This publication lists books, magazine and journal articles, periodicals, audiovisual materials, internet sites and organizations that are part of the web resource, "Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)" at the Alternative Farming Systems Information Center's website. The website is a cooperative effort between the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES) and the National Agricultural Library (NAL) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The specific programs involved are CSREES's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program and its Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN), and NAL's Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC). The CSA website, **http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/csa/**, also includes a database of CSA farms throughout the U.S., resources related to "Eating Seasonally and Regionally" and links to other sources related to sustainable agriculture.

Much effort has been made to provide accurate information about the resources listed in this publication.. Mention of a particular CSA, publication, website, or organization does not constitute an official endorsement or approval by the United States Department of Agriculture or the Agricultural Research Service of any product or service to the exclusion of others that may be suitable. **Suggestions as to additions and/or corrections to this list of resources are most welcome.**

## A Little About CSA

From *Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): An Annotated Bibliography and Resource Guide* by Suzanne DeMuth (AFSIC, 1993):

"Community supported agriculture (CSA) is a new idea in farming, one that has been gaining momentum since its introduction to the United States from Europe in the mid-1980s. The CSA concept originated in the 1960s in Switzerland and Japan, where consumers interested in safe food and farmers seeking stable markets for their crops joined together in economic partnerships. Today, CSA farms in the U.S., known as CSAs, currently number more than 400. Most are located near urban centers in New England, the Mid-Atlantic states, and the Great Lakes region, with growing numbers in other areas, including the West Coast.

"In basic terms, CSA consists of a community of individuals who pledge support to a farm operation so that the farmland becomes, either legally or spiritually, the community's farm, with the growers and consumers providing mutual support and sharing the risks and benefits of food production. Typically, members or "share-holders" of the farm or garden pledge in advance to cover the anticipated costs of the farm operation and farmer's salary. In return, they receive shares in the farm's bounty throughout the growing season, as well as satisfaction gained from reconnecting to the land and participating directly in food production. Members also share in the risks of farming, including poor harvests due to unfavorable weather or pests. By direct sales to community members, who have provided the farmer with working capital in advance, growers receive better prices for their crops, gain some financial security, and are relieved of much of the burden of marketing.

"Although CSAs take many forms, all have at their center a shared commitment to building a more local and equitable agricultural system, one that allows growers to focus on land stewardship and still maintain productive and profitable small farms. As stated by Robyn Van En [1948-1997], a leading CSA advocate, "...the main goal...of these community supported projects is to develop participating farms to their highest ecologic potential and to develop a network that will encourage and allow other farms to become involved." CSA farmers typically use organic or biodynamic farming methods, and strive to provide fresh, high-quality foods. More people participate in the farming operation than on conventional farms, and some projects encourage members to work on the farm in exchange for a portion of the membership costs.

"Most CSAs offer a diversity of vegetables, fruits, and herbs in season; some provide a full array of farm produce, including shares in eggs, meat, milk, baked goods, and even firewood. Some farms offer a single commodity, or team up with others so that members receive goods on a more nearly year-round basis. Some are dedicated to serving particular community needs, such as helping to enfranchise homeless persons. Each CSA is structured to meet the needs of the participants, so many variations exist, including the level of financial commitment and active participation by the shareholders; financing, land ownership, and legal form of the farm operation; and details of payment plans and food distribution systems.

"CSA is sometimes known as "subscription farming," and the two terms have been used on occasion to convey the same basic principles. In other cases, however, use of the latter term is intended to convey philosophic and practical differences in a given farm operation. Subscription farming (or marketing) arrangements tend to emphasize the economic benefits, for the farmer as well as consumer, of a guaranteed, direct market for farm products, rather than the concept of community-building that is the basis of a true CSA. Growers typically contract directly with customers, who may be called "members," and who have agreed in advance to buy a minimum amount of produce at a fixed price, but who have little or no investment in the farm itself. An example of one kind of subscription farm, which predates the first CSAs in this country, is the clientele membership club. According to this plan, which was promoted by Booker Wheatley in the early 1980's, a grower could maintain small farm profits by selling low cost memberships to customers who then were allowed to harvest crops at below-market prices."

## Books and Articles

*1996 CSA Farm Network*, by Northeast Organic Farming Association. Still water NY: CSA Farm Network, 1996. 88 pp. [NAL Call #: HD1484 A15 1996]
**On-line information/reviews**: Sustainable Agriculture Sourcebook:
http://www.sare.org/san/sourcebook/book/NY0412.html
- and -
*1997 CSA Farm Network*, by S Gilman, editor. Still water NY: CSA Farm Network, 1997. 96 pp.
**Availability**: Steve Gilman, Coordinator, CSA Farm Network Publications, 130 Ruckytucks Road, Still water NY 12170, phone 518-583-4613; Volume I (1996), $6.00 plus $2.00 mailing; Volume II (1997), $10.00 plus $2.00 mailing; both Volumes I & II, $14.00 plus $2.50 mailing ($16.50)
**On-line information/reviews:** Permaculture listserv (includes tables of contents for both volumes):
http://metalab.unc.edu/london/permaculture/mailarchives/permaculture-WA/msg00509.html

*Basic Formula to Create Community Supported Agriculture*, by R Van En. Great Barrington, MA: R Van En, 1992. 80 pp. [HD9225 A2V35 1992]
**Availability**: Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association, P.O. Box 29135, San Francisco CA 94129-0135, phone 888-516-7797, fax 415-561-7796, e-mail biodynaimc@aol.com; $12.95 plus $4.50 shipping & handling (plus $1 for each additional book ordered), checks payable to "Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association"
A limited number of copies are also available from the Robyn Van En Center, c/o Center for Sustainable Living, Wilson College, 1015 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg PA 17201, phone 717-264-4141 ext. 3247, fax 717-264-1578; $10.00.
**On-line information/reviews**: BDA: http://www.biodynamics.com/books.html

"Community Shared Agriculture: Putting the Culture Back Into Agriculture," by R Samson. *Sustainable Farming: The Magazine of Resource Efficient Agriculture Production* (1994) [NAL Call #: HD9225 A2V35 1992]
**Availability**: Ecological Agriculture Projects
http://www.eap.mcgill.ca/MagRack/SF/Spring%2094%20E.htm

"Community Supported Agriculture," by S Ehrhardt. *Dig Magazine* [1996?].
**Availability**: http://www.digmagazine.com/96/56-96/sylvia.cfm.

"Community Supported Agriculture," by E Wiggins. *Ag Opportunities (Missouri Alternatives Center)* (Nov./Dec. 1998) 9(1)
**Availability**: http://agebb.missouri.edu/mac/agopp/arc/agopp022.txt

"Community Supported Agriculture," by E Gibson. *Small Farm News* (Nov./Dec. 1993) pp.1, 3-4. [NAL Call #: HD1476 U52C27]

"Community-Supported Agriculture: A Risk-reducing Strategy for Organic Vegetable Farmers," by C Nickerson. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* (1997) 79(5): p. 1729. [NAL Call #: 280.8 J822]

"Community Supported Agriculture: Can it Become the Basis for a New Associative Economy," by G Lamb. *Biodynamics* (Nov./Dec. 1994): p. 8-15.

*Community Supported Agriculture Conference* (University of California, Davis, Dec. 1993), Davis CA : Small Farm Center, 1994? 37 pp. (Proceedings, edited by G Cohn). [NAL Call #: S494.5 A65C65 1993]
**Availability**: ANR Communication Services, 6701 San Pablo Ave., Oakland CA 94608-1239, phone 800-994-8849, fax 510-643-5470; Product code SA-002, $8.00.

"Community Supported Agriculture: Connecting Consumers and Farms," by V Grubinger. *The Grower: Vegetable and Small Fruit Newsletter* (1993) 93(11): pp.6-7. [NAL Call #: SB321 G85]

*Community Supported Agriculture: Growing Food and Community*. Madison WI: Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1998.
**Availability**: http://www.wisc.edu/cias/pubs/resbrief/021.html

*The Community Supported Agriculture Handbook: A Guide to Starting, Operating or Joining a Successful CSA*, by Wilson College Center for Sustainable Living. 88 pp. Chambersburg PA: Center for Sustainable Living, Wilson College, 1997. [NAL Call #: S494.5 A67C65 1998]
**Availability**: The Robyn Van En Center, c/o Center for Sustainable Living, Wilson College, 1015 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg PA 17201, phone 717-264-4141 ext. 3247, fax 717-264-1578; $10.00.

Community Supported Agriculture: Local Food Systems for Iowa [December 1996]
**Availability**: PDF file at Iowa State University Extension,
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Pages/pubs/su.htm

*Community Supported Agriculture - Making the Connection: A 1995 Handbook for Producers,* by University of California, Cooperative Extension, Placer County. Auburn CA; Davis, CA: University of California Cooperative Extension, Placer County; Small Farm Center, University of California, 1995. [NAL Call #: S494.5 A65C66 1995]
**Availability**: UC Cooperative Extension, Attn: CSA Handbook, 11477 E Avenue, Auburn CA 95603, phone 530-889-7385; $31.81, make check payable to UC Regents.
**On-line information/reviews**: Press release reference,
http://www.sare.org/san/htdocs/hypermail/html-home/10-html/0264.html

"Community Supported Agriculture: Niche Market or Paradigm Shift," by D Guenthner, pp. 2-5 in *Greenbook*, Saint Paul MN: Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture, Energy and Sustainable Agriculture Program, 1996. [NAL Call #: S494.5 S86M56]
**Availability**: Energy and Sustainable Agriculture Program, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 90 West Plato Blvd., St. Paul MN 55107, phone 651-296-7673; ask about free copies of this article as well as the *Greenbook* series.

"Community Supported Agriculture - Part II", by J Hoffman. *The Natural Farmer* (special supplement, 1996).

"Community Supported Agriculture: Research and Education for Enhanced Viability and Potential in the Northeast," by DA Lass. *Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Research Projects, Northeast Region* (1996). 31pp. (SARE Project Number: LNE95-63. Record includes computer diskette. Reporting period for this report is September 1995 to December 1996. Report includes publication entitled "1996 CSA Farm Network"). [NAL Call #: S441 S855]

"Creating a Market," by S Milstein. *The Mother Earth News* (1999) 172 pp.40-44. [NAL Call #: AP2 M6]

"CSA - A First Year's Experience," by J Bauermeister. *Washington Tilth* (1997) pp.3, 12-15. [NAL Call #: S605.5 W372]

"Direct Marketing Options: Farmers Markets, Restaurants, Community Supported Agriculture and the Organic Alternative," by S Gilman, pp. 118-121, in *Agricultural Outlook Forum. Proceedings* (Washington DC, 1999). Washington DC: USDA World Agricultural Outlook Board, 1999. [NAL Call #: aHD1755 A376]
**Availability**: WordPerfect and ASCII versions at
http://www.usda.gov/agency/oce/waob/outlook99/99speeches.htm

"Eight Tips From the Experts to Make Your Community Shared Agriculture Project a Success," by A Salm. *COGNITION: The Voice of Canadian Organic Growers* (1997). [NAL Call #: SB453,5 C6]
**Availability**: Ecological Agriculture Projects
http://www.eap.mcgill.ca/MagRack/COG/COG_E_97_04.htm

"Factors Influencing the Decision to Join a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Farm," by JM Kolodinsky and LL Pelch. *Journal of Sustainable Agriculture* (1997) 10(2-3): pp.129-141. [NAL Call #: S494.5 S86S8]

"A Farmer's Perspective on the CSA Movement," by J Leap. *The Cultivar* (1996) pp.7-8

*Farms of Tomorrow Revisited: Community Supported Farms, Farm Supported Communities*, by T Groh and S McFadden. Kimberton PA: Bio-dynamic Farming and Gardening Association, 1997. 294 pp. [NAL Call #: HD1491 U6G76 1997]
**Availability**: Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association, P.O. Box 29135, San Francisco CA 94129-0135, phone 888-516-7797, fax 415-561-7796, e-mail biodynaimc@aol.com; $17.50 plus $4.50 shipping & handling (plus $1 for each additional book ordered), checks payable to "Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association"
**On-line information/reviews**: BDA: http://www.biodynamics.com/books.html

"Filling the Boxes - Designing a CSA Crop Plan," by J Leap. *The Cultivar* (1997) pp.3-5.

"Growing Food, Growing Community: Community Supported Agriculture in Rural Iowa," by B Wells, S Gradwell, and R Yoder. *Community Development Journal* (1999) 34(1): pp.38-46. [NAL Call #: S521 C65]

*Iowa Community Supported Agriculture Resource Guide for Producers and Organizers*. Ames IA: Iowa State University Extension, 1999.
**Availability**: ISU Extension Distribution, 119 Printing and Publications Bldg., Iowa State University, Ames IA 50011-3171, phone 515-294-5247, fax 515-294-2945; Publication # Pm-1694, $5.00, non-Iowa residents add $4.25 shipping and handling.

*The Legal Guide for Direct Farm Marketing*, by N Hamilton. Des Moines IA: Drake University Agricultural Law Center, 1999 (Prepared under a grant from the US Department of Agriculture, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program)
**Availability**: Drake University Agricultural Law Center, 2507 University Ave., Des Moines IA 50311, phone 515-271-2065; $20.00.

*The Many Faces of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): A Guide to Community Supported Agriculture in Indiana, Michigan, & Ohio*, by LB Delind. Hartland MI: Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance, 1999. 107 pp. (Funding provided by the North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program through the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture under special project number 06709)
**Availability**: Michigan Organic Food & Farm Alliance (MOFFA), P.O. Box 530, Hartland MI 48353-0530, phone 810-632-7952, fax 810-632-7620, e-mail hnccinc@ismi.net, web http://www.moffa.org; Item # BK101, $13.50 plus $5.00 shipping and handling ($1.50 each additional item), make checks payable to MOFFA.
**On-line information/reviews**: MOFFA http://www.moffa.org/pubs.htm

*Maximizing Shareholder Retention in Southeastern CSAs: A Step Toward Long Term Stability*, by DJ Kane and L Lohr. Portland OR: D. Kane, 1997 ("This study is supported by a grant from the Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) in Santa Cruz, CA"). [NAL Call #: HD1484 K36 1997]
**Availability**: Organic Farming Research Foundation, P.O. Box 440, Santa Cruz CA 95061, phone 831-426-6606, fax 831-426-6670, email research@ofrf.org; $2.00.

*Rebirth of the Small Family Farm: A Handbook for Starting a Successful Organic Farm Based on the Community Supported Agriculture Concept*, by B Gregson and B Gregson. (1st ed., Vashon Island WA: IMF Associates, 1996. 64 pp. [NAL Call #: HD1476 U62W24 1996]
**Availability**: IMF Associates, P.O. Box 2542, Vashon Island WA 98070; $9.95, checks payable to IMF.

*Sharing the Harvest: A Guide to Community-Supported Agriculture*, by E Henderson and R Van En. White River Junction VT: Chelsea Green, 1999. 254 pp. (In partnership with Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE), Northeast Region) [NAL Call #: HD1492 U6 H46 1999]
**Availability**: Chesea Green Publishing, P.O. Box 428, White River Junction VT 05001, phone 1-800-639-4099; $24.95 plus $6.00 shipping and handling
**On-line information/reviews**: The Publisher: http://www.chelseagreen.com/Sharing/index.html

*Small Farm Resource Guide*. Washington DC: Small Farm Program, USDA/CSREES, 1998.
**Availability**: USDA-Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, Plant and Animal Systems, Stop 2220, 1400 Independence Ave, S.W., Washington DC 20250-2220, phone 202-401-4385, fax 202-401-5179, email sfp@reeusda.gov; Free. Also: http://www.reeusda.gov/smallfarm/guide.htm

"Small-scale Community Supported Agriculture." *Countryside and Small Stock Journal* (Mar. 1999) 83(2): p.78. [NAL Call #: S521 C62]

"Successful Transition to Organic Farming," by D Block. *In Business: The Magazine for Environmental Entrepreneuring* (Nov./Dec. 1998). (Magazine published by J-G Press, Inc., 419 State Ave., Emmaus PA 18049, phone 610-967-4135)

*Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program, National Database of Projects.* Washington DC: Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program, CSREES, USDA, 1999.
**Availability**: http://www.sare.org/san/projects/

*To Till It and Keep It: New Models for Congregational Involvement with the Land*, by D Guenther. White Bear MN: Land Stewardship Project, 1995.

"Western Region Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Conference," by J Lawson. Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Research Projects, Western Region (1996) 9 p. (SARE Project Number: SW94-022. Date of report is March 11, 1996. This is a final report.) [NAL Call #: S441 S8554]

"Who Leaves the Farm? An Investigation of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Farm Membership," by J Kolodinsky and L Pelch. *Consumer Interests Annual* (1997) 43: p.46.

"Why People Join CSAs." *In Business: The Magazine for Environmental Entrepreneuring* (Nov./Dec.1998). (Magazine published by J-G Press, Inc., 419 State Ave., Emmaus, PA 18049, phone 610-967-4135)

## Video and Audio Cassettes

*CSA: Be Part of the Solution.* Slide show including 22 text slides and 44 photo slides that illustrate text.
**Availability**: The Robyn Van En Center, c/o Center for Sustainable Living, Wilson College, 1015 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg, PA 17201, phone 717-264-4141 ext. 3247, fax 717-264-1578; $45.00.

*CSA: Making a Difference.* 15 minute video
**Availability**: The Robyn Van En Center, c/o Center for Sustainable Living, Wilson College, 1015 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg, PA 17201, phone 717-264-4141 ext. 3247, fax 717-264-1578; $10.00.

*CSA Clip Art.* Over 300 images relevant to small-scale and CSA. Hard copy only.
**Availability**: The Robyn Van En Center, c/o Center for Sustainable Living, Wilson College, 1015 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg, PA 17201, phone 717-264-4141 ext. 3247, fax 717-264-1578; $4.00.

