

After reviewing all of the responses it was determined that the following eight areas were worth further discussion by the group on November 16, 2005. The eight areas were grouped together where applicable.

**All groups were asked to consider this theme:**

**Tipping Points:** more research on those points where farmers decide to change their farming operations. What are the tipping points? increased energy or input costs? need to maintain soil quality?

**Group One: *Diverse audiences and Marketing:***

**Themes to consider:**

***MISA and Consumer Marketing*** - look at national models, systems. Marketing beyond personal niche and direct marketing. Finding profitable mainstream markets.

***Should MISA become more multicultural?*** relating to sustainable agriculture and new constituencies, old traditions, new languages, cross cultures

- 1) Diverse customers
- 2) Translate publications
- 3) Diversity: consumers, farmers, diverse ways to do agriculture. "old traditional" ag methods.
- 4) 4 million in MN, 500,000 are immigrants (permanent residents)
- 5) New immigrants have good skills and backgrounds, but lack information.
- 6) Best way to reach them? Not traditional classroom instruction. Many not literate.
- 7) On-farm tours? SFA has discussed. Translators needed? Maybe not.
- 8) Mentoring program might be good. help and production and also marketing techniques. 2-way learning.
- 9) Basic info in own language is necessary.
- 10) Could transmit info to older immigrants through the education of their kids.
- 11) Hands-on education, demonstrations
- 12) Outreach to rural people and low socio-economic status, some have same issues as immigrants.
- 13) Marketing, individual farmers diversifying their operations
- 14) Many immigrant farmers are cautious about new marketing methods.
- 15) Work to make marketing options more secure, verbal versus written contracts
- 16) Cooperatives for marketing a value-added product
- 17) Lots of farmers facing these issues, how do we create space for immigrant/ethnic farmers to connect and get established, anglo-farmers?
- 18) What can MISA do? Round table to bring people together. Field days, workshops.
- 19) Marketing studies, demand for new crops? White corn, goats.
- 20) How to conduct own market research?
- 21) Special event/social event with educational component. Ask groups what model they would like to use.
- 22) Branding products, face on the product
- 23) Growth of organic
- 24) Relate to values, rural life, family farmers, some co-opting by corporations
- 25) MISA: Wayne, integrated livestock
- 26) SARE: MN grants to travel programs

- 27) Demand is there, how can sustain fill it? Production needs to increase, processing/handling bottleneck, infrastructure is expensive.
- 28) MISA: problem solving/discussion group to discuss above issues and disseminate existing and new info.

## **Group Two: *Science & Sustainability***

### **Themes to consider:**

***Science and Sustainability:*** Quantifying the environmental consequences of land use practices, identifying environmental benefits of sustainable agriculture

***Sustainable Agriculture and energy, energy use, weather.***

- 1) Build/convene partners to ID around common interests
- 2) ID sustainable indicators on: devise tests, justify new paradigms, energy issues scenario-building
- 3) Define principle criteria of moving toward sustainability.
- 4) Networker/Broker (not necessarily an implementer)
- 5) Leadership on topics around which to build teams: ex, some would like to see MISA deliver practical applications. Help gather and analyze data. Energy costs rising, create scenarios for change.
- 6) Climate change: perennial cropping, carbon sequestration, CSP and other rewards for good stewardship, and flood protection of land/cities
- 7) Market agriculture to new audience, potential ecosystems services delivery.
- 8) 3 degrees: principal criteria, 4 big topics:
  - a. energy
  - b. Climate change
  - c. Water quality
  - d. Health
- 9) We need: what is MISA's stake in all this? Other groups and what do they do? RSDPs, H2O quality center
- 10) Need MISA to focus on sustainable ag. How does our work fit in relations to other groups' work?
- 11) Tert:prine
- 12) Secondary: BROK, NET, scenario
- 13) Primary: works does not
- 14) Policy aspects of all of these topics need to be considered
- 15) Policy makers need this type of information
- 16) Three upcoming issues: expensive energy, climate change, declining economy. We have access to researchers and data. But avoid only looking back to determine where to go. Tipping point has been reached on these 3 things
- 17) Avoid using the rear-view window for these things

### **Group Three: *Students***

#### **Themes to consider:**

***Students:*** Increased focus on students, new classes, new links to internships at Sustainers' organizations, expand the Sustainable Agriculture minor, market MISA to students across the campuses and in recruitment

- 1) Livestock production, new class?
- 2) Organic production, student farm planning classes
- 3) Sustag minor, links to grad program's websites
- 4) New internship sites, businesses, coops...
- 5) Interact with students from other colleges?
- 6) Bureaucratic hoops: get more students outside grad school into minor program. School of public health, public policy...
- 7) Track graduates: where do they go? Future internship sites, exit interviews with graduates.
- 8) Open MISA channel into sustainer's organizations to get experience in sustainable agriculture
- 9) Career options in sustainability through internships, courses?
- 10) Applied economics connected to markets. "Changing infrastructure toward a more local emphasis
- 11) New course? Existing conventional course. Growing demand for local/organic foods.
- 12) Slow process of sustainability being integrated into all courses. Student pressure, MISA pressure.
- 13) Engage faculty. Actively solicit faculty to create new courses, engage in sustainability.

### **Group Four: *MISA within U of M***

#### **Themes to consider:**

***MISA within the University of Minnesota:*** how does MISA fit in the New College design (merger of COAFES and CNR?) How to broaden and strengthen faculty involvement in MISA? Learn from other colleges nationwide, learn from other campuses statewide?

***MISA and the School of Public Health:*** Sustainability and research or practices on health-related issues, plants/food as medicine, ties with the Nursing School, etc.

- 1) Promote and perform. Sort through research that supports benefits of foods raised in certain sustainable ways. eg CLA, Omega-3, what are the exact health benefits? Research to quantify and put a monetary value on the environmental services farmers provide. Better link between specific practices and environmental results, consequences.
- 2) Promote current activities within all parts of the university.
- 3) Bring back the "Joint Seminar." See MISA by-laws. Between researchers, producers, and sustainable coalitions.
- 4) See sustainability being moved to other areas of the university, eg city, regional planners must know about organic practices, multifunctional landscapes, and ag educators.
- 5) Ag-ed student should be required to take a sustag course
- 6) How do we stay visible to be heard even when speaking out?
- 7) How do we bring the "systems" focus to areas that have traditionally focused on the individual? Help to mesh sustag and nutrition, public health, etc.
- 8) MN Institute for Sustainable Living. Name change? But stay connected to Ag.
- 9) With NUCO? Making a greater link with environmental sci/studies programs.

- 10) Bringing/linking MISA to the other U campuses. Eg UMM has Pride of the Prairie has local meals, and a growing interest in sustag. Visible connection to regional partnerships.
- 11) Workshop on Student farms at MOSES conference.
- 12) Does extension have a role with MISA? Are they using MISA? What does this mean to us and sustag? Is sustainability a part of extension? Is extension responding to the needs of farmers? Is extension top-down or bottom-up?
- 13) Educate future extension agents about sustainability, or at least introduce them to the concept.
- 14) Bring organics/sustainability to master gardener program.
- 15) Have a basic biology class taught with organics. Have them grow an organic garden as a lab component. Can start with greenhouse/ hoop houses in spring semester.
- 16) Send all U depts. a survey: "What can MISA do for you?"
- 17) How does MISA coordinate expertise within the university?
- 18) Elementary education: bring basic sustag/growing plants/gardening curriculum to classroom.
- 19) Connect with other centers within the U. MISA doesn't have a formal relationship with them.