

# 2001 Sunset Review Document

---

## Name of Center:

Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture

## Director:

October 1991 - April 2000 - Donald L. Wyse

May 2000 - To be announced

## A. GENERAL INFORMATION:

### A1. Date Center was created:

MISA Board of Directors met for the first time in February 1992

### A2. What office space or other goods/services are provided by COAFES to the Center?

The Department of Agronomy & Plant Genetics provides office space for MISA:

- MISA main office, 413 Hayes Hall (Lewis)
- Regional Partnerships main office (COAFES, CNR and Extension Program), 313 Hayes Hall (Green .25 FTE with MISA)
- Staff office, 418 Hayes Hall (Murray)
- Staff office, 415 Hayes Hall (Nelson, Jewett)

The Department also provides accounting services (MISA pays \$5,000/year for this service), access to copiers and fax machine (MISA pays per use), and network access (MISA pays per month).

The Swine Center provides office space for MISA:

- Staff office, 385 E Vet Med (Martin)

### A3. What office space or other goods/services are provided by other colleges to the Center?

We work with the U of MN Extension Service to publish materials. We pay expenses (development and printing) for each publication.

## A4. Who are the Center's primary clients?

---

**Minnesota farmers.** We serve farmers throughout the state through our research and educational activities, through our web site, through the Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships. Farmers and those who work with farmers are our target audience when assessing information needs, and when developing and reviewing educational materials on sustainable agriculture that are produced jointly with the University of Minnesota Extension Service. Field days and workshops are also held to assist farmers, and farmers are notified and invited to the symposia and conferences that are held on the St. Paul campus.

However, more importantly, *farmers work with us*. Farmers are our partners. This is our fundamental philosophy, and a guiding principle that permeates everything that MISA does. Farmers serve on MISA's Board of Directors ( six of the fifteen members must be farmers as mandated by our bylaws). Every major program that has been initiated by MISA has begun by bringing together farmers and researchers to discuss issues and educate each other about the problem and possibilities for action. In developing educational materials, farmers serve on the Advisory Committee for the Information Exchange. Hence, they participate in identifying information needs, identifying others to work on the project teams, serve on the project teams which write and develop publications and farmers serve as reviewers, evaluating the usefulness of publications. Farmers serve on the interdisciplinary learning and research teams.

**Students at the U of MN.** We serve primarily students in COAFES, but also a number of students from CNR, CBS, Geography, Political Science have participated in MISA-sponsored events. The graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture is open to all students enrolled in any M.S., M.A. or Ph.D. program offered by the University of Minnesota. Students are encouraged to interact with farmers, specifically through internships and weekly seminars (What's Up in Sustainable Agriculture series). The WUSA seminars serve both graduates and undergraduates and are organized by the Sustainable Agriculture Study Group (approximately 15 to 20 students each semester). The MISA coordinator, Helene Murray, has been instrumental in coordinating internships, and assisting with the seminars. Both Helene and Don Wyse (Executive Director), discuss research ideas in sustainable agriculture with students and link them with farmers and researchers. Students feel incredibly well-served by these opportunities.

"I was so excited when I found out about MISA two years ago....I met with Helene Murray and she was very supportive of the idea of working on a collaborative project with the nutrition department. Until that date, I am unsure of how much interaction there was between the two departments...but I thought it made sense to work together. It has been a wonderful experience...There are so many new connections that are being formed and I feel that the future holds an abundance of opportunities.. These days I think many people have the desire to support farmers, environment, and community but they don't know what to do about it. They often feel overwhelmed. With a grant from MISA, I am working with community organizations (LSP, MFA, and Food Choices) and grocery stores to evaluate consumer attitudes and behaviors, educate consumers about their food choices, and share with consumers how they can make an impact by choosing to buy sustainably produced food....."

-Ramona Robinson, graduate student, Department of Food Science and Nutrition

"MISA-sponsored programs and events have been critical in my development as a graduate student ...the courses associated with the sustainable agriculture minor have presented perspectives that were not available elsewhere in the curriculum. Seminars provided by MISA

have been particularly helpful in my personal development of a systems view of agriculture. MISA has also been important in generating grant writing ideas. My conversations with MISA staff have resulted in attaining over \$200,000 in grants for sustainable agriculture research that is directly associated with my dissertation research. MISA has developed a network that is able to catalyze the thinking and relationships necessary to generate the ideas that will attract funding from a wide range of source..."

-Lee DeHaan, Ph.D. candidate, Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics

"... my most valuable experience was funded through the Minnesota Institute of Sustainable Agriculture. I spent eight months working with the Whole Farm Cooperative and their "Food with a Face" project. I had the pleasure of interviewing farmers about their farms, farming practices, and why they do what they do. The objective was to create profiles about the farmers for the general public to learn more about who is producing their food and how it is produced.."

-Kristen Corselius, graduate student, Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics

**U of MN faculty, Extension and staff.** We serve primarily faculty in COAFES. Faculty members (113) have been affiliated with MISA activities and programs in many capacities: as graduate faculty for the Minor in Sustainable Agriculture; writing grants and conducting research on sustainable agriculture issues; developing educational materials as members of a project team; and planning and participating in seminars (see Faculty Interactions list in [appendix](#)). MISA's ability to serve as an information clearinghouse of sustainable agriculture information and provide contacts with farmers and organizations benefits all parties.

".When I decided that I wanted to research family issues for families involved in some form of sustainable agriculture, the MISA staff was quite helpful to me in a number of ways. They helped me to know about several research projects that had not yet shown up in indexes of published work. They helped me to link up with local sustainable farming groups around the state, with the sustainable farming folks in the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and with sustainable farming groups in North and South Dakota. MISA's help was crucial to me in writing a grant proposal that was funded, in finding respondent families for my study, and eventually in producing interesting, publishable, published research findings. As an added benefit, the knowledge I acquired from MISA and through the research I did has enabled me to be an effective consultant in the development of a statewide whole-farm-planning program for farm families."

-Paul Rosenblatt, Professor, Family Social Science, College of Human Ecology

**Minnesota citizens.** We consider and respond to concerns that are voiced to us by citizens concerned with issues associated with and a need for information about sustainable agriculture. In 1995, the Legislature recognized the need for information related to sustainable agriculture and appropriated \$100,000 per year "for a contract with the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture to gather, evaluate, publish and disseminate sustainable agriculture information to a broad audience through both printed and electronic means." This appropriation resulted in the formation of MISA's Information Exchange. We now have an excellent reputation as a clearinghouse for sustainable agriculture.

"MISA's role as a visible, competent clearinghouse and referral agent for information on sustainable agriculture is not to be underestimated. The impact is significant, ironically, because there are increasing numbers of places to get such information, and thus confusion and frustration among citizens and local government officials in Minnesota. 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, St. Paul, MN

## A5. What are the principal departments and colleges with whom the Center works?

---

We have worked with faculty members *in all COAFES departments* in a variety of capacities, including joint research and educational materials development. Funding by MISA to faculty members to supports research. Thirty-three faculty members from 13 departments serve on the Graduate Faculty for the Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture. Joint Seminar faculty members come from 12 departments or centers from across COAFES and the College of Natural Resources

MISA has co-sponsored research and educational events with the following centers: Visions for Change; Center for Agricultural Impacts on Water Quality; Center for Farm Financial Management; Center for Alternative Plant and Animal Products; Center for Integrated Natural Resources and Agricultural Management; Swine Center; Program for Decision Cases; Center for Spirituality and Healing.

## A6. How many employees are supported by the Center?

---

Six, 4.0 FTE (3 full-time employees, and 3 part-time employees)

**Emily Green, M.S.**, Regional Partnership Coordinator (0.25 FTE with MISA, remaining 0.75 FTE for Regional Partnerships, salary split is the same). Emily began in April 2000 and works on behalf of the Statewide Coordinating Committee made up of representatives from the five Regional Partnerships.

**Jane Grimsbo Jewett, M.S.**, Research Assistant, Information Exchange (0.25 FTE - salary paid from the Information Exchange monies). Jane manages the questions that come into MISA through our web page, phone calls and emails. She also oversees the MISA web site. Jane has been employed by MISA since January 2000.

**Roxanne Lewis**, Principal Secretary (1.0 FTE, salary paid from base funding from COAFES). 75% of Roxanne's time is devoted to MISA, the other 25% is devoted to the Regional Partnerships Statewide Coordinating Committee. Roxanne has been on the MISA staff since September 1999.

**Wayne Martin, M.S.**, Alternative Swine Production Systems Coordinator (1.0 FTE - salary paid from Legislative funding for the Alternative Swine Program). Wayne coordinates the Alternative Swine Production Systems Task Force. Wayne has been with MISA since April 1999.

**Helene Murray, Ph.D.**, MISA Coordinator (1.0 FTE - salary paid from base funding from COAFES). Helene provides day-to-day coordination for MISA programs. She is also the program manager for an LCMR-funded grant. Helene has been the Coordinator for MISA since October 1993.

**Beth Nelson, Ph.D.**, Associate Program Director, Information Exchange (0.5 FTE - salary paid from Information Exchange monies). Beth provides overall coordination for the Information Exchange, with a primary emphasis on coordinating publications. Beth started her position in February 2000.

## A7. What are the major current sources of funding for the Center (in % blocks and dollars)?

---

### i. Funds used directly by MISA for operations and program support:

#### **COAFES:**

Since 1992, COAFES has provided important base funding for MISA (\$247,444/year, See 14B for details). This funding supports MISA staffing (coordinator and secretary positions), Board support, and programming support.

#### **Legislative funding:**

- Information Exchange - \$100,000/year (recurring, \$200,000 biennium). Funds are appropriated to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture for a contract with MISA.
- Alternative Swine Production - \$155,000 (1998 one-time appropriation). This money comes to MISA via COAFES as part of the Ag State Special.

### ii. Funds managed by MISA:

#### **Grants written by staff:**

\$350,000 -- Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources 1999-01. Sustainable Farming Systems - Continuation. H. Murray, Project Manager. Partners: MISA, UMES, MDA, SFA, LSP, The Minnesota Project. Note: \$229,100 went into a Soils CUFS account managed by Deborah Allan and David Mulla to conduct soil and water quality research.

#### **Endowments:**

- The School of Agriculture Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems, funded by an endowment from alumni of the School of Agriculture University of Minnesota (SAUM) (see brochure in appendix describing the purpose of the [Endowed Chair](#), its objectives and guiding principles): \$1.0 million Endowment, \$84,000 available annually
- Johnson Endowment (undergraduate research award, managed by MISA): \$102,000 Endowment, \$6,000 available annually

### iii. Funds for programs that MISA helped to initiate:

Regional Partnerships - \$1.2 million (recurring: \$2.4 million/biennium). Funds are managed by the Minnesota Experiment Station. The Regional Partnership program is a joint program of COAFES, Extension and the College of Natural Resources, MISA and the Minnesota Experiment Station.

## B. PROGRAMMATIC INFORMATION

## B1. What is the mission of the Center?

---

The Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA) is a joint venture of the University of Minnesota's College of Agricultural, Food, and Environmental Sciences, and the Sustainers' Coalition, a group of individuals and organizations which in 2000 includes: Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Land Stewardship Project, Minnesota Food Association, The Minnesota Project, Organic Growers and Buyers Association, and the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota.

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 which integrate *theecological, economic, and social aspects of life.*

## B2. What are the Center's objectives?

---

- i. Work with the University community to better address issues affecting the long-term viability of agriculture within Minnesota by engaging and responding to problems and needs expressed by those trying to develop sustainable farming systems.
- ii. Promote sustainable agriculture thinking within the University so that the concepts permeate teaching, research and extension.
- iii. Work with rural communities in discovering and implementing the values of sustainability.

### **Activities to meet these objectives include:**

(The [Appendix](#) contains detailed information on each of the following activities. MISA has played a significant role in the development of these programs, often in partnership with other organizations. Some of these programs are now self-sufficient, and no longer officially MISA programs, though MISA connections and support are evident).

**The Information Exchange** is devoted to developing and disseminating sustainable agriculture information to the public, via printed and electronic means. This program was developed after a need for information on sustainable agriculture was identified. MISA staff was instrumental in lobbying efforts to procure these funds. MISA staff then built an infrastructure for the development of educational materials that used input from farmers, students, faculty, and community groups, at all stages (needs assessment, writing, review, dissemination). These are reviewed and produced in cooperation with Extension. This has resulted in five quality publications, with four more due out this year (see Appendix for publications and list of upcoming publications). In cooperation with Extension, MISA staff also developed an extensive MISA web page, which contains a sustainable agriculture calendar of events, announcements, a searchable data base, information about MISA, partner organizations and the Sustainable Agriculture Minor, and an interactive "Ask MISA" section.

**Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture.** Planning for the minor began with a MISA educational team building planning grant in 1993, and subsequent funding by MISA in 1994 and 1995 to develop new courses and curriculum. The minor was approved by the graduate school in 1995. It is open to any Masters or Ph.D. student enrolled at the University of Minnesota. Most

students are from COAFES, but we also have students from Geography, Conservation Biology, and from the College of Natural Resources. MISA has hosted 107 seminars since 1995, in conjunction with the Sustainable Agriculture Study Group (WUSA seminars), and other partners. Faculty in Agronomy & Plant Genetics are currently working to revise the undergraduate minor in sustainable agriculture and have asked for assistance from MISA staff with this important endeavor. The Graduate Minor requires an internship as part of the program. MISA staff maintain and update the list of opportunities, thereby helping students to connect to a wide variety of opportunities for their internship.

***Alternative Swine Systems Program*** was funded by the Legislature to identify and develop research and educational activities for farmers and consumers interested in alternative swine production. MISA brought farmers who wanted more research on alternative swine systems together with animal scientists. Farmers, with the support of the Sustainers' Coalition, approached the Legislature to procure funding for an alternative swine research center at the West Central Research and Outreach Center in Morris, and to form the Alternative Swine Task Force. MISA staff (Wayne Martin) coordinates the task force. Thus far the task force has assembled and distributed the Swine Source Book, compiled a database of people interested in alternative swine systems, initiated a newsletter, created a web page, filled a position for a rural sociologist, assisted with the Endowed Chairs who conducted work in this area, and held several symposia. The symposium, "Demand-Driven Agriculture: Value-Added Labeling and Quality Assurance" was held to highlight work in alternative marketing across disciplines. Summaries of the symposium will be made available summer 2000.

***Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships*** are a program first envisioned by MISA in the early 1990s. Development of the Partnerships idea arose with the recognition by the Board and MISA staff that although current programs were bringing farmers and other individuals together with researchers and making progress in discussing and addressing sustainable agriculture systems, there was a need to broaden the discussion even further-hence the idea of discussing agricultural practices in the context of sustainable development, within different bioregions of the state arose. The Sustainers' Coalition, with support from the Dean's office (Dean Mike Martin), developed the legislative support to fund this project. MISA provided staff support for the Task Force which provided the framework for the Regional Partnerships, out of which the first three Regional Partnerships were established. These partnerships bring together diverse groups to discuss complex issues and identify research needs. The program is now a partnership in five regions across the state and is a joint program of citizens, COAFES, the College of Natural Resources, Extension and MISA and the Minnesota Experiment Station.

***Enhanced Landscape, Food Systems, Human and Animal Health Initiative*** is a new initiative designed to help facilitate interdisciplinary work within the University. Just as the Regional Partnerships have increased the scope of the discussion and of the exchange of information and education at the regional levels, this initiative is designed to broaden the discussion at the University level. Research will be directed toward sustainable development, with the goal of simultaneously enhancing the health of the landscape, humans and animals through holistic approaches to human nutrition and medicine, animal nutrition and veterinary science, and increased plant diversity on the landscape. Connections between diverse faculty across colleges must be made in order to facilitate the concurrent development of plant production systems, processing capacity and product markets. MISA staff have been instrumental in coordinating discussions on this topic over the past two years. These have led to the writing of a "white paper" and formation of a planning committee which held an all day

symposium, "Enhanced Landscape, Food Systems, Human and Animal Health" on the St. Paul campus in April, 2000. Twenty-five speakers spoke on diverse but inter-related topic areas with about 150 attendees. This symposium was sponsored by MISA, Visions for Change, Water Resources Center, Center for Integrated Natural Resources and Agricultural Management, Center for Alternative Plant and Animal Products, and the Center for Spirituality and Healing. (See Appendix for Abstracts). The next step is to begin facilitating broad faculty research teams capable of addressing complex issues and research priorities that will come from the Regional Partnerships.

***The Farmer Summit*** is a farmer-led network designed to create long-term solutions that support healthy food and farming systems and thriving rural communities. MISA staff was involved in discussions which led to the Farmer Summit. This program began in 1998, when a group of farmers (several were MISA Board members or former MISA Board members) from Minnesota, North and South Dakota met with land grant faculty to discuss the farm crisis. The Farmer Summit is sponsored by MISA, Visions for Change and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. These discussions led to the writing of the Farmer Summit Platform. This platform, along with an agricultural policy paper by Willard Cochrane "A Food and Agricultural Policy for the 21st Century" were presented and discussed at a symposium held on the Saint Paul campus in April, 2000: "The New Language of Farm Policy: Engaging Consumers, Labor, Environmentalists and Farmers in Shaping the Future of Food and Agricultural Systems." Two hundred-fifty people attended. The symposium was sponsored by MISA and Visions for Change.

