



Keeping it Between the Ditches

Most people around the small town of Okemah, Oklahoma, know Dr. Claud Evans as the veterinarian who patches up their pets or vaccinates their beef cattle. But he is also an inventor, entrepreneur and a researcher using his herd of cashmere goats as subjects.

For this combination of accomplishments, Evans was asked to be part of a national panel of five innovative farmers to kick off SARE's national conference the evening of October 23, in North Carolina. The panel's theme will be Keeping it Between the Ditches, personal accounts of overcoming obstacles on the road to sustainable agriculture.

Evans, who received a SARE producer grant to research the possibility of managing parasites by rotating the grazing pastures of his goat herd, also invented a comb to remove the precious cashmere. By combing rather than shearing, he obtains a higher quality fiber and also spares his herd the trauma of being sheared.

He will be joined on the panel by LaRhea Pepper who helped start an organic cotton cooperative in Texas.

LaRhea and Terry Pepper knew they had to do something drastic the day they realized they were selling cotton at the same price her grandfather sold it for in the 1930s, when he could buy a new tractor for \$1200. The Pepper's drastic action was to go organic. After that, one thing just led to another. They needed a way to market their organic cotton so they founded a fabric company, Cotton Plus, in 1992. In order to get enough cotton to fill the orders, they helped establish the Texas Organic Cotton Marketing Co-op in 1993, with a steady membership of around 30 families. Then came Organic Essentials, which manufactures premium-priced organic personal care products from short staple cotton.

In less than a decade, the cooperative and the two businesses were responsible for producing and moving more than 25 percent of U.S. organic cotton and adding more than \$12 million to the rural communities around Lubbock.

From the mountains to the prairie

Steve Groff, the no-till pioneer from Pennsylvania will talk about his road from severe erosion to healthy soil. When Groff started farming with his father after graduating from high school, he faced the same problem as other farmers in Lancaster County: the hilly landscape causes about nine tons of soil per acre to wash away each year.

Tired of watching two-foot-deep crevices form after heavy rains, Groff began experimenting with no-till methods. Over the years he developed a system of cover crops and no-till techniques that not only protect the soil but also has increased yields of grain and vegetables. Word of his success has brought thousands of visitors to his farm and earned him numerous awards.

Mark Frasier will share milestones from his transition to holistic management ranching in eastern Colorado. Frasier, who ranches in partnership with his father and two brothers, improved the forage and, ultimately, the productivity on 29,000 acres by going to management intensive grazing. These days the family puts in fewer hours and sees a better bottom line using a well-tooled system involving 125 paddocks that allow the forage to rest and recover between grazings.

Alex Hitt will be there from Peregrine Farm, where he and wife Betsy use a

computer to keep track of 10-year rotations of 57 kinds of flowers and 60 varieties of 20 vegetables.

Farms in the spotlight

The farmer panel is just the kick-off event for *On the Road to Sustainable Agriculture*, which will be based at the Sheraton Imperial Conference Center in Research Triