

# **Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture**

Program Update  
1992-2006

*A partnership of the University of Minnesota's  
College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource  
Sciences, University of Minnesota Extension, and the  
Sustainers' Coalition*

# A Message from the Staff

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MISA was created nearly fifteen years ago to bring the agricultural and University communities together in a cooperative effort to develop and promote sustainable agriculture in Minnesota and beyond. This publication was designed to share and celebrate the accomplishments produced by this University-Community partnership and to describe MISA's intended direction for the future.

There have been significant accomplishments:

- Creation of the Sustainable Agriculture Information Exchange.
- Development of the Sustainable Agriculture Graduate Minor.
- Selection and management of three rounds of School of Agriculture Endowed Chairs in Agricultural Systems.
- Initiation of the Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships.
- Development and support of numerous interdisciplinary research and education teams comprised of University-Community partnerships
- Development of the Alternative Livestock Production Systems Program.
- Creation of the *Green Lands, Blue Waters* Initiative

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the commitment, collaboration, and hard work of many people. Key players have changed, we added the University of Minnesota Extension to our list of partners, and MISA's Bylaws have been renegotiated. Thanks to the broad support of many friends, MISA managed to remain faithful to its purpose and goals.

There is more to be done. MISA will continue to support the above efforts while exploring new opportunities to develop and promote sustainable agriculture. We are excited to be a partner in this work and to continue the University-Community dialog. MISA's future is bright, and we invite you to be a part of it.

*MISA Staff*

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*"...MISA represents a working model where no one entity or organization holds control, but where power and opportunity are shared, and where good ideas and persuasion are the negotiable currency for the common good."*

*~ External Review Team's letter to  
Dean Michael Martin,  
January 1997*

## History

MISA is a collaborative effort of the University of Minnesota's College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS,) University of Minnesota Extension, and the Sustainers' Coalition. MISA's cornerstone was laid in 1987 when a group of sustainable agriculture community organizations expressed concern about the level of sustainable agriculture work in the University's research, education, and extension initiatives. A series of discussions followed, and from these beginnings, a model to organize and expand the University-Community dialogue on sustainable agriculture was created. MISA came into formal existence in 1992 with CFANS and Extension funding currently playing a crucial role in this dialogue.

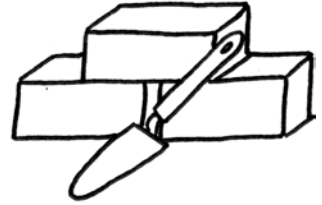
## Structure

**Board of Directors.** MISA's Board of Directors consists of twelve to fifteen members. Membership on the Board represents a 1/3 balance among University representatives, sustainable agriculture practitioners (e.g., farmers, ranchers), and representatives of the sustainable agriculture community (e.g., non-governmental organizations, business, government, citizen representatives). We welcome Board of Director nominations.

# Partner Organizations

## Sustainers' Coalition Membership:

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, 1996-  
Land Stewardship Project, 1987-  
Minnesota Food Association, 1987-  
Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota, 1994-  
The Minnesota Project, 1987-



**University of Minnesota's College of Food, Agricultural  
and Natural Resource Sciences 1992-**

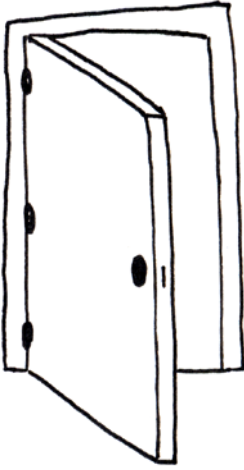
**University of Minnesota Extension 2006-**

## Former Sustainers' Coalition Members:

Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, 1987-1993  
Organic Growers & Buyers Association, 1987-2001

*"MISA is based on a partnership between the University and citizens of Minnesota who are interested in sustainable agriculture. This partnership has helped foster continuing, meaningful interactions among people from these two communities."*

*~ Robert King  
Professor, Department of  
Applied Economics*



*"We've used MISA many times to link up to people at the University that can help us find the answers that we need, and if the answers aren't there, to encourage someone to start looking for them."*

*~ Dan and Muriel French,  
Dairy farmers  
Dodge Center, MN*

## Purpose & Goals

MISA's purpose is to bring together the agricultural community and the University community in a cooperative effort to develop and promote sustainable agriculture in Minnesota and beyond. MISA promotes dynamic agricultural systems that integrate the ecological, economic, and social aspects of life. MISA's goals and objectives are to:

**Increase** the University's response to the needs of the sustainable agriculture community and increase practitioners' influence on the University. MISA serves as a door to the University's resources.