***Sustainable Farming Systems Team (LCMR)*** consists of on-farm and Experiment Station research, demonstration and educational activities to examine the economic and environmental impacts of sustainable farming systems. Forty-seven events (field days, workshops, conference) were held around the state, with 2500 participants. Partners: MISA, Extension, U of MN (Dept. of Soil, Water & Climate) MN Department of Agriculture, Sustainable Farming Association, Land Stewardship Project, The Minnesota Project.

***MISA Competitive Grants Program*** funds team-building planning grants to promote interdisciplinary research and education teams. These teams contain researchers, farmers, students and community members. Some teams are then funded to conduct the proposed research. Some of the successful grants have been the Beginning Farmer research team, the Biological, Financial and Social Monitoring Team, Integrated Cropping Systems, marketing exploration teams. Fourteen teams have been funded since 1993 totaling \$714,565. Annual base funding from COAFES is used to fund these grants. (Total list of projects funded in Appendix).

***Theodora and Arnold Johnson Undergraduate Research Fellowship.*** The endowment is designed to provide undergraduate students with the opportunity to do research on a topic related to sustainable agriculture in conjunction with a COAFES faculty member. MISA staff (Helene Murray) solicit and evaluate applicants, and assist recipients in discussing research topics and connecting with faculty in their area of interest.

***School of Agriculture Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems*** provides the unique opportunity to bring in expertise for a period of time ranging from 2 weeks to 1 year. The Chair is funded by an endowment from the alumni of the School of Agriculture University of Minnesota (SAUM) and is managed by MISA. MISA staff manage the search process for Chairs, negotiate



contracts and work plans with the chair, find office space and "hosts" the Chairs during their tenure at the University. MISA Board members have served on the Endowed Chair search committee. From 5/97 to 5/98, three Endowed Chairs, Pat Henderson, Carmen Fernholz and Bob von Bernuth, focused on "the current socioeconomic issues related to livestock expansion and the structure of agriculture." From 7/99 to 5/19/00, Karen Lehman and Julie Ristau's focused their research on "A Sustainable Food System in Southeast Minnesota: Linking the Land-grant University and Communities through the Southeast Regional Partnership to Maximize Opportunities and Address Challenges in an Age of Globalization". Cornelia and Jan Flora (7/1/99 to 6/30/00) studied the "Intersection between Agriculture and Community Sustainability." Jim Van Der Pol (1/99 to 1/00) examined alternative swine systems.

### B3. How are the activities designed to reach these objectives monitored and reported?

---

- **Staff is required to assess and report monthly** on activities related to each major program initiative of MISA by filling out an activity matrix (see samples in Appendix). Each program initiative directly relates to one of our stated objectives. This matrix is distributed to the MISA Board of Directors. The Board monitors how well we are meeting our stated objectives, and helps to identify new initiatives. The Board consists of both University faculty and community members, insuring that we are achieving our goal of meeting the sustainable agriculture needs of the University community as well as the wider community.
- **The Board of Directors meets monthly**, alternating between all day, in-person meetings and short conference calls. The Board receives a monthly packet containing minutes from the previous meeting, financial statements and that month's activity matrix.
- **The Board holds an annual retreat**, typically in January or March, to review progress and set the direction for future activities and actions.
- In accordance with MISA by-laws, **a five-year review was conducted in 1997**. An internal review committee designed a review that included a **mailed survey, interviews conducted by an independent consultant, and review by an external panel**. The external panel consisted of: Jerry DeWitt, chair, Iowa State University; Margaret Smith, Iowa State University Extension Service; Marvin Johnson, retired farmer; Mary Hanks, Minnesota Department of Agriculture; Tracy Beckman, Minnesota State Senate; Marilyn DeLong, COAFES Administration; Conrad J. Weiser, Oregon State University. A copy of the agenda for the panel is included in the appendix. After the review, in accordance with the by-laws, the MISA Board and Joint Seminar approved the continuation of MISA and consequently updated the bylaws.

### B4. How is impact of these activities on the intended clientele measured, and how does this influence program development?

---

We use a variety of approaches:

- The comprehensive five-year review completed in Spring 1997, including the **external review panel**, the **survey of individuals with whom MISA had interacted**, and the **individual in-depth interviews** were conducted to measure impact of programs on

the intended clientele. These last two activities were conducted by an independent consultant to avoid bias (M.A. Casey). A copy of the report of these activities can be found in the Five-Year Review Binder.

- The MISA Board of Directors meets monthly to monitor activities and to provide staff with input. With this regular input we are able to quickly respond to and develop program initiatives to meet new concerns.
- The **annual Board retreat** is a major time for the Board to set direction for program development for the future. Discussions at Board retreats have led to major initiatives- not all of which are now directly associated with MISA, but for which MISA laid the groundwork: the Sustainable Agriculture Minor; the Regional Partnerships; the Enhanced Landscape, Human and Animal Health initiative; the Alternative Swine Systems Program; the Farmer Summit.
- A log is kept of all questions and replies submitted to MISA via the web site. This helps us to respond to feedback from farmers, students, faculty and citizens. We use information requests to develop informational materials, and to identify gaps in research. We also use it to update the MISA web site and to add to our searchable data base.
- **We track use of the web site.** Between March 27, 1999 and March 20, 2000 the MISA web site log shows just under 625,000 "hits" from just under 25,000 distinct servers. That is an average of 1,739 visits per day.
- In addition, for this review we attempted to assess MISA's impact via an e-mail **request for positive impact statements** sent out May 7, 2000. The request and complete responses are included in the appendix.

## B5. Provide examples of specific positive economic and/or social impacts on citizens of Minnesota that have resulted from the work of the Center.

*Specific Programs (accompanied by specific impact statements from clientele groups):*

The **Information Exchange program** of MISA serves as a clearinghouse for sustainable agriculture information, through both our web site and publications. This generates goodwill for the University among our clientele. For example, we serve many students who are looking for information, farmers engaged in alternative enterprises, and urban residents with minimal agricultural connections with information that they have difficulty finding:

"I am an organic vegetable grower in south central Minnesota, (Blue Earth County) and I sell at the Mankato Farmer's Market. It has been helpful for me to access MISA on the internet when I need help in finding Minnesota suppliers for things such as organic fertilizer, cover crop seeds, and irrigation supplies. I also occasionally look at the MISA calendar for learning events, such as field days and workshops.."

-Jean Lovett, Amboy, MN

"Here's an example of MISA helping in a small but important way. Last summer our sustainable agriculture group had a tour of an organic blueberry farm. The tour got posted on the MISA website. As a result of this posting, folks at the Staples center, who were doing a project on blueberries, including organic production, became aware of this grower and were able to make contact. This is the kind of link that is very hard to make without a centralized, state-wide

resource for Sustainable Agriculture".

-Paul Conklin, Lake Itasca, MN

The development of educational materials by teams benefits not only the farmers who will one day use the publications, but the participants on the development project team as well.

"I was very excited to be able to take part in the MISA business plan manual project this winter (Rob King and Debra Elias-Morse)...I was extremely interested in what they had to offer-the creation of a business plan for our farm to make changes towards organic certification. With their guidance, I made up a pretty good plan, including lots of things I would not have even considered...Being part of this program also gave me access to various departments within the University, ag econ, marketing, etc. I also got to work with other sustainable farmers from Minnesota and get to know them better..."

-Nancy Aspelund, St. James, MN

"...My work on MISA sponsored projects on farm business planning and collaborative marketing has extended over the past three or four years. These have been typical MISA projects, with lots of involvement from stakeholders from the beginning. This greatly increases the quality and usefulness of the end-product. For example, my recent Extension publication titled "Collaborative Marketing: A Roadmap and Resource Guide for Farmers" (co-authored with Gigi DiGiacomo) is already in demand by producer groups and resource providers around the state. We also received a request from Kansas State University to include this publication in materials they were preparing for meetings with farmers considering involvement in new collaborative marketing ventures. Finally, in connection with my work on these projects, members of the MISA staff have always been helpful in providing support that makes it easier to get the work done..."

-Robert P. King, Professor, Department of Applied Economics

"An Educational Materials grant supported the development of a series of Soil Management booklets that were recently published by the Extension Service. The grant and MISA's guidance were instrumental in generating cooperation among farmers, Extension Educators, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and soil scientists. The result was a unique publication that addresses the interaction of multiple soil management issues, technologies, and practices. This publication was not written for a small, specialized group of farmers. It meets a general need for comprehensive basic soils information. Yet this integrated and interdisciplinary approach to developing and presenting soil information would not have been possible without the support of MISA. They also helped leverage significant support for the project from the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and the University of Minnesota Extension Service.

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 M. Lewandowski, NRCS Soil Quality Institute, Department of Soil, Water, and Climate

"Thanks to the funding of the Hogs Your Way Project by MISA, we were able to assemble for the first time in Minnesota a team of practitioners, extension educators, marketing experts and others to look at the practices and potential of 'conventional' and alternative hog production and marketing for state producers. From this project has come not only a presentation slide set and workbook, but the team has continued its work ad hoc, and members spearheaded the

development of the Alternative Swine Task Force and the alternative systems research at the Morris campus. Through this leading edge work, we now have several state producers exporting alternatively produced, value added pork to high end markets across the country through the Nieman Ranch/Willis Pork label. This is giving state producers better return on their production as well as benefitting the environment through the use of low-impact production systems".

-Prescott H. Bergh, Outreach Coordinator, Energy and Sustainable Agriculture Program, Minnesota Department of Agriculture

**Farmer Summit** developed a policy platform to concentrate more on long-term alternatives to support farmers in gaining economic and political power, improve labor conditions for farm workers, and to offer consumers choice in the marketplace. (See Appendix for a copy of the position paper and activities of the Farmer Summit group).

**Alternative Swine Systems Program** serves many producers and rural citizens who are interested in seeking ways to raise swine using alternative systems - i.e., those not relying on confinement systems, with little or no use of hormones and antibiotics. The program has worked in conjunction with faculty and staff at the West Central Research and Outreach Center and within the Animal Science Department to establish alternative facilities for research, demonstration and educational activities:

"...I feel MISA has been very instrumental in getting the Alternative Swine Task Force into operation and assisting with setting up of a deep-bedded swine system at the U of M in Morris. This program would not have materialized without MISA and Don Wyse . Since we produce pigs from farrow to market in totally deep bedding and pasture, we fully realize and appreciate the support and philosophy recognition which MISA gives with this new venture...Without these types of programs, I feel that the U of M would be failing to maintain support of our smaller family farms".

-Dwight Ault, farmer, Austin MN

"MISA's presence at the University emboldened some of us who were dissatisfied with the University's approach to swine research to go to the legislature and ask for funding for facilities and programs. As a result, the Alternative Swine Task Force was established....MISA....encouraged some of the animal science faculty to take us seriously right from the start, which to their credit, they did.

The results for the University and the people and farmers of this state so far are: A hoops building project nearly complete at Morris, along with interest from across the University in using it for research. A pasture farrowing and deep straw farrowing system soon to follow. A scientist position is being advertised for and the program in research is starting.

Two major grants are being applied for which if funded will result in research work across five to seven University departments. Another major University funder is in conversation with University researchers about a new and ongoing commitment. And animal science, as well as the University as a whole, is poised ...to be in the forefront of changes in the hog markets as well as rural communities and economies.

All this was sparked by MISA. A wonderful return on investment, in my view."

-Jim Van Der Pol, farmer, Chippewa County

The **Sustainable Agriculture Minor** is a widely respected program. The WUSA seminars and internship program have given graduate students exceptional opportunities and experiences:

"As a graduate student in the Forest Resources Department, I have found MISA's support..crucial to my education and performance. As an intern with the Land Stewardship Project I was supported through MISA's Graduate Internship Program. During my internship I worked with the Chippewa Stewardship Whole Farm Planning and Monitoring Team to implement farm monitoring of ecosystem function and quality of life with team members and their families. This experience gave me a strong foundation in farm family planning and monitoring, and interdisciplinary teamwork. Skills which I am currently utilizing in Paraguay as a part of an Internship with SEPA, Ecoforestry Services for Farmers. An internship that was funded by the MacArthur International Program. My work with both of these organizations has furthered their goal of promoting sustainable rural communities. I am thankful that MISA has helped me develop my skills which in turn has allowed me to serve rural communities, both in Minnesota and abroad..."

-Amy Bacigalupo, Graduate Student, Department of Forest Resources

"Because of the grant award I received from MISA, I was able to conduct one month of intensive research in the Ecuadorian Amazon studying sustainable agriculture techniques used by the Quichua people. Since my internship, I have given presentations, documented my work, published an article and made lasting relationships with researchers and tribes people in South America...I cannot say enough good things about my experience which was made possible by the encouragement and funds I received from MISA".

-Stephanie Lundeen, former student

**Regional Partnerships** have created great excitement in the state. Many have already identified research priorities. A total of 52 research and/or education projects pertaining to regional sustainability have been funded through the regionally-based Partnership Boards. Total funding allocated and committed to these projects since 1998 is approximately \$1,000,000:

"From my position in the Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems, I have spent over nine months seeing first-hand the impact that MISA has had in Minnesota's rural communities. MISA played a key role in developing the concept and in securing support from the Minnesota Legislature for the Regional Agricultural and Natural Resources Sustainable Development Partnerships. Without MISA, these partnerships in five regions of the state would not have come into being. These impressive collaborations among University faculty, staff and students, and citizens from the regions, have provided over \$1,000,000 to support forty-nine regionally-based programs addressing sustainable development issues. 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. MISA is a touchstone for this work, providing an important point of entry to the University for people unfamiliar with the University system".

-Karen Lehman, Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems

"In 1999, MISA was central to organizing the Experiment in Rural Cooperation's task force initiative on sustainable financing for rural Minnesota (SFRM). The citizen leaders and farmers who direct the Experiment are profoundly concerned with the overuse of credit and debt to finance agricultural enterprises and farming in rural Minnesota. In the absence of accessible sources of patient, long-term equity capital, it is naive to believe that rural enterprise can succeed in sustainable fashion. The task force, now in its second year of operation was initially staffed by MISA and MISA leadership played a pivotal role in recruiting the multi-disciplinary faculty team-representing a half-dozen University department or schools, including the Law School and the Carlson School of Management. The myriad dimensions of rural equity financing

demand a multi-disciplinary approach that creates or invents new approaches; this requires cutting across traditional disciplines and harmoniously merging the short-term interests of citizen leaders reacting to a rural crisis and the long-term scholarship interests of a large public university. It was MISA that provided the infrastructure to launch this critical project...on short notice in the face of some daunting challenges".

-Dick Broeker, Ph.D., Executive Director, Experiment in Rural Cooperation

"The Root River Market Coop in Houston, MN had and has the support of the Experiment in Rural Cooperation. Thanks in large part to the Experiment, the market has become involved with a number of other experiment projects that are coming together to form what will be a sustainable regional food system..our so far dramatic success in organizing memberships (350 families in a town of ..1100..). The market will buy as much food as possible from an already established community of organic farmers aware of the need for meat, fruit and vegetables uncontaminated by noxious chemicals used in production of so many commercial foods...MISA plays a vital role in the growth of support for strategies that will persuade many people to take proper care of their children, their communities and their environment, and ultimately the planet".

-Peter Denzer, Houston, MN

**Educational Research teams** funded by MISA have led to numerous projects that have had direct impact on students, citizens and farmers:

"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. Two projects that have had a big impact on us have been the Social, Biological and Economic Monitoring Project and The Dairy Team Project. We made quite a few changes in our farming system from the things learned on those projects. The multiple disciplines make-up of those research teams wouldn't have happened without MISA. Because of our involvement in those two projects we've been able to move much more quickly to the sustainable system we're trying to achieve. Because of the monitoring Project we have an ongoing research relationship with several of the professors at the University. We're now involved in starting a No Hormones, No Antibiotics, Milk Coop and we are receiving funding from MISA for marketing and educational information, and to document this formation process for other small groups to use. 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

".as a result of MISA's support and guidance,I was able to spend a year as an intern [Team Building to Promote Visioning, Whole Farm Planning and Alternative Economic Uses of Environmentally Sensitive Areas in the Chippewa River Basin Grant] working in Western Minnesota with the Land Stewardship Project. Working in the Chippewa River Watershed, I participated in the formation of two citizen/agency partnerships. These partnerships were not easy to form and my experience there taught me much about conflict resolution, consensus building and the importance of citizen participation. As a student I feel that this experience was critical to my education. Working with diverse groups and building consensus among stakeholders has given me practical experience in grappling with the ethics of organization, research and extension. This has positively effected my professional career. Without MISA's support I would not have been able to participate in this internship".

-Paul Wymer, Graduate student, Department of Forest Resources

**SARE Grants.** Minnesota has been highly successful in obtaining SARE grants. This success is due in part to the assistance MISA staff have provided by discussing grant ideas, and actual grant writing. Several successful proposals were developed from MISA funded education and research programs:

"...Helene Murray was always highly effective in helping a variety of folks get projects accomplished. While I served on the SFA Board for the Central Chapter, she helped us develop ideas that were funded through a SARE grant, and then helped us implement the grant and evaluate, simply through some technical support. This support resulted in over \$100,000 in Federal grant support coming to Minnesota, which could have gone to any other state in the region..."

-Carol Ekarius, former Minnesota farmer

***Other Survey Results:***

All positive impact statements received in response to our e-mail request are included in the appendix. A few excerpts representing our various clientele groups and demonstrating how we have met our stated objectives follow:

**Farmers:**

"..My husband and I just recently purchased some farmland. As small farmers, we realize that if we are to make it, we cannot farm with conventional methods and make a living. We must look to alternative farming methods. During the past 5 years, MISA has been a very valuable source of information to us as develop our farm plan. We have developed a network of supporters and have attended many informational seminars and classes, which have helped us to make informative decisions. If that information had not been available to us, I do not believe we would have decided to farm...MISA played an enormous part in our research and I can only hope that it will be around to help us accomplish our dreams..."

-Ray and Brenda Postels, Maple Grove, MN

"...for a decade my husband and I farmed in Minnesota and were actively involved with sustainable agriculture...during that time I had many positive interactions that blossomed thanks to MISA, including a short stint serving on the MISA Board. One thing that has been disappointing to me in my return to Colorado is that CSU has no comparable program for farmers..."

1. We were able to call on Roger Moon for information on alternative control strategies for flies in a dairy operation. Roger's information was common sense, but valuable, and later found its way into a book I wrote that came out last fall...
2. We direct marketed most of our meat from the farm having gone through the process of getting USDA inspection and label approval. One day I received a phone call from Debra Elias [former Info Exchange Associate Program Director], and she said that a pig farmer who lived near us had contacted the Information Exchange for info about marketing pork, because the State Dept of Ag said they couldn't do it from their farm. Debra said she knew we were doing it, and would we mind if she gave our number out so the other farmer could contact us. We said no problem, and two months later they were legally selling pork from the farm..."

-Carol Ekarius, former Minnesota farmer

**Students:**

"I chose to become a graduate student in the Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics here at the University of Minnesota because of the graduate minor in sustainable agriculture offered through MISA. During my time here I have been very involved with the weekly discussion group, WUSA (What's Up in Sustainable Agriculture), including leading the group for a semester while we investigated the agricultural systems of NW MN and the scab crisis. This resulted in my first publication, which was part of a chapter co-authored with another sustainable agriculture graduate student...Through the programs provided by MISA I have been able to get a more rounded education on problems in world agriculture. The attention MISA pays to issues of community health, power and ecological viability in relations to our farming systems has improved my understanding of risks and benefits of the current agricultural economy and of future or alternative pathways..."

-Kristin Mercer, Graduate Student, Agronomy and Plant Genetics

"As a graduate student in the Conservation Biology program...since 1996..my research interests have focused on the intersection of watershed and stream science and management...During the course of my studies I have seen or been part of a number of positive, grassroots-based, watershed scale, sustainable agriculture initiatives fostered and developed in partnership with MISA, including an on-farm interdisciplinary biological monitoring team. These have played an important role, not the least, in helping me and other graduate students with whom I've worked develop a more sophisticated understanding of the issues and challenges involved in developing adequate responses to the social, ecological, and economic problems of the coming century..."

-Kristen L. Blann, graduate student, Conservation Biology

"I am writing to describe the unique and valuable benefits that my research has gained as a result of my participation in the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture...although the faculty in our HST program at Minnesota are extremely supportive of my dissertation topic area...it has been through MISA, particularly WUSA, the graduate student group, that I have found a diverse community of agricultural researchers with whom I can discuss the agricultural aspects of my dissertation...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, Doctoral candidate, Program of History of Science and Technology

"MISA's programs have been very impactful in my personal and professional life for a number of years. I first became involved with MISA in 1997 when it co-sponsored a sustainable ag study trip to Cuba. This led to 2 more trips to Cuba and thesis research in that nation's conversion to sustainable ag. Interestingly, the president of Cuba's organic association was more familiar with the contents of MISA's website than I was!...I also participated in an internship sponsored by MISA and the graduate minor program. Through my position as an organic grain buyer for Northland Organic Foods Corp., I now contract with the organic farmer that I featured in my internship project..."

-Carolyn Lane, Northland Organic Foods

**Faculty:**



"MISA was instrumental in designing and implementing the April 12 "New Language of Farm Policy" symposium. The symposium was a great success and would not have happened without MISA support...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 UM over many other offers. He is looking forward to orienting much of his program toward issues relating to sustainable agriculture".

-Richard Levins, Professor and Extension Agricultural Economist, Agricultural and Applied Economics

"...After participating in their [Western Land Stewardship] 2000 Annual Meeting and working with Carmen Fernholz and Don Wyse, did I see the way citizens make the difference and truly internalized what "Landgrant Mission U of M" means.

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 here in west central MN...Thanks to MISA and its dedicated board members and staff, more and more citizens are realizing the impact they can have in determining their own future. I know it hit me square in the head these past two years".

-Mary Ann Scharf, University of MN Extension, Steven County

"I have worked with several area farmers who have tried several different ventures and methods. Much of this would not be happening without MISA and other similar institutions. While most of these ideas and ventures are not yet mainstream, they are providing new knowledge and skills, some of which will be vital in the future to developing a new viable product, crop, or venture".

-Wayne Hansen, Extension Educator, Redwood County

"I have been involved with ...MISA...since its inception...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. Joint Seminar meetings over the years have given me a chance to be exposed to new ideas and issues in a setting that also offered opportunities to get to know farmers and community leaders and other faculty members in the College. This has helped me to identify new directions for my work and has made it easier to establish working relationships with colleagues and with stakeholders outside the University.

I have advised several graduate students whose degree programs included a minor in Sustainable Agricultural Systems. I think one of the most valuable contributions of the minor is that it gives students an opportunity to broaden their understanding of agriculture. For students in Applied Economics, this means getting exposure to concepts and methods from sciences related to production agriculture. The minor has also made it easier for students in other graduate programs to get some exposure to economics. Finally, the core courses in the minor have been an excellent vehicle for graduate students to work in multidisciplinary teams focusing on "real world" problems. This helps them develop skills that will be invaluable in their professional careers..."

-Robert P. King, E. Fred Koller Professor of Agricultural Management Information Systems, Department of Applied Economics

**Citizens:**

"I am an attorney with the Minnesota Family Farm Law Project in Mankato. Along with others on our staff, I have looked to MISA for leadership in knowing how to conduct our legal representation of farmers. We have also considered applying to MISA for funding of certain projects that we me consider..."

-Peter Gustafson, Attorney at Law, Ph.D

## **B6. What added value does the Center bring that could not be done within existing College infrastructure and resources?**

**Ease of access to the University.** MISA is structured to enhance the link between COAFES, farmers, students, Extension Educators, and other citizens. For a citizen seeking information, approaching the University can be overwhelming-MISA provides an entrance and directions to the resources of the University.

"I am writing to confirm the impact of relationship and information our farm has experienced as a result of the work of the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture. Here at Moonstone Farm in Chippewa County we have had the good fortune to benefit from the outreach efforts of a variety of MISA programs, which include the Monitoring Project and the Chippewa Whole Farm Planning Team, and the sustainable ag graduate minor program (which has linked us with the work of some wonderful graduate students).

MISA feels like our home at the University. In an era when so much research energy and expense are allocated to the kinds of farming systems which are not in keeping with our own farm's goals, MISA and its dedicated and inspirational staff have always had an open door. Through this door much dialogue has been able to take place in the service of a sound agricultural economy, environmental integrity and prosperity. MISA also serves as the portal through which we have felt we could best access other pertinent disciplines within the College of Agriculture, and, indeed the rest of the University. This is a dynamic and strategic link for those of us on the frontier..."

-Richard Handeen and Audrey Arner, farmers, Montevideo, MN

**Quick response to concerns.** As a Center, we are able to quickly develop new program initiatives to address concerns. This is not always possible in the traditional college departmental infrastructure. Our flexibility allows us to approach research needs from a "bottom-up" model (ideas or concerns generated by producers) rather than a more traditional "top-down" approach (problems identified by researchers).

**Team-building grants** offer a unique opportunity to reward faculty for building interdisciplinary teams which include farmers, students, and other professionals to address sustainable agriculture issues.

**New interactions, and consequently, a broader base of support for the University from the community.** MISA provides an opportunity for faculty, students and staff to interact with individuals and groups that, prior to the existence of MISA, believed that the University of Minnesota was not interested in working on sustainable agriculture issues. The changes in cooperation, attitudes and trust have taken years to accomplish, but have been dramatic. MISA Board Members and Joint Seminar Members have actively supported COAFES legislative requests for the past several years.

"..I was extremely impressed by the high level of mutual respect between [primarily organic and transitional organic] farmers and the University, respect that is uncommon in other states. In other states where I have worked I would hesitate to let small and alternative farmers know that I was university-educated, or that I promoted university recommendations, because many of them associate their state university only with promotion of technologies for larger industrial-scale farms..I think the difference here is largely due to the work of MISA..."

-Lois Braun, Agricultural Consultant, St. Paul MN

**Partnerships.** Centers are designed to encourage and enhance interdisciplinary research and outreach activities. MISA does that through a structured partnership between the University and several community groups through open dialogue and by shared decision-making power, which results in trust and support from the community. All of our programs involve partnership between faculty, students, farmers, and citizens to the mutual benefit of all. An easily identifiable structure that demonstrates this is the structure of the MISA Board of Directors. The University appoints six of the fifteen Board members. Four of the six may be University representatives, and the remaining two must be from outside of the University. The Sustainers' Coalition nominates the remaining nine representatives. Seven of the total fifteen positions must be held by farmers. The existing departments have excellent advisory committees but the Board of Directors model used by MISA is unique. This was a feature highlighted by the external review team in their letter to Dean Mike Martin, January 1997:

"...MISA Board members, supporters, and staff have demonstrated the ability to successfully work in this environment, adapting to changing needs and challenges. MISA has adopted an encompassing, holistic view and definition of a sustainable agriculture embracing production, environment and community.

The MISA Board members are unquestionably talented individuals who are respected by their peers. By the unique structure of the Board, they represent their individual views and good ideas, and not officially any one organization. This is perceived to be an important operational principle for MISA and has helped ensure its success. Future partnerships and models may well forge structure and representation after this model. The Joint Seminar and Sustainers' Coalition, which is composed of organizational representatives, make it possible for the MISA Board to be organizationally independent and to function constructively. This structure of balance and creative tension appears to be appropriate, representative, and productive for sustainable agriculture in Minnesota.

In fact, 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. This spirit of the model should be maintained; it is working".

This shared power can cause frustration-it implies that compromise is necessary for the model to work. The external review committee also recognized this in their letter:

"...The review team had the fortune of witnessing the numerous examples of successes expressed energetically by MISA supporters sometimes interwoven against a backdrop of high unmet expectations and frustrations over the last five years. The review team encourages all MISA supporters to recognize that the most significant accomplishments brought forth by MISA may well be the incremental and widespread shifts in attitudes, priorities, partnerships, and processes created and adopted during the last five years by not only those directly, but also those indirectly associated with or influenced by MISA. These changes impact not only the academic community, but the organizations and individuals external to the University as well. MISA supporters should consider means of recognizing and celebrating both the tangible and

intangible successes such as both publications and partnerships, legislative funding and attitudinal shifts, and other accomplishments regardless of magnitude".

## B7. Should this Center be expanded, reduced, phased out or stay the same, and why?

There is still much to do to promote sustainable agricultural practices in the community as well as within the University. The sustainable agriculture community is growing rapidly. MISA should be maintained at the current base funding level to allow MISA to continue to serve our clientele groups, and to continue to initiate research and education planning teams. Once programs are successfully established, we will work with the Dean's Office to seek further funding to build those projects from public and private funding sources. This is the same approach that was used to develop the Alternative Swine System Program, and the Regional Partnerships. After two years of exploration and in-depth examination of issues surrounding landscape issues and agriculture, the Enhanced Landscape, Food System, Human and Animal Health Initiative was launched beginning with the April 28, 2000 Symposium. We envision this team-building project within the University community as a major program thrust in the future.

Additionally, the student base that MISA supports through the Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Systems is growing. The Director of Graduate Studies for the Applied Plant Sciences Program tells us that two major areas of emphasis seem to be attracting some of the best graduate students: (1) genomics and (2) sustainable agriculture. MISA staff play a vital role in making this unique minor be such a positive experience for many students, as evidenced by the many positive impact statements received in response to our request.

## B8. What should the role of the Center be within our College in the future?

MISA must continue to do what it has done so well in the last eight years (see answer to B6)...**to provide easy access, identify concerns and needs in sustainable agriculture and initiate partnerships and programs to address those concerns, and provide the link between the sustainable agriculture community and COAFES and other appropriate University groups.** Community-University partnerships offer an incredible opportunity to work together on complex issues. MISA should continue to provide the access to university resources for the sustainable agriculture community, a community which is clearly increasing in size and scope.

Our discussions must increase in size and scope as well. The framework is now in place to broaden the discussion about sustainable agriculture and view it as an even more complex, multifunctional system, with implications for the environment, animal and human health and social well-being. Discussions at this level are taking place throughout the state within the Regional Partnerships. The Landscape, Human and Animal Health Initiative has as its goal the building of teams of researchers from diverse areas within the University, which can then address newly identified issues and broad research agendas. We see MISA as having a critical role in bringing the issues identified by the Regional Partnerships together with research teams from the University.

We have emphasized repeatedly that MISA is an entrance to the University-but it is also a place where two very different groups come together, a border between a community system and

university system-different cultures, different expectations, different ways of doing and seeing. Ecologists tell us that the greatest diversity in a natural system is at the borders. That diversity breeds tension, a type of chaos at times--yet we are learning that it is by maintaining this diversity that a system is resilient.

## B9. What efforts have been made to inform the COAFES community about the work of the Center?

---

- We **recruit Executive Board members and Joint Seminar members** from a variety of departments.
- We **solicit faculty involvement with MISA projects and publications.**
- The **Sustainable Agriculture minor faculty meet** as needed.
- Approximately **90 articles** describing MISA activities have been presented in the **Sustainable Agriculture newsletter** from July 1993 through April 2000. This newsletter is a joint MISA/Extension publication and copies are distributed to all COAFES departments, Extension county offices, and a mailing list of about 2,200 each month. Additionally, an electronic version is distributed each month to Extension's press list and **posted on the MISA web site.**
- The **MISA web site** provides information in a format easily accessible to the COAFES community. All of our publications are available electronically, as well as information about the organization and a calendar of sustainable agriculture events.
- Between 1993 and April 2000, a total of **107 events**(seminars, workshops, presentations, etc) have been held on the Saint Paul campus (see Appendix). The majority of events have been co-sponsored by another COAFES partner. **Thirteen hundred people attended the 41 events** for which attendance was recorded.
- The MISA office posts event notices and other pertinent information to the "**Everyone in COAFES**" listserv on a regular basis.
- MISA held an **open forum to hear from the External Review Panel** regarding their preliminary findings of the five-year review of MISA.

## B10. What has been done to engage College personnel in the work of the Center? Describe how successful the Center has been in this attempt?

---

- 113 faculty members are engaged in MISA endeavors in some capacity. (See Appendix, "Faculty and P&A members affiliated with MISA endeavors" for a comprehensive list of faculty who interact with MISA, and in what capacity).
- Our **Executive Board has faculty as members**, hence we are provided monthly with feedback from faculty representatives. The Joint Seminar, which includes a faculty group, meets about three times per year.
- The development of the **Sustainable Ag minor** helped to involve many faculty in the work of the Center through teaching activities, advising, or participating in weekly WUSA seminars.
- **Grant Funding:** In 1993, MISA began a competitive grants program designed to develop interdisciplinary research and education teams. Initially, teams were provided with planning grants to help them begin to work together and to develop their ideas into

a full proposal. MISA funded five team-building planning grants in 1993. Three of those teams were then funded to carry out the work described in their proposals over the next two to three years. A copy of the proposals and calls for proposals is in the Five-Year Review binder. In 1996, five team planning grants were funded, three received continuation funds. In 1999, an additional five team planning grants were awarded, with two receiving continuation funds. (A list of all proposals and major participants are provided in the Appendix. Copies of the full proposals are available from the MISA office).

- **Development of Educational Materials and Planning of New Initiatives:** Many faculty members have participated in the development of new educational materials through the Information Exchange. In addition, faculty have participated in several symposia co-sponsored by MISA. MISA has successfully engaged 113 faculty members in various capacities.
- **The Enhanced Landscape, Human and Animal Health Initiative** is a far-reaching plan to involve faculty from diverse areas in discussions about sustainable development. MISA's goal is to facilitate discussions within the University coincident with the discussions taking place outside the University, in the Regional Partnerships.

## B11. List significant cross-departmental or collegiate interdisciplinary achievements that have occurred since July 1, 1997.

---

- **Sustainable Farming Systems Team:** A 1997-99 Collaboration with soil scientists from the Department of Soil, Water and Climate, the Southern and West Central Research and Outreach Centers at Lamberton and Morris, and Extension, and non-profit organizations resulted in significant funding from LCMR for research on the impacts of alternative farming systems on soil and water quality. Additionally, work with the team resulted in an important interaction with the Center for Farm Financial Management (\$560,000). In 1999-2001, we received continuation funding for the LCMR funded team (\$350,000) resulting in additional opportunity for interdisciplinary work.
- **The Alternative Swine Systems Program** has provided an opportunity for new partnerships between farmers and faculty and staff in the Animal Science Department, Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering Department, College of Veterinary Medicine, West Central Research and Outreach Centers and MISA. The first three people in the Endowed Chair (Fernholz, Henderson and VonBernuth) and one just finishing his term in the Chair (Van Der Pol) concentrated their efforts on alternative swine systems.
- Faculty serve on the Boards of the **Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships**. Three of the five regions are well-established and the two new regions are in the beginning stages of development. This program is a partnership between citizens, COAFES, the College of Natural Resources, Extension, MISA and the Minnesota Experiment Station.
- New publications developed by the Information Exchange have been written by project teams consisting of farmers, community groups and **COAFES faculty** from the departments of: Applied Economics; Soil, Water and Climate; Agronomy and Plant Genetics; Animal Science; and Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering. These publications, produced jointly with the University of Minnesota Extension Service, are available through the Extension Distribution Center (see Appendix for copies and a listing of upcoming publications).

- The **Symposium "Enhanced Landscape, Food Systems, Human and Animal Health"**, held on April 28, 2000, began by identifying short- and long-term strategies which support constructive approaches to multifunctional agricultural systems. This symposium was planned and co-sponsored in partnership with Visions for Change, Water Resources Center, Center for Integrated Natural Resources and Agricultural Management, Center for Alternative Plant and Animal Products, and the Center for Spirituality and Healing. The forum highlighted activities in these interrelated yet diverse topic areas, emphasizing how they relate to the entire food system. Participants identified current research and educational programs related to this important issue. We anticipate a series of events and activities will be pursued as a result of this important first meeting.
- **Graduate Faculty** for the Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture come from thirteen departments in the University.

## B12. Does the Center provide funding or other resources for other units in the College or University? Explain.

Yes, we have done so primarily through a competitive grants process. Grants are used to fund research to address problems, as well as to support diverse team building. We have had three granting cycles. (See 10B for details). Grants are evaluated by MISA's Program Committee, which consists of Board members and faculty members not on the MISA Board. As an example, in the last cycle, 1999, MISA received 26 proposals requesting over \$550,000. Three proposals and two planning grants were funded:

1. **Searching for Sustainable Weed Management:** Evaluation of Types of Early Season Mechanical Cultivation and Flame Weeding for Effect on Weed Control, Soil Quality, and Profitability in Organic Corn Production. \$15,940 Project Coordinators: Elizabeth Dyck and Paul Porter, Southwest Experiment Station.
2. **Assessing the Nutritional Impact of Sustainable Food Systems:** Urban and Rural Linkages. \$38,275. Project Coordinators: Cherry Smith, Food Science and Nutrition; Jan O'Donnell, Minnesota Food Association.
3. **Farm Sustainability and Survivability in Minnesota's Red River Valley:** Lessons from Adaptive Production and Business Management Strategies of Farmers. \$24,995 Project Coordinator: Glenn Pederson, Applied Economics
4. **Pastureland:** Marketing Antibiotics and Hormone Free Grass Based Milk Products (Planning Grant) up to \$10,000, Project Coordinator: Dan French, chairman, PastureLand Coop
5. **Medicinal Herbs:** Creating a Network of Growers and Herbalist Health Care Providers (Planning Grant) up to \$10,000, Project Coordinator: Craig Hassel, Extension Nutritionist, Food Science and Nutrition,

## B13. If the Center is receiving COAFES financial support, what steps are being taken to move toward financial self-sufficiency or sustainability?

MISA relies on the base funding from COAFES to help facilitate a wide array of projects. MISA has a history of successfully garnering funds to move sustainable agriculture ideas forward with a variety of partners both within and outside of the College. Rather than procuring funds to

enlarge our own Center, we have helped to establish these initiatives as self-sufficient programs. Our Board of Directors has discussed several financial options to enhance the base funding from COAFES, but strongly believes that some base public funding is essential to keep the community-University partnership functional and to demonstrate University commitment to sustainable agriculture. The MISA Board and Joint Seminar members donate a tremendous amount of time and energy because of their commitment to work with the College on these issues. We are in the process of developing a plan to obtain public and private resources to support the new research and educational teams which will be developed through the Landscape, Human and Animal Health Initiative, in partnership with the Regional Partnerships.

**B14. Please provide a historical record of the financial support for the Center over the past 5 years and projected funding needs for the next 3 years with respect to the questions in the table below:**

**COAFES (\$)**

**Past five year budget (U fiscal year):**

<b>COAFES \$</b>	<b>95-96</b>	<b>96-97</b>	<b>97-98</b>	<b>98-99</b>	<b>99-2000</b>
	287,444	247,444	247,444	247,444	247,444
New money brought into the College/ University over the past 5 years? (\$)		15,500 <sup>d</sup>	280,000 <sup>b</sup>	280,000 <sup>b</sup>	175,000 <sup>a</sup>
		108,905 <sup>f</sup>	52,380 <sup>c</sup>		
		11,375 <sup>g</sup>	12,000 <sup>e</sup>		
	100,000 <sup>h</sup>	100,000 <sup>h</sup>	100,000 <sup>h</sup>	100,000 <sup>h</sup>	90,000 <sup>h</sup>



			1,200,000 <sup>k</sup>	1,200,000 <sup>k</sup>	1,200,000 <sup>k</sup>
				125,000 <sup>l</sup>	155,000 <sup>m</sup>

**Grants written by staff:** \$1,111,160. Funds do not all remain in MISA budget, but are used to conduct research and develop educational materials (this sum does not include the \$86,000 that went to partner organizations from the Kellogg Foundation):

- <sup>a</sup>\$350,000 Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources 1999-01. Sustainable Farming Systems - Continuation. H. Murray, Project Manager. Partners: MISA, Extension, MDA, SFA, LSP, The Minnesota Project. Note: \$229,100 went into a Soils CUFS account managed by Deborah Allan and David Mulla to conduct soil and water quality research.
- <sup>b</sup>\$560,000 Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources 1997-99. Sustainable Farming Systems. H. Murray, Project Manager. Partners: MISA, Extension, MDA, SFA, LSP, The Minnesota Project. Note: \$256,500 went into a Soils CUFS account managed by Deborah Allan and David Mulla to conduct soil and water quality research.
- <sup>c</sup>\$52,380 USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Program. 1997-98 "Decision Cases for Sustainable Agriculture: Helene Murray and Tammy Dunrud, Co-principal investigators. A video training project for professional development." Worked with the Program for Decision Cases (Steve Simmons, Agronomy and Plant Genetics) on this project. The videos were made in conjunction with Extension, and are available through Extension's distribution center.
- <sup>d</sup>\$15,500 USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Program. 1996. Quality of Life Research. Working with the North Central Regional Center on Rural Development.
- <sup>e</sup>\$98,000 W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Integrated Farming Systems project. 1997. Land Stewardship Project (LSP), Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota (SFA), and MISA. **\$12,000** directly to MISA, remaining \$86,000 to other partner organizations.
- <sup>f</sup>\$108,905 USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Program. 1996. Helene Murray, principal investigator. Funds designed to provide training in sustainable agriculture to Extension, NRCS, and related agency personnel in MN, WI, and IA.
- <sup>g</sup>\$11,375 From the Minnesota Department of Agriculture for work on CRP fact sheets and decision case training. Debra Elias was the author for these publications. 1996. Fact sheets are available through the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

**Legislative funding:**

- <sup>h</sup>Information Exchange - \$490,000 to date (recurring, \$200,000/biennium)
- <sup>i</sup>Regional Partnerships - \$3,600,000 to date (recurring: \$2.4M/biennium)
- <sup>j</sup>Alternative Swine Production - \$125,000 (1997-one time appropriation)
- <sup>m</sup>Alternative Swine Production - \$155,000 (1998-one time appropriation)

**Money managed by MISA - Endowments:**

- School of Agriculture Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems Endowed Chair: (1.0 M Endowment (\$86,000 '99-'00 revenue)
- Johnson Endowment (undergraduate research award, managed by MISA): (\$102,000 Endowment--approx. \$6,000 available annually)

**Major Current Sources of recurring funding (other than College)?**

Information Exchange (as listed above).

Projected funding needs from College during next 3 years?	2001	2002	2003
	247,444	247,444	247,444

We respectfully request that every effort be made to continue COAFES base funding of MISA at \$247,444/year. We believe that it is essential to continue the work that MISA is doing, and that staff could not maintain current programs if funds were cut. We emphasize that rather than enlarge MISA with outside funds, we have sought outside funding to establish our programs as independent programs, or as partnerships.

# Supplemental Information

## 1993-2000 Projects Funded

From 1993-2000 MISA has supported 14 teams through their competitive grants program. Funds from the annual base funding from COAFES to MISA were used. Total team support provided through MISA: \$714,565

**Biological, Financial and Social Monitoring Team** Received a \$10,000 planning grant in 1993, and \$82,000 in 1994 and again in 1995.

**Woody Agriculture Team** Received a \$10,000 planning grant in 1993.

**Integrated Farm Planning Team** Received a \$10,000 planning grant in 1993.

**Sustainable Dairy Systems Team** Received a \$10,000 planning grant in 1993, and \$40,000 in 1994 and again in 1995.

**Graduate School Team** (developed the minor in sustainable agriculture) Received a \$10,000 planning grant in 1993, \$45,000 in 1994, and \$53,545 in 1995. \$10,000 was allocated to support the Minor in 1999.

**Integrated Approaches in Natural Resources and Agricultural Management: Establishing a Research and Educational Agenda for Minnesota** Received a \$10,000 planning grant in 1996, and \$20,000 in 1997.

**Establishing Beginning Dairy Farmers Utilizing the Sharemilking Concept** Received a \$4,000 planning grant in 1996, a \$35,000 grant in 1997, and \$55,000 in 1998.

**Team Building to Promote Visioning, Whole Farm Planning and Alternative Economic Uses of Environmentally Sensitive Areas in the Chippewa River Basin** Received a \$10,000 planning grant in 1996, \$50,000 in 1997, and \$35,000 in 1998.

**Evaluating Approaches in Comprehensive Farm Planning** Received a \$10,000 planning grant in 1996, and \$20,000 in 1997.

**Integrated Cropping Systems Team: Southern Minnesota Cropping Systems** Received a \$20,000 planning grant in 1996.

**Assessing the Nutritional Impact of Sustainable Food Systems: Urban and Rural Linkages** This proposal was accepted for funding of \$38,275 for calendar year 1999. This team received an additional \$33,750 for the 2000 calendar year.

**Farm Sustainability and Survivability in Minnesota's Red River Valley: Lessons from Adaptive Production and Business Management Strategies of Farmers** This project received \$24,995 for calendar year 1999.

**PastureLand: Marketing Antibiotics and Hormone Free Grass Based Milk Products** The Board allocated up to \$11,000 for this team to use as a planning grant for 1999-2000.

**Medicinal Herbs: Creating a Network of Growers and Herbalist Health Care Providers** The Board allocated up to \$10,000 for this team to use as a planning grant during 1999. An additional \$5,000 was awarded in November 1999 to supplement the network.

# **1994-2000 Faculty and PA Collaborators**

Faculty Name & Dept.	MISA Association
Paul Addis - Food Science and Nutrition	Past Joint Seminar Member
Deborah Allan - Soil Water & Climate	Joint Seminar Member; Monitoring Team; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team; Sustainable Farming Systems Team; Integrated Soil Management Educational Materials Team; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
Dorothy Anderson - Forest Resources	CINRAM Team
Jim Anderson - Soil, Water & Climate	Comprehensive Farm Planning Team; Whole Farm Planning Educational Materials Team; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium planning committee
David Andow - Entomology	Joint Seminar Member; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium planning committee
Roger Becker - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Joint Seminar Member, Comprehensive Farm Planning Team; Cover Crop Working Group

David Biesboer - Plant Biology	Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team; Cover Crop Working Group
Dave Birong - Soil, Water & Climate	Cover Crop Working Group
Thomas Blaha - Biosystems & Ag Eng.	Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
Mary Brakke - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
Ken Brooks - Forest Resources	CINRAM Team; Agroforestry Resource Guide; Educational Materials Team
Paul Bucciaglia, Post Doc. Scientist for Dave Somers	Cover Crop Working Group
Lowell Busman - Southern Experiment Station	Comprehensive Farm Planning Team; Whole Farm Planning Educational Materials Team
Vernon Cardwell - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team

John Carter - Horticultural Science	Joint Seminar Member; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
Kent Crookston - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Past Board Member
Hugh Chester-Jones - Southern Research & Outreach Center	Sustainable Dairy Farming Team
Greg Cuomo - West Central Experiment Station	Chippewa River Team; Sustainable Farming Systems Team
Sharon Danes - Family Social Science	Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
David Davis - Horticultural Science	Past Joint Seminar Member
John Deen, College of Vet. Medicine	Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
Francisco Diez-Gonzalez - Food Science & Nutrition	Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter



Shelly Diment - COAFES	Systems Thinking Team
Anita Dincesen - U of MN Ext. Service	Decision Case Video Grant
Tammy Dunrud - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Decision Case Video Grant; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
Elizabeth Dyck - SW State University, Agronomy	Cover Crop Working Group; Weed Control Team; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
Nancy Ehlke - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Cover Crop Working Group
Samuel Evans - West Central Research & Outreach Center	Sustainable Dairy Farming Team
Les Everett - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Systems Thinking Team; CINRAM Team, Whole Farm Planning Educational Materials Team
Gary Fulcher - Food Science & Nutrition	Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium planning committee

Earl Fuller - Applied Economics	Sustainable Dairy Farming Team
Sue Galatowitsch - Horticultural Science	Cover Crop Working Group; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
Peter Graham - Soil, Water & Climate	Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture
Team Hans Gregerson - Forest Resources	CINRAM Team
Alan Gross - Rhetoric	Past Joint Seminar Member
Jeff Gunsolus - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Production and Certification of Organic Crop Educational Materials Team; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
Marcia Hathaway - Animal Science	Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
Emily Hoover - Horticultural Science	Cover Crop Working Group; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team. Joint Seminar member

<p>Bill Head - West Central Research &amp; Outreach Center</p>	<p>Chippewa River Stewardship Team</p>
<p>Craig Hedburg - Division of Environmental &amp; Occupational Health</p>	<p>Landscape, Food Systems, Human &amp; Animal Health Symposium presenter</p>
<p>David Huggins - SW Experiment Station</p>	<p>Past Joint Seminar Member; Chippewa River Stewardship Team; Systems Thinking Team, Integrated Soil Management Educational Materials Team; Production and Certification of Organic Crops Educational Materials Team</p>
<p>William Hutchinson - Entomology</p>	<p>Past Joint Seminar Member</p>
<p>Christopher Iremonger, Post Doc. Scientist for Deborah Allan &amp; Dave Mulla</p>	<p>Sustainable Farming Systems Team (LCMR grant)</p>
<p>Dennis Johnson - West Central Research &amp; Outreach Center</p>	<p>Joint Seminar Member; Sustainable Dairy Farming Team; Sustainable Farming Systems Team; Chippewa River Stewardship Team; Landscape, Food Systems, Human &amp; Animal Health Symposium presenter</p>
<p>Gregg Johnson - Southern Research &amp; Outreach Center</p>	<p>Cover Crop Working Group; MISA Board member</p>

Lee Johnston - West Central Experiment	Station Alternative Swine Production Task Force
Julie Miller Jones - Food Sci & Nutrition	Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
Nick Jordan - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Systems Thinking Team; CINRAM Team; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team; Joint Seminar Member; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium planning committee
Scott Josiah - Forestry Department	CINRAM Team; Agroforestry Resource Guide Educational Materials Team
Hans Kandel - Red Lake Co. Extension	Cover Crop Working Group
Anne Kapuscinski - ISEES	Joint Seminar Member
Robert King - Applied Economics	Joint Seminar Member; Developing Marketing and Businesses Educational Materials Team; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team

Linda Kinkel - Plant Pathology	Past Joint Seminar Member; Cover Crop Working Group; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
Kevin Klair - Applied Economics	Comprehensive Farm Planning Team; Whole Farm Planning Educational Materials Team
William Koskinene - Soil, Water & Climate	Cover Crop Working Group
Jo Ann Lamb - USDA	Joint Seminar Member
Phil Larsen - Assoc. Dean, COAFES	Past Board Member
Gary Lemme - West Central Research & Outreach Center	Sustainable Dairy Farming Team
Richard Levins - Applied Economics	Past Board Member; Joint Seminar Member; Monitoring Team; Comprehensive Farm Planning Team; "Hogs Your Way" Team; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
Ann Lewandowski - Soil, Water & Climate	Integrated Soil Management Team

James Linn - Animal Science	Sustainable Dairy Farming Team
Diane Lopez - UMM, Computer Science Dept.	Cover Crop Working Group
Bill Lueschen - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Cover Crop Working Group
Albert Markhart III - Horticultural Science	Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team; MISA Board member
Neal Martin - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Sustainable Dairy Farming Team
Dario Menanteau - Center for Rural Sociology	Joint Seminar Member
Jean Molina - Soil, Water & Climate	Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
Roger Moon - Entomology	Joint Seminar; Past Board Member; "Hogs Your Way" Educational Materials Team; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team

Robert Morrison - Clinical & Population Sci.	Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
Gary Muehlbauer, Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
David Mulla - Soil, Water & Climate	Sustainable Farming Systems Team member; Comprehensive Farm Planning Team; Whole Farm Planning Educational Materials Team; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
Joan Nassauer - Landscape Architecture	Past Board Member
John Nieber - Biosystems & Agric. Engineering	Past Joint Seminar Member
Bret Oelke - Grant Co. Extension Office	Alternative Swine Production Task Force; "Hogs Your Way" Team
Erv Oelke - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	CINRAM Team; Woody Ag Team member; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium planning committee member

Bob Olsen - Washington Co. Extension Service	Developing Marketing and Businesses Educational Materials Team; Integrated Soil Management Educational Materials Team
Kent Olsen - Applied Economics	Systems Thinking Team; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
William Olson, College of Veterinary Medicine	Sustainable Dairy Farming Team
Don Otterby - Animal Science	Sustainable Dairy Farming Team
Glenn Pederson	MISA grant recipient (Red River Valley)
Frank Pflieger - Plant Pathology	Past Joint Seminar Member
Carl V. Phillips	Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Graduate Faculty; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
John Polanski - Environment & Occupational Health	Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter



<p>Paul Porter, SW Experiment Station</p>	<p>Sustainable Farming Systems Team; Systems Thinking Team; Cover Crop Working Group; Production and Certification of Organic Crops Educational Materials Team; MISA grant recipient (Weed Control team), Landscape, Food Systems, Human &amp; Animal Health Symposium presenter</p>
<p>Klaus Puettmann - Forest Resources</p>	<p>Past Joint Seminar Member</p>
<p>Edward Radcliff - Entomology</p>	<p>Cover Crop Working Group; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team</p>
<p>Dave Ragsdale - Entomology</p>	<p>Cover Crop Working Group</p>
<p>Pierre Robert - Precision Agriculture Center, &amp; Soil, Water &amp; Climate</p>	<p>Landscape, Food System, Human and Animal Health Symposium presenter</p>
<p>Carl Rosen - Soil, Water &amp; Climate</p>	<p>Production and Certification of Organic Crops; Educational Materials Team</p>
<p>Paul Rosenblatt - Family Social Science</p>	<p>Joint Seminar Member; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team</p>

Michael Russelle - Soil, Water & Climate	Past Board Member; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
Vernon Ruttan - Applied Economics	Past Board Member; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
David Schmidt - Biosystems & Ag. Engineering	Alternative Swine Production Task Force
Chuck Schwartau, Wabasha Co. Extension Office	Beginning Dairy Farming Team; Whole Farm Planning Educational Materials Team
Steve Simmons - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team; Systems Thinking Team; CINRAM Team, Decision Case Video
Grant Marla Spivak - Entomology	Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
Erik Streed - CINRAM	Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium
Deon Stuthman - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Past Board Member

Craig Sheaffer - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Joint Seminar, Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team, Cover Crop Working Group
Dave Somers - Agronomy & Plant Genetics	Cover Crop Working Group
Deborah Swackhamer - Environmental & Occupational Health	Landscape, Food System, Hum and Animal Health Symposium presenter
Cindy Tong - Horticultural Science	Joint Seminar Member; Production and Certification of Organic Crops Educational Materials Team
Sara Tjossem - Ecology, Evolution & Behavior	Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
Bruce Vondracek - Fisheries & Wildlife	Board Member; Monitoring Team Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter
Roger Walker - Southern Experiment Station	Alternative Swine Production Task Force
Dennis Warnes, West Cen. Experiment Station	Sustainable Dairy Farming Team

Tom Wegner - Hennepin Co. Extension Office	Joint Seminar Member
Delane Welsch - Applied Economics	Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team
Lyle Westrom - UMC Agricultural Mgmt	Sustainable Dairy Farming Team
Michael White - Animal Science	Past Joint Seminar Member; MISA Board member; Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium planning committee
Bill Wilcke - Biosystems & Agric. Engineering	Past Board Chair; LCMR Team, Systems Thinking Team; Graduate Minor in Sustainable Agriculture Team, Joint Seminar member
Wynne Wright - West Central Research & Outreach Center	Landscape, Food Systems, Human & Animal Health Symposium presenter

# **1995-2000 Seminars and Events**

**1995**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Title</b>
January 21, 1995	Field Trip	Seed Savers Exchange and the Institute for Biodiversity
January 25, 1995	Steve Taff	An Overview of Commodity Support Programs
March 9, 1995	Pierre Robert	Precision Farming: Is it Sustainable?
May 22, 1995	George Boody	Land Stewardship Program: The Biological, Financial and Social Monitoring of Grazing Systems Projects
May 31, 1995	Ralph Lentz and Harlen Anderson	Big is Better? Two Farmers' Perspectives on Farm Size
June 28, 1995	Glenn McDonald	Perspectives on Sustainable Agriculture in Australia
October 27, 1995	Lucy Steinkamp	Marketing a Niche Product: Ewscream Ice Cream

November 9, 1995	Lisa Sass Zaragoza	Issues of Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers
November 9, 1995	Robert McKinnell	Frogs and the Environment
<b>1996</b>		
February 1, 1996	Tom Wegner, Hennepin County Extension Educator	Farmland Conversion in the Metro Area: Where's the Farmland Gone?
February 15, 1996	George Boody, Land Stewardship Project	Holistic Resource Management
February 29, 1996	Jim Bender	Book: Future Harvest
March 17, 1996	Lisa Gulbranson	The Ins and Outs of the Organic Certification Process
April 25, 1996	Brian DeVore, Land Stewardship Project	The Cost of Urban Sprawl
November 21, 1996	Judy Helgen and Bob McKennell	Frogs and the Environment

**1997**

February 5, 1997	Barb Wingen and Lori Pommerenke	Student Internship Presentation: Study on Agriculture Natural Resources Management Integration in the Waseca Area, Barb Wingen, for CINRAM (Wingen) and Internship Experience on Five Family Farms in West Central Minnesota and the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota (Pommerenke).
February 10, 1997	Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin, Headwaters International, Organic Farmer from Chiapas, Mexico	Organic Coffee Growing Techniques Using Communal Lands and Techniques, and Organic Coffee Marketing
February 11, 1997	Joel Salatin	Pastured Poultry and Saladbar Beef
February 19, 1997	Mark Ritchie, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy	History of Farm Program/Conservation Interaction and Today's Agriculture Policies
March 19, 1997	Peter Seim, undergraduate student, University of Minnesota, and John Westra, Graduate Student, University of Minnesota.	Internship Experience at Natural Harvest CSA in Stillwater, Minnesota, and their role in a new land development(Peter Seim). Market Potential for Chemical-free, Naturally-raised Beef in Northeastern Minnesota, a Survey done for the Sustainable Farming Association of Northeastern Minnesota.



April 2, 1997	Linda Noble, sustainable hog production system farmer, Kenyon, Minnesota	Linda's Happy Hogs
April 10, 1997	William Lockertz	American in the Thirties in Pictures, Songs and Words
April 15, 1997	Representatives from the Land Stewardship Project, Red Cardinal Farm and other CSAs, Sustainable Farming Association, and individual farmers	Internships in Sustainable Agriculture
April 16, 1997	Renay Leone, Minnesota Land Trust	The Minnesota Land Trust, a discussion of its role, tools and projects, including sustainable agriculture development patterns
April 30, 1997	Dr. R. Ford Denison, University of California, Davis	Science and Sustainability at LTRAS, The World's Youngest 100-Year Experiment
May 7, 1997	James Dontje	Internship Experience at the rotational grazing dairy operation of Dave and Florence Minar, New Prague, Minnesota
May 21, 1997	Lisa Sass-Zaragosa and trip participants	Experiences of Migrant Farm Workers on the South Texas/Mexico Border

June 4, 1997	Amy Bacigalupo, Paul Wyman, Land Stewardship Project	Student Internship Presentation: A Way and a Why: Measuring Quality of Life and Relationship with Rural Community (Bacigalupo) Partnerships and Working Toward Consensus (Wymar)
October 24, 1997	Photo Exhibit, Reception and Panel Discussion: Mary Doerr, Dairy Goat Farmer and Cheese Processor; Dancing Winds Farm, Linda Noble, Non-confinement Hog Production; Mary Ellen Frame, Organic Vegetable and Herb Production for Farmers' Markets; and Laurie Hougen-Eitzman, Big Woods Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) farmer	Getting Down to Earth: Images of Women Farmers
November 4, 1997	Eric Hoeft, Graduate Student, Agronomy	Student Internship Presentation: Flame Weeding in Chemical-Free Horticultural Systems
November 18, 1997	Jean-Luc Jannink, Graduate Student, Agronomy	Student Internship Presentation: Whole Farm Planning from a Farmer's Perspective
December 2, 1997	Lee DeHaan, Graduate Student, Agronomy	Student Internship Presentation: Studying Land Transfer Patterns with Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
<b>1998</b>		

January 13, 1998	Carmen Fernholz, Endowed Chair in Agriculture Systems and organic farmer	Visioning the Rural Landscape <i>Attendees: 30</i>
January 20, 1998	Members of the Farmworker Action Network (FAN), a student/community group coordinated by Yectli Huerta, Jesus Bernal and Linda Alvarez	Migrant Farmworkers in Sustainable Agriculture, Part I, Strawberry Worker Organizing <i>Attendees: 20</i>
January 27, 1998	Members of the Farmworker Action Network (FAN), a student/community group coordinated by Yectli Huerta, Jesus Bernal and Linda Alvarez	Migrant Farmworkers in Sustainable Agriculture, Part II, Strawberry Worker Organizing <i>Attendees: 15</i>
February 3, 1998	Members of the Farmworker Action Network (FAN), a student/community group coordinated by Yectli Huerta, Jesus Bernal and Linda Alvarez	Migrant Farmworkers in Sustainable Agriculture, Part II, Strawberry Worker Organizing <i>Attendees: 15</i>
February 10, 1998		Political Ecology and Sustainable Agriculture, Part I Liberation Ecology: Development, Sustainability and Environment in an Age of Market Triumphalism
February 10, 1998	Joel Wainwright, Graduate Student, Geography and Dana Blumenthal, Graduate Student, Agronomy	Political Ecology and Sustainable Agriculture, Part I <i>Attendees: 10</i>

February 17, 1998	Joel Wainwright, Graduate Student, Geography, and Dana Blumenthal, Graduate Student, Agronomy	Political Ecology and Sustainable Agriculture, Part II <i>Attendees: 10</i>
February 24, 1998		Qualitative and Participatory Research for Sustainability, Part I <i>Attendees: 12</i>
March 3, 1998	Pat Duncanson, Southwest Minnesota corn/beans farmer, Phil Arnold, garlic farmer in Central Minnesota, and Carl Rosen, Soil Fertility Researcher at the University of Minnesota	Qualitative and Participatory Research for Sustainability, Part II <i>Attendees: 18</i>
March 10, 1998	Jan Joannides from the Center for Integrated Natural Resources and Agricultural Management (CINRAM)	Qualitative and Participatory Research for Sustainability, Part III
April 15, 1998	Tomas Hansmeyer, Department of Soil, Water and Climate	Student Internship Presentation: Exploring Agricultural Opportunities in Central Minnesota: A Field Tour and Discussion <i>Attendees: 18</i>
April 22, 1998	Dominic D. Ackerman, Department of Forest Resources	Student Internship Presentation: Sips of Coffee and Shoots of Vetiver - Promoting Soil Conservation as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Costa Rica

April 29, 1998	Stephanie Lundeen Environmental Education, College of Natural Resources	Student Internship Presentation: Sustainable Agriculture Education and Outreach in an Ecuadorian Quichua Community
May 6, 1998	Ruth Dill-Macky, Department of Plant Pathology, University of Minnesota	Scab and its niche in the Red River Valley
June 1, 1998	Nick Jordan, concerned citizens	Crisis in the Red River Valley: A dialogue with farmers and other citizens from the Valley.
October 7, 1998	Betsy Barnum, Great River Earth Institute	Some Practical and Ethical Considerations of Sustainability and Deep Ecology
October 10, 1998	Kathryn Gilje, IATP	World Food Day A Live Teleconference: Food for All: Right or Goal?
October 14, 1998	Emily Pullins	Borders, Boundaries, Biotech, and Breeding: A conceptual overview of links made between Biotechnology and Colonialism
October 21, 1998	Emily Pullins, Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics	Borders, Boundaries, Biotech and Breeding: A conceptual overview of links made between Biotechnology and Colonialism

October 21, 1998	Dr. Sharon Danes, Associate Professor, Family Social Science Department, College of Human Ecology	The Times They Are A' Changin', Minnesota Farm Women 1988-1995 <i>Attendees: 32</i>
October 28, 1998	Panel Discussion with Ann Brennan, Whole Foods Market, Elizabeth Archer, The Wedge Natural Food Co-Op, and Barbara Duff, Organic Alliance	Natural Foods and You: Implications of Natural Food Sales in Co-ops, Publicly Owned Natural Foods, and Conventional Food Stores <i>Attendees:18</i>
November 4, 1998	Carolyn Lane, Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics	Topical Discussion: Exploration of Possible Collaboration with Cuban Sustainable Agriculture Organizations
November 11, 1998	Erin Lees, School of Public Health	Student Internship Presentation: Surface Water and Irrigation: A Threat to Public Health?
November 18, 1998	Caroline Scully	Student Internship Presentation: Using Oxen for Market Gardening at Howell Living History Farm
December 2, 1998	Jennifer Callahan, Graduate Student, Philosophy	Student Internship Presentation: Consumption and Civic Virtue: Some Thoughts on the Moral Status of Sustainability
December 3, 1998	Rose Beddington	Rural People, Rural Lives: A Slide Presentation on Lincolnshire, England.

December 9, 1998	Julie Grossman, Graduate Student, Agronomy and Plant Genetics	Student Internship Presentation: Cover Crop Use by Campesino Farmers in Honduras, Central America
<b>1999</b>		
January 6, 1999	Film produced by BBC, contact Sheri Huerd	Assault on the Male
January 13, 1999	Jan O'Donnell, Executive Director, Minnesota Food Association, delegate with the Sustainable Marketing Eurotour organized by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP)	Overview Marketing and Sustainable and Organic Products in Europe <i>Attendees: 18</i>
January 20, 1999	Kathryn Gilje, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy	Marketing of Sustainable Agriculture; A Focus on Eco- and Social Labeling in the Food System <i>Attendees: 25</i>
January 20, 1999	Steve Light	Building Adaptive Capacity: The Hero's Journey
January 27, 1999	Panel Discussion, MAST (Minnesota Agricultural Student Trainees) students from several different countries	Around the World in an Hour: Perspectives on Sustainable Agriculture in Other Countries <i>Attendees: 8</i>

February 3, 1999	Julie Grossman, Graduate Student, Agronomy and Plant Genetics	Cover Crop Use by Campesino Farmers in Honduras, Central America, Student Internship Presentation
February 10, 1999	Steve Hiniker	Student Internship Presentation: Making the Transition from Conventional to Sustainable Agriculture
February 10, 1999	George Boody	Restoring Biodiversity and Resilience in Farming: Holistic Approaches
February 11, 1999	Gary Grant, Farmer	The Struggle for Forty Acres and a Mule: Black Farmers Fight Government Discrimination <i>Attendees: 60</i>
February 17, 1999	Dr. James Orf, Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics	Seeds - One Year and Out? <i>Attendees: 32</i>
February 24, 1999	Rachel Gawson	Can Soil Test Phosphorus Predict Bioavailable Phosphorus in Runoff from Highly Manured Soils?
March 3, 1999	Joel Wainwright, Geography, and MacArthur Scholar	Lands in Transition: The Political Ecology of Agriculture in Post-Apartheid South Africa and Post-'Socialist' Ethiopia <i>Attendees: 26</i>



March 10, 1999	Keith Wendt, Clarence Turner and Laura Preus	A Systems Approach to Using Indicators and Other Tools for Natural Resource Management
March 31, 1999	Paul Porter, Assistant Professor, Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics, Southwest Research and Outreach Center, Lamberton	The Organic Conversion Project: Organic Research Efforts in Southwest Minnesota
April 7, 1999	Joel Wainwright, MacArthur Scholar and Graduate Student, Geography	Sustainable Capitalist Agriculture: Is It Possible?
April 14, 1999	Mark Ritchie, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP)	GATT, Agricultural Trade, and the Farm Crisis
April 21, 1999	Lynn Carpenter Boggs, USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Morris	Fertilizers, Tillage and Unsustainable Microbial Activity: A Discussion of Carbon and Nitrogen Cycling in Minnesota Soils <i>Attendees:15</i>
May 5, 1999	Lori Pommeranke, Ph.D. Student, Conservation Biology	Agriculture in the Woods: Ideas from Foraging Practices of Northeastern Thai Villagers
May 12, 1999	Robert Herling, Senior Student, College of Natural Resources A Survey of	Successful Mechanical Weed Control in Minnesota

May 19, 1999	G. Edward Schuh, Professor, Hubert Humphrey Institute for Public Affairs	World Markets and the World Bank: The Sustainability of U.S. Agricultural Exports <i>Attendees: 25</i>
May 26, 1999	Jack Kloppenberg, Associate Professor, Rural Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison	From Food System to Foodshed: Eating for Sustainability in the 21st Century
July 28, 1999	Leo Joosten	Payments to Farmers: Tools for Transition
September 10, 1999	Dr. E. Ann Clark, Associate Professor, Plant Agriculture, University of Guelph, Ontario	Agriculture as a Positive Environmental Influence <i>Attendees: 25</i>
October 7, 1999	Dr. Luis Garcia Barrios	Problems Present in Marginal Indigenous Agricultural/Forestry Systems in the Chiapas Highlands <i>Attendees: 35</i>
October 13, 1999	Kristin Corselius, Agronomy	Student Internship Presentation: Food with a Face - Building Urban and Rural Ties <i>Attendees: 20</i>
October 20, 1999	Emily Pullins, Agronomy	Student Internship Presentation: Is She Sustainable?

October 27, 1999	Kristen Nelson, Department of Forest Resources and Fisheries and Wildlife	Struggling Toward Sustainability: Participatory Science and Sustainable Development in Mexico <i>Attendees: 25</i>
November 3, 1999	Perry Aasnes, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture	Federal Dairy Policy and Its Impact on Minnesota Dairy Farmers <i>Attendees: 20</i>
November 10, 1999	Tom Walsh, Intern, and Gabriela Flora, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP)	Student Internship Presentation: Public Perceptions of Genomic Technology <i>Attendees: 35</i>
November 17, 1999	Julie Grossman, Agronomy	What You Should Know About Your Joe: Organic Coffee Production in Chiapas, Mexico <i>Attendees: 35</i>
November 18, 1999	Jan Diek van Mansfeldt	Checklist for Sustainable Landscape Management
December 1, 1999	Ray Kirsch and Emily Pullins, Agronomy	Sustainable Agriculture and Biotechnology: Report from the 11th Annual NABC Conference <i>Attendees: 22</i>
December 8, 1999	Kindi Harla and Brenda DeMarco	Student Internship Presentation: Growing Up in a Garden <i>Attendees: 27</i>

December 15, 1999	Phil Rice	Computer Simulations of Agricultural
<b>2000</b>		
January 26, 2000	Joel Wainwright	Introduction to the WTO and the Seattle Protests <i>Attendees: 23</i>
February 2, 2000	Kristin Mercer	The World Trade Organization, Part II. How Can the WTO Affect Agriculture? <i>Attendees: 28</i>
February 9, 2000	Dick Levins	U.S. Farm Policy and Family Farming <i>Attendees: 42</i>
February 16, 2000	Karen Lehman and Julie Ristau	From Sustainable Agriculture to Sustainable Food Systems <i>Attendees: 28</i>
February 23, 2000	Jan Flora	Natural Resource Management in the Northern Andes of Ecuador and in Minnesota: Advocacy Colitions and Decision Making. <i>Attendees: 27</i>
March 1, 2000	Cornelia Flora	Farm Community Partnerships for Sustainability <i>Attendees: 24</i>

March 3, 2000	PCUN	Sweatshops in the Field <i>Attendees: 30</i>
March 8, 2000	Paul Wymar & Amy Bacigalupo	Farming Sustainably: Lessons and Challenges from Farmers in Paraguay. <i>Attendees: 28</i>
March 15, 2000	Carolyn Carr	Patents, Agricultural Biotechnology and Public Interest at the University of Minnesota. <i>Attendees: 26</i>
March 22, 2000	Gunner Liden and Perdita Butler	Youth Farm: Developing Strong Communities through Youth and Gardens <i>Attendees: 12</i>
April 5, 2000	Eric Streed	Can Growing Hybrid Poplar Fit in with the Sustainable Agriculture Movement? <i>Attendees: 20</i>
April 12, 2000	Carmen Fernholz and William Cochrane, also panel discussion	The New Language of Farm Policy: Engaging Consumers, Labor, Environmentalists and Farmers in Shaping the Future of Food and Agricultural Systems <i>Attendees: 250</i>
April 18, 2000	Cornelia Flora, Jim Ennis, Thomas Blaha, and panel discussion	Demand-driven Agriculture: Value-added Labeling & Quality Assurance <i>Attendees: 30</i>

April 26, 2000	Karin Matchett	An Evening of Cinema and Discussion on the WTO
April 28, 2000	25 individual speakers	Enhanced Landscape, Human and Animal Health Symposium <i>Attendees: 125</i>
May 5, 2000	Dana Blumenthal	The New Immigrant Agriculture Project: an Intern's View.
9/13	WUSA Planning Mtg. (408 Hayes)	Open Meeting -- Food will be provided.
9/20	Ted Radcliffe	Biological Control of Potato Aphids: Commercial production is more dependent upon intensive use of pesticides than any other crop grown in Minnesota. That notwithstanding, control of green peach aphid, the most important potato insect pest, is only possible if its natural enemies are preserved. Across North America, recent pest management crises are forcing a rethinking of approaches to potato pest management.
9/27	Nick Jordan	Agroecology of Mutualism Between Plants and Mycorrhizal Fungi: The development and maintenance of ecological partnerships appears to be a fundamental strategy of agroecological restoration. Mutualisms between plants and mycorrhizal fungi may provide a paradigm of such partnerships. Specifically, the fungi may serve to integrate plant biodiversity on farms into ensembles that provide important

		ecological benefits to farms and surrounding landscapes.
10/4	Dennis Johnson	Grazing Dairy Cattle in Minnesota: A discussion focused on the challenges faced by dairy farmers in grazing dairy cattle in Minnesota.
10/11	Kristin Mercer & Joel Wainwright	From Intercropping to Inoculum Production or Pasture and Forage Research in Cuba: Kristin Mercer and Joel Wainwright will discuss their internship experience working with the Research Institute for Pastures and Forages (IIPF) in Cuba. They will be discussing their experiences at various research stations throughout the country, impressions of the use of agroecology in IIPF research, and agricultural politics in Cuba.
10/18	Craig Hassel, Paul Red Elk & Sally Auger	Preserving Biological and Cultural Diversity - The Dream of Wild Health Network: This seminar offers a Native American perspective of sustainable agriculture. The Network hopes to preserve culture and improve human health through gathering indigenous crop, medicinal and tobacco seeds and knowledge of their traditional uses from elders throughout the upper Midwest and southern Canada. Paul will share photographs of the plants and describe opportunities for research and student involvement.
10/25	Lynn Mader	"From Land to Mouth" Making the Link Between Nutrition and Sustainable Agriculture: Lynn will present on her summer internship work, with The Land

		<p>Stewardship Project in the Southwest Minnesota office, and her work exploring and strengthening the connections between nutrition and sustainable agriculture in research and in practice. This will include her experience raising community awareness and support for sustainable agriculture through a local foods banquet the "Sumptuous Sustainable Supper." Additionally she will discuss her pursuit of information on nutritional and health implications of sustainable livestock systems.</p>
11/1	Ann Lewandowski	<p>Climate Change, Agriculture, and Conservation: A variety of agricultural practices contribute to the greenhouse gases that appear to be causing global climate change. In turn, changes in patterns of precipitation, temperature, and extreme weather will affect the productivity of agriculture. Agriculture is a unique industry in that it can reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere by increasing the amount of carbon stored in soil. This presentation is an introduction to the science and the politics of the issue, and the potential of agriculture to mitigate and adapt to climate change.</p>
11/8	Linda Kinkel	<p>The Use of Green Manures to Enhance Indigenous Antagonists and Control Plant Diseases: In the seminar, I will describe our research on the effects of different green manure species on the densities and antibiotic activities of indigenous pathogen antagonists in a variety of soils. I will also present data on the effects of green manures on root disease, and on the effects of antibiotic-producing soil borne antagonists on both disease and plant pathogen populations. Our goal is the development of an integrated, multiple season crop management</p>



		system that targets a diverse collection of soil borne plant pathogens of both vegetable and field crops.
11/8	Linda Kinkel	The Use of Green Manures to Enhance Indigenous Antagonists and Control Plant Diseases: In the seminar, I will describe our research on the effects of different green manure species on the densities and antibiotic activities of indigenous pathogen antagonists in a variety of soils. I will also present data on the effects of green manures on root disease, and on the effects of antibiotic-producing soil borne antagonists on both disease and plant pathogen populations. Our goal is the development of an integrated, multiple season crop management system that targets a diverse collection of soil borne plant pathogens of both vegetable and field crops.
11/15	Prescott Bergh	Chefs Shape the Future of Food: Hundreds of food-industry professionals recently gathered at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y., for a major conference on where the food industry is heading and where they want it to go. Chefs, culinary students, teachers, farmers, gardeners, ranchers, environmentalists, community activists, marketers and consumers attended the three-day conference. Topics included genetically altered food, global influences on regional cuisines and new methods of farming, ranching and fishing that are healthier for the environment. Prescott Bergh will discuss his observations of the conference and some of its outcomes.
11/22	HOLIDAY	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

11/29	Paul Rosenblatt	Family Issues in the Transition to Sustainable Agriculture: Based on intensive interviews, Family Social Science grad student Althea Dixon and I found clear but different patterns of family relationship issues and difficulties depending on whether the family took over a family farm or was entering farming from outside of farming.
12/6	Student Panel	Minnesota Agricultural Student Trainee (MAST) Program: MAST is an international exchange program that provides participants hands on experiences in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness while living and working with a host family in another culture. In this seminar a group of students will talk about their experiences as participants in the MAST program.
12/13	Eric Ristau	Native Perennial Legumes - Possibilities for Minnesota Agriculture: Minnesota has many native species of perennial legumes but we are only beginning to identify some which could have a place in our agricultural system. Illinois bundleflower and false indigo are showing promise as possible new forage crops for adventurous farmers in Western and Southeastern MN. We have established large plots at several rural sites and currently are working to identify plants with traits that will enable these species to become viable alternatives for Minnesota farmers.
12/20	FINALS	FINALS/WINTER BREAK

# Positive Impact Statements

I am a faculty member in the College of Human Ecology. When I decided that I wanted to research family issues for families involved in some form of sustainable agriculture, the MISA staff was quite helpful to me in a number of ways. They helped me to know about several research projects that had not yet shown up in indexes of published work. They helped me to link up with local sustainable farming groups around the state, with the sustainable farming folks in the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and with sustainable farming groups in North and South Dakota. MISA's help was crucial to me in writing a grant proposal that was funded, in finding respondent families for my study, and eventually in producing interesting, publishable, published research findings. As an added benefit, the knowledge I acquired from MISA and through the research I did has enabled me to be an effective consultant in the development of a statewide whole-farm-planning program for farm families.

Paul C. Rosenblatt  
Professor  
Family Social Science  
290 McNeal Hall  
1985 Buford Avenue  
University of Minnesota  
St. Paul, MN 55108-6140  
office phone: 612-625-3120  
office FAX: 612-625-4227

---

I am replying to your request for information about how MISA has positively impacted me.

I chose to become a graduate student in the Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics here at the University of Minnesota because of the graduate minor in sustainable agriculture offered through MISA. During my time here I have been very involved with the weekly discussion group, WUSA (What's up in sustainable agriculture), including leading the group for a semester while we investigated the agricultural systems of NW MN and the scab crisis. This resulted in my first publication, which was part of a chapter co-authored with another sustainable agriculture graduate student.

Additionally I was able to give a presentation this year on how agriculture may be affected by new WTO rules after having attended symposia and forums in Seattle during the WTO ministerial. Through the programs provided by MISA I have been able to get a more rounded education on problems in world agriculture. The attention that MISA pays to issues of

community health, power and ecological viability in relation to our farming systems has improved my understanding of risks and benefits of the current agricultural economy and of future or alternative pathways. Investing in MISA should be equated with investing in future agricultural leaders who will have a strong background to apply to the challenging and complex problems faced by the global agricultural community.

Kristin Mercer  
Graduate Student  
Agronomy and Plant Genetics

---

I have had many positive experiences with MISA over my several years with the organization, ranging from the Monitoring team to Rosemount planning. Rather than list them all, I will give two examples from the past month that have been of help to my department (Applied Economics).

First, MISA was instrumental in designing and implementing the April 12 "New Language of Farm Policy" symposium. The symposium was a great success and would not have happened without MISA support.

Second, 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 UM over many other offers. He is looking forward to orienting much of his program toward issues relating to sustainable agriculture.

Respectfully submitted,  
Richard A. Levins  
Professor and Extension Agricultural Economist

---

MISA-sponsored programs and events have been critical in my development as a graduate student at the University of MN. The courses associated with the sustainable agriculture minor have presented perspectives that were not available elsewhere in the curriculum. Seminars provided by MISA have been particularly helpful in my personal development of a systems view of agriculture.

MISA has also been important in generating grant writing ideas. My conversations with MISA staff have resulted in attaining over \$200,000 in grants for sustainable agriculture research that is directly associated with my dissertation research. MISA has developed a network that is able

to catalyze the thinking and relationships necessary to generate the ideas that will attract funding from a wide range of sources.

I fully support the continued funding of MISA at current or increased levels. This center has and will continue to produce great returns on every dollar invested in terms of education for students and bringing additional grant money into the University of MN.

Sincerely,  
Lee R. DeHaan  
Ph. D. Candidate  
Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics

---

I would like to endorse the continued involvement of the University in MISA & other similar activities. In southwestern MN we have become heavily dependent on a corn/soybean rotation in our cropping pattern. Since over 90% of the land area in Redwood County is either of primary or secondary importance to agriculture, we are heavily dependent on agriculture & crop farming. Between 80 & 90% of this land is currently planted to corn or soybeans. We desperately need viable alternatives to rotate with these two crops to minimize the effect of diseases, insects, and other pests. Plus, we need some economic diversity to spread out risk.

The role of the University should be to help foster other viable alternatives, not to just improve on growing more corn and soybeans. It is very important that the University continue to remain involved in organizations and initiatives such as MISA.

I have worked with several area farmers who have tried several different ventures and methods. Much of this would not be happening without MISA and other similar institutions. While most of these ideas and ventures are not yet mainstream, they are providing new knowledge and skills, some of which will be vital in the future to developing a new viable product, crop, or venture.

For the past 6 years, I have coordinated the University and Extension tent and plots at FARMFEST. We have exhibited a number of different new crops, cover crops, forages, and conservation methods. These always receive a tremendous amount of interest and questions, highlighting the fact that farmers are interested in this type of thing.

Wayne Hansen  
Extension Educator  
Livestock Systems / Community Resource Development  
University of Minnesota Extension Service  
Redwood County

---

I have been very pleased to refer Minnesota citizens, University students, and members of the Minnesota Dietetic Association to MISA, providing them with copies of the MISA Newsletter to document that the University cares about sustainable agriculture, the economy, the environment, and people. MISA has been a pathfinder, a flag that we can point to and rally around. MISA must be a viable and visible organization in the State and at the University.

Mary E. Darling, Ph.D., R.D,  
Assistant Professor and Extension Nutritionist  
Department of Food Science and Nutrition  
University of Minnesota

---

Dear Beth:

I am sorry, I did not get a chance to participate in the Symposium on "Enhanced Landscape, Human and Animal Health". I had another commitment at that time. Therefore, I do not have any specific comment about the Symposium.

On the question of Centers at the College, I believe it is a bad idea as the concept has evolved over the past 10 years. They are taking meager resources away from the faculty and the departments. Every time a Center is set-up at the College, they end up spending most of the money in overhead by hiring staff. Furthermore, in some cases USDA-ARS or other interesting parties are using these centers to take resources away from the University faculty. College and Experimental Station Deans and Directors tell us they do not have any extra money to support faculty's research but I do not understand how they have money for ARS Scientists or other groups who get money from these centers. Furthermore, the center ends up spending the hard money to hire support staff, another level of overhead. I do not see any benefit of spending money this way.

Many of us never get any money from these centers. Furthermore, why does a center need to take money from the University and then distribute it to the faculty. Why can't that money be distributed directly through regular channels like Dept. Head or Expt. Stn. Director.

I do not know how MISA has handled its affairs but I believe the present concept of center at the college level is bad. If the center concept stays at the college level, then they should be not be getting any money from the University after 2 years. We need to have the same concept as the Graduate School does for its centers. After 2 years, every center should be on their own and no resources should be put in from the College, Expt. Station, or the University budget. Furthermore, the first 2 years money should be no more than \$50,000 per year.

My comments are no reflection on MISA but this is a good time to look at all the Centers and have an honest review/discussion on what we are doing at the College and the Expt. Station.

Satish Gupta

---

As a graduate student in the Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics, my most valuable experience was funded through the Minnesota Institute of Sustainable Agriculture. I spent eight months working with the Whole Farm Cooperative and their "Food with a Face" project. I had the pleasure of interviewing farmers about their farms, farming practices, and why they do what they do. The objective was to create profiles about the farmers for the general public to learn more about who is producing their food and how it is produced. Not only did I learn more from these farmers than I ever did in a class, but the Whole Farm Cooperative was provided a valuable service by my labor which they might not have otherwise been able to provide. Without MISA's support, I would have never been provided the opportunity for such an experience.

Sincerely,  
Kristen Corselius  
Research Assistant  
Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics  
University of Minnesota

---

MISA's role as a visible, competent clearinghouse and referral agent for information on sustainable agriculture is not to be underestimated. The impact is significant, ironically, because there are increasing numbers of places to get such information, and thus confusion and frustration among citizens and local government officials in Minnesota. When I ask people where they go for authoritative information on sustainable agriculture, they usually say MISA's the best and first stop.

