

Simply Sustainable

quarterly newsletter
from Western SARE
working to sustain western agriculture

July 2007

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SARE GRANT OPTIONS GROWING

As Western SARE matures beyond its teenage years, pushing to become a 20-year-old program in 2008, it has expanded its reach into several targeted areas beyond the traditional competitive grants.

- The Western Region is currently developing the first of its subregional conferences, this one for the tropical Pacific island subregion Oct. 16 and 17.
- The next phase of evaluating its competitive grants, the Research and Education grants, is nearly complete.
- Four state coordinators – from Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington – are embarking on their

funded projects in the new supplemental R&E funding for “Innovative SARE Coordinator Programs.”

(For more on the new Innovative SARE Coordinator Programs, please turn to page 7. For an update on the current planning for the subregional conferences, please see page 8.)

What’s more, the Western SARE Administrative Council has begun discussions on the possibility of increasing Farmer/Rancher grant funding through a competitive request for applications that would likely be handled by a principal investigator from a land grant university. Those talks will continue in August

when the AC meets in Bozeman, MT.

“Because SARE has grown from \$610,000 a year in 1994, when Utah State University began hosting the program, to \$3.6 million in 2007, we continue to have targeted calls that go out to various land grant institutions,” said Phil Rasmussen, Western SARE regional coordinator.

In the meantime, the Western Region continues to strengthen its competitive grants program, which issued in April its Request for Applications for 2008 funding. Here’s an update on Western SARE’s five competitive grant categories:

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YOUNG TO DIRECT CSU EXTENSION

Colorado State University has selected Western SARE Administrative Council chair-elect Deborah Young as its new extension director.

Young, who will assume the new extension position Aug. 1, has served as associate director of the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Service since 1997 and has been a member of the Western SARE executive committee since 2004.

“We of the Administrative Council of Western SARE are very proud of Deborah’s appointment as CSU Extension director,” said Karl Kupers, current AC chair. “Her leadership and passion for the role of extension in the develop-



ment of sustainable agriculture will be a cornerstone of her tenure. In light of the changes farmers are seeking for more sustainable systems through their university re-

search arm, Deborah will ensure Colorado producers receive the information in a timely and useful format.”

Phil Rasmussen Western SARE regional coordinator agrees that Young’s choice to lead extension in Colorado is a good one.

“SARE has always recognized Deborah’s talents and abilities, and it’s satisfying to see that others agree,” said Rasmussen. “She has a keen sense of measurable outcomes and is always asking the ‘so-what’ questions. “She never flinches at tackling the difficult questions.”

As associate director of

continued on page 10

GRANTS FUNDED AT \$2.18 MILLION

Western SARE funded 44 competitive grants this year for \$2.18 million, down slightly from last year's \$2.31 million funding of 56 competitive grants.

"While our competitive grant funding was lower this year, we increased the dollars targeted at several new programs designed to enhance sustainability in the Western Region, said Phil Rasmussen, regional coordinator. (See articles on pages 7 and 8 about SARE's new targeted funding initiatives.)

Eleven Research and Education grants were funded this year for a total of \$1.36 million compared with 12 grants in 2006 for \$1.49 million and 12 grants in 2005 for \$1.45 million. Over the last three years, R&E grants have averaged just over \$120,000, while in previous

years the average has fluctuated more widely, from as low as \$83,000 per grant to as high as nearly \$150,000.

The Professional Development Program funded seven grants in 2007 for \$406,094. That compares with six grants

in 2006 for \$413,725 and eight in 2005 for \$508,921.

The Farmer/Rancher grant program has seen a steady rise in funding over the last three years. In 2007, 20 grants were funded for \$313,058, up from 27 grants for \$300,406 in 2006 and 23 grants for \$280,419 in 2005. The first year Farmer/Rancher grants were available, 1995, 27 projects were funded for \$102,965.

The two-year-old Graduate Fellow in Sustainable Agriculture grants saw six grants funded this year for \$106,979, compared with 11 grants for \$105,445 in 2006.

A full listing of the 2007 grants begins on the next page.



"While our competitive grant fund was lower this year, we increased the dollars targeted at several new programs."

Phil Rasmussen, regional coordinator

Growing Options ...continued from Page 1

Research & Education – As of the June 14 deadline, 133 online pre-application submissions had been received in the SARE office. That compares with 79 pre-applications submitted last year and 111 the year before. For the first time this year, all applicants were required to post their submissions online through the Western SARE website, which generates a PDF file for reviewers. This year's pre-applications will be reviewed in September and those selected will be asked to submit full applications, due Nov. 15. After a technical review in January 2008, the Western SARE Administrative Council will make final selections in March. Successful applicants will be informed in April, and funds will be disbursed in the summer.

Professional Development Program – The deadline for applications is Nov. 1, 2007.