- Increase communication and mutual exchange between the University and sustainable agriculture practitioners.
- Increase the influence of farmers and their practical knowledge on the faculty of the University.
- Increase practitioners' access to faculty.
- Increase practitioners' access to information and literature.
- Identify gaps in knowledge of farmers and of the University faculty.

**Promote** sustainable agriculture thinking within the University so that the concepts permeate teaching, research, and extension.

- Influence the movement of funds to researchers for sustainable agriculture.
- Foster teamwork on sustainable agriculture by funding interdisciplinary research projects, supporting undergraduate and graduate academic programs, and fostering partnerships.
- Oversee an endowed rotating Chair in sustainable agriculture.
- Create a climate of political support for sustainable agriculture among Minnesotans.
- Increase the opportunities for students and faculty to be exposed to sustainable agriculture issues and discussions both on and off campus.

**Work with** rural communities in discovering and implementing the values of sustainability.

- Develop a method for defining the sustainability of agricultural systems and for assessing their impacts on rural communities.
- Promote sustainable community development principles throughout the State.

MISA works to achieve these goals and objectives through various programs in an effort to better serve Minnesota farmers and non-farming citizens, as well as University of Minnesota students, faculty, and staff.

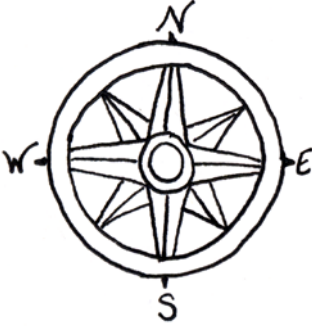


*"It isn't big vs. small, organics vs. modern farming, but it is people sitting down together to put their very best forward as citizens to tackle common issues and work for solutions that fit our land, water, and air resources."*

*--Mary Ann Scharf,  
University of MN Extension,  
Stevens County*

# Guiding Principles

Four core principles guide all MISA projects and programs.



- ***Systems Approach:*** MISA believes that agriculture is a system in which the land, people, and production of food are interwoven. One aspect of the system cannot be changed without influencing all of it. MISA believes that all efforts to improve agriculture should take care to balance the long-term economic, ecological, and social effects.
- ***Synergy:*** MISA believes that people of diverse interests working together cooperatively can produce a positive effect greater than the sum of their individual efforts. MISA's intention is to create opportunities for people to work cooperatively on issues of sustainable agriculture in a way that promotes synergy.
- ***Healthy Debate:*** It is MISA's intention to promote sustainable agriculture through all of its various activities. In doing so, MISA welcomes input from any interested parties and will encourage healthy and vigorous debate.
- ***Balance of Power:*** MISA is founded upon a balance of power between the Sustainers' Coalition and the University of Minnesota. This balance is reflected in the composition of MISA's Board of Directors and other governance structures. In addition to this internal balance, MISA seeks to achieve an appropriate balance of influence on the University between sustainable and conventional agricultural interests.



# Green Lands, Blue Waters Initiative

**Purpose.** The Initiative seeks to increase and broaden discussions surrounding sustainable agriculture at multiple levels. Members of the Green Lands, Blue Waters Initiative represent private and public institutions throughout the Mississippi River Basin. Together we share a vision of developing and promoting perennial and cover crop-based farming systems that will conserve resources and provide wildlife habitat while sustaining healthy and vibrant farm communities.