Philipp Muessig  
Pollution prevention specialist  
Sustainable Communities Team  
Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance

---

I am an organic vegetable grower in south central Minnesota, (Blue Earth County) and I see at the Mankato Farmer's Market. It has been helpful for me to access MISA on the internet when I need help in finding Minnesota suppliers for things such as organic fertilizer, cover crop seeds, and irrigation supplies. I also occasionally look at the MISA calendar for learning events, such as field days and workshops, although I haven't attended any yet.

Thank you. Jean Lovett  
Tinken Creek Farm  
Amboy, Minnesota

---

As an older farmer who has a son who is farming with me, I would like to take this opportunity to express my feelings and the impact that MISA (Minnesota Institute of Agriculture) has had on us and our farming operation.

I feel MISA has been very instrumental in getting the Alternative Swine Task Force into operation and assisting with setting up of a deep-bedded swine system at the U of M in Morris. This program would not have materialized without MISA and Don Wyse. Since we produce pigs from farrow to market in totally deep bedding and pasture, we fully realize and appreciate the support and philosophy recognition which MISA gives with this new venture. Without these types of programs, I feel that the U of M would be failing to maintain support of our smaller family farms.

In this point in time, we desperately need programs which moves our agriculture to more sustainability and reduces exploitation of our people, land and natural resources.

Sincerely  
Dwight Ault  
Austin, MN.

---

To Whom it May Concern:

I am an attorney with the Minnesota Family Farm Law Project in Mankato. Along with others on our staff, I have looked to MISA for leadership in knowing how to conduct our legal representation of farmers. We have also considered applying to MISA for funding of certain projects that we may consider taking on from time to time.



MISA is an indispensable organization. We all have a big stake in supporting and furthering its work.

Peter Gustafson  
Attorney at Law  
Doctor of Philosophy

---

By Stephanie Lundeen

In 1998, I took a Sustainable Agriculture colloquium to learn more about what is going on in Minnesota in regards to agricultural systems that strive to be in harmony with the natural world. I met compassionate, dedicated and interesting farmers, teachers, graduate students and undergrads - like myself. The teaching assistant, Julie Grossman, encouraged me to apply for a MISA grant for the internship that I wanted to do in South America.

Because of the grant award I received from MISA, I was able to conduct one month of intensive research in the Ecuadorian Amazon studying sustainable agriculture techniques used by the Quichua people. Since my internship, I have given presentations, documented my work, published an article and made lasting relationships with researchers and tribespeople in South America.

International internships are a great way to see the world and get involved with the community in which you are conducting the research. I cannot say enough good things about my experience which was made possible by the encouragement and funds I received from MISA.

I also appreciate the WUSA brown bag lunch series. I am now graduated with an Environmental and Sustainable Agriculture Education degree and work at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy and the Minnesota Food Association, both of which are directly related to sustainable agriculture in Minnesota. Although I am not on campus as a student, I still attend WUSA wednesdays whenever I get the chance!

Stephanie Lundeen

---

In your effort to receive citizen input on the MISA Center, I would like to submit the following documentation:

MISA has affected my viewpoint on "land grant mission" and citizen involvement in determining the future for my region of the state. I'm sure some people think I had a "religious experience" but it took about three exposures to the subject called a variety of things before it made sense to me. I first heard Peg Michaels sharing with a group of citizens in west central MN, the impact that active citizenship can make in local/area issues and solutions.

The above referernces were further honed at a Western MN Land Stewardship Annual Meeting in Morris in March 2000. These people were not the rabied "tree huggers" I figured they would be. They really care about sensible stewardship of water, soil, air and people. Through role plays and open discussion, I came to see this as the same thing I care deeply about - the future of communities in outstate Minnesota. We are capable of working together to face common issues, whether it is large or small farms, gmo's or organics, most of us want the same thing - to pass this land and community on the next generation in better shape than we found it.

There are many ways of reaching MN citizens, but MISA gives people credit for making their own decisons with requested assistance from their Land Grant University. It is not TOP Down, but People Involved and that is very healthy and deserves to be honored by the U of Minnesota and the COAFES.

Sincerely, Mary Ann Scharf  
Citizen of Stevens County, Morris, MN  
University of Minnesota Extension

---

Hello,

I was so excited when I found out about MISA two years ago. I am a graduate student in the department of food science and nutrition. When I found out about MISA, I met with Helene Murray and she was very supportive of the idea of working on a collaborative project with the nutrition department. Until that date, I am unsure of how much interaction there was between the two departments...but I thought it made sense to work together. It has been a wonderful experience to see the faculty and students in the nutrition department working with faculty and students in agronomy, etc... There are so many important connections that are being formed and I feel that the future holds an abundance of opportunities.

I have always been interested in finding ways to support farmers who are working to improve the quality of natural resources and community life. I am particularly interested in educating consumers about the choices they have when it comes to food. As consumers, we can play a role in sustaining the planet for future generations. These days I think many people have the desire to support farmers, environment, and community but they don't know what to do about it. They often feel overwhelmed. With a grant from MISA, I am working with community organizations (LSP, MFA, and Food Choices) and grocery stores to evaluate consumer attitudes and behaviors, educate consumers about their food choices, and share with consumers how they can make an impact by choosing to buy sustainably produced food. Through consumer research which has already been conducted, it is clear that consumers are ready to support farmers...if only they knew how.

In this time of increasing concern for the environment and community, it is important to continue to finance an institute that is working to provide a healthy planet for future generations. I only hope that we do not find ourselves 10 years down the road realizing what a tragic mistake it was to withdraw funding for a department that is working to sustain the future of our communities and our planet. Is there any more noble and PRACTICAL goal?

Thanks for your time,  
Ramona Robinson

---

I was very excited to be able to take part in the MISA business plan manual project this winter (Rob King and Debra Elias-Morse). I had always wanted to get to the U of MN campus in St Paul, and I was extremely interested in what they had to offer--the creation of a business plan for our farm to make changes towards organic certification. With their guidance, I made up a pretty good plan, including lots of things I would not have even considered without their help. I kept changing the plan throughout the process until I was satisfied that it would work financially and labor-wise. Being a part of this program also gave me access to various departments within the University, ag econ, marketing, etc. I also got to work with other sustainable farmers from Minnesota and get to know them better.

Furthermore, at the April meeting of our South Central Sustainable Farming Association (where there were 20 plus people meeting in a living room to learn more about organics), we talked about getting together with MISA to work with them. It would be a great way to link the University with ordinary farmers in our state and share information--both scientific and practical.

If you need me to go into greater detail about my experience with MISA, I would be happy to.

Nancy Aspelund, St. James, MN

---

MISA's presence at the University emboldened some of us who were dissatisfied with the University's approach to swine research to go to the legislature and ask for funding for facilities and program. As a result, The Alternative Swine Task Force was established under MISA's guidance. MISA, through the endowed chair position and other direct contacts, encouraged some of the animal science faculty to take us seriously right from the start, which to their credit, they did.

The results for the University and the people and farmers of this State so far are: A hoops building project nearly complete at Morris, along with interest from across the University in using

it for research. A pasture farrowing and deep straw farrowing system soon to follow. A scientist position is being advertised for and the program in research is starting.

Two major grants are being applied for which if funded will result in research work across five to seven University departments. Another major University funder is in conversation with University researchers about a new and ongoing commitment. And animal science, as well as the University as a whole, is poised (should it decide to take advantage of it) to be in the forefront of changes in the hog markets as well as rural communities and economies.

All this was sparked by MISA. A wonderful return on investment, in my view.

Jim Van Der Pol  
farmer  
Chippewa county

---

Dear Friends at MISA,

On May 8th, I graduated from the University of Minnesota's College of Agriculture with a major in Agricultural Education. One of the reasons I chose that particular college was the fact that I believed the University offers a wide range of agricultural related coursework. I was able to study the history of agriculture as well as learn of the possible future of agriculture. My coursework included classes ranging from biotechnology to organic farming methods. I was very happy that I was able to obtain such well-rounded information. I am afraid that if MISA loses their funding, future students will not be afforded the opportunity to examine the many aspects of agriculture. This will be a serious misfortune for the entire state of Minnesota. Not only for future students, but also for the many farmers who depend on MISA for the wide bank of information and resources that are now available to them. I have had the opportunity to explore sustainable farming practices in other states such as Nebraska, Missouri, and Iowa. I was very impressed with the wide amount of support these Universities offer for alternative agriculture. If Minnesota farmers loses MISA, they will be forced to look to alternative states for guidance. This is very unfortunate.

My husband and I just recently purchased some farmland. As small farmers, we realize that if we are to make it, we cannot farm with conventional methods and make a living. We must look to alternative farming methods. During the past 5 years, MISA has been a very valuable source of information to us as we develop our farm plan. We have developed a network of supporters and have attended many informational seminars and classes, which have helped us to make informative decisions. If that information had not been available to us, I do not believe we would have decided to farm. Small farms are failing at an alarming rate, yet, with the research we have done, we believe we have the power to succeed. MISA played an enormous part in our research and I can only hope that it will be around to help us accomplish our dreams.

You have our full support and if there is anything more we can do to help, please feel free to contact us.

Ray and Brenda Postels

---

To Misa and in ardent support for and defense of sustainable agriculture:

The Root River Market Coop in Houston, MN had and has the support of the experiment in rural cooperation. Thanks in large part to the experiment the market has become involved with a number of other experiment projects that are coming together to form what will be a sustainable regional food system. As recently as fifty years ago Houston was a busy town with amenities that contributed to today's relative stability. The social, economic and political qualities that draw people to see Minnesota are, however fragile and deteriorating. Scale is critical. Township government is neighbor-to-neighbor government. Bureaucracy is by-passed by small government.

It was our goal at the outset to supply an almost moribund but very attractive small town with an urgently needed market competently managed, owned by and responsive to the community. Our so far dramatic success in organizing memberships (350 families in a town of some 1100 souls) and designs for an outstandingly attractive market -- Houston's "center." The market, for example, will buy as much food as possible from an already established community of organic farmers aware of the need for meat, fruit and vegetables uncontaminated by noxious chemicals used in production of so many commercial foods.

Misa plays a vital role in the growth of support for strategies that will persuade many people to take proper care of their children, their communities and their environment and ultimately the planet.

Peter Denzer

---

Paul Conklin & Becky Marty wrote:

Here's an example of MISA helping in a small but important way. Last summer our sustainable agriculture group had a tour of an organic blueberry farm. The tour got posted on the MISA website. As a result of this posting, folks at the Staples Center, who were doing a project on blueberries, including organic production, became aware of this grower and were able to make contact. This is the kind of link that is very hard to make without a centralized, state-wide resource for Sustainable Agriculture.

I am an urban resident (St.Paul) who works closely with the farming community in Minnesota. I do this work as a way of contributing to the overall health of rural residents, which in turn gives me better food, secure water quality, and much pleasure in my job. By 'health' I refer as much to economics as to the environment and social well-being of our rural landscape and its communities. This is a driving credo of the Land Stewardship Project, my employer, and of MISA, a major collaborator in directing my work.

The proof is in the fields, which host water monitoring units and healthier livestock because of research; in farm families and a sustained rural lifestyle because of alternative markets and premium prices; and in the watershed teams that mark my work as an organizer. MISA is behind it all.

We're a diverse group, befitting the dynamics of farmers and non-farmers trying to do things better. Our work ranges from university-based scientific research to streamside bird walks - it takes vision and panache to keep us all talking and working together and MISA is central in that role. If one is dedicated to sustainable agriculture as a function of soil, farm families, and rural Minnesota, then one must be dedicated to MISA for forwarding the reality.

Caroline van Schaik  
Land Stewardship Project  
Sand Creek Watershed Coordinator

---

I am writing to express my thanks and support to MISA. I am a graduate student in forestry and am getting a minor in Sustainable Agriculture through MISA. As a result of MISA's support and guidance I was able to spend a year as an intern working in Western Minnesota with the Land Stewardship Project. Working in the Chippewa River Watershed, I participated in the formation of two citizen/agency partnerships. These partnerships were not easy to form and my experience there taught me much about conflict resolution, consensus building and the importance of citizen participation. As a student I feel that this experience was critical to my education. Working with diverse groups and building consensus among stakeholders has given me practical experience in grappling with the ethics of organization, research and extension. This has positively effected my professional career. Without MISA's support I would not have been able to participate in this internship.

In addition, I saw the effect of MISA in the development of proactive partnerships. The two groups I worked with respected MISA as a supporter of the community engagement process, an important resource for connecting to faculty at the University, and as a provider of technical support for research and monitoring. MISA's openness to working with the local community on issues important to the community was deeply appreciated. As a result of the work of these two partnerships and MISA, antagonism has been kept to a minimum as the future use of watershed resources is explored in the Chippewa River Basin.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my admiration for MISA. Paul Wymar

---

As a graduate student in the Forest Resources Department, I have found MISA's support, both personal and professional, crucial to my education and performance. As an intern with the Land Stewardship Project I was supported through MISA's Graduate Internship Program. During my internship I worked with the Chippewa Stewardship Whole Farm Planning and Monitoring Team to implement farm monitoring of ecosystem function and quality of life with team members and their families. This experience gave me a strong foundation in farm family planning and monitoring, and interdisciplinary teamwork. Skills which I am currently utilizing in Paraguay as a part of an Internship with SEPA, Ecoforestry Services for Farmers. An internship that was funded by the MacArthur International Program. My work with both of these organizations has furthered their goal of promoting sustainable rural communities. I am thankful that MISA has helped me develop my skills which in turn has allowed me to serve rural communities, both in Minnesota and abroad. I am writing this letter of support to ensure that MISA is able to continue to create similar opportunities for connecting students with rural communities to help them both achieve their goals.

Sincerely, Amy Bacigalupo, Graduate Student  
Department of Forest Resources

---

Dear MISA,

When I first came to Minnesota, MISA was instrumental in helping me make the contacts within the sustainable agriculture community that led to my current job as an independent agricultural consultant, working primarily with organic and transitional organic farmers. When I started that work I was extremely impressed by the high level of mutual respect between farmers and the university, respect that is uncommon in other states. In other states where I have worked I would hesitate to let small and alternative farmers know that I was university-educated, or that I promoted university recommendations, because many of them associate their state university only with promotion of technologies for larger industrial-scale farms, technologies which leave them out. I think the difference here is largely due to the work of MISA.

In addition to my consulting work I coordinate a small on-farm research project with some organic farmers in the Red River Valley. My understanding of the issues in the Red River Valley has been enhanced by my participation in a MISA-sponsored field trip to the Valley two years ago, planned by the student group "WUSA" (What's Up in Sustainable Agriculture) as part of a semester-long systems analysis of the agricultural crisis there.

Although I do not spend much time at the University any more, I continue to attend WUSA and other seminars sponsored by MISA. These help me to keep up with what others are doing

around the state, and beyond, which is important in my work as an information provider to farmers. Finally, I want to comment on the high quality of information available through MISA's website. The recently-released primers on Soil Biology and on Soil Management, produced in part by MISA, have been excellent, and much-needed.

Lois Braun  
Agricultural Consultant

---

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. Two projects that have had a big impact on us have been the Social, Biological and Economic Monitoring Project and The Dairy Team Project. We made quite a few changes in our farming system from the things learned on those projects. The multiple disciplines make-up of those research teams wouldn't have happened without MISA. Because of our involvement in those two projects we've been able to move much more quickly to the sustainable system we're trying to achieve. Because of the monitoring Project we have an on going research relationship with several of the professors at the University. We're now involved in starting a No Hormones, No Antibiotics, Milk Coop and we are receiving funding from MISA for marketing and educational information, and to document this formation process for other small groups to use. 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

---

To whom it may concern:

My name is Carol Ekarius, and for a decade my husband and I farmed in Minnesota and were actively involved with sustainable agriculture. (We moved to "return home" to Colorado in 1998.) During that time I had many positive interactions that blossomed thanks to MISA, including a short stint serving on the MISA Board. One thing that has been disappointing to me in my return to Colorado is that CSU has no comparable program for farmers, ranchers, and other folks to call on.

Let me give some direct and concrete examples:

1. We were able to call on Roger Moon for information on alternative control strategies for flies in a dairy operation. Roger's information was common sense, but valuable, and later found its way



into a book I wrote that came out last fall {Small-Scale Livestock Farming: A Grass-Based Approach for Health, Sustainability, and Profit, Storey Publishing, Pownal, VT..

2. We direct marketed most of our meat from the farm, having gone through the process of getting USDA inspection and label approval. One day I received a phone call from Deborah Elias, and she said that a pig farmer who lived near us had contacted the information exchange for info about marketing pork, because the State Dept of Ag said they couldn't do it from their farm. Deborah said she knew we were doing it, and would we mind if she gave our number out so the other farmer could contact us. We said no problem, and two months later they were legally selling pork from the farm. (Unfortunately, I can't think of they're names, but if I recall, they lived in Parkers Prairie).

Both of these previous items are directly mentioned in the text, with Roger and MISA given the credit they're due.