This year, drawing on the results of a 2004 survey of extension county agents/educators, Western SARE is soliciting applications that build on agricultural professionals' skills and abilities in three categories, 1) ecological weed management strategies, 2) economics of alternative farming systems and 3) ecological insect or disease management strategies. Applications will be reviewed in January, final selections made in March, successful applicants informed in April and funds disbursed in the summer.

Farmer/Rancher and Professional + Producer – Applications for both of these grant categories are due Dec. 7, 2007. During the technical review in January 2008, the Farmer/Rancher grant applications will be reviewed competitively against one another and separately from the Professional + Producer applica-

tions. The Western SARE AC will make final selections in March, applicants will be informed in April and funds will be disbursed in the summer.

Graduate Student Fellow in Sustainable Agriculture – This program, now in its third year, received 20 applications as of the May 31 submission deadline. Twenty-two were submitted last year and 30 the year before. The applications are scheduled for review July 20 by a technical review of selected members of the Western SARE Administrative Council. Final selections will be made in mid August and successful applicants will be informed in September.

For more information, visit the Western SARE website at <http://wsare.usu.edu> and click on Apply for a Grant. Or contact the Western SARE office on the campus of Utah State University, (435) 797-2257 or wsare@ext.usu.edu.

2007 FUNDED COMPETITIVE GRANTS

Alaska

Farmer/Rancher Grant: FW07-037, Evaluation of Wild Rice in the Rural Kuskokwim Region of Western Alaska, Fritz Grenfell, project coordinator, P.O. Box 1427, Bethel, AK 99559, (907) 543-5760; Jeff Smeenk, technical advisor, (907) 746-9470, jeff.smeenk@uaf.edu. Western SARE funding: \$3,526

Graduate Fellow Grant: GW07-013, Sustainable Farming in Alaska: Maintaining Old Traditions and Building New Ones, Philip Loring, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, P.O. Box 757880, Fairbanks, AK 99775-7880, (970) 474-7051, (907) 474-7453 fax, ftpal@uaf.edu. Western SARE funding: \$10,347

Arizona

Professional + Producer Grant: FW07-310, Hopi Rangeland Management Series, Dennis Becenti, project coordinator, Hopi Tribe Range Conservationist, P.O. Box 123, Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039, (928) 738-0018. Western



SARE funding: \$14,513.

Professional Development Program Grant: EW07-020, "High Tech, High Touch" Professional Development in

Geospatial Applications for Invasive Species Management, Barron Orr, principal investigator, University of Arizona Geospatial Extension Specialist, 1955 E. 6th St., Tucson, AZ 85719, (520) 626-8063, barron@ag.arizona.edu. Western SARE funding: \$60,560

Graduate Fellow Grant: GW07-004, Contamination of Non-Bt Cotton Fields by Transgenic Bt Cotton, Shannon Heuberger, University of Arizona Department of Entomology, P.O. Box 2100 (36), Tucson, AZ 85721-0036, (520) 621-4981, (520) 621-1150 fax, heuberger@ag.arizona.edu. Western SARE funding: \$20,000

Graduate Fellow Grant: GW07-007, An Environmentally Friendly Alternative for Control of Citrus Nematode in Arizona, Joanna Gress, University of Arizona, Department of Plant Sciences, Forbes 303, 1140 E. South Campus Drive, Tucson, AZ 85721-0036, (520) 626-3854, (520) 626-1150 fax, jgress@email.arizona.edu. Western SARE funding: \$19,476

American Samoa

Farmer/Rancher Grant: FW07-035, Sustainable Tilapia Aquaculture Production Demonstration Facility, Troy Fiaui, project coordinator, P.O. Box 2435, Pago Pago, AS 96799, (684) 622-7188; John Gonzales, technical advisor, (684) 699-5358, johnm@hawaii.edu. Western SARE funding: \$9,148

Farmer/Rancher Grant: FW07-036, Model Small-Scale Greenwater Tilapia Hatchery Facility, Joseph Fuamatu, project coordinator, P.O. Box 1953, Pago Pago, AS 96799, (684) 252-0131, fuamatujuvsr@yahoo.com;

John Gonzales, technical advisor, (684) 699-5358, johnm@hawaii.edu. Western SARE funding: \$9,969

Professional Development Program Grant: EW07-002, Sustainable Fruit and Vegetable Production in American Samoa: Protecting Your Health and the Health of Your Land with Integrated Pest Management and Soil Conservation, Jeff Satele, principal investigator, Chairman, American Samoa Soil and Water Conservation District, P.O. Box 3094, Pago Pago, AS 96799, jeffsatele@yahoo.com. Western SARE funding: \$55,660



California

Professional + Producer Grant: FW07-303, Farm Direct Distribution, Brigitte Moran, Executive Director, Marin Farmers Market Association, project coordinator, 76 Pablo Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94903, (415) 472-6100, SREvents@alo.com. Western SARE funding: \$25,444

Professional + Producer Grant: FW07-311, Building on Organic Knowledge: On-Farm Transfer of a Trap Cropping Method to Control Lygus Bug in Conventional Strawberry Production, Sean Swezey, project coordinator, Center for

*Western SARE funded
11 Research and
Education grants for a
total of \$1.36 million.*

2007 FUNDED COMPETITIVE GRANTS

Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, (831) 332-6231, findit@ucsc.edu. Western SARE funding: \$14,846

Professional + Producer Grant: FW07-324, Management Challenges for Dairy Goat Sustainability, Deborah Giraud, project coordinator, University of California Farm Advisor, 5630 South Broadway, Eureka, CA 95503, (707) 445-7351, ddgiraud@ucdavis.edu. Western SARE funding: \$15,360

Research and Education Grant: SW07-022, Using Nectar Cover Cropping in Vineyards for Sustainable Pest Management, Mark Hoddle, principal investigator, Associate Extension Specialist, Department of Entomology, University of California, Riverside, CA 92521, (951) 82704714, mark.hoddle@ucr.edu. Western SARE funding: \$178,300

Graduate Fellow Grant: GW07-003, Sustainable Landscapes: Investigating the Landscape Scale Effects of Riparian Habitat on Natural Pest Control on the Farm, Suzanne Langridge, Environmental Studies, University of Santa Cruz, 1156 High Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, (831) 325-1745, (831) 459-4015 fax, sml@ucsc.edu. Western SARE funding: \$17,950

Graduate Fellow Grant: GW07-006, Risk, Rate, and Impact of Medusahead Invasion of California Savannas, Corey Cherr, Department of Plant Sciences Mail Stop 1, University of California, One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616, (530) 754-7577,

(530) 752-4361 fax, cmcherr@ucdavis.edu. Western SARE funding: \$19,971

Graduate Fellow Grant: GW07-012, Managing Soil Food Webs for Enriched and Suppressive Soils: Effects of Cover Crop Diversity and Quality, Tianna DuPont, University of California, Davis, Department of Nematology, One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616, (530) 754-7577, (530) 752-4361 fax, stdu-pont@ucdavis.edu. Western SARE funding: \$19,235

Colorado

Farmer/Rancher Grant: FW07-024, Different Goat Breed Crosses to Find the Best Tasting Meat, Holly Napier, project coordinator,



Napier Family Farms, 1117 C.R. 126, Hesperus, CO 81326, (970) 588-3716, napierfamily@earthlink.net; Beth LaShell, technical advisor, (970) 385-4574, beth.lashell@colostate.edu. Western SARE funding: \$12,623

Professional + Producer Grant: FW07-319, Season Extension and Crop Area Mul-

tiplication with a Moveable Hoophouse in an Organic System, Edward Page, project coordinator, Colorado State University Area Extension Agent, 1001 N. 2nd Street, Montrose, CO 81401, (970) 249-3935, edward.page@colostate.edu. Western SARE funding: \$11,230

Professional Development Program Grant: EW07-008, Enterprise, Environmental and Community Development to Promote Agricultural and Heritage Tourism, Dawn Thilmany, principal investigator, Professor, Colorado State University Department of Ag and Resource Economics, B-325, Fort Collins, CO 80523-1172, (970) 491-7220, thilmany@lamar.colostate.edu. Western SARE funding: \$59,973

Hawaii

Farmer/Rancher Grant: FW07-034, Choosing the Best Figs for Hawaii, Ken Love, project coordinator, P.O. Box 1242, Captain Cook, HI 96704, (808) 323-2417, ken@mycoffee.net; Kent Fleming, technical advisor, (808) 989-3416, fleming@hawaii.edu. Western SARE funding: \$25,000

Professional Development Program Grant: EW07-004, New Crops for Pacific Island Forestry, Craig Elevitch, principal investigator, Permanent Agriculture Resources, P.O. Box 428, Holualoa, HI 96725, (808) 324-4427, SARE@agroforestry.net. Western SARE funding: \$80,000

Research and Education Grant: SW07-073, Enhancing Phyto-Nutrient Content, Yield and Quality of Vegetables with Compost Tea in the Tropics, Theodore Radovich, principal investigator, Department of Tropical Plant and Soil Sci-

The Western Region funded seven Professional Development Program grants this year for a total of \$406,094.

2007 FUNDED COMPETITIVE GRANTS

ence, University of Hawaii, 3190 Maile Way, St. John 102, Honolulu, HI 96822, (808) 956-8351, Theodore@hawaii.edu. Western SARE funding: \$162,500

Montana

Research and Education Grant: SW07-013, Evaluation of Alfalfa Weevil (Coleoptera curculionidae) Densities, Weed Abundance and Regrowth Characteristics of Alfalfa Grazed by Sheep, Hayes Goosey, principal investigator, Research Scientist, Department of Animal and Range Sciences, Wool Lab, P.O. Box 172900, Bozeman, MT 59717-2900, (406) 994-2012,



hgoosey@montana.edu. Western SARE funding: \$96,817

Research and Education Grant: SW07-025, Grower-Based Selection of Varieties and Systems for Wheat Stem Sawfly Suppression, Luther Talbert, principal investigator, Professor, Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology Department, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717, (406) 994-5060, usslt@montana.edu. Western SARE funding: \$125,000

