

1996 Sunset Review

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The Fall of 1996 marked the fifth anniversary of the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA). The MISA by-laws have a sunset provision that requires a five year review. Specifically, the section of the by-laws pertaining to this reads:

"MISA will be dissolved on June 30, 1997, unless a resolution for its continuation is passed by the Joint Seminar and the MISA Board of Directors. Action on this resolution by both organizations must occur on or before the January, 1997, annual meeting.

The Board will establish a committee of Board and Joint Seminar members who will design and implement a review which begins no later than June of 1996 and which provides the information and analysis requested by both organizations for this sunset provision."

The review was conducted in October through November of 1996. As laid out by the committee appointed by the Board of Directors, the entire review process was designed to:

- Gauge MISA's progress to date,
- Set future directions for the organization (for the next 5 years), and
- Share information about MISA with the public.

The review process consisted of the following steps:

- Personal interviews (conducted by an independent party) with approximately 10 individuals familiar with MISA's work;
- A survey mailed to 268 people who have interacted with MISA over the past several years; and
- An external review panel who reviewed written documentation pulled together by MISA Staff and partners, and who made a site visit on November 14-15, 1996.

The information learned from the entire review process (see the reports, below) was used to provide the Board of Directors, the MISA Joint Seminar, and the Dean of the College of Agricultural, Food, and Environmental Sciences (COAFES) with information necessary to determine the future of MISA.

In January of 1997, The Board of Directors and the MISA Joint Seminar voted unanimously to continue MISA for another 5 years.