*CSA: Building a Future for Farming in the Northeast.* Northeast CSA Conference Proceeding Audio Cassettes. 38 lectures on audio tape.
**Availability**: The Robyn Van En Center, c/o Center for Sustainable Living, Wilson College, 1015 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg, PA 17201, phone 717-264-4141 ext. 3247, fax 717-264-1578; ask for the list of tapes/order form; tapes are @5.00 plus $1.65 shipping and handling, through Technical Video, Inc., no checks.

## Periodicals and Listservs

*The Community Farm: A Voice for Community Supported Agriculture.* Published quarterly, $20/year.
**Availability**: Jim Sluyter and Jo Meller, 3480 Potter Rd., Bear Lake MI 49614, phone 616-889-3216, e-mail: fsfarm@mufn.org
web site: http://www.mufn.org/public/tcf

*Growing for Market: A Journal of News and Ideas for Market Gardeners.* Published monthly, $30.00/year.
**Availability**: Fairplain Publications, P.O. Box 3747, Lawrence KS 66046, phone 785-748-0605 or 800-307-8949, fax 785-748-0609, e-mail growing4market@earthlink.net

*CSA-L Listserv*, CSA-L@prairienet.org e-mail list
listowners John Barclay (jbarclay@prairienet.org) of Prairieland CSA in Champaign, Illinois and Sarah Milstein (milstein@pipeline.com) of Roxbury Biodynamic Farm in New York
**Availability**: subscription information: http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/CSA-L/

## Internet Resources

*Center for Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems, University of CA, Santa Cruz*
"What is Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)?"
http://zzyx.ucsc.edu/casfs/publicinfo/community.html

*Community Supported Agriculture in Maine*
http://www.state.me.us./agriculture/marketprod/communityag.htm

*Farmer's Market Online*
Community Support (Resource Page)
http://www.farmersmarketonline.com/Communit.htm

*Missouri Alternatives Center*
http://agebb.missouri.edu/mac/

*The Small Farm Program*
USDA-Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service
http://www.reeusda.gov/smallfarm

*Sustainable Agriculture Network*
http://www.sare.org/

*USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, Farmer Direct Marketing, Farm Direct Marketing Bibliography*, Part 8
http://www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing/b_8.htm

*Urban Agriculture Notes/City Farmer*
Canada's Office of Urban Agriculture
http://www.cityfarmer.org/

*Homepage for E-Mail List CSA-L@prairienet.org*
http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/CSA-L/
(includes resource and networking organizations, CSAs with Web pages, etc.)

## Organizations

### National Organizations

*Alternative Farming Systems Information Center*
National Agricultural Library, ARS, USDA
10301 Baltimore Ave., Room 304
Beltsville MD 20705-2351
phone 301-504-6559, fax 301-504-6409
e-mail afsic@nal.usda.gov
http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic

*American Farmland Trust*
Agricultural Economic Development, Technical Assistance
Herrick Mill, One Short Street
Northampton MA 01060
phone 413-586-4593; fax 413-586-9332
http://www.farmlandinfo.org

*Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)*
P.O. Box 3657
Fayetteville AR 72702
phone 800-346-9140 (M-Th 8:30am-4:30pm CST; F 8:30am-12:30pm CST)
http://www.attra.org/

*Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association*
P.O. Box 29135
Bldg 1002B, Thoreau Center, The Presidio
San Francisco CA 94129-0135
phone 415-561-7797; fax 415-561-7796
e-mail biodynamic@aol.com
http://www.biodynamics.com

*Canadian Organic Growers*
P.O. Box 6408
Station J, Ottawa, Ontario, K2A 3Y6 CANADA
phone 613-231-9047, e-mail
COGinfo@gks.com
http://gks.com/cog/

*CSA Farm Network Publications*
Steve Gilman
130 Ruckytucks Road
Stillwater NY 12170
phone 518-583-4613
e-mail sgilman@netheaven.com

*CSA Works*
115 Bay Road
Hadley MA 01035
phone 413-586-5133

*Ecological Agriculture Projects*
McGill University (Macdonald Campus)
Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, QC, H9X 3V9
CANADA
phone 514-398-7771; fax 514-398-7621
e-mail info@eap.mcgill.ca
http://eap.mcgill.ca/

*Robyn Van En Center*
Wilson College Center for Sustainable Living
1015 Philadelphia Ave
Chambersburg PA 17201
phone 717-264-4141 x3247; fax 717-264-1578
e-mail jayneshord@usa.net
http://www.umass.edu/umext/csa/

## State and Regional Organizations

*California Certified Organic Farmers*
1115 Mission St.
Santa Cruz CA 95060
phone 831-423-2263
toll free in CA 1-888-423-CCOF
fax 831-423-4528
http://www.ccof.org/index.htm

*Carolina Farm Stewardship Association*
P.O. Box 448
Pittsboro NC 27312
phone 919-542-2402; fax 919-542-7401
e-mail cfsa@carolinafarmstewards.org

*Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems (CIAS)*
1450 Linden Dr Rm 146
University of Wisconsin
Madison WI 53706
phone 608-265-3704
e-mail jhendric@macc.wisc.edu

*Community Food Security Coalition*
P.O. Box 209
Venice CA 90294
phone 310-822-5410; fax 310-822-5410
e-mail asfisher@aol.com
http://www.foodsecurity.org

*CSA West*
Center for Sustainable Food Systems
Univ. of California
1156 High St.
Santa Cruz CA 95064
phone 408-459-3964, fax 408-459-2799
e-mail farmcsa@aol.com
http://www.caff.org/caff/programs/

*The Farm Connection*
P.O. Box 477
Dixon NM 87527
phone 505-579-4386

*Farming Alternatives Program*
216 Warren Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
phone 607-255-9832
http://www.cals.cornell.edu/dept/ruralsoc/fap/fap.html

*Future Harvest-Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture*
University of Maryland
2101 Ag/Life Sciences Surge Bldg.
College Park MD 20742-3359
phone 301-405-8762; fax 301-405-8763
e-mail fhcasa@umail.umd.edu

*Great Lakes Area CSA Coalition (GLACSAC)*
C/o Petter Seely
7065 Silver Spring Lane
Plymouth WI 53073
phone 414-8922-4856

*Hartford Food System*
509 Weathersfield Ave
Hartford CT 06114
phone 860-296-9325, 860-296-8326
e-mail hn2838@handsnet.org

*Iowa Network for Community Agriculture (INCA)*
1465 120th St.
Kanawha IA 50447
phone 515-495-6367
e-mail libland@kalnet.com

*Just Food/NYC Sustainable Food System Alliance*
290 Riverside Dr #15D
New York, NY 10025-5287
phone 212-677-1602; fax 212-677-1602, 212-677-1603
e-mail info@justfood.org

*Land Stewardship Project*
2200 Fourth St
White Bear Lake MN 55110
phone 651-653-0618, fax 651-653-0589
e-mail lspwbl@mtn.org
http://www.landstewardshipproject.org

*Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture*
209 Curtiss Hall
Iowa State University
Ames IA 50011-1050
phone 515-294-3711
e-mail leocenter@iastate.edu
http://www.leopold.iastate.edu

*Madison Area Community Supported Agricultural Coalition (MACSAC)*
4915 Monona Drive, Suite 304
Monona WI 53716
phone 608-226-0300, fax 608-226-0301
e-mail info@wrdc.org
http://www.wisc.edu/cias/macsac

*Maine Organic Farmers & Gardeners Association*
P.O. Box 2176
Augusta ME 04338-2176
phone 207-622-3118
e-mail mofga@mofga.org
http://www.mofga.org

*Michael Fields Agricultural Institute*
W2493 County Rd ES
East Troy WI 53120
phone 414-642-3303; fax 414-642-4028
e-mail mfai@mfai.org

*Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance (MOFFA)*
P.O. Box 530
Hartland, MI 48353-0530
phone 810-632-7952, fax 810-632-7620
e-mail hnccinc@ismi.net
http://www.moffa.org

*Minnesota Food Association*
1916 2nd Ave. South
Minneapolis, MN 55403-3927
phone 612-872-3298
e-mail odonn014@tc.umn.edu

*Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA)*
University of Minnesota
411 Borlaug Hall
St. Paul MN 55108-1013
phone 612- 625-8235; fax 612-625-1268
toll free 1-800-909-MISA
e-mail: misamail@gold.tc.umn.edu
http://www.misa.umn.edu/csag.html

*New England Small Farm Institute*
P.O. Box 937
Belchertown MA 01007
phone 413-323-4531

*New Mexico Farmers Marketing Association*
phone 1-888-983-4400 (toll free)
e-mail marketsnm@nets.com
http://www.farmersmarketsnm.org

*Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA)*
411 Sheldon Rd
Barre MA 01005
phone 508-355-2853, fax 978-355-4046
e-mail JACKKITT@aol.com
(also NOFA state chapters involved in CSA, e.g., New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Connecticut)

*Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (NESAWG)*
P.O. Box 608
Belchertown MA 01007-0608
phone 413-323-4531; fax 413-323-9595
e-mail nesawg@smallfarm.org

*Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society*
9824 79th St SE
Fullerton, ND 58441-9725
phone/fax 701-883-4304
email tpnpsas@drservices.com
http://www.npsas.org

*Ohio Ecological Food & Farming Association*
P.O. Box 82234
Columbus OH 43202
phone 614-267-FOOD; fax 614-267-4763
e-mail oeffa@iwaynet.net
http://www.greenlink.org/oeffa/

*Oregon Tilth*
1860 Hawthorne Ave. NE, Suite 200
Salem, OR 97303
phone 503-378-0690; fax 503-378-0809
e-mail organic@tilth.org
http://www.tilth.org/

*Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)*
P.O. Box 419
Millheim PA 16854
phone 814-349-9856; fax 814-349-9840

*Prairieland CSA*
P.O. Box 1404
Champaign IL 61824-1404
phone 217- 239-3686
e-mail abarnes@prairienet.org
http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/pcsa.htm

*Seattle Tilth Association*
4649 Sunnyside Avenue North, Room 1
Seattle, Washington 98103
phone 206-633-0451
e-mail tilth@speakeasy.org
http://www.speakeasy.org/~tilth/index.html

*Small Farm Center*
University of California
One Shields Ave
Davis CA 95616-8699
phone 530-752-8136; fax 530-752-7716
http://www.sfc.ucdavis.edu

*Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group/Community Farm Alliance*
P.O. Box 324
Elkins AR 72727-0324
phone 501-587-0888; fax 501-587-1333
e-mail ssfarm@juno.com

*Sustainable Earth, Inc.*
100 Georgeton Ct.
West Lafayette IN 47906
phone 765-463-9366, fax 765-497-0164
e-mail sbonney@iquest.net

*Texas Organic Growers Association (TOGA)*
P.O. Box 15211
Austin TX 78761
toll free 1-877-326-5175; fax 512-842-1293
e-mail suejefi@aol.com
http://www.texasorganicgrowers.org/

*Wisconsin Rural Development Center*
4915 Monona Dr., Ste 304
Monona WI 53716
phone 608-226-0300; fax 608-226-0301
e-mail wrdc@execpc.com
(works with Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition (MACSAC))

*About AFSIC*

The Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC) is one of several topic-oriented information centers at the National Agricultural Library (NAL). The Library, located in Beltsville, Maryland, is the foremost agricultural library in the world, and is one of four U.S. national libraries along with the Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine, and the National Library of Education. AFSIC is supported, in part, by USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. AFSIC specializes in locating and accessing information related to alternative cropping systems including sustainable, organic, low-input, biodynamic, and regenerative agriculture. AFSIC also focuses on alternative crops, new uses for traditional crops, and crops grown for industrial production.

**Alternative Farming Systems Information Center**
**National Agricultural Library, Rm 304**
**10301 Baltimore Ave.**
**Beltsville MD 20705-2351**
**phone 301/504-6559 or 301/504-5724, fax 301/504-6409**
**TDD/TTY: 301/504-6856, e-mail afsic@nal.usda.gov**
**http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic**

3/00

USDA

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education

Part of USDA's efforts to help small-scale farmers and ranchers.

# Farming for Profit, Stewardship & Community

## TIP #2: ADD VALUE THROUGH MARKETING

**Direct-marketing, niche markets and value-added processing offer you a share of the 50 percent of the food dollar that now goes to middlemen — and strengthens communities, too.**

### FARMERS MARKET DIRECTORY

USDA's 1999 National Farmers Market Directory lists hundreds of farmers markets across the country, a 10-percent increase in the number of markets since 1996.

**How to order:** Free from USDA's Agricultural Marketing service. Call Denny Johnson, (202) 690-0531; http://www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/map.htm

### ADDING VALUE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

This guidebook for producers, processors and community leaders interested in adding value to farm products offers practical information on food safety, financing, marketing and community support strategies for small-scale processors. Created by the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture and Cornell University's Farming Alternatives Program, with support from USDA-SARE.

**How to order**: $8.50 + $3 s/h to "Cornell University," Farming Alternatives Program, 17 Warren Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; (607) 255-9832

### SELL WHAT YOU SOW! THE GROWER'S GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL PRODUCE MARKETING

This 304-page book by author Eric Gibson specifies strategies from master marketers around the country. Features information about direct-to-consumer marketing, retail outlets, specialty foods, wholesale, promotion and business management.

**How to order**: $22.50 + $3 s/h to New World Publishing, 3085 Sheridan St., Placerville, CA 95667; (916) 622-2248

### ATTRA'S MARKETING & BUSINESS SERIES

Farmer-ready publications on Community Supported Agriculture; Direct Marketing; Marketing Channels: Pick-Your-Own & Agri-Entertainment; Organic Certification; Resources for Organic Marketing; and Alternative Beef Marketing.
**How to order:** Free from ATTRA, 800-346-9140; http://www.attra.org

*The tools listed here can help you apply this tip to improve your farm or ranch. See the "How to order" section under each reference to obtain your free or low-cost copy. This partial list was compiled by USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program in March 1999. Other resources not listed may also be suitable. See the "Education" link at http://www.sare.org for a complete set of tip sheets.*

## SHARING THE HARVEST: A GUIDE TO COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

This inspirational yet practical handbook by Elizabeth Henderson with Robyn Van En lays out the basic tenets of community-supported agriculture for farmers and consumers. Covers startups, strategies and the satisfaction of building a CSA community.

**How to order**: $24.95 to Chelsea Green Publishing, 205 Gates-Briggs Bldg, PO Box 428, White River Junction, VT 05001; 1/800-639-4099; http://www.chelseagreen.com

## A FARMER'S LEGAL GUIDE TO PRODUCTION CONTRACTS

This SARE-funded project will help producers negotiate a sometimes-complicated legal system when trying to obtain contracts for alternative crops.

**How to order**: $16.95 to the Agricultural Law Center, Drake University, Des Moines, IA 50311; (515) 271-2947.

## LEGAL GUIDE FOR FARM MARKETERS

This guide from the Drake University Agricultural Law Center explores legal issues regarding direct marketing farm products; contracts; liability and insurance; processing and marketing of meat and poultry; labor and employment; community-supported farms; farmers markets; and local food processing rules.

**How to order**: $20 to Drake University Agricultural Law Center, 2507 University Ave., Des Moines, IA 50311-4505; (515) 271-2947.

## FREE-RANGE POULTRY PRODUCTION & MARKETING

This folksy, 120-page three-ring binder offers a guide to raising, processing and marketing chicken, turkey and eggs by Herman Beck-Chenoweth offers information on field production, processing facilities, slaughter procedures and finding a niche.

**How to order**: $39.50 + $4.50 s/h from Back Forty Books, 26328 Locust Grove Road, Creola, OH 45622, (740) 596-4379 (Ask for information about short courses for farmers.)

## THE DIRECT MARKETING RESOURCE NOTEBOOK

For farmers who want to bring processing, packaging, labeling and marketing dollars home to their farms, this book includes case studies of different direct marketing enterprises, marketing contacts, and an extensive resources section.

**How to order**: $20 to Nebraska Sustainable Ag Society, PO Box 736, Hartington, NE 68739; (402) 254-2289

Administered by USDA-CSREES, SARE has funded more than 1,400 projects looking at ways to farm more sustainably. To learn more about project findings by category, search SARE's national database on the web at www.sare.org/san/htdocs/research/ or contact Kim Kroll at (301) 405-5717. To obtain print versions of SARE research by region, contact a SARE regional office and request a copy of their most recent annual report or project list.
North Central SARE, (402) 472-0266; ncrsare@unl.edu
Northeast SARE, (802) 656-0471; nesare@zoo.uvm.edu
Southern SARE, (770) 412-4787; kberry@gaes.griffin.peachnet.edu
Western SARE, (435) 797-2257; wsare@mendel.usu.edu

## RELEVANT WEB SITES

USDA's Farmer Direct Marketing web page
*Includes a national directory of farmers markets; lists of upcoming conferences; a direct marketing newsletter and resources by state.*
http://www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing

USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program
*Features on-line books and a database of more than 1,400 research projects funded by USDA-SARE*
http://www.sare.org

Alternative Farming Systems Information Center's Direct Marketing and Related Topics bibliography
http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/AFSIC_pubs/qb9702.htm

Healthy Farmers, Healthy Profits
*Direct-marketing tip sheets for small-scale vegetable growers.*
http://bse.wisc.edu/HFHP/HFHP_home.htm

Organic Farmers Marketing Association
http://web.iquest.net/ofma/

OpenAir-Market Net
*The World Wide Guide to Farmers' Markets, Street Markets, Flea Markets and Street Vendors.*
http://www.openair.org/

Sustainable Farming Connection
*Offers a forum for farmers to find and share information, including a diverse collection of marketing resources.*
http://metalab.unc.edu/farming-connection


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# Research & Publications

AREC Home
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Research & Publications
Extension
Academics

For more information about this publication, please contact:

Russ Tronstad
Extension Economist

Phone: (520) 621-2425
Email: tronstad@ag.arizona.edu

## Direct Farm Marketing and Tourism Handbook

This guide is designed to help farm and ranch operators (and other individuals who grow or process food products) market their products and services directly to the consumer.

You can access the guide online by following the links below. Please note that these pdf files require Acrobat Reader, which can be downloaded free from the Adobe website.

You may also order a hard copy of the guide for $25.00. Quantities are limited, please email tronstad@ag.arizona.edu for ordering information.

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**Introduction** 14 kb

### Direct Marketing Alternatives

1. Characteristics of Direct Marketing Alternatives 11 kb
2. Direct Farm Marketing Options 23 kb
3. Farmers Markets: A Guide to Starting Operating, and Selling 70 kb
4. Pick-Your-Own Markets: Should I Grow Fruits and Vegetables 61 kb
5. Roadside Stands: Should I Grow Fruits and Vegetables
6. Running a Roadside Stand - Some Helpful Tips 15 kb
7. Selling to Restaurants 22 kb
8. The Fresh Connection Keeps Farmers and Chefs in Touch 57 kb

### Tourism/Value Added Products

1. Opportunities for Adding Value to Your Products 89 kb
2. This Market Boosted Sales With Bakery 82 kb
3. Restaurant Adds to Diversity of Hubers Family Farm 100 kb
4. Bed and Breakfast: Hosting Travelers for Extra Income 96 kb

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3. A Business Plan is Important When Working With a Lender 105 kb
4. Training Helps Farm Market Employees Succeed 93 kb

## Market Analysis and Pricing

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2. Product Position 249 kb
3. Geyers' Specialty is Marketing Small Fruits 84 kb
4. Quality Keeps Customers Coming Back to This Farm 70 kb
5. Taste Preferences Outweigh Appearances of Apples 36 kb
6. Selling Organic Produce Poses New Challenges 54 kb
7. The Organic Market: Results from a Tucson Study 56 kb
8. Pricing 21 kb
9. Assessing Risks and Finance Requirements 35 kb

## Consumer Profiles and Tourism Trends

1. Farm Outlet Customer Profiles 18 kb
2. Profile of Visitors to Fresh Farm Produce Outlets in Cochise County, Arizona 215 kb
3. Tourism Trends and Rural Economic Impacts 17 kb

## Advertising and Promotion

1. Advertising and Promotion 25 kb
2. Direct Mailings as an Advertising Strategy 14 kb
3. How Tasting Rooms Can Help Sell Wine 196 kb

## Legal Considerations

1. Legal Structure Rules and Regulations for Direct Marketing Enterprises 24 kb
2. Examining Insurance Needs is Essential to Marketing 78 kb
3. How Growers Can Reduce Liability Risks 36 kb

## Production Considerations

1. Production of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables as it Relates to Direct Marketing 36 kb
2. Estimating Costs of Production 295 kb

## Additional Resources

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2. Associations 11 kb

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Send comments or questions to arecweb@ag.arizona.edu

Last updated August 17, 1999
Document located at http://ag.arizona.edu/arec/pubs/dmkt/dmkt.html

RESOURCE PACKET:

# DEVELOPING NEW MARKETS TO SUPPORT LOCAL AGRICULTURE

- Tapping New Markets
- Creating A Regional Product Identity
- Promoting Local Wholesaling

Farming Alternatives Program
Department of Rural Sociology
Cornell University

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Agricultural Opportunities and Markets in Delaware and Otsego Counties

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Emerging Markets: Examples From South-Central New York

Goat Market Study

Organic Crop and Dairy Product Markets

SECTION II

CREATING A REGIONAL PRODUCT IDENTIFY

Developing A Common Identity For New Hampshire Products

"Placer Grown" Brochure

Hudson Valley Harvest

Ag Project Spawns Marketing Group

Growers and Critics Joining Forces

SECTION III

PROMOTING LOCAL WHOLESALING

The Portland Public Market

Redeveloping Wholesale Markets

Eating Closer To Home

# RESOURCE PACKET:
# ADDING VALUE WITH SMALL-SCALE FOOD PROCESSING AND SPECIALTY DAIRY PRODUCTS

- Fostering Locally-Owned Food Processing Businesses
- Specialty Dairy Opportunities

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"Making it in the Northeast: Small-scale Food Processing on the Rise" Workshop Highlights, Resources and References

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University of Colorado Workshops

Seneca Army Depot Kitchen Incubator Project

Urban Horizons Food Sector Initiative

N.H. COOKS Food Processing Centers

Mid-Atlantic Agri-Business Incubator and Local Food Processing Centers

Bonner Business Center and Commercial Kitchen

Epping, N.H. Co-op Kitchen

Arcata Foodworks Culinary Center

SECTION II

SPECIALTY DAIRY OPPORTUNITIES

Independent Thinkers

Milk tastes better in glass bottles

Farmers Market Designer Milk

No BST here

New Niches For Milk Marketers

Organic Dairies Market Real Values

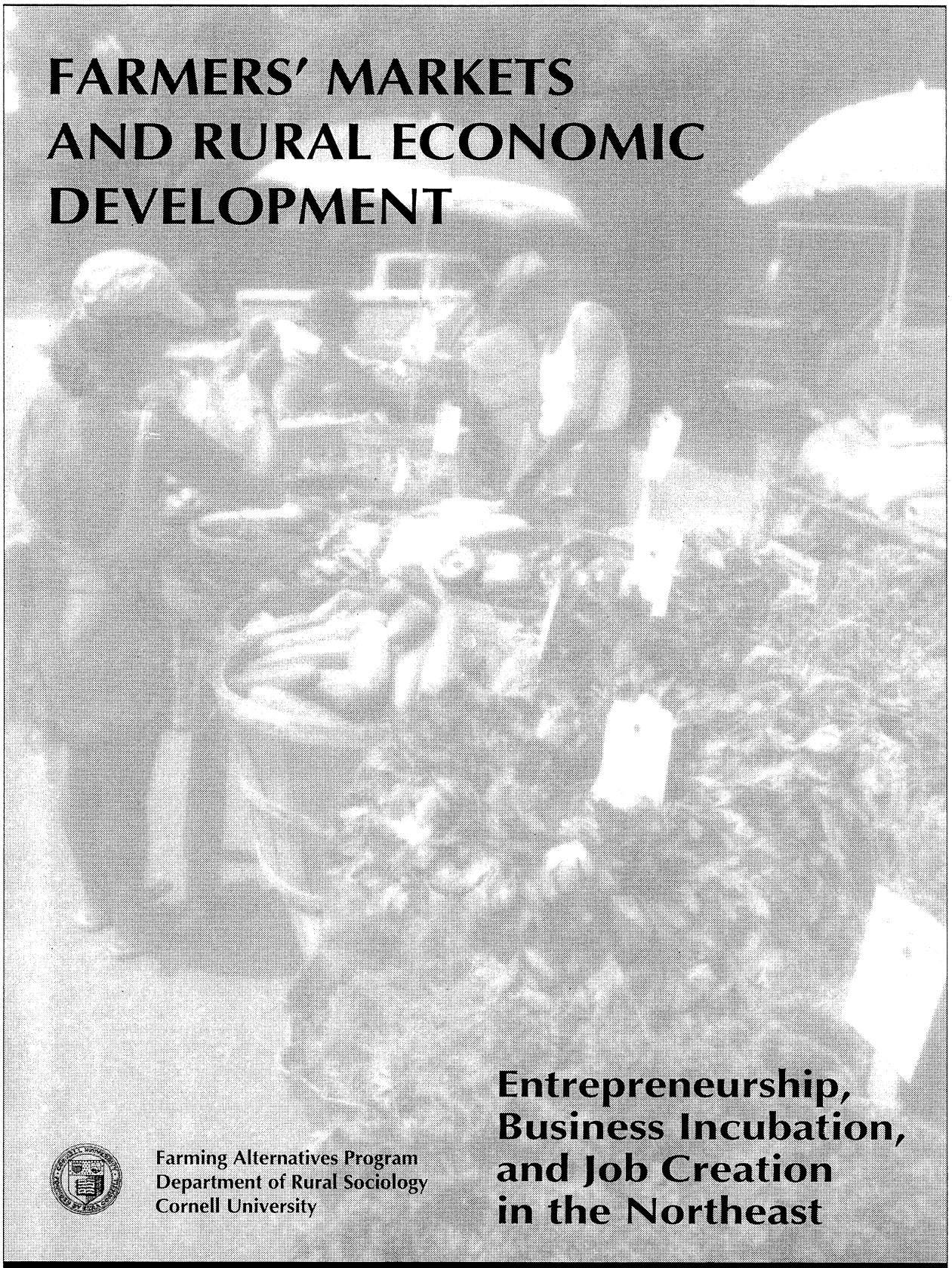
Co-op sells organic cheese

Vermont Famliy Farms Premium Milk

Too Much Government?

Profiles of Dairy Producer-Handlers in New York

# FARMERS' MARKETS AND RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## Entrepreneurship, Business Incubation, and Job Creation in the Northeast

Farming Alternatives Program
Department of Rural Sociology
Cornell University

Community Agriculture Development Series

## Overview

Our study of farmers' market vendors in the Northeastern U.S. shows that farmers' markets provide a variety of benefits and opportunities for their vendors and host communities. They permit vendors to achieve as a group what can be extremely difficult to do as individuals. Furthermore, farmers' markets enhance business opportunities for new and existing enterprises, foster business skills and entrepreneurship, and have positive effects on rural families. Like *business incubators*, farmers' markets provide rich entrepreneurial environments that help to hatch homegrown businesses and jobs, and generate new economic wealth in rural areas. Written for local economic development officials, Agricultural and Farmland Protection Boards, and Cooperative Extension staff, this publication outlines some of the results of the vendor study and discusses how public agencies can assist farmers' markets in contributing to rural development.

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## Acknowledgments

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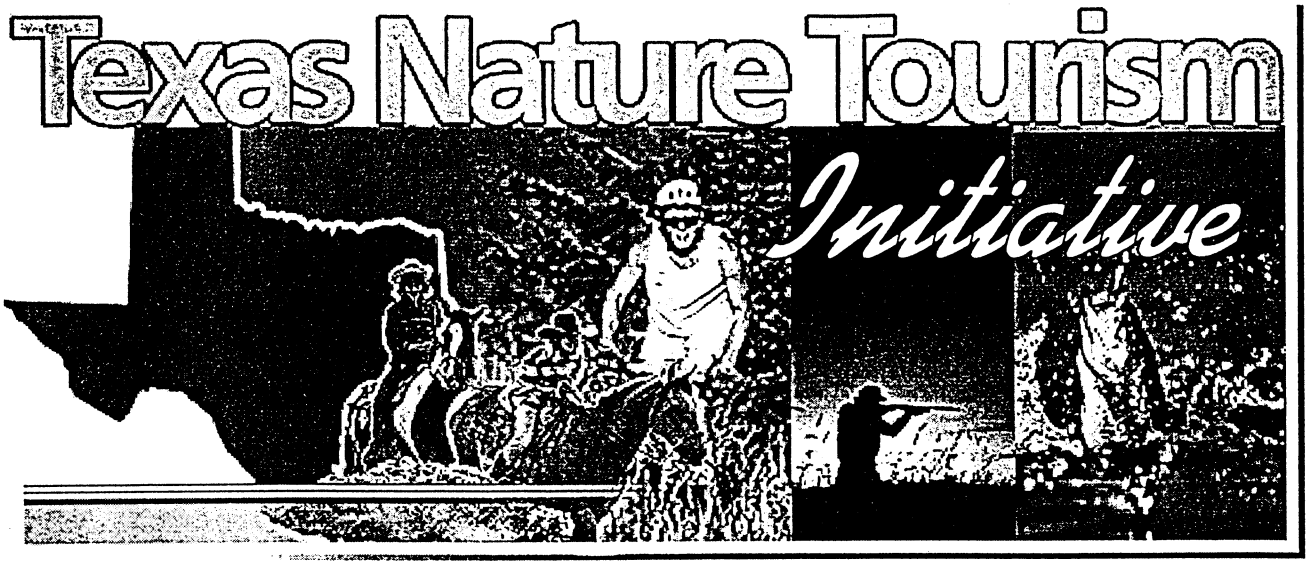
## About the Farming Alternatives Program

The Farming Alternatives Program is dedicated to promoting a sustainable food and agricultural system which supports farm families and their communities. Our current program focus is on innovative marketing, value-added processing and sustainable farming practices. We conduct research, and provide information, educational programs, and referrals to diverse audiences, including Extension Agents and other agricultural educators, agriculture development organizations, and community decision leaders. The Farming Alternatives Program is supported by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University.

## What is Community Agriculture Development?

Community Agriculture Development (CAD) involves community-based partnerships working to create or improve economic opportunities for farmers, by: (1) sustaining existing farms; (2) providing opportunities for beginning farmers; and (3) strengthening rural communities. There are more than 40 CAD initiatives throughout New York State. The Farming Alternatives Program supports these efforts through research, education, and this series of Community Agriculture Development Bulletins.

The information in this publication is for educational purposes only. Reference to specific commercial organizations, products, or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Farming Alternatives Program is implied.




# Marketing Natural Resources

*Through Recreation and Tourism Enterprises*

# Facilitator's Resource Manual

*Collaborating Organizations*

Texas A&M University System
Texas Agricultural Extension Service
Texas Agricultural Experiment Station
Southwest Texas State University

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
Natural Resource Conservation Service
Texas Nature Tourism Association
Texas Department of Economic Development - Tourism

## Marketing Natural Resources Through Recreation & Tourism Enterprises

Latest Revision:April 27, 2000 (10:33AM)

**NOTE: There is an underlying assumption of this agenda to address "marketing natural resources." The assumption is that the ranch owner has as their goal...*to maximize return on their investment of (ROI) resources.* Other personal goals and ideals are not considered even though, for some owners, they may have significant impact on resource allocation decisions.**

| Landowner questions / issues | Workshop Content | Learning Objectives |
|---|---|---|
| ***Goal - ROI*** | ***Introduction of Workshop*** | |
| ***Day 1 - 8:30 am*** | Goals of Owner<br>Focus on ROI<br>Nature tourism/types of enterprises overview - video/pictures - collage of images with little or no dialogue | *Focus of workshop - marketing<br>*Goals of owners<br>*1st focus is on ROI<br>*2nd focus is on marketing through the eyes of the consumer<br>*Understand the terms supply and enterprise as the businesses that produce the product<br>*Understand the terms demand and market as the customers who purchase and experience the product<br>*Introduced to the "marketing circle" |
| ***Who are my customers?*** | ***Developing a Marketing Perspective*** | |
| ***9:00 am - 11:00 am*** | ① Contrasting Supply and Demand - Participant Exercise | *Understand the difference between supply and demand (market) perspectives<br>*Know what it means to examine your enterprise from a market perspective |
| ***11:00 am - 12:00 pm*** | ② Marketing - Presentation (Sarah Richardson) | *Know the definition of marketing<br>*Understand market segmentation<br>Introduced to the criteria for evaluating market segments and selecting target markets<br>*Be familiar with the nine "P's" of tourism marketing<br>*Know why tourism marketing is different from the marketing of most other products and services<br>*Know the steps in developing a marketing plan |
| ***12:00 pm - 1:00 pm Lunch*** | | |
| ***What do my potential customers want?*** | ***Collecting Market Information***<br>Introduction | |
| ***1:00 pm - 1:30 pm*** | ③ Methods of collecting market information | *Know the importance of being able to access data to describe market segments<br>*Know that there are an infinate number of ways to segment markets<br>*Understand the concept of using comparables to collect market information<br>*Improve the understanding of the nine P's of marketing<br>*Understand how market information can be secured |
| ***1:30 pm - 3:00 pm*** | ④ Case studies | *Understand the role and use of case studies |
| | ⑤ Comparables | *Understand the role and use of comparables in market information<br>*Know the types of information that should be collected from comparable enterprises<br>*Know how to collect comparable enterprise information |
| ***3:15 pm - 4:00 pm*** | ⑥ Current markets - profiling existing customers | *Understand why to profile existing customers<br>*Know the types of information that should be collected on current customers<br>*Know the importance of a systematic collection of customer information and how that information can be used to make decisions<br>*Know how to use information to segment markets |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *4:00 pm - 5 :00 pm* | ***Describing Marketing Segments/Products***<br><br>⑦ Describing outdoor recreation markets using national and state trends, demographic and behavioral variables - Presentation (David Scott) – (60 min) | *Know national and state trends in outdoor recreation participation<br>*Understand how to use demographic, psychographic, geographic, and behavior data to segment and profile markets<br>*Understand how to use trend data<br>*Know which variables can be used to describe market segments |
| ***What are my options?***<br><br>*Day 2 - 8:30 am - 9:30 am* | ⑧Alternative resource use decision making...how do I decide among options? | *Understand how to identify alternative enterprise options<br>* Understanding of the economic and personal trade-offs of non-traditional land-use enterprises.<br>*Understand the purpose and processes of choice between traditional and non-traditional land-use enterprises.<br>* Understanding the basic elements of commercial recreation feasibility analysis.<br>* Understand the management trade-offs of enterprise diversification |
| *9:30 am - 10:00 am* | ⑨ Defining options - two approaches: What do I have? What does the market want? | *Understand the contrast between a market approach vs a resource (production) approach<br>*Know about a process for discovering and identifying underutilized recreation and tourism resources on the land<br>*Know the value of market understanding to inventory resources |
| ***How many are out there who will buy my recreation product?***<br><br>*10:15 am - 12:00 pm* | ***Market Feasibility***<br><br>⑩ Describing market segements using demographic, geographic and psychographic information<br>*Market Feasibility Exercise | *Understand and apply the steps for a market feasibility analysis<br>*Know how to segment markets using three types of information (demographic, psychographic, geographic)<br>*Know how to associate a market profiles/segments with product/service mix<br>*Know how to use market information and available data to quantify market segments<br>*Demonstrate the impact of distance to market on volume of business<br>*Demonstrate the impact of price on volume of business |
| | ①① Describe product/service mix of the enterprise | *Know how to describe the combination of activities and services that constitute the "experience" for a market segment<br>*Understand the packaging and programming of resources required to provide the "experience" desired by a market segment |
| *12:00 pm - 1:00 pm Lunch* | ①② Positioning and competition<br>*differentiation | *Understand and apply market positioning and competitor analysis<br>*Know the impact of competition on volume of business<br>*Know the importance of "positioning" with the customer to differentiate from the competition |
| ***How do I reach my potential customers?***<br><br>*1:00 pm - 2:00 pm* | ***Advertising, Promotion and Evaluation***<br><br>①③ Methods of advertising and promotion - direct mail, internet, media | *Understand the various advertising and promotion vehicles<br>*Understand how to select an effective advertising and promotion vehicle<br>*Know how to use direct mail to match the profile of the customer<br>*Know how to evaluate direct mail marketing<br>*Know sources of help in direct mail marketing |
| | ①④ Evaluating advertising and promotion effectiveness<br>*address partnerships& industry insiders/media | *Know the criteria for evaluating the different advertizing mediums |
| ***Is it worth the effort?***<br><br>*2:00 pm - 3:00 pm* | ***Enterprise Feasibility***<br>①⑤ What are my resource requirements/inputs? | *Know the importance of market feasibility in enterprise feasibility<br>*Know the steps in enterprise feasibility<br>*Know the resource requirements/inputs for enterprise feasibility<br>*Understand the types of information needed to project enterprise revenue |
| | ①⑥ Comparing alternative investments | *Understand the purpose and processes of choice between traditional and non-traditional land use enterprises |

