

Simply Sustainable

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from Western SARE

working to sustain western agriculture

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AC GETS A TASTE OF MONTANA

From predator friendly wool to organic goat cheese production, the Western SARE Administrative Council got a good taste of Montana agriculture last August in the Gallatin River Valley.

The AC met in Bozeman Aug. 6-10 to assess Research & Education pre-applications, review applications for the



Predator friendly products.

next round of subregional conferences and to consider options for enhancing grants to farmers and ranchers.

The council narrowed the 2008 R&E pre-applications to 25. Now, the principal investigators of those applications are preparing full applications, to be submitted by the Nov. 15, 2007, deadline.

The Western SARE subregional conferences are moving full steam ahead (see article below), and the council increased funding for producer projects (please turn to



AC members, from left, Peg Perreault, Karl Kupers, Chuck Boerner and Don Bustos.

page 2 for a report on the results of discussions on farmer and rancher grant enhancement.)

As is typical with the Administrative Council's summer meeting, a tour of area agriculture was included in the mix of business activities.

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SUBREGIONALS FULL STEAM AHEAD

More than 100 key Pacific island stakeholders in agricultural sustainability are expected to attend the Pacific Subregional Conference in Guam Oct. 17 and 18.

And the next slate of subregional conferences, five in all so far, is coming into focus as two groups of conference planners — one from Hawaii and the other from the Pacific Northwest — met in Salt Lake City in Sep-

tember to outline plans for their own conferences. The Hawaii subregional conference is scheduled for Septem-

ber 2008, and the Pacific Northwest subregional conference will held in February 2009.

Meanwhile, the planning team for the Pacific conference, "Sustaining Tropical Pacific Island Agriculture: Counting our successes, charting our future," has lined out an agenda that includes a poster session describing some of the success that have been achieved in agricultural and tabletop



Hawaii subregional conference planners Virginia Easton-Smith, left, and Jody Smith.



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AC GETS A TASTE OF MONTANA

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On Wednesday, Aug. 8, the bus left for the Wright farm, which produces a wide variety of crops, including wheat, peas, alfalfa, camelina and sunflowers. Bill Wright demonstrated his new oilseed press, and discussed some of the farm's philosophies when it comes to the use of agricultural chemicals.

"We've changed our chemical use," said Wright. "We use no residual chemicals — when the season's over, the chemical is gone. It makes it hard to control weeds, but I don't like to have chemicals tied up in the ground."



Lillian and Chuck Boerner of Maui.

The next stop on the day-long tour was 13 Mile Ranch to visit the ranch and wool-processing facility of Dave Tyler and Becky Weed, who have found a niche market producing lamb and wool described as predator friendly (see the article on 13 Mile Ranch on Page 3).

At 13 Mile Ranch, on which

a conservation easement protects a large chunk of the ranch, Steve Johnson of the Gallatin Valley Land Trust explained some of the trust's efforts to preserve ground in a valley that's filling up with people and houses and where ag land is worth between \$10,000 and \$50,000 an acre.

"We've begun to grapple with this issue," said Johnson. "Even if you inherited the land, it's hard to make a business out of it. And you certainly can't buy the land to get into farming."

He said the trust is working to get new producers onto old land in leasehold arrangements, and that it currently has 30,000 acres under land trust easements.

"Even if they don't have to pay for the land, they need every value-added nickel they can get out of it," he said. "The food cooperative and local restaurants become part of a local system to support the producers."



Bill Wright explains his new oilseed press from which he plans to make biodiesel from his oilseed crops that include sunflowers and camelina.



Brian Goldhahn describes his plant oil extraction as a "shade tree engineering project."

At the Cook Ranch, a 1,200-acre certified organic operation north of Bozeman, Brian Goldhahn described some of the innovative projects on the ranch, which includes extracting oil from oilseed crops, a process he says has a high learning curve. Early tests have yielded 38-40 percent oil.

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We use no residual chemical — when the season's over, the chemical is gone. It makes it hard to control weeds, but I don't like to have chemicals tied up in the ground."

Bill Wright, Wright Farm

AC Doubles Amounts for FRG and P+P grants

The Western SARE Administrative Council has doubled the amount of funding this year for its Farmer/Rancher and Professional + Producer grants. The program has also expanded the funding limits for the Professional + Producer grants, requiring increased producer participation.

AC Chair Karl Kupers said the 14-member council voted to increase the funding as a

way to encourage practical applications in sustaining agriculture at the farm and ranch level — a means of getting more sustainable research and education on the ground where it can be employed by producers.

This year, \$294,000 will be available for Professional + Producer grants, with new funding limits of \$50,000 per grant and at least five separate participating producers.

Likewise, \$294,000 will be available for Farmer/Rancher grants, with limits of \$15,000 for individual producers and up to \$30,000 for three or more producers. Last year, \$294,000 was available for both types of grants.

The deadline for submitting applications is Dec. 7, 2007. Applications are available at <http://wsare.usu.edu> under "apply for a grant" or by calling (435) 797-2257.

PREDATOR FRIENDLY LAMB & WOOL

It's a marketing niche, sure, but for Becky Weed and Dave Tyler at 13 Mile Ranch north of Bozeman, their promotion of Predator Friendly Wool comes from a belief that farmers and ranchers can co-exist with the environment. That includes the wild carnivores — coyotes, mountain lions, foxes and bears — that sometimes prey on domestic livestock.

"The predator friendly moniker is controversial, and many people around the state think we're stark raving mad" says Weed. "We've been 100 percent successful in preventing predation on our livestock."

The method in their madness began in 1994 when Tyler and Weed made a commitment to avoid killing natural predators. They used llamas to guard their 170-ewe flock until about five years ago, when they switched to guard dogs. Despite a few concerns over barking and safety, the dogs have worked well. Indeed, Weed says that when 100 kindergarten pupils visiting the ranch entered the field, the dogs came up and licked the children's faces and were very friendly. Then they went right back to their guard duties.

Weed says being predator friendly requires adaptability. "Every year is different. It's a work in progress, and it's not for everybody. It's as much an educational tool as it is a marketing tool."



The predator friendly approach has clearly succeeded from a marketing perspective. Their lamb is marketed primarily in the Gallatin River Valley, with some sales outside the county. Their wool was sold as a commodity until three years ago, when they began taking their raw wool to a spinning facility operated in a solar-heated barn.

"We run a factory to support our ranching," says Weed, who adds that she enjoys the variety of all of the things they do. She and Tyler do all of the work on the ranch except for shearing, which is done on contract. Tyler's biggest concern for the ranch's lamb operation is packing

industry infrastructure.



"Of all of the issues that plague sustainable agriculture, the meat packing issue is the most critical," he says. "It affects livestock production, which affects the issue of integrating livestock into the other elements of agriculture."

"Of all the issues that plague sustainable agriculture, the meat packing issue is the most critical. It affects livestock production, which affects the issue of integrating livestock into other elements of agriculture."

Dave Tyler, 13 Mile Ranch



AC members and guests inspect the solar-heated barn in which Becky Weed and Dave Tyler, above, process their predator friendly wool.



AC GETS A TASTE OF MONTANA

...from page 2

Goldhahn and his wife, LaVerne, who have managed the ranch for environmentally conscious Lew and Marian Cook since 1998, suggested organic certification to the Cooks. In 2004, the hay and pasture lands were certified organic through the Montana Department of Agriculture, and the Angus calves and contract grass-fed yearlings were certified in 2006.

The AC traveled to Three Forks, Mont., where they enjoyed sandwiches made with bread from Wheat Montana, a vertically integrated wheat operation that markets baked goods in Montana and surrounding Western states.

The tour concluded at the 250-acre MSU Arthur Post Agronomy Farm near Bozeman, where the AC was greeted by Montana State University President Geoff Gamble, and heard presentations by Montana State researchers Perry Miller and Luther Talbert, who discussed their Western SARE-funded projects. Talbert's study (SW07-025) is looking for



AC Chair Karl Kupers greets Montana State University President Geoff Gamble at the MSU Ag Experiment Station near Bozeman. Below, a worker fills a bag of flour at Wheat Montana, a vertically integrated farm-to-table operation near Three Forks

solutions to wheat stem sawfly, which inflicts considerable damage on Montana's wheat industry. Miller (SW02-005) is working to improve crop water efficiency in advanced no-till systems as well as seeing how different cropping systems affect soil fertility and nutrient availability.



Since 1988, Western SARE has funded 67 competitive grant projects in Montana totaling \$3.3 million, including 27 Research and Education Grants, 10 Professional Development Program grants, 24 Farmer/Rancher grants, 5 Extension Indian Reservation Grants and 1 Graduate Student Grant.

AMALTHEIA: THE GOAT THAT FED ZEUS

When the cheese maker buying their goat milk stopped making cheese, Melvyn and Sue



Melvyn Brown, Amaltheia Dairy.

Brown decided to start making their own chevre, the French word for goat cheese. At the time they were milking 100 goats. Today, Amaltheia Dairy milks 340 goats, making certified organic cheese that's shipped throughout the country.

Brown says it takes five hours to milk the sheep. He takes the morning shift, and hires help for the afternoon milking. The goats graze organic pasture, with rotations using six-strand electric wire.

"The wire keeps the goats in and the coyotes and lions out," says Brown.

The dairy, named Bozeman's startup business of the year in 2003, has the capacity to produce 2,000 pounds of cheese a week, including ricotta, feta, smoked chevre and perigord black truffle chevre. The milk for these cheeses contains 5.5 percent butterfat and 4.5 percent protein.



A SHELTER IN THE PACIFIC STORM

Typhoons strike Guam and Micronesia as often as two or three times a year, with winds between 50 and 130 miles per hour. These powerful winds can easily blow away structures made of light materials.

Buildings for poultry producers are particularly susceptible, which has discouraged many producers from constructing permanent facilities. Manny Duguies, a veterinarian with the University of



Manny Duguies, DVM

Guam, surmised that converted container vans, the kind used on cargo ships, could provide the structural soundness that producers need to maintain their chicken flocks.

With that in mind, Duguies applied for and received a Western SARE Research and Education grant, SW02-048, funded at \$26,857 to achieve these objectives:

- Study and demonstrate container vans as alternative poultry housing structures
- Demonstrate the impact of such housing on the Pacific region poultry industry
- Encourage producers to revive the poultry industry
- Increase producer awareness about animal welfare
- Produce educational materials about the project in different dialects in the region

A Western SARE Grant Profile

In the first year of the project, a 20-foot container van was used to house and raise, from brooding to layer, 50 Brown Nicks (a cross between Rhode Island and White Leghorn) chickens. Dried hay and dried banana leaves were used as litter and bedding material, and 5-gallon plastic pails were used as feeders and waterers.

Another batch of Brown Nicks was raised from brooding to layer in typical open pens. Performance of the two batches was recorded and compared at the end of a six-month production cycle.

In years two and three of the study, two 40-foot container vans were added, each housing 100 chickens from brooding to laying for a 20-month production cycle. Production records were maintained and analyzed on feed conversion, growth rate, disease incidence, bird behavior and mortality rate.

Duguies reported that the performance of the chicks, from brooding to pullet stage inside the containers was rated as satisfactory:

- Morbidity and mortality rates were within standard performance for poultry houses in the Pacific
- The growth rate of the chicks was uniform
- There was no incidence of disease or behavioral problems

The satisfactory performance carried through to the laying stage:

- The birds began laying at 22 weeks
- Peak production occurred at eight weeks after the onset of laying
- The birds exhibited no behavioral problems

Although no super typhoon struck Guam during the grant period, the results proved that chickens could be raised inside container vans with satisfactory results.



Chickens in the container experiment performed at satisfactory levels.

Duguies said that it's important that the vans be properly secured to the ground. And temperatures can be lowered inside the vans by cutting back the sides to increase air movement and circulation.

The project opened more alternatives for housing in typhoon-prone areas, including condemned school or tour buses. It also showed how plastic containers can be converted to cheaper yet practical means of feeding and watering poultry, and that dried banana leaves can be used as bedding for floors and nests, demonstrating how local resources can be used for raising poultry instead of buying expensive imported products.

For a look at Duguies final report, go to the National SARE website at www.sare.org and click on "project reports" and "search SARE database. Then enter SW02-048.

PDP COORDINATORS MEET IN PASCO

When state and island protectorate coordinators from around the West gathered last July in Pasco, Wash., for the annual Professional Development Program meeting, they got a first class tour of Columbia Basin agriculture, including the results of a Western SARE grant testing the values of using mustards as a green manure.

The Research and Education grant, SW03-018, Mustard Green Manures for Potato Production, was conducted by Andy McGuire of Washington State University.

Farmer-cooperator Dale Gies, who farms just south of Moses Lake, has been testing white mustard as a green manure in his two-year rotation of wheat and potatoes since the 1990s, and he likes the results.

“This stuff is not a silver bullet, it’s more of a finesse,” says Gies. “But you can see the cumulative benefits: We always improve the soil; we reduce erosion from the wind; and we’ve doubled or tripled our water infiltration. These are things you can’t put a dollar value on. But better soil is money in the bank.”

He said the practice also makes it easier to dig potatoes and reduces his disease problems. With such success, he’s mystified that more producers have yet to adopt the practice. McGuire notes that Washington acreage in green

manures has hit a plateau of just over 20,000 acres.

Says Gies, “I know it works, WSU can quantify it. It’s not that simple. I kind of like that it’s a finesse thing. But at some point, you’ll see more people doing it.”

The tour next stopped at Williamson Farm, where Eric Williamson discussed the multitude of practices being used to refine the operation, including strip tillage and year-round, management-intensive grazing. The farm rotates 600 head of cattle on summer pasture under a center pivot, then uses sweet corn residue and triticale, 40 different fields last year, to get the cattle through to the spring pasture.

“The year-round grazing is a byproduct of our crop rotations, which include sweet corn and green peas for processing, alfalfa, potatoes and wheat,” says Williamson. “We’re grass finishing now and marketing in stores in Seattle as grass-fed beef.”

For strip tillage, he uses a coulter and a shank, opening up a planting slit.

“We plant into about everything — wheat stubble, corn stubble, bean residue, bluegrass residue,” Williamson says. “There have been a lot of benefits from strip till that we never expected, like our ability to double crop, savings on water, electricity and fertilizer and better weed control. And we’ve seen organic matter go up.”



White mustard green manures being swathed as Dale Gies lists their benefits for his farm’s soil.



Dale Gies



Washington SARE coordinator Andy McGuire, test drives an apple-picking platform with Karen Lewis, WSU Extension fruit specialist.

“This stuff (white mustard green manures) is not a silver bullet, it’s more of a finesse. But you can see the benefits: improved soil, reduced wind erosion and double or triple the water infiltration. These are things you can’t put a dollar value on. But better soil is money in the bank.”

Dale Gies



Eric Williamson

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After lunch and a tour of the Wanapum Dam on the Columbia River, tour participants visited the orchard of John Doebler, where Karen Lewis, Washington State University Extension, described the Washington fruit as an industry in transition.

“If you’re an alert grower, there are more opportunities,” says Lewis. “Given the tools and technology available, you can be highly successful.”

She added that stabilizing the work force can benefit farms and communities alike.

“Hiring more people for longer periods will require



Craig Cogger

more mental skills, which ultimately makes better communities,” she said.

In addition to the tour, PDP coordinators heard presentations from SARE grant recipients, including Craig Cogger, whose grant, SW03-040, is assessing soil quality in intensive organic management systems. Cogger’s grant is testing three cover crops and two soil amendments under two tillage systems, conventional tillage with disc, plow and rototiller and a spader that simulates digging with a shovel.

He is measuring soil quality parameters like permeability, enzyme activity, nutrient cycling and the aggregation of soil particles. The study is also looking at the yield of several crops under the various regimes, including snap peas, spinach, winter squash, broccoli and lettuce.

While the project has yet to be completed, Cogger has



Above, workers outfit one of the turbines for Wanapum Dam. Below, tour participants inspect the new fish ladders being installed at the dam to help salmon and other fish navigate the river.



found that the spader tillage has reduced soil compaction compared with conventional tillage. However, the improved soil quality has yet to improve the yields of the vegetables in the study.

“Everyone needs to think about the sustainability model.”

Linda Fox, Washington State University Extension

SARE PROVIDES A ROLE MODEL

SARE provides a good model for getting stakeholders involved and identifying research needs, said Linda Fox, Washington State University’s dean and director of extension.

Speaking to Western SARE state and protectorate coordinators in Pasco, Fox cited the Washington State Legislature’s funding of the Sustainable Food and Farming Network for \$1 million in grants to build on the model of SARE to look at integrated research and extension grants.

“Everyone needs to think about the sustainability model,” she said.



Linda Fox, WSU Extension

Fox noted that Washington’s governor is intent on looking at land use and how

to cut through the complexity of land issues to ensure that both agriculture and the environment survive.

“We need to figure how to solve problems collaboratively, bringing together diverse groups to look at critical issues like buffers for salmon recovery,” said Fox, alluding to a SARE grant on riparian buffers that “has provided good leadership on the issue.”

She cited work by Washington SARE coordinators Andy McGuire and Carol Miles, and the key roles they play to connect Western SARE with various ag constituencies.

SUBREGIONAL CONFERENCES

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discussions among several groups that focus on at least five questions that affect agricultural sustainability in the Pacific islands.

Jerry DeWitt, director of the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture and coordinator of the Iowa Learning Farm and Iowa State University Extension's Sustainable Agriculture Program, will serve as the conference facilitator for the Pacific conference, as well as for the

other subregional conferences planned in the Western Region. Harnessing Dewitt's talents for facilitation for all conferences will engender continuity, which is important as Western SARE and its Administrative Council gather information that will help chart the future of sustainability and Western SARE.

In addition, the Western SARE staff has assisted the conference planners in Guam to develop 20 posters, each on successful projects in the Pacific islands: eight from Guam, four from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, four from the Federated States of Micronesia, two from American Samoa and two from Hawaii.

The five questions that will focus the tabletop discussions for the Pacific conference are:

1. What will be needed to create stronger local food systems that are less reliant on imports?
2. What are the local food production

trends on your island? Do you think your local farmers can produce enough for your area 5-10 years from now? What areas of production need improvement?

3. The SARE program was commissioned, by Congress, to get its research results to the farmer and rancher. Has this been a success in your area of influence? Why or why



Members of the Pacific Northwest planning team, from left, Cinda Williams, Kim Leval and Jeff Schahczenski.

not?

4. What type of research, education and development is going to be necessary over the next 10 years to help economically sustain farming and the environment?
5. If Western SARE received (from Congress) an additional \$1 million per region, what types of projects should be targeted or emphasized?

Each tabletop discussion, four over the two-day conference, will try to provide responses that can be used for charting SARE directions over the next 20 years.

In addition to the nuts and bolts of the conference, those attending, which includes several members of the Western SARE Administrative

Council and state coordinators who help facilitate the conference, are invited to an opening social and dinner Oct. 16 at the Government House on Guam, and a visit Oct. 17 to a Chamorro Village for views of cultural foods, a flea market and dinner.

The Hawaii subregional conference planning team was represented at the meeting in Salt Lake City Sept. 19 and 20 by Jody Smith of Oahu and Virginia Easton-Smith of the Big Island, both with the

University of Hawaii. Jonathan Deenik, Western SARE Hawaii state coordinator is the lead applicant for the Hawaii conference, which is targeting a conference in Kona on the Big Island in the third week of September next year.

Planners of the Pacific Northwest subregional conference attending the meetings in Salt Lake were Cinda Williams, Western SARE Idaho state coordinator, Jeff Schahczenski, National Coalition for Appropriate Technology, Butte, Mont., and Kim Leval, Center for Rural Affairs, Eugene, Ore. Their conference is tentatively scheduled for February 2009 in Spokane.

Two other subregional conferences are now on the calendar, the Southwest conference slated for June 10 and 11 in Albuquerque, and the High Plains conference to be held in Cheyenne Oct. 28 and 29.

The Western SARE Administrative Council has posted an RFA for a California subregional conference on sustainable agriculture. The deadline is February 2008.

Pacific subregional conference, Oct. 17-18, 2007, Guam

Southwest subregional conference, June 10-11, 2008, Albuquerque

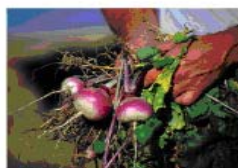
Hawaii subregional conference, Sept. 22-24, 2008, Kona

High Plains subregional conference, Oct. 28-29, 2008, Cheyenne

Pacific Northwest subregional conference, February 2009, Spokane

CELEBRATE 20 YEARS OF SARE

SARE's
20th
anniversary



New Voices, Top Photo Contests Solicit Entrants

Plans for the SARE's 20th anniversary New American Farm celebration, March 25-27 in Kansas City, Missouri, are rapidly coming into focus.

Speakers have been invited, posters solicited and two contests have been announced, "The New American Farm Photo Contest," and the "New Voices Contest."

The New Voices Contest seeks responses from:

- Farmers and ranchers
- Emerging leaders in the field of advocacy, education or research
- Beginning farmers and ranchers
- Students
- Minorities and other under-represented audiences.

The contest asks participants to consider these two questions:

1. How can we advance sustainable practices and innovations to the whole of American Agriculture, and
2. What if you had just five minutes to share your vision with the leaders of the sustainable agriculture community?

SARE seeks written, audio or video submissions that articulate emerging perspectives and illustrate an inspira-

tional and pioneering vision for the advancement of sustainable agriculture over the next 20 years.

Go to www.sare.org for entry details for the New Voices Contest as well as those for the New American Farm Photo Contest.

The photo contest, with a deadline of Oct. 31, will select four grand-prize winners to attend the Kansas City conference, for free.

The photo contest promotion notes that the American public increasingly cares about how and where its food is produced and that new, lucrative markets are opening up for farmers and ranchers for "natural," "organic" and "local."

"Capture the groundbreaking innovations, people and partnerships advancing the frontier of sustainable agriculture in America," the contest urges.

More than 20 speakers from the West have been invited to make presentations at breakout sessions. And 25 individuals who have received West-

ern SARE competitive grants and have conducted research or education projects that emulate the best of sustainable agriculture, have been invited to present posters at the conference.

For more information on the conference or to receive contest registration materials in January 2008, contact Sean McGovern, National SARE outreach coordinator at outreach@sare.org.



SARE hopes photographers will capture images that reflect the new mood of American consumers, who care more and more about how and where their food is produced.



The photo contest deadline is Oct. 31, 2007. The deadline for the New Voices Contest, which asks SARE partners and stakeholders to "share your vision for advancing sustainable agriculture," is Dec. 7, 2007. Look for details at www.sare.org.

SUSTAINABLE AG IN THE NEWS

The Food Alliance, a previous Western SARE grant recipient that certifies the sustainability of farms, ranches and food processors, will celebrate its 10th anniversary next year (Western SARE Research and Education Grant, SW02-024, "Farmers Growing the Market with TFA-Approved").

The Portland-based operation includes among its list of certified operations several other participants in Western SARE grants: Cattail Creek Farm of Johnson City, Ore., **John Neumeister**, certified sustainable lamb; Shepherd's Grain of Reardon, Wash., Western SARE Administrative Council Chair **Karl**

Kupers, certified sustainable wheat, garbanzo beans and lentils; and **Stahlbush Island Farms** of Corvallis, certified sustainable blueberries, cranberries, raspberries, pumpkin, rhubarb, squash, corn, spinach, strawberries and wheat. Stahlbush is also a Food Alliance Certified Handler.

Since 1998, Food Alliance has certified more than 300 producers.

The *Toronto Star* on Oct. 3 featured an article on Local Food Plus, a nonprofit Toronto company that has begun to certify food as "sustainable." That means the food is produced in Ontario in a way that's "gentle on the environment" and strict on worker rights.

"First there was organic, then local. Now, there's sustainable food," says the article, noting Local Food Plus has approved 50 farms and food processors as sustainable since it was launched a year ago.

Reports on SARE and Ag Sustainability

The *Capital Press* weekly agricultural newspaper in Salem, Ore., ran a feature Sept. 28 on a seminar con-



John Neumeister, right, discusses his lamb production with Karen Murphy and Woody Lane (FW99-071, Willamette Valley Grazing and Nutrition Group).

ducted under the auspices of a Western SARE Professional Development Program Grant..

Larry Lev, professor and extension marketing specialist with Oregon State University, is the project coordinator for EW06-012, "Hands-On Workshops: Alternative Marketing Approaches and Distribution Channels."

Sixteen agricultural professionals from Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming attended the workshop, held in Portland.

Western SARE grant recipient **Mehrten Homer**, president of Painted Hills Natural Beef in Fossil, Ore., was featured in a June 22 article on direct marketing in the *Capital Press*. Homer (Western SARE

Farmer/Rancher Grant, FW04-118, "Virtual Focus Group to Measure Most Effective Use of Marketing Resources") said in the article, "We go down as ranchers and stand in the store and teach housewives how natural beef is different than regular beef."

The New Yorker magazine in its Sept. 3 & 10, 2007, issue, has an article on "eating the fruits of the five boroughs," in which the author, Adam Gopnik, undertook a project to eat only food grown or raised food in the five boroughs of New York City. He notes that the point of localism is to "encourage sustain-

able agriculture by eating things that nearby friends and farmers grow or raise and that don't have to be shipped halfway around the world, guzzling fossil fuel, to get to your table."

Newsweek, in its Aug. 20/27 issue, ran an article on "The Green Campus," noting that "As more schools get serious about going green, college presidents say sustainability is no longer an elective."



Brad Jaeckle of Moscow, was featured in a Sept. 28 *Capital Press* article on Washington State University's organic farm. Jaeckle's SARE grant, FW06-014, is conducting hoop house trials.

"First there was organic, then local. Now, there's sustainable food."

Toronto Star in an Oct. 3 article on Local Food Plus, a sustainable certification entity in Ontario.

NEW SARE COORDINATOR IN CNMI

Allan Sabaldica, the new Western SARE coordinator for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, hit the ground running.

Based on the island of Tinian, Sabaldica is a veterinarian with the College of Northern Mariana. Before tackling his new SARE assignment, he had already applied for and received a Western SARE Research and Education grant to study new forage options for cattle, goats and poultry.

And in September, he took the grant application bull by the horns to conduct a grant-writing seminar for islands residents.

To kick off his SARE workshop, Sabaldica arranged to place a news article in the *Saipan Tribune* announcing an opportunity for farmers and ranchers on Saipan to learn how to access grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, especially Western SARE Farmer/Rancher and Professional + Producer grants.