Research and Education Grant: SW07-028, Is Sulfur Cinquefoil a Candidate for Control with Sheep and Goats? Jeff Mosley, principal investigator, Professor of

Range Science and Extension Range Management Specialist, Department of Animal and Range Sciences, Montana State University, P.O. Box 172820, Bozeman, MT 59717-2820, (406) 994-5601, jmosley@montana.edu. Western SARE funding: \$54,250

Micronesia

Farmer/Rancher Grant: FW07-028, Sei Enterprise Inc. Farm Pohnpei Pepper, Sei Uemoto, project coordinator, P.O. Box 301, Kolonia Pohnpei, FM, 96941, (961) 320-2659, sei_f_pepper@mail.fm; technical advisors Kadalino Lorens, (961) 320-2400, pniagriculture@mail.com, and Alpenster Henry, (961) 320-5731, henry@comfsm.fm. Western SARE funding: \$12,000

New Mexico

Farmer/Rancher Grant: FW07-032, Southwest Survivor Queenbee Project, Melania Kirby, project coordinator, Zia Queenbee Co., P.O. Box 898, Alcalde, New Mexico, 87511, (505) 852-0831, ziaqueenbee@hotmail.com; Greg Watson, technical advisor, (505) 46-320, awatson@mnda.msu.edu. Western SARE funding: \$15,000

Northern Mariana Islands

Farmer/Rancher Grant: FW07-001, Neem Tree Production for Alternative Pesticides, Nematode Control and Fertilizers, Francisco Atalig, project coordinator, P.O. Box 1007, Rota, MP 96951, (670) 532-0349, pacific_hotstuff@hotmail.com; Gadi Reddy, technical advisor, (671) 734-4439, reddy@guam.uog.edu. Western SARE funding: \$14,500

Oregon

Farmer/Rancher Grant:

FW07-006, Butcher Waste Composting for Field Fertility, Ross and Kelly McGarva, project coordinators, 16866 Westside Rd., Lakeview, OR 97630, (541) 947-4062, McGarva@centuryte.net; Christopher Anderson, technical advisor, (541) 955-9873, canderso@oda.state.or.us. Western SARE funding: \$13,750

Farmer/Rancher Grant:

FW07-015, Using Season Extending Techniques to Diversify Traditional Agricultural Economy and Improve Quality and Quantity of Fresh Food Supply in Remote NE Oregon Valley, June Colony, project coordinator, 67597 Lostine River Road, Lostine, OR 97857, grassjune@hotmail.com; Laura Barton, technical advisor, (503) 872-6600. Western SARE funding: \$12,475

Professional + Producer

Grant: FW07-308, Augmentation of Mite Predators on Apples and Grapes, Lyla Lampson, project coordinator, President, Lampson Research and Consulting, 54738 Day Road, Milton-Freewater, OR 97862, (541) 938-4711,



lampsonl@motioncodec.com.

Western SARE funding: \$25,000

Professional Development Program Grant: EW07-018,

There were 20 Farmer/Rancher grants funded this year, including the category of Ag Professional + Producer, for a total of \$313,058.

2007 FUNDED COMPETITIVE GRANTS

Conserving the Three P's: Habitat Conservation Practices for Beneficial Predators, Parasites and Pollinators, Mace Vaughan, principal investigator, Conservation Director, Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, 4828 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Portland, OR 97215, (503) 232-6639, mace@xerces.org. Western SARE funding: \$51,165

Utah

Professional + Producer Grant: FW07-315, Bramble Variety Trials in Utah to Reduce Disease, Increase Production and Enhance Profitability, Rick Heflebower, project coordinator, Horticulture Extension Agent, 44 North 100 East, St. George, UT 84770, (435) 634-5706, Ext. 4, rickh@ext.usu.edu. Western SARE funding: \$23,250



Research and Education Grant: SW07-014, Sustainable Vegetable Production Systems: Screening Cover Crops for Water Use Efficiency, Dan Drost, principal investigator, Extension Vegetable Specialist, Utah State University, Logan, UT 84322-4820, (435) 797-2258, dand@ext.usu.edu. Western SARE funding: \$118,411

Research and Education Grant: SW07-035, High Value Crop Rotations for Utah High Tunnels, Brent Black, princi-

pal investigator, Extension Fruit Specialist, Utah State University, Logan, UT 84322-4820, (435) 797-2174, blackb@ext.usu.edu. Western SARE funding: \$144,495

Washington

Farmer/Rancher Grant: FW07-008, JJJ Farm Duckweed Harvesting, Jerry Darnall, project coordinator, 25789 Miller Bay Rd. NE, Kingston, WA 98346, (360) 509-0351, jaddarnall@aol.com; Arno Bergstrom, technical advisor, (360) 337-7225, awbergstrom@wsu.edu. Western SARE funding: \$8,519

Farmer/Rancher Grant: FW07-009, Leafy Spurge Management in Shrub Steppe Rangeland, Craig Madsen, project coordinator, Healing Hooves, LLC, P.O. Box 148, 49332 Sobek Rd. E, Edwall, WA 99008, (509) 990-7132, shepherd@healinghooves.com; Tom Platt, technical advisor, (509) 725-4171, platttom@wsu.edu. Western SARE funding: \$10,000

Professional Development Program Grant: EW07-009, Western Region Dairy Odor and Air Quality Education, Pius Ndegwa, principal investigator, Biological Systems Engineering, LJ Smith 201, Washington State University, P.O. Box 646120, Pullman, WA 99164-6120, (509) 335-8167, ndegwa@wsu.edu. Western SARE funding: \$89,236

Research and Education Grant: SW07-055, A Sustainable Distribution and Evaluation Program for Selected Honey Bee Stock in the Pacific Northwest, Walter Shepherd, principal investigator, Professor, Department of

Entomology, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164-6382, (509) 335-5180, shepp@mail.wsu.edu. Western SARE funding: \$172,938

Wyoming



Professional Development Program Grant: EW07-016, Educator Training for the Wyoming Cow-Calf Record Management System, Dallas Mount, principal investigator, Southeast Area Livestock Extension Educator, University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service, 57 Antelope Gap Rd., Wheatland, WY 82201, (307) 322-3667, dmount@uwyo.edu. Western SARE funding: \$9,500

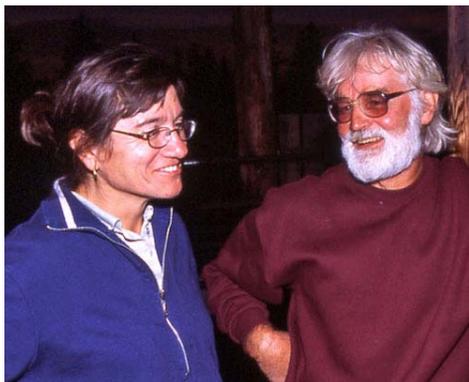
Research and Education Grant: SW07-049, Evaluation of Camelina sativa as an Alternative Seed Crop and Feedstock for Biofuel and Developing Replacement Heifers, Brett Hess, principal investigator, Associate Professor of Ruminant Nutrition, Department 3684, 1000 E. University, Laramie, WY 82071, (307) 766-5173, brethess@uwyo.edu. Western SARE funding: \$155,000

Six graduates students were funded this year under the Graduate Fellow in Sustainable Agriculture grant category for a total of \$106,979

INNOVATIVE COORDINATOR GRANTS

To provide Western SARE state and island protectorate coordinators with an opportunity to expand their programs and impacts, Western SARE recently issued a competitive Request for Applications for Innovative SARE Coordinator Programs. The submissions of four state coordinators have now been funded:

- Washington, Carol Miles, Sustainable Water Law Programs, \$24,842.
- Oregon, Brian Tuck, Sustainable Organic Seed Development, \$3,615.



Carol Miles, Washington state SARE co-coordinator, with Henning Sehmsdorf of Lopez Island.

- Colorado, Dennis Lamm, Sustainable Options for Rural Landowners, \$25,000.
- Jonathan Deenik, Virtual Field Days for the Pacific Islands, \$25,000.

Miles project will make available information on water law through a handbook and DVD, a website, two one-day workshops in Spokane and Mt. Vernon and at on-farm demonstration sites.

Tuck, noting increased demand for organic seed over the last five years, plans to

work with Washington State University and the Organic Seed Alliance to hold an "Organic Seed Growers Conference" in Portland next February.

Lamm, who sees a need for expanding the amount of sustainable ag information to several audiences, plans to embark on a "Mini-Grant" program with the



Dennis Lamm, Colorado state coordinator.

theme, "Keeping Colorado Green."

Deenik plans to develop and deliver a video workshop titled, "From the Experiment Plot into the Farm Field." It will showcase current SARE projects in Hawaii and discuss ways to link the needs of the farmer with the science of the researcher and seek to identify critical research gaps in sustainable agriculture for Hawaii.

Funds for the Innovative State Coordinator Program can be used for projects and programs that cannot be done with 3-D Extension funds.

SAVE THE DATE FOR SUSTAINABLE AG

The 20th anniversary conference for the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program will be March 25-27 at the Westin Crown Center in Kansas City, Missouri.

The conference theme is "The New American Farm: Advancing the frontier of sustainable agriculture." It will showcase how sustainable farming is rapidly changing the face of American agriculture and rural life.

The conference will feature cutting edge research, inspiring speakers and practical advice from experienced farmers and ranchers. The

New American Farm conference is shaping up to be one of the nation's most important agricultural gatherings. Those attending will:

- Learn the ins and outs of innovative marketing and production.
- Visit local farms to see sustainable agriculture at work.
- Meet others and build partnerships.
- Explore SARE grant opportunities for innovative ideas.
- Help chart a course for 20 more years of SARE success.

The conference is open to farmers, ranchers, educators, researchers, agricultural professionals and the curious consumer.

More information will become available as the conference plans unfold. Check the website of the Sustainable Agriculture Network at www.sare.org.

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education is a program of the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

SUBREGIONAL PLANS SHAPING UP

In addition to the traditional competitive grants that Western SARE funded in 2007, the Administrative Council directed the staff to put out a competitive request for applications to fund "subregional conferences."

The RFA was sent out and two respondents have been funded so far:

- Tropical Pacific island subregional conference, Bob Barber, David Crisostomo and Manuel Duguies, \$50,000.
- High Desert and Intermountain subregional conferences, Dennis Lamm, John Allen and Jim Dyer, \$98,807.82.

Planning for the conferences, designed to showcase SARE successes of its first 20 years and make plans for the next 20, began in earnest May 24 in Salt Lake City, where the grant recipients and SARE staff met to map out strategies.



Jerry DeWitt of Iowa will moderate all of the subregional conferences in the Western Region.

The first conference out of the blocks will be "Sustaining Tropical Pacific Island Agriculture" Oct. 16 and 17 on Guam. Conference planners Barber, Duguies and Crisostomo, all with the University of Guam, plan to invite around 50 key stakeholders from the Pacific island protectorates of Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands and the Federated

States of Micronesia. The two-day conference will feature presentations of SARE successes in the tropical Pacific islands as well as table-top discussions on strategies and directions for SARE and sustainability in the years to come.

Dennis Lamm, Colorado state SARE coordinator and a professor at Colorado State University, John Allen, director of the Western Rural Development Center at Utah State University, and Jim Dyer, project director for the Southwest Marketing Network in Colorado, have tentatively scheduled their first conference in Albuquerque next spring or summer and the second in Cheyenne in the fall of 2008.

A second competitive RFA is currently soliciting additional applications for subregional conferences in the Pacific Northwest, California and Hawaii.

The subregional conferences will enable Western SARE to reflect on what it has accomplished during its first 20 years and assess what challenges it should be addressing in the future



Tropical Pacific subregional conference team, from left, Manuel Duguies, Bob Barber and David Crisostomo.

NEW AMERICAN FARMERS SPEAK ONLINE

If you want an idea what drives innovative producers to farm and ranch the way they do, take a look at the website of the Sustainable Agriculture Network.

"Voices from the New American Farmers," a new

feature of www.sare.org, features short video clips (and corresponding audio for those with dial-up access) of farmers and ranchers sharing the inspirations that motivate them to produce in ways that are profitable, environmen-

tally sound and good for people and communities.

Take a moment and let us know what you think of this pilot effort by visiting <http://www.sare.org/publications/naf2/voices.htm>.

SUSTAINABLE AG IN THE NEWS

The Western wine industry is embracing environmental responsibility and the concept of ag sustainability. The June 30, 2007, issue of **Wine Spectator** magazine, in a section titled, "Green Revolutionaries: West Coast Winegrowers Fight to Save the Environment," devotes 23 pages of text and photos to wine grape growers who have adopted organic, biodynamic or sustainable practices. In California, the article notes, at least 1,165 vineyards and wineries have assessed the sustainability of their farming practices. The California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance says these businesses account for 33% of the state's 522,000 acres of wine grapes and 53% of its annual production of 273 million cases.

Among those quoted in the article is **Ann Thrupp**, a former member of the Western SARE Administrative Council and currently manager of organic development for the Fetzer winery.

Not to be outdone, **Newsweek** magazine, in its May 28 issue, spotlights organic, biodynamic and sustainable winegrowing in an article titled "Reds, White and Green."

Anticipating that the focus on sustainably grown could translate into increased sales, the **Central Coast Vineyard Team**, recipients of a 2003 Western SARE Farmer/Rancher Grant, sponsored a workshop June 28 titled, "Consumer Preferences for Wines Made with Sustainably Grown Grapes." "With current growth of various eco-labeling efforts and evolving consumer preferences, the winegrape industry is in a unique position to capitalize on these trends," the postcard promoting the event said. Central Coast Vineyard Team's 2003 grant for \$13,000 was titled,



"Increasing Adoption of Sustainable Practices in Central Coast Vineyards." For more information, go to www.vineyardteam.org.

The June 2007 issue of **Western Farmer-Stockman** magazine features a full-page article on a new free publication from the Sustainable Agriculture Network, "Rangeland Management Strategies." The 16-page bulletin highlights successful rangeland practices, many promulgated through grants from Western SARE. A PDF copy of the bulletin is available for downloading at www.sare.org/publications/bulletins.htm. A hard copy can be ordered by calling (301) 504-5411.