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# SUCCESSFUL MARKETING RESEARCH

*The Complete Guide to Getting and Using Essential Information About Your Customers and Competitors*

EDWARD L. HESTER

JOHN WILEY & SONS, INC.
New York • Chichester • Brisbane • Toronto • Singapore

VIII-95

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USDA

**United States Department of Agriculture**

Agricultural Marketing Service

February 2000

# Innovative Marketing Opportunities for Small Farmers: Local Schools as Customers

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# Summary

Small farmers in the United States are declining in number and experiencing economic difficulty. Within that group, the number of African-American farmers has dramatically decreased since 1910, when 1 million African-American farmers owned 15 million acres of land. In 1998, fewer than 20,000 African-American farmers owned 2 million acres.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the West Florida Resource Conservation and Development Council (WFRCDC), and the Small Farmer Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Project, Florida A&M University (FAMU) have worked together on this pilot project to create marketing opportunities for limited-resource growers. The cooperators used *A Time to Act,* the report produced by USDA's National Commission on Small Farms, as a guide. A group of small farmers in the Florida Panhandle organized into the New North Florida Cooperative and established a location in Marianna, FL, 70 miles west of Tallahassee. The Cooperative recognized a considerable opportunity in serving local school districts with fresh agricultural products. This pilot project has made substantial progress over the 1997/98 and 1998/99 school years.

The Cooperative overcame initial difficulties, including lack of organization, economic difficulties, social attitudes, existing customer preferences, and lack of equipment. Realizing that effective organization was critical, these limited-resource growers formed a management team as a governing body. The management team addressed problems and handled day-to-day business activities in a unified, methodical way. The Cooperative acquired capital and purchased necessary startup equipment, such as a refrigerated trailer, cutting machines, and wash sinks.

The Cooperative developed a good working relationship with the Food Service Director for the Gadsden County School District by providing high-quality produce, prompt deliveries, fair prices, and courteous professionalism. The vending experiences over the 1997/98 and 1998/99 school years were positive steps for the Cooperative in building a long-term, reputable business. The Cooperative's main product was fresh-cut, leafy greens, but watermelons, strawberries, blackberries, and muscadine grapes were also sold. Word-of-mouth advertising has portrayed the Cooperative as a reputable vendor and opened doors of opportunity in other school districts, including Jackson, Leon, and Walton Counties.

**Reap New Profits: Marketing Strategies for Farmers & Ranchers**
*A PowerPoint Presentation for Educators*

1 – Title image: Collage of marketing strategy images

**Presenter:** For a small or medium-sized farm operation, innovative marketing strategies may mean the difference between a profitable, successful enterprise and closing the farm gate forever. Alternative marketing strategies have become an important way for small and medium-sized farms and ranches to prosper. Rather than accepting prices offered by wholesalers, direct marketers gain the power to turn a profit back in their own hands.

2 – Text image:
- Farmers markets
- Pick-your-own farms
- Farm stands/Value-added products
- Entertainment farming/Agri-tourism

**Presenter:** We will lay out some of the more successful alternative farm marketing strategies. You will probably pick up several ideas from the successes of others.

3 – Text image:
- Community supported agriculture (CSA)
- Cooperatives
- Restaurant sales
- Mail order/Internet
- Direct marketing meat

**Presenter**: Farmers markets, farm stands, agritourism, community supported agriculture and adding value to farm products offer producers direct connections to their customers and allow them to sell a "farm experience" as well as their goods.

4 – Text image: Knowledge of production without effective marketing usually will not bring a rewarding return.

**Presenter**: Coming up with a great idea is just the beginning. You still need to research your proposed enterprise using sound business planning and decide whether it makes sense for you and your family. Use this accompanying bulletin from the Sustainable Agriculture Network for additional ideas and a list of helpful resources.

5 – Text image:
- Great idea
- Planning
- Implementing
- Evaluating/Refining

6 – Title image: Farmers markets

**Presenter:** Farmers markets may be the most common direct-marketing strategy. According to USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, the number of farmers markets in this country jumped from 2,410 to 2,746 in just two years.

7 – Text/Photo image: Farmers market photo with "1996 – 2,410 markets; 1998 - 2,746" super-imposed.

**Presenter:** That increase in farmers markets reflects an increasing preference for farm-fresh produce. This most popular form of direct marketing perhaps has done more than any other strategy to increase support for farmers and farming. Many customers prefer to buy produce from farmers they know and trust, especially the small family farms that help support communities.

8 – Text image: Maine farmers market customers say supporting local farmers was their second reason for shopping there, behind product quality. Source: University of Calif. Small Farm Program.

9 – Farmers market photo

**Presenter:** Farmers markets usually offer a secure, regular and flexible outlet where a vendor can sell a wide range of fresh produce, plants, value-added farm products and crafts. Beginning direct-marketers may want to start with farmers markets.

10 – Farmers market photo

11 – Text image: *Dynamic Farmers' Marketing: A Guide to Successfully Selling Your Farmers' Market Products* by farmer Jeff Ishee

12 – Text image: Market tips
- Colorful, layered displays of your products are enhanced by signs, packaging, even the clothes you wear.
- Price in round numbers to speed sales and eliminate problems making change.

- Don't deliberately or drastically undersell your fellow farmers.

13 – Text image: To locate farmers markets in your area, go to www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/map.html, or call USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service at (202) 720-8317.

14 – Title image: Pick-your-own

**Presenter:** Pick-your-own marketing turns the job of harvesting, packing and transporting to the customer. While it can be a good way to offset labor costs, many farmers find it most profitable when paired with an on-farm tourism activity.

15 - Photo: Pick-your-own

16 – Text/photo slide: "People don't come all the way out here to get cheap food. They come because it's fun and the berries are absolutely fresh."
Earnie Bohner
Persimmon Hill Berry Farm

**Presenter:** The popularity of pick-your-own farming has declined since the 1970s and 1980s, but it remains a great marketing option for small growers with a good client base — especially those located on the edge of urban areas. Pick-your-own reduces harvest labor needs and eliminates most post-harvest tasks such as grading, washing, packing, cooling and storing.

17 – Text image: Producers considering pick-your-own need will need:
- liability insurance
- space for parking
- ability to supervise customers
- a willingness to host the public

18 - Photo/text image:
The success of pick-your-own marketing is often in the details, such as:
• Having an answering machine message listing prices, conditions and operating hours
• Maintaining evening and weekend hours
• Creating a pleasant setting for families

19 - Title slide: Farm stands

**Presenter:** Producers opening stands on site can sell freshly harvested produce that does not need to be trucked beyond the farm gate. Key to supporting such a venture is a location along a busy road, with good, attractive signage.

20 - Photo: Farm stand sign

**Presenter:** A good farm stand also functions as a place to display and sell value-added products. Producers should examine their products and brainstorm about how processing might increase their value.

21 – Photo: Value-added product

**Presenter**: Fruit growers can dry their product or make wines, juice, vinegar, spreads, sauces, syrups and preserves. Grain growers might want to create cereals and baking mixes. Dairy operators can bottle milk or create homegrown cheese, while livestock producers might sell dried meat or specialty cuts.