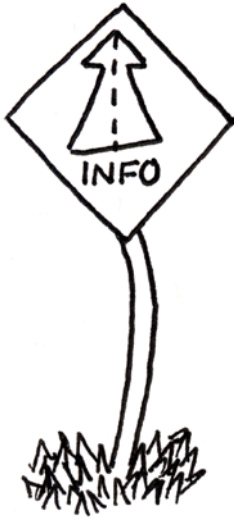
**Accomplishments.** We have numerous land grant university (Iowa, Illinois, Louisiana, Minnesota and Wisconsin) and non-profit partners involved in our efforts. In February 2006 we presented at the American Association for the Advancement of Science annual meeting in a 3 hour session. We have obtained grant funding from the McKnight Foundation to support our efforts. For a complete listing of partners see our web site: [www.greenlandsbluewater.org](http://www.greenlandsbluewater.org)

## Current & Future Efforts.

- **Build capacity of stakeholders**, including scientists and farmers, farm advisors, extension educators, input suppliers, bankers, processors, NGO personnel, civic and faith leaders, and others regarding continuous living cover farming systems.
- **Significantly expand the knowledge base** regarding perennial crops and the use of cover crops in annual systems and their environmental, economic, and health impacts and potential of these farm systems.
- **Heighten visibility** of and focus on perennial farming systems and the use of cover crops.
- **Identify and promote policy changes** needed to encourage and support adoption of perennial crops and increase the use of cover crops.

*“When we try to pick up anything by itself, we find it is attached to everything in the universe.”*

*-John Muir,  
Naturalist*



*"MISA's role as a visible, competent clearinghouse and referral agent for information on sustainable agriculture is not to be underestimated...When I ask people where they go for authoritative information on sustainable agriculture, they usually say MISA's the best and first stop."*

*~ Phillip Muessig  
Minnesota Office of Environmental  
Assistance*

## **Sustainable Agriculture Information Exchange**

**Purpose.** The Information Exchange is a clearinghouse of information on sustainable agriculture and a collaborative effort of multiple stakeholders and information providers. In 1995, the Minnesota State Legislature allocated money for MISA to work with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Energy and Sustainable Agriculture Program to develop and disseminate sustainable agriculture information.

**Accomplishments.** Two primary activities have been the development of the MISA website and educational materials.

**Website.** The Information Exchange maintains a popular website, which is constantly evolving to meet new needs. It currently contains:

- Electronic versions of our educational materials
- "Ask MISA" (fields sustainable agriculture questions)
- Calendar of sustainable agriculture events
- Announcements
- Database of resources (searchable by keyword)
- Links to partner organization websites as well as other websites related to sustainable agriculture
- Forum section which contains news articles and opinion pieces

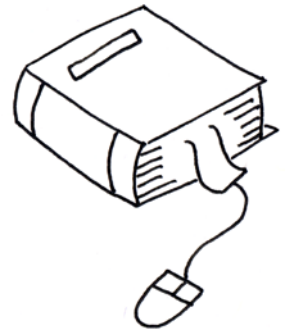
In addition to the website's "Ask MISA" section, the Information Exchange also answers sustainable agriculture questions via e-mail, fax, and a toll-free telephone number.

**Educational Materials.** Development of the Information Exchange's educational materials is a collaborative effort. Input from farmers, students, faculty, and community groups is used at all stages of development (to identify and prioritize topics, identify project team members, and to write, review, and disseminate the materials). MISA staff directs this process and facilitates the writing and production of the materials.

Six publications are available in full text on-line or through the University of Minnesota Extension Service Distribution Center. These publications are:

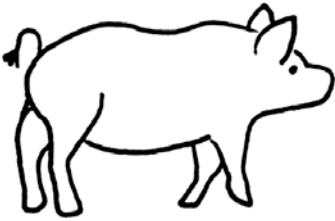
- Organic Certification of Crop Production in Minnesota
- Whole Farm Planning: Combining Family, Profit and Environment
- Minnesota Soil Management Series
- Collaborative Marketing: A Roadmap and Resource Guide for Farmers
- Discovering Profits in Unlikely Places: Agroforestry Opportunities for Added Income
- Hogs Your Way: Choosing a Hog Production System in the Upper Midwest
- Dairy Your Way: A guide to management alternatives for the Upper Midwest
- Poultry Your Way: A guide to management alternatives for the Upper Midwest
- Time, Soil and Children: Conversations with the second generation of sustainable farm families in Minnesota
- Resources for Beginning Farmers. Building a Sustainable Future
- Building a Sustainable Business: A Guide for Farmers and Rural Business Owners
- Local Food: Where to find it, how to buy it

**Current & Future Efforts.** In addition to maintaining and updating the MISA website, we have several publications in development.