Diana Roberts, Washington State University Spokane County extension educator and a participant in several Western SARE grants, is pictured and quoted in a May 25 article in the Capital Press weekly ag newspaper on the growing problem of cereal leaf beetles in Pacific Northwest grain fields. In 1999, anticipating the eventual spread of the beetles and looking to biological control potentials, Roberts established the state's first insectory of parasitic wasps. Now she's work-

ing on an additional biocontrol option, planting strips of oats between winter and spring wheat to stop migration from winter to spring fields.

The Western Front, a newsletter of the **Western Integrated Pest Management Center**, highlights on the front page of its June 2007 newsletter the awarding of a Western SARE Research and Education grant to work on small fruits titled "Encouraging Sustainability in Small Fruits by Educating Producers on Scouting and Decision-Making Parameters" (SW06-013, \$170,929). The newsletter said the grant resulted from the coordinated efforts of the Western IPM Center-funded Pacific Northwest Small Fruits Working Group and Washington State University Extension. The grant's principal investigator is **Craig McConnell**, WSU extension faculty and director. Portland crop consultants **Anna** and **Tom Peerbolt** created the Small



Fruits Working Group. The Western SARE grant will create a scouting toolbox for small fruits that will include consensus based decision-making parameters to guide and reduce risk. The toolbox will empower producers to conduct their own scouting or train their employees.

Nearly 1,200 California vineyards and wineries, representing 33% of the state's wine acres and 53% of its production, have assessed the sustainability of their practices.

California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance

Deborah Young ...continued from Page 1

extension in Arizona, Young has provided leadership for the coordination of statewide outreach from the UA College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, working closely with department heads, school directors and county extension directors. Her goal has been to foster interdisciplinary team efforts, coordinate programs and stimulate grants. In 2000, she served on the planning committee for the Western Extension Leadership Development program, or WELD.

"We look forward to Dr. Young's arrival to assume this important leadership position with Colorado State University Extension," said Lou Swanson, CSU's vice provost for outreach and strategic partnerships whose office administers cooperative extension.



Deborah Young and Phil Rasmussen

Young, who has a wealth of experience in promoting sustainable agriculture and its principles and is one of its most ardent supporters, noted that sustainable agriculture uses both local knowledge that is specific to place and scientific knowledge that looks to larger systems.

"We need both types of knowledge, which develop over time, to support farming

and ranching in the West," she observed.

Young earned a bachelor of arts in biology and Spanish in 1974 from Indiana University and Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. She has an M.S. and a Ph.D. in plant pathology, both from the University of Arizona.

She joined UA in 1984 as an extension agent in Cochise County, where she worked with agricultural producers who market directly to consumers. Young was extension agent and county extension director in Yavapai County and was named in 1997 as an extension specialist in plant pathology and associate director of programs. In addition to her expertise in plant pathology, she focuses on plant health, grassland ecosystems and sustainable agriculture.

"We look forward to Dr. Young's arrival to assume this important leadership position with Colorado State University Extension."

Lou Swanson, CSU vice provost for outreach and strategic partnerships

COLORADO NOW HOSTS FIVE WESTERN SARE AC MEMBERS

With Deborah Young moving to Fort Collins to become director of extension at Colorado State University, Colorado is now home to five of Western SARE's 14 Administrative Council members. Coordinator Phil Rasmussen points out that each member has a reason and a responsibility for being on the council.

"It might appear that we have an overabundance of Colorado representatives, but we should remember that each represents a broader regional organization."

- Young, based in Fort Collins at CSU, represents the region's cooperative extension programs.
- Cattle producer Mark Frasier, past AC chair from Fort Morgan, is a rancher representing the interests of farmers and ranchers.
- Mike Harrington, executive director of the Western Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors based at CSU in Fort Collins, represents that organization on the AC.
- Cindy Lair, program manager for the Colorado State Conservation Board at the Colorado Department of Agriculture, represents the Western Association of State Departments of Agriculture.
- Peg Perreault, an environmental scientist with EPA Region 8 in Denver, represents the Environmental Protection Agency.



CLASS ON AN ISLAND

On Lopez Island, in the Puget Sound of northwest Washington, Henning Sehmsdorf and Elizabeth Simpson have created a veritable campus of research, education and extension for sustainable agriculture.

Their 50-acre diversified crop and livestock operation, S&S Homestead Farm, has been transformed into S&S Center for Sustainable Agriculture. It provides practical education in farming and nutrition to interns, students and island residents. It's become a thriving research laboratory delving into the nuances and impacts of ecological farming. And it hosts a variety of seminars and workshops on sustainability.