"I conducted four separate workshops in Saipan, Tinian and Rota (CNMI islands)," said Sabaldica. "A total of 12 interested farmers and ranchers came out with their proposed projects.

He added that is using recent CNMI producer recipients of Western SARE grants as examples for others to emulate.

Sabaldica, who became Western SARE coordinator for the Mariana Islands earlier this year, graduated in 1996 from the University of the Philippines Los Banos with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

For the past 11 years, he has worked as an extension specialist in livestock and poultry, first in the Philippines. In 2002 he moved with his wife, Esperanza and daugh-



Allan Sabaldica, DVM

ter, Nina Patricia Yvonne, to the Northern Mariana Islands, serving as Agriculture Extension Agent until 2007. He is currently the Livestock Extension Specialist for the land grant college, NMC-CREES.

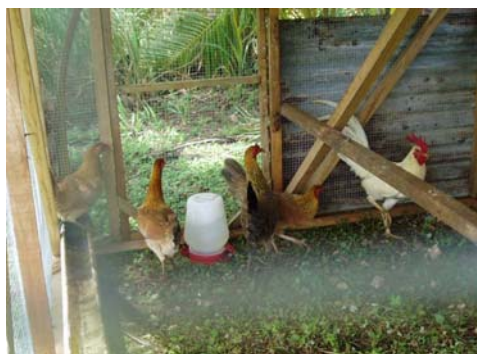
His current SARE project, "Sustainable Forage and Livestock System for the Island of Tinian," SW06-042, seeks to promote the adoption of forage-livestock systems and to

introduce the concepts of sustainable agriculture among Pacific island farmers.

He is also working on a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency project in the Marianas and Palau that deals with alternative swine waste management using carbon materials such as chipped coconut husks, wood chips or other materials as bedding in pig pens of small-scale swine operations.

Sabaldica is also the Para-Vet Training Project Coordinator for the Marianas, and has trained 21 para-vets in the Western Pacific.

Sabaldica can be reached at allans@nmcnet.edu.



The portable pastured poultry container above is one of two built for Sabaldica's Western SARE project. The cattle are grazing on a mix of Guinea grass and mimosa in one of eight test pastures.



Sabaldica is currently working on an Animal Health Survey for the Northern Mariana Islands.

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Western Sustainable
Agriculture, Research,
and Education Program

Western SARE PDP Shines in the Review Spotlight

A Host Institution Review of Western SARE's Professional Development Program learned that the University of Wyoming has a strong commitment and support for the PDP program, and considers Western SARE to be a natural complement to the in-state outreach of the university.

"In general," said the review report, "we found the University of Wyoming to be a welcome and supportive host for the program operations, and that, five years into the current administrative contract, program administration is efficient, well-organized and meeting the needs of state coordinators across the vast expanse of the Western Region."

Jim Freeburn, based at the UW Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Center near Lingle, is the Western SARE PDP coordinator, with support from Al Kurki, Assistant Coordinator, in Helena, Kelly Greenwald, Administrative Assistant, in Lingle, and Joleen Pantier, Contracts Manager, in Laramie.

Western SARE's Administrative Council Executive Committee — Karl Kupers, AC Chair, Deborah Young, Chair-Elect, and Mark Frasier, Past Chair — conducted the review last summer.

Before the visit, to UW's Laramie campus and SAREC facility in Lingle, the reviewers conducted a "360 degree evaluation" of Freeburn. On a scale of 1-5, Freeburn was

rated 4.7 by the staff and 4.9 by the 16 Western SARE state and protectorate coordinators who responded.

"Comments noted his positive attitude and his understanding and support of the SARE mission," the review said. Kurki, although not stationed in Wyoming, received praise for his contributions.

While state and island protectorate coordinators rated the quality of services as excellent, the report noted that communications with some coordinators, particularly those in the Pacific islands, could be improved. It also suggested, given the PDP office location just 20 miles from the North Central SARE region, increased collaboration with that region.



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