*"Specialization is necessary for high-quality, reductionistic research, but interdisciplinary institutions such as MISA are necessary to clarify research needs, and to develop useful research applications such as the Soil Management Series."*

*~ Ann Lewandowski,  
NRCS Soil Quality Institute, and  
Dept. of Soil, Water, & Climate,  
University of Minnesota*



## **Alternative Livestock Program**

The purpose of this program is to conduct research and outreach on livestock production and marketing systems that are considered environmentally friendly, profitable, and that help support rural communities in Minnesota. The program was created in 1997 by the Minnesota Legislature, with encouragement from a coalition of sustainable agriculture organizations. It originally focused on swine production systems that used pasture and/or bedding for finishing pigs, for group farrowing and nursery settings, and for group gestation of sows. This approach was developed by program supporters who were interested in finding alternative production systems. In 2005, we expanded the program to include research and outreach on all domestic livestock, including sheep, goats, dairy, and poultry. An advisory task force comprised of farmers, University faculty, and others connected to animal agriculture, oversees the program.

Accomplishments. Activities of the past include:

- Increased communication among producers through the formation of the AltSwine Listserv, the Alternative Swine Newsletter, the Program's website, a database of individuals interested in alternative swine production, and articles about alternative swine practices in industry magazines.
- Increased educational activities for those interested in alternative and production and marketing of swine, goats, sheep, poultry, including field days, workshops, roundtable discussion groups, and the publication of the Swine Source Book.
- Secured legislative funds for research activities including the construction of alternative swine production research facilities at the West Central Research and Outreach Center in Morris and a full-

time researcher to investigate priority issues identified by the Swine Task Force.

- Established interdisciplinary connections within the University—including faculty in Agronomy & Plant Genetics; Animal Science; Biosystems & Agricultural Engineering; Soil, Water & Climate; and the College of Veterinary Medicine.

### **Current & Future Efforts.**

- Focus on marketing options for pork, poultry, goats, sheep, and beef produced in alternative systems and help farmers organize marketing cooperatives or other entities.
- Seek and secure funds for research and educational activities.
- Continue to build connections by linking researchers to producers for on-farm alternative livestock systems research.
- Continue educational activities, facilitate networking, upgrade the existing website, and develop publications on alternative livestock systems.



*"Our department offered a fellowship to a highly-recruited graduate student. He was on the fence about accepting after a departmental visit, but when he learned of the sustainable ag minor program, he chose the U of M over many other offers."*

*~ Richard Levins,  
Professor, Department of  
Agricultural & Applied Economics,  
University of Minnesota*

## **Sustainable Agriculture Minor & Other Education-related Endeavors**

**Purpose.** Helping students develop the capacity to address increasingly complex and trans-disciplinary societal and ecological challenges is critical for the future of agriculture.

**Accomplishments.** MISA is actively involved with the University's graduate and undergraduate minors in sustainable agriculture, WUSA seminars, Theodora and Arnold Johnson Undergraduate Research Internship Program, and *Cornucopia*, The Student Organic Farm.

***Graduate/Undergraduate Minors in Sustainable Agriculture.*** The graduate and undergraduate minors in sustainable agriculture were created in 1995 and in 1992, respectively. A MISA team-building grant led to the development of the graduate minor. The minors place strong emphasis on systemic approaches to analyzing current agricultural production systems in the U.S., as well as environmental, economic, and social conditions that influence changes in agriculture. Courses designed specifically for this program integrate biology, ecology, agriculture, sociology, history, philosophy, and economics.

An internship with agricultural producers, non-profit organizations, or government agencies working on sustainable agriculture issues is required for the graduate minor and is highly recommended for the undergraduate minor. The internship offers students an opportunity to gain practical experience in an area that complements their studies, broadens their understanding of food production, and develops learning and thinking skills that will serve them in a variety of settings.