22 – Photo: Value-added product

23 – Text image:
- Feature high-demand items, such as fresh-picked sweet corn
- Pick locations on or near busy roads
- Contact your local extension agent for more information about setting up a stand
- Familiarize yourself with regulations governing food products

**Presenter:**
Local extension offices should have information about how to construct sales stands, small market buildings, and produce displays.

24 – Title image: Entertainment farming

**Presenter:** Pairing farms with entertainment can draw families — and their recreational dollars. Seasonal festivals, hayrides, petting zoos, on-farm classes and workshops bring more potential customers to the farm. Another option for recreational farming is leasing wooded land or marginal cropland for hunting, fishing or hiking.

25 – Photo: Agritourism

**Presenter**: Social skills and a scenic, clean, attractive farm are crucial for success in agritourism and can overcome a location that is less than ideal.

26 - Photo: Agritourism

27 – Photo/text image: State tourism bureaus can offer a wealth of ideas and information. Increasingly, county and state economic development boards offer expertise and/or publicity.

28 – Text image:

- Producers will need good "people" skills
- Tourism offices can help bring customers
- Link to the state Department of Agriculture for help with farm festivals, etc.

29 – Title slide: Community-Supported Agriculture

**Presenter:** Community supported agriculture (CSA) is still new to most people. But since it began in the U.S. in the late 1980s, it has grown tremendously as farmers and consumers have seen the many advantages to this unique partnership.

30 – Photo: CSA

**Presenter**: CSA is an organized form of subscription marketing in which consumers pay up front in the beginning of the growing season in exchange for weekly supplies of fresh produce. By paying in advance, they become members of the farm who share in many of the risks of farming, but also share the bounty.

31 – Photo: CSA

**Presenter:** Many CSA farms offer members opportunities to volunteer at the farm. This not only lowers costs, but also allows members to learn more about what it really means to grow food. No two CSA farms are alike. Some supply such items as flowers, berries, eggs, meat or honey in addition to standard produce.

32 – Photo: CSA

33 – Photo/text image: "We want our customers to be more sensitive to the farm situation. The more they understand the connection of family farms to healthy communities, the better for us and farmers everywhere."
-- Molly Bartlett, CSA farmer, Hiram, Ohio.

34 – Text image: When evaluating community supported agriculture consider:

- Proximity to customers
- Ability to host members
- Willingness to sponsor farm events
- Variety of products
- Ability to distribute produce

**Presenter**: Farmers may ask members to come to the farm to pick up their shares, or they might deliver them to centrally located distribution sites. Many CSA farmers produce weekly or biweekly newsletters describing the anticipated harvest and featuring recipe ideas. Others reach out through listservs or websites.

35 - Title slide: Cooperative Marketing

**Presenter:** Some direct marketers go it alone, but many find that profitability comes through working with others. Through a cooperative, producers share marketing expenses and risks and negotiate with buyers as a team. Co-ops create all sorts of new opportunities, from diversifying products to reaching new markets.

36 - Photo: Co-op

37 - Photo: Co-op

**Presenter**: Perhaps the most attractive aspect of joining a co-op is the ability of a group to diminish financial risks for individuals.

38 - Photo: Co-op product

**Presenter**: With start-up help from a SARE grant, the farmer-owned Vermont Quality Meats marketing cooperative is netting top dollar for its products and providing 52 member farms with crucial income.

39 – Text image: Vermont Quality Meats marketing cooperative has put $100,000 to $150,000 extra profit into the collective pockets of its member producers in less than a year.

40 – Text image: "Instead of throwing our product away at the auction and supporting a bunch of middlemen, we're doing all those steps ourselves."
Lydia Ratcliff
Founder, Vermont Quality Meats

41 – Text image: To set up a marketing cooperative…

**Presenter**: The USDA's Rural Business-Cooperative Services agency offers information and assistance in setting up and managing a cooperative marketing effort, as does the National Coop Business Association.

42 – Text image: To learn more about cooperatives and community development, visit the National Cooperative Business Association at www.cooperative.org/economic.cfm

43 – Title slide: Direct sales to restaurants

**Presenter:** Restaurants and specialty stores such as health food outlets long have been prize

markets for many growers, because they are usually willing to pay premiums for quality, freshness and reliable delivery.

44 – Photo: restaurant photo

**Presenter**: In the competitive restaurant business, chefs continue to seek innovative ways to draw customers. Featuring fresh, unusual produce straight from the farm has become an increasingly popular way to do this.

45 – Restaurant photo

46 – Restaurant photo

**Presenter**: Growers need to cultivate relationships with chefs and food buyers and stay attuned to their needs. Maintaining good communication about what will be available and how chefs or buyers would like them harvested is key to successful sales.

47 – Text image: Upscale restaurants and specialty stores pay top dollar for quality produce and hard-to-get items. Growers usually can expect about 10 percent more than wholesale prices for standard items at mainstream restaurants.

48 – Text image: "Get to know how the chef wants the produce picked. If squash soup is on the menu, larger ones are okay. If the squash is to be presented whole on the plate, they can't be longer than 3 inches."
Cass Peterson

49 – Title slide: Mail order/Internet

**Presenter:** As mail order and Internet sales continue to grow, creative farmers are jumping on board. Both spell convenience for busy people looking for unique products. The good news: Farmers don't need to be computer experts to tap into millions of potential buyers, although maintaining a successful web site is time-consuming and challenging. If farmers already have a good customer base, web sites and mail-order strategies offer good ways to diversify and expand.

50 – Image: Wheat Montana website

51 – Image: Hartzler Dairy website

52 – Text image:
• Visit web sites that connect farmers and consumers. <www.localfarm.net>, <www.upick.com> and <www.smallfarms.com>
• Update your catalog or website often
• Find reliable shippers

53 - Title slide: Direct Marketing Meat

**Presenter:** For meat producers facing an increasingly concentrated market, direct marketing offers the opportunity to retain a greater share of product value. One good selling point is offering tastings for new customers. Marketing meat and animal products, however, means making food safety issues paramount.

54 - Photo: Meat tasting

55 – Text image: For more information about meat inspection regulations, see *The Legal Guide for Direct Farm Marketing* by agricultural law professor Neil Hamilton.

56– Text image: For more information, check with FSIS

57– Text image: Strategic planning

**Presenter**: Overall, new enterprises such as agricultural direct-marketing strategies require strategic planning. Not only do farmers need to plan, but they also must consider ongoing evaluation against stated goals.

58 – Text image: Where do you want to be in 10 years?

**Presenter**: It's important to check in regularly to measure progress against 5- and 10-year goals. How do they fit with the farm family's goals and resources?

59 – Text image: Resources

**Presenter**: We've just laid out some alternative marketing ideas. You may want to seek help from your local extension agent and other experts from your land grant university to help make *your* idea a reality. Consult some of the resources listed on the last two pages of "Reap New Profits: Marketing Strategies for Farmers and Ranchers" for more sources of information about creating a strategic plan.

60 – Text image: Resources (continued)

61 – Photo/text image: Credits

# IX. Tourism Development

# ALTERNATIVE ENTERPRISE AND AGRITOURISM: FARMING FOR PROFIT AND SUSTAINABILITY TOOL KIT

***TABLE OF CONTENTS AND ABSTRACTS***
For

## IX. TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

*Agritourism in New York State: Opportunities and Challenges in Farm-Based Recreation and Hospitality.* Farming Alternatives Program, Cornell University. This publication provides a realistic look at the important concerns and the economics of agritourism operations, including first-hand accounts of operators in NY. Call 607-255-9832 for a copy.

*Agritourism Resource Packet*. Farming Alternatives Program, Cornell University. This resource packet contains materials used in the 1996 and 1997 Farming for the Future Leadership workshops. Call 607-255-9832 for a copy

*Taste, Face and Place of NY Farms! Photo Contest.* NY Farms has a photo contest where winners compete at the state fair. It is open to all ages and to both professionals and amateur photographers. The goal is for winners to tour the state and photos to be placed in high traffic areas where urbanites will see them. For more information, contact Glenda Neff, NY Farms, POBox 1491, Auburn, NY 13021. 315-255-9267 or email: nyfarms@baldcom.net.

*Tourism USA: Guidelines for Tourism Development.* University of Missouri, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, University Extension. This 214 page publication addresses—appraising tourism potential, planning for tourism, assessing product and market, marketing tourism, visitor services and sources of assistance. Worksheets are included to facilitate development of a plan. Out of print. Call James A. Maetzold 202-720-0132 for a copy.

*Considerations for Agritourism Development.* Sea Grant NY, Cornell University. Publication discusses agritourism businesses, farmers' markets, farm festivals and regional agritourism planning. It has a good reference list. Call Diane Kuehn at 315-341-3042 or email: dkuehn@cce.cornell.edu.

*National Association for Interpretation.* NRI exists to foster excellence in interpretation and support for the interpretative profession. Interpreters combine an understanding of the subject and communicates it to the visitor. It insures proper communication to people visiting the farm and rural community. For information, call 303-491-6434 to find out where professionals live in your area.