3. Helene Murray was always highly effective in helping a variety of folks get projects accomplished. While I served on the SFA Board for the Central Chapter, she helped us develop ideas that were funded through a SARE grant, and then helped us implement the grant and evaluate, simply through some technical support. This support resulted in over \$100,000 in Federal grant support coming to Minnesota, which could have gone to any other state in the region!

If I had more time, I could probably come up with many more examples, but this should give you the idea: Don't cut MISA, its a program that the University of Minnesota, and the citizens of Minnesota, not only benefit from, but should be extremely proud of!

Carol Ekarius

---

### The Experiment in Rural Cooperation - a citizen-led University of Minnesota Sustainable Regional Development Partnership

In 1999, MISA was central to organizing the Experiment in Rural Cooperation's task force initiative on sustainable financing for rural Minnesota (SFRM). The citizen leaders and farmers who direct the Experiment are profoundly concerned with the overuse of credit and debt to finance agricultural enterprises and farming in rural Minnesota. In the absence of accessible sources of patient, long-term equity capital, it is naive to believe that rural enterprise can succeed in sustainable fashion. The task force, now in its second year of operation, was initially staffed by MISA and MISA leadership played a pivotal role in recruiting the multi-disciplinary faculty team - representing a half-dozen University department or schools, including the Law School and the Carlson School of Management. The myriad dimensions of rural equity financing demand a multi-disciplinary approach that creates or invents new approaches; this requires cutting across traditional disciplines and harmoniously merging the short-term interests of citizen leaders reacting to a rural crisis and the long-term scholarship interests of a large public university. It was MISA that provided the infrastructure to launch this critical project ... on short notice in the face of some daunting challenges.

Dick Broeker, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Experiment in Rural Cooperation

---

I am writing to describe the unique and valuable benefits that my research has gained as a result of my participation in the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture. I am a doctoral candidate in the Program in History of Science and Technology at the University of Minnesota. The field of history of science and technology is broad; however, my area of interest, the history of science and agriculture, is surprisingly understudied. And although the faculty in our HST program at Minnesota are extremely supportive of my dissertation topic area--the relations between science and agriculture in the United States and Mexico--their expertise lies elsewhere. It has been through the MISA, particularly WUSA, the graduate student group, that I have found a diverse community of agricultural researchers with whom I can discuss the agricultural aspects of my dissertation, who challenge my assumptions, and who teach me the history that they know and have participated in. 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--the individual departments are unable to be comprehensive as MISA is.

My dissertation will bear the strong marks of my involvement with MISA, and will be a much more solid analysis of the relationships among agricultural researchers, farmers, governments, and educators in Latin America and the U.S. than it would have been if I hadn't had MISA's unique resources to draw upon.

Sincerely,  
Karin Matchett  
History of Science and Technology

---

Thanks to the funding of the Hogs Your Way Project by MISA, we were able to assemble for the first time in Minnesota a team of practitioners, extension educators, marketing experts and others to look at the practices and potential of 'conventional' and alternative hog production and marketing for state producers. From this project has come not only a presentation slide set and workbook, but the team has continued its work ad hoc and members spearheaded the development of the Alternative Swine Task Force and the alternative systems research at the Morris campus. Through this leading edge work, we now have several state producers exporting alternatively produced, value added pork to high end markets across the country through the Nieman Ranch/Willis Pork label. This is giving state producers better return on their production as well as benefitting the environment through the use of low-impact production systems.

Prescott H. Bergh  
Outreach Coordinator  
Energy and Sustainable Agriculture Program  
Minnesota Department of Agriculture

---

I have been involved with the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA) since its inception. I have served as a member of the Joint Seminar, and I am a member of the graduate faculty for the minor in Sustainable Agricultural Systems. I have also worked on two MISA projects: one on farm business planning and one on collaborative marketing. I want to take time here to identify some of the positive impacts MISA has had on my work as a faculty member in the Department of Applied Economics

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. Joint Seminar meetings over the years have given me a chance to be exposed to new ideas and issues in a setting that also offered opportunities to get to know farmers and community leaders and other faculty members in the College. This has helped me identify new directions for my work and has made it easier to establish working relationships with colleagues and with stakeholders outside the University.

I have advised several graduate students whose degree programs included a minor in Sustainable Agricultural Systems. I think one of the most valuable contributions of the minor is that it gives students an opportunity to broaden their understanding of agriculture. For students in Applied Economics, this means getting exposure to concepts and methods from sciences related to production agriculture. The minor has also made it easier for students in other graduate programs to get some exposure to economics. Finally, the core courses in the minor have been an excellent vehicle for graduate students to work in multidisciplinary teams focusing on "real world" problems. This helps them develop skills that will be invaluable in their professional careers.

My work on MISA sponsored projects on farm business planning and collaborative marketing has extended over the past three or four years. These have been typical MISA projects, with lots of involvement from stakeholders from the beginning. This greatly increases the quality and usefulness of the end-product. For example, my recent Extension publication titled "Collaborative Marketing: A Roadmap and Resource Guide for Farmers" (co-authored with Gigi DiGiacomo) is already in demand by producer groups and resource providers around the state. We also received a request from Kansas State University to include this publication in materials they were preparing for meetings with farmers considering involvement in new collaborative marketing ventures. Finally, in connection with my work on these projects, members of the MISA staff have always been helpful in providing support that makes it easier to get the work done.

In closing, MISA has made valuable contributions to my work, and I believe it is an organization that is valued in our College, the University, and the state.

Robert P. King  
E. Fred Koller Professor of Agricultural Management Information Systems  
Department of Applied Economics College of Agricultural, Food, and Environmental Sciences

---

I feel that continued support for MISA is of great importance and value for the organic and sustainable agriculture industry. MISA's programs have been very impactful in my personal and professional life for a number of years.

I first became involved with MISA in 1997 when it co-sponsored a sustainable ag study trip to Cuba. This led to 2 more trips to Cuba and thesis research in that nation's conversion to sustainable ag. Interestingly, the president of Cuba's organic association was more familiar with the contents of MISA's website than I was! MISA's impact clearly is not limited to the boundaries of Minnesota.

I also participated in an internship sponsored by MISA and the graduate minor program. Through my position as an organic grain buyer for Northland Organic Foods Corp., I now contract with the organic farmer that I featured in my internship project. I also benefited greatly from the many WUSA-sponsored speakers and activities. I have applied much of what I learned in these seminars to my current full-time employment with Northland Organic Foods Corp. The president and staff of Northland are also strong supporters of MISA's positive influence.

For MISA's activities to be discontinued or reduced would be a great loss to the organic/sustainable ag community.

Sincerely,  
Carolyn Lane

---

As a graduate student in the Conservation Biology program, the Fisheries and Wildlife Cooperative Research Unit, and the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at the University of Minnesota since 1996, my research interests have focused on the intersection of watershed and stream science and management.

In many parts of the world, freshwater resources are threatened and degraded by a variety of human activities on the landscape, foremost among them agriculture. Developing sustainable and alternative agriculture that does not negatively impact downstream water quality, fishery and other aquatic resources is a critical task that faces human society in the 21st century, as the stress on freshwater ecosystems continues to mount. Most of the potential gains possible at the

site-level (e.g. habitat restoration, scientific understanding of freshwater ecology) have been achieved, and the majority of opportunities for gains and improvements in aquatic resource health in the future lie in the area of land use, land management, partnership, and interdisciplinary cooperation at the scale of whole watersheds to develop understanding, theory, and sustainable practice.

During the course of my graduate studies, I have seen or been part of a number of positive, grassroots-based, watershed scale, sustainable agriculture initiatives fostered and developed in partnership with MISA, including an on-farm interdisciplinary biological monitoring team. These have played an important role, not the least, in helping me and other graduate students with whom I've worked develop a more sophisticated understanding of the issues and challenges involved in developing adequate responses to the social, ecological, and economic problems of the coming century. Technology is not a magic bullet that can solve every social or economic ill--it never has in the past, and it never will.

I believe that the partnership work that MISA supports and sustains IS "cutting edge research", and it is precisely the kind of work a land grant university should be doing--research driven by the needs of working people on the land, geared to improving the quality of life for all Americans, and focused on the problems as they come in the real world--complex, social, and economic, rather than merely technical. I believe the kind of community work, problem-solving, and dialogue MISA sponsors should be the centerpiece of the University's agricultural research, rather than consigned to the periphery competing with private nonprofits for petty cash.

Kristen L. Blann  
M.S., Conservation Biology '00

---

I would like to offer you some brief words about how MISA has helped me. I am currently a graduate student in Nutrition at the University of Minnesota. I am also minoring in sustainable agricultural systems, of which wouldn't be possible if it weren't for the presence of MISA. This offering was large part of my decision to attend graduate school at the University of Minnesota. It showed that this institution is open to alternative ways of thinking.

Last summer, I benefitted in another way from MISA. My cohort and I developed a nutrition education curriculum that emphasized sustainable agriculture/food systems. We taught this through an already established children's program which taught about cooking, art, and science through a garden. The curriculum was a great success and this was possible because of funding provided from MISA.

I could not imagine the University of Minnesota without MISA. It stands for acceptance of alternative ways of thinking, innovative creative solutions, and building relationships with the community - all of what a public, land-grant university is about. Sustainable approaches will be a part of my future work once I graduate. I would like to think that MISA will have a continued presence in my educational experience in order to foster such approaches, in fact its presence

is necessary. MISA has given me a voice to express my alternative ways of thinking - something that is needed within this large traditionally-focused university.

Sincerely,  
Kindi Harala

---

MISA has had a powerfully positive impact in communities that have hosted the photo display "Getting Down to Earth", Images and Voices of Women Farmers. WISA (Women in Sustainable Farming) received some grant money from MISA in 1996 and was able to put together a 45 photograph exhibit designed to raise the awareness in local communities of the variety of ways women contribute to farming operations.

To date, the photo exhibit has traveled to at least 30 Minnesota communities that have requested it as well as making it's debut at the 1997 Mn. State Fair and many other conferences since then, including "The Soul of Agriculture", Mpls, October, 1998- The Midwest Organic Conference 2000, Lacrosse, Wisc. March, 2000- It is presently on display at the public library in Montevideo, Mn. until June 20th at which time it will travel back to St. Paul for the Rural Women's History Conference, June 22-25th,2000.

MISA facilitated this project with seed money towards a creative idea and the vision of a core group of WISA members. Without MISA's encouragement, this project would never have gotten off the ground. The "ripple-effect" of this project has been far-reaching.

Mary C. Doerr

---

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for MISA's support for our internship project, Growing Up in the Garden. Without MISA's financial support, we would not have been able to provide incentives to the under served children in the project, develop and instruct our educational program, and to attend an agriculture conference to present our project. The internship project curriculum encompasses nutrition, sustainable agriculture/food systems, community, and culture. The project that my cohort and I developed was for the East Side Garden Project, in St. Paul, MN. The East Side Garden Project is a program of the Community Design Center of Minnesota (CDC) that helps give children the knowledge of sustainable gardening and fresh food to help promote healthy children and communities. They accomplish this through the learning modalities of art, science, and home economics.

Working with MISA, I personally was able to gain knowledge about organic gardening and other sustainable agriculture practices. I took this knowledge and planted my own organic garden that I feel proud of. It is free of biotechnology, pesticides, and herbicides. I feel safe to eat my own GMO free food. Thank you MISA for your mission to promote sustainable agriculture/food systems! Please keep up the great work and outreach!

Sincerely,  
Brenda DeMarco  
University of Minnesota  
Nutrition Student

---

I am writing to confirm the impact of relationship and information our farm has experienced as a result of the work of the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture.

Here at Moonstone Farm in Chippewa County we have had the good fortune to benefit from the outreach efforts of a variety of MISA programs, which include the Monitoring Project and the Chippewa Whole Farm Planning Team, and the sustainable ag graduate minor program (which has linked us with the work of some wonderful graduate students).

MISA feels like our home at the University. In an era when so much research energy and expense are allocated to the kinds of farming systems which are not in keeping with our own farm's goals, MISA and its dedicated and inspirational staff have always had an open door. Through this door much dialogue has been able to take place in the service of a sound agricultural economy, environmental integrity and prosperity. MISA also serves as the portal through which we have felt we could best access other pertinent disciplines within the College of Agriculture, and, indeed the rest of the University. This is a dynamic and strategic link for those of us out on the frontier. Please accept our firm statement of support. It's the least we can express for all that MISA has done for us and farmers like us.

Sincerely, Richard Handeen and Audrey Arner  
Moonstone Farm

---

Here is a short list of ways (there are many) that MISA has impacted me. I am enclosing a copy of a letter to President Yudof that I sent a few weeks ago in which I outlined some of the benefits. I hope this helps. I am sorry that I do not have time to polish a new paragraph right now!

MISA HAS...

- Funded my first 2 years in grad. school
- Aided me in designing a dissertation topic (Volunteer monitoring)
- Provided me with invaluable contacts in the rural community
- Changed the way I think about research
- Given me the incentive to work on a book out the value of local knowledge(Chapter in Navigating Nature's Dynamics, Fikret Berkes and Carl Folke editors)
- Encouraged me to change my diet - I now buy local meat and produce.
- Given me material to use in my Environmental Ethics Course
- Helped to make me more aware of corporate agriculture.

Julia Frost

# Swine Task Force Accomplishments

**Swine Source Book** - a compilation of literature from both research and popular press articles that focus on Pasture farrowing and finishing, Hoop Huts for swine finishing, and the Swedish Deep-bedded system. In early 1999, 225 copies were published and distributed to farmers, extension educators, and other interested in alternative systems of production. Another 250 were ordered and are currently available through MN Extension Publications.

**Database** - A list of 232 farmers, professors, researchers, extension educators, and others interested in alternative systems of pork production has been created. This total number will continue to expand as people express interest and are added to the list.

**Alternative Swine Newsletter**- A newsletter that discusses activities of the Swine Task Force, field days, conferences, and other upcoming events that focus on alternative systems and whole farm planning is sent to the list members every two months.

**Database Survey**- A survey was conducted of those who had signed up for the list. Fifty participants responded to the survey questions, which focused on farmer needs in areas of information on alternative systems.

**Financial Case Studies** - This was a topic of much discussion, but has been abandoned, at least temporarily. The STF will be considering other options at the next meeting on April 3rd.

**Alternative Marketing** - In June of 1999, the Marketing Committee, in conjunction with the Swine Center and the MN Pork Producers, held an Alternative Marketing Workshop. Thirty professors, researchers, farmers, and industry specialists were in attendance.



One idea generated from this activity led to the development of a survey that was distributed to producers and others whose businesses are listed in the MN Grown and the Specialty Meats directory. They in turn gave it to their customers to fill out and return. The survey information received may give us a profile of the type of consumer interested in buying meat directly from producers. This may help us find larger markets for farmers interested in direct marketing.

Another idea that the Marketing Committee is currently pursuing is the development of a MN Grown Label, that will be available for those producers who are using alternative systems of production.

Wayne Jim Van Der Pol, and others from the STF have been meeting with Thomas Blaha, a professor at the Swine Center, who is developing a marketing certification program. They have also been meeting with Jim Ennis regarding the Food Choices Initiative which will identify organic and alternative production through labeling.

**Research Facilities @ Morris** - The Swine Task Force has directed the development of alternative systems of production at the UM Morris Facility. An older farrowing unit will be remodeled into a Swedish Deep-bedded system in Spring 2000. Four Hoop Huts have been constructed for finishing and gestation.

**Swine Systems Position @ Morris** - A faculty position has been created for the WROC at Morris. The person to be hired for this position will use the facilities described above for research on alternative systems of production. Unfortunately after conducting two searches, that position has not yet been filled. The search committee is currently working with others at the U of M to establish different minimum qualifications that might make it easier to fill the position.

**Endowed Chair Position @ Morris** - Jim VanDerPol is a farmer from Kerkhoven, MN who practices alternative production methods on his farm, and also does some direct marketing of the pigs he raises. He held the College of Agriculture Endowed Chair position for the year 1999-2000. He will probably continue in the role of consultant to the U of M, to oversee the completion of the alternative facilities being built at West Central Research and Outreach Center in Morris.

**Rural Sociologists in Endowed Chairs at U of M-** Cornelia and Jan Flora have been in the Endowed Chair positions since October 1999. They are doing research on the SE Regional Partnerships, and Cornelia will conduct a symposium on alternative marketing in April 2000.

**Rural Sociologist @ Morris-** Wynne Wright was hired in August 1999. She will conduct research on livestock production systems as they impact families and communities.

**Pigs, Pork, and Prosperity** - In April of 1999 Jim VanDerPol produced a series of programs that were aired on public TV in western Minnesota. They discussed alternative production and marketing. It was a call-in show, with many people calling to express their support for this activity.

**Swine Center-** Jim Van Der Pol gave a year-end report on the Alternative Swine Program to the faculty and staff of the Swine Center. It was well received.

**Research Proposals-**

-Wayne, Jim Van Der Pol, Lee Johnston, and Steve Stassen wrote a research proposal that was submitted to the National Pork Producers.

-Wayne, Lee J., Jim Van Der Pol, and others from the Swine Center wrote a collaborative proposal that was submitted to the Legislative Committee for Minnesota Resources.

-Wayne, Jim, and faculty from the Swine Center, along with the Flora's, will be submitting a proposal to the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems. This will be a multi-state, multi-university, interdisciplinary study, in conjunction with other Midwestern universities.