**WUSA Seminars.** WUSA, or What's Up in Sustainable Agriculture seminars, is a student-run seminar series that deals with sustainable agriculture issues. MISA co-sponsors the series each year with the Sustainable Agriculture Study Group. Seminars are informal, lunchtime gatherings open to all. Seminars address a wide range of topics, including alternative swine production systems, urban agriculture and community gardens, cultural diversity in agriculture, human health and agriculture, applied ecology, and marketing strategies. Guest speakers are from diverse backgrounds--academic, nonprofit, business, and farming communities. These weekly seminars consistently attract 20 to 50 participants.

**Theodora and Arnold Johnson Undergraduate Research Internship Program.** This program is designed to provide undergraduate students with a paid internship opportunity to work with a faculty mentor on a research topic pertaining to sustainable agriculture. It is funded by a private endowment and is managed by MISA staff. Six students have benefited from this program to date.

**Cornercopia, the Student Organic Farm.** This program began on a small garden plot on the Saint Paul Campus in 2004, and in 2005 about 2 acres of land at the corner of Larpentur and Cleveland Avenues was identified as the permanent home for the student farm.

**Current & Future Efforts.** MISA plans to continue strengthening the graduate and undergraduate minors in sustainable agriculture. Specific goals include expanding the activities available for students through the minors, and increasing funding for internships.

*"...through WUSA, I have found a diverse community of agricultural researchers ...nowhere else in the University does there exist a group of researchers of all kinds who focus their attention on agriculture in the broadest sense..."*

*~ Karin Matchet,  
Graduate Student,  
Program of History of  
Science & Technology*

*" Working in the Chippewa River Watershed, I participated in the formation of two citizen/ agency partnerships—my experience taught me much about conflict resolution, consensus building, and the importance of citizen participation—I feel this experience was critical to my education"*

*~ Paul Wymar,  
Graduate Student,  
Department of Forest Resources  
University of Minnesota*



## School of Agriculture Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems

**Purpose.** The Endowed Chair is dedicated to stimulating interdisciplinary discussions, new ideas, and leadership in agriculture. It seeks to promote a healthy environment, vital communities, and economic profitability over the long term. Rotating appointments are filled by agricultural leaders not only in academics, but also from private and public arenas. Individuals or project teams serve flexible, varying length terms as appropriate. MISA manages the Chair, which is funded by a \$1.9 million endowment from School of Agriculture alumni, the Minnesota Legislature, and the University of Minnesota.

*"I have been pleased and sometimes amazed at the reception I get at the University, and how, when I have explained the endowment to faculty in a wide variety of disciplines, they become animated and interested.*

*Many folks at the University appear to be interested in systems thought and research...I think this position is an idea whose time has come."*

*~ James Van Der Pol,  
former Endowed Chair*

**Accomplishments.** Eight individuals have completed tenure as Endowed Chairs.

- **Patricia Henderson**, *agribusiness marketing consultant*  
**Carmen Fernholz**, *farmer, Madison, MN*  
**Robert von Bernuth**, *Michigan State University*  
*Current Socioeconomic Issues Related to Livestock Expansion and the Structure of Agriculture* (May 1997-May 1998)
- **James Van Der Pol**, *farmer, Kerkhoven, MN*  
*Alternative Swine Systems* (January 1999-January 2000)
- **Karen Lehman**, *Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy*  
**Julie Ristau**, *Utne Reader Magazine*  
*A Sustainable Food System in Southeast Minnesota* (July 1999-May 2000)



- **Cornelia Flora and Jan Flora**, Iowa State University  
*Intersection between Agriculture and Community Sustainability*  
(July 1999-June 2000)
- **Douglas Tiffany**, University of Minnesota  
*Agricultural Energy Issues* (August 2001-August 2002)
- **Luanne Lohr**, University of Georgia  
*Prospects for Regionalization of Organic Food Systems in Minnesota* (August 2001-May 2002)
- **Debra Elias Morse and Steve Morse**, consultants  
*Prospects for Regionalization of Organic Food Systems in Minnesota* (May 2003-May 2004)
- **James A. Riddle**, consultant  
*Organic Livestock Research Survey* (May 2003-April 2004)
- **Beth Waterhouse**, author and consultant  
*Time, Soil and Children: Conversations with the second generation of sustainable farm families in Minnesota*  
*Minnesota* (May 2003-August 2003)