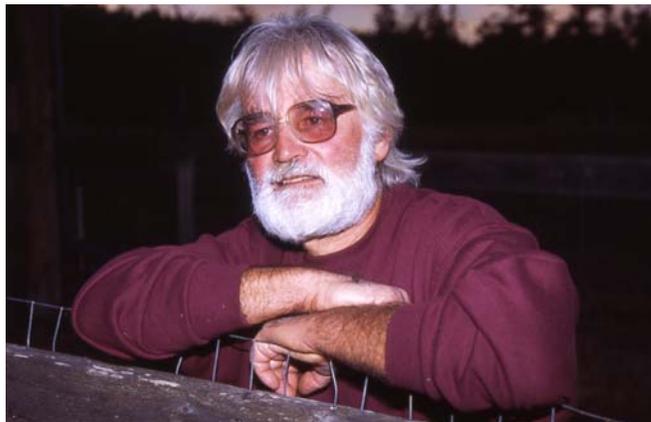
While Sehmsdorf and Simpson have been fashioning their model of sustainable farming and living since 1970, Sehmsdorf says Farmer/Rancher grants from Western SARE have brought focus to priorities.

"The grants helped me articulate, in objective terms, the goals and mission of this farm, which is ecological food production and education in sustainable living," said Sehmsdorf. "The grants have helped us solve specific problems on the production side of our farm and, at the same time, strengthened our educational outreach."

S&S Homestead Farm, 15 acres owned and 35 leased from neighbors, produces beef, pork, lamb, chicken, eggs, dairy products, fruit and vegetables as well as animal feed and local fertility.

In all, Sehmsdorf has been involved in three Western SARE grants, two he coordinated and another on which he serves as a farmer advisor.

The first SARE grant (FW01-081), conducted in 2001 and 2002, tested grain on a small scale. The idea was to find a crop – in this



Henning Sehmsdorf of Lopez Island Washington.

A Western SARE Grant Profile

case barley – that could capture and recycle excess soil nutrients from a field used for wintering beef cows, preventing pollution and reducing farm inputs.

As a result of the project, the farm saves money to buy straw it uses to mulch fruits and vegetables (it typically costs \$7 a bale from the local feed store). The grain fed to cattle, sheep, pigs and chickens promotes their health by guaranteeing a clean, organic feed source. And the barley takes up nutrients that otherwise might pollute ground or surface waters.

A second SARE-funded project (FW04-305), Bio-Intensive Forage Production, scheduled to be completed in 2007, is testing whether farm-produced biodynamic soil stimulants are a viable



Students learn about sustainable crop production at S&S Homestead Farm.

substitute for lime applications in modifying soil acidity. S&S is collaborating on the project with Washington State University research and extension faculty, including a forage specialist, microbiologist and soil scientist. Preliminary assessments indicate that the biodynamic preparations performed at least as well as the lime application, if not better.

"If final analysis bears this out, we will have achieved our goal, which is to maximize protein production in the form of harvestable forage, meat and dairy products," says Sehmsdorf. "That will increase overall farm productive while maintaining ecological balance by reducing the consumption of non-renewable fossil fuels and other resources."

The third SARE project (FW04-006) supports the mission of S&S Homestead Farm to provide education in ecological food production and sustainable living. The grant continued a program Sehmsdorf and Simpson had developed two years earlier to teach local public school students and supply fresh produce to the local school cafeteria.

The farm built a 45-foot by 12-foot hoop house in which to grow vegetables during the winter, and a Washington State University plant special-

"The grants have helped us solve specific problems on the production side of our farm and, at the same time, strengthened our educational outreach."

*Henning Sehmsdorf,
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Western Region Sustainable
Agriculture, Research,
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ist provided guidance for two-year bean trials in which students could participate for science credit.

Beyond instilling a better understanding about nutrition in the island community, Sehmsdorf acknowledges that the work evolving from the SARE grants has had several ripple effects, among them:

- The school board has officially sanctioned the farm-to-school project in support of the state-mandated Wellness Policy.
- An island donor has contributed a large hoop house now installed on S&S Homestead Farm for instruction and vegetable production for the school cafeteria.
- The school cafeteria has

committed to maximize access to locally grown, organic food (within current school budget limits), and the chef kitchen staff have undergone extensive training to redirect the delivery of school lunch.

The San Juan Conservation District and the Lopez Island Farm Education program have jointly applied for two years of funding under the Agriculture Pilot Project Initiative supported by Washington's Gov. Gregoire; if successful, the grant will double the food budget of the school cafeteria to demonstrate impacts on student health and academic performance, at the same time supporting local agriculture.

Sehmsdorf says the S&S Center for Sustainable Agri-

culture hopes to obtain grant funding that will continue the center's work to promote sustainability into the foreseeable future – beyond the time when he and his wife can carry out the work.

He says agricultural sustainability is possible only in the context of soils, plants, animals, community and landscape, all of which are local concerns with global implications. He adds that the current industrial global food system, predicated on diminishing fossil energy and waste sinks, is not sustainable.

"Agricultural can be sustainable," Sehmsdorf, "only if it cultivates perennial, pastoral, polycultural, biological and diverse systems based on renewable, solar energy harvested directly through plants and animals."



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