*"This Chair seems to be a logical progression for me. It is more structured than my other visiting positions, and offers the chance to work with some of the most progressive researchers, extensionists, and practitioners in the country."*

*~ Luanne Lohr,  
Former Endowed Chair*

**Current & Future Efforts.** The newest Endowed Chairs were announced in October 2006

- **Gigi DiGiacomo**, Economic Consultant  
*Development of an organic commodity price reporting service* (October 2006-October 2007)

**Larry Lev**, Oregon State University (March 2007-September 2007)  
*Innovative Marketing Alternatives* (June 2007-May 2008)

**Katherine L. Clancy**, Food Systems Consultant  
*Collaborative Approaches to Sustainable Agriculture* (June-December 2007)

**Gary Holthaus**, Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society  
*Conversations on the New Agrarianism* (January-June 2007)



## Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships

**Purpose.** The Regional Partnerships bring citizens and University faculty, staff, and students together to identify and address issues affecting the sustainability of natural resource-based industries, including agriculture and tourism. In five regions across the state, citizen-University boards of directors fund projects that promote the long-term social, economic, and environmental health of their communities.

MISA helped secure legislative funding for the Partnerships in 1997 to establish three pilot regions. MISA helped coordinate the development of the regional boards and staffing structures. Before additional funding for the program was obtained in the 1999 legislative session, MISA provided staff support to the Partnerships' Statewide Coordinating Committee.

**Accomplishments.** To date, the Partnerships have funded over 300 research, education, and outreach projects for a total of roughly \$6,500,000. The Statewide Coordinating Committee has staff and directs a statewide project on the feasibility of local energy generation and distribution.

**Current & Future Efforts.** MISA continues to share staff with the Partnerships through the split positions of the MISA office administrator and the Partnerships' Statewide Director—who also participates in the Green Lands, Blue Waters Initiative. MISA staff are active on the Statewide Coordinating Committee, the Pride of the Prairie efforts, and the Northland Food and Farming Initiative. MISA's networking experience has helped the Partnerships develop relationships with University faculty, staff, and students and other organizations working to promote sustainability.

MISA plans to maintain its relationship with the Regional Partnerships and to continue to explore connections between MISA programs and Partnerships projects.

*"MISA played a key role in developing the concept and in securing support from the Minnesota Legislature for the Regional Partnerships...They've begun to develop an educational model that blurs the boundary between University and community and creates the opportunity for questions of sustainability to be at the center of applied University research..."*

*~ Karen Lehman,  
former Endowed Chair*

## Sustainable Farming Systems Team (1997-2001)

**Purpose.** This team researched the impacts of alternative farming systems on soil and water quality. The project focused on the collaborative efforts of participants from the Department of Soil, Water, and Climate, the Southwest and West Central Research and Outreach Centers at Lamberton and Morris, Extension, and non-profit organizations. Funding for this work was provided by the Minnesota Future Resources Fund as recommended by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources.

**Accomplishments.** The results of the four-year study were published in July 2001. The report discusses the water quality and economic profile data from three grazing farms in the study.

## Farmers' Summit (1998-2000)

**Purpose.** A farmer-led network was developed that sought alternatives for current farm policies. MISA, the Kellogg-funded Visions for Change program, and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy sponsored the Farmers' Summit--which included farmers from Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

**Accomplishments.** The Farmers' Summit developed a policy platform focusing on long-term alternatives that would support farmers in gaining economic and political power, improve labor conditions for farm workers, and offer consumers choices in the market place. The Summit was also responsible for laying the foundation for the Red River Valley Project, an educational publication being developed by the Information Exchange.



*"Four years of painstaking research proved that these sustainable farms simultaneously benefit the environment and economically benefit the farm family. The dual goal of sustaining the land and sustaining the farmer is proven to work."*

*~ Sustainable Farming Systems Team  
report: "Demonstrating Environmental  
and Economic Performance"*

## Team Grants (1993-2000)



*It has been necessary to nurture larger-scale research projects spanning multiple investigators and disciplines. These projects are quite difficult to organize, but are widely recognized as vital to the development of science-based solutions to environmental challenges such as the sustainability of agriculture."*

*~ Joint Seminar Letter  
to Dean Charles Muscoplat,  
May 18, 2000*

**Purpose.** This program provided competitive grant funding for interdisciplinary research and education teams to address key issues affecting community and agricultural sustainability. MISA developed a competitive grant process to encourage interdisciplinary teams consisting of faculty, staff, students, non-profit organization representatives, and farmers.

**Accomplishments.** MISA funded 14 team grant projects over the course of seven years. Several teams went on to secure additional funding from other organizations.

- Woody Agriculture Team (1993); *Information gained from this grant helped develop the Center for Integrated Natural Resources and Agricultural Management (CINRAM).*
- Biological, Financial, and Social Monitoring Team (1993-1995); *Developed "The Monitoring Tool Box" and its companion video, "Close to the Ground."*
- Integrated Farm Planning Team (1993); *Explored whole farm planning options, developed publication "How to Establish Goals: A Group Project for Farmers & Their Families."*
- Sustainable Dairy Systems Team (1993-1995); *Developed publication "Knee Deep in Grass: A Survey of 29 Grazing Operations in Minnesota," part of M.S. degree program for a student enrolled in the Graduate Minor.*
- Graduate School Team (1993-1995); *Developed the sustainable agriculture minor for Masters and Ph.D. students. MISA continues to support this program.*

- Integrated Approaches in Natural Resources and Agricultural Management: Establishing a Research and Educational Agenda for Minnesota (1997); *Helped develop research and outreach agenda for CINRAM.*
- Farm Beginnings (1996-1998); *Helped develop hands-on workshops and courses for beginning farmers. Now a standing Land Stewardship Project program.*
- Team Building to Promote Visioning, Whole Farm Planning, and Alternative Economic Uses of Environmentally Sensitive Areas in the Chippewa River Basin (1996-1998); *Helped shape and develop the concept for the LCMR-funded Sustainable Farming Systems Project (1997-2001).*
- Evaluating Approaches in Comprehensive Farm Planning (1996-1997); *Developed the Whole Farm Planning Network.*
- Integrated Cropping Systems Team: Southern Minnesota Cropping Systems (1996); *Supported researchers and farmers examining weed control options at the Elwell Ecology farm at the Southwest Research and Outreach Center in Lamberton.*
- Assessing the Nutritional Impact of Sustainable Food Systems: Urban and Rural Linkages (1999-2001); *Explored nutritional impacts of sustainable agriculture on urban community members, part of a Ph.D. program for a student enrolled in the Graduate Minor.*
- Farm Sustainability and Survivability in Minnesota's Red River Valley: Lessons from Adaptive Production and Business Management Strategies of Farmers (1999); *Developed a publication with the same name.*
- PastureLand: Marketing Antibiotics and Hormone Free Grass Based Milk Products (1999-2000); *Developed standards for incorporating direct marketing research and formed a business plan. Information available to others interested in direct marketing value-added products.*
- Medicinal Herbs: Creating a Network of Growers and Herbalist Health Care Providers (1999-2000); *Established network to develop marketing links between herbal health care practitioners and producers.*

*"MISA has been a lot of help to us as we've tried to put together a sound economical, biological, and social system that fits our needs in today's competitive agriculture environment...Because of our involvement in those two projects (Social, Biological and Economic Monitoring Project and The Dairy Team Project), we've been able to move much more quickly to the sustainable system we are trying to achieve."*

*~ Dan and Muriel French,  
Dairy farmers,  
Dodge Center, MN*

## Present Board of Directors

*Gigi DiGiacomo, Economic Consultant*  
*Wayne Edgerton, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources*  
*Carmen Fernholz, Farmer and Organic Research Coordinator, Madison*  
*Dale Hennen, Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, St. Paul*  
*Bill Hutchison, Extension Entomologist, University of Minnesota*  
*Jacqueline Jacob, Animal Science, University of Minnesota*  
*Rob King, Applied Economics, University of Minnesota*  
*Chuck Knierim, Farmer, Breezy Point*  
*Dan Miller, Farmer and Farm Business Management Instructor, Spring Valley*  
*Rick Olson, Farmer, Lake Park*  
*Paul Porter, Agronomy and Plant Genetics, University of Minnesota*  
*Alvaro Rivera, Latino Economic Development Center*  
*Jim Stordahl, Extension Educator, Polk County*  
*Tony Thompson, Farmer, Windom*  
*Terry VanDerPol, Farmer and Land Stewardship Project, Granite Falls*

## Past Board of Directors Members

Nancy Adams, 2004-2006	Albert Markhart III, 2000-2006
*JoAnne Berkenkamp, 2001-2005	Randy Meyer, 1996-1997
DeEtta Bilek, 1998-2004	Dave Minar, 1999-2005
*R. Kent Crookston, 1992-1996	Roger Moon, 1992-1997
Mary Doerr, 1993-1997	Joan Nassauer, 1992-1994
Carol Ekarius, 1996-1999	*Jan O'Donnell, 2000-2006
Jon Evert, 1992-1998	Jerry Perkins, 1992-1998
*Carmen Fernholz, 1992-1998	Greg Reynolds, 1999-2005
Muriel French, 1997-2003	Mark Ritchie, 1998-2004
Doug Gunnink, 1992-1995	William Rois, 1999-2005
Ralph Hilgendorf, 1992-1999	Michael Russelle, 1992-1995
Dana Jackson, 1994-2000	Vernon Ruttan, 1992-1995
Gregg Johnson, 1998-2001	Charles Schmidt, 1993-1996
*Loni Kemp, 1992-1998	Dave Serfling, 1992-1993
Tim King, 1992-1996	Deon Stuthman, 1995-1998
Rebecca Knittle, 1992-1995	*Mary M. Tacheny, 1995-2001
Philip O. Larsen, 1993-1995	Mark Thell, 1995-2001
Richard Levins, 1996-1999	*Bruce Vondracek, 1995-2001
Bernadette Longo, 2002-2005	Michael White, 2000-2003
Lynn Mader, 1999-2005	*Bill Wilcke, 1994-2000

*\*Board of Directors Chair*

## **Present Staff Members**

**Jane Grimsbo Jewett**, *Asst MISA Coordinator, 1999-*  
**Wayne Martin**, *Alternative Swine Task Force Coordinator, 1999-*  
**Helene Murray**, *MISA Coordinator, 1993-2002; Executive Director, 2002-*  
**Beth Nelson**, *Information Exchange Associate Director, 1999-*  
**Kate Seager**, *Program Associate, 2000-*  
**Courtney Tchida**, *Student Programs Coordinator, 2003-*

## **Past Staff Members**

**Derrick Braaten**, *Intern, 2004*  
**Charlotte Conn**, *Senior Secretary, 1995-1998*  
**Debra Elias Morse**, *Associate Program Director, 1995-1999*  
**Emily Green**, *Regional Partnerships Coordinator, 2000-2001*  
**Julie Grossman**, *Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator, 1997-1999*  
**Sara Hartman**, *Principal Secretary, 1992-1994*  
**Melinda Hooker**, *Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator, 1999-2002*  
**Roxanne Lewis**, *Senior Secretary, 1999-2000*  
**Caitrin Mullan**, *Intern, 200-2002*  
**Monica Siems**, *Regional Partnerships Coordinator, 1999 and 2001-2003*  
**Julie Tranquilla**, *Alternative Swine Task Forcer Coordinator, 1998-1999*  
**Daniel Ungier**, *Intern, 2004*  
**Ken Virnig**, *Intern, 2000*  
**Bill Wilcke**, *Acting Administrator, 2000-2002*  
**Don Wyse**, *Executive Director, 1992-2000*

# Contact Us!

We welcome your questions and comments. For more information regarding MISA, sustainable agriculture questions, or to provide financial support for MISA's endeavors, please contact the MISA office at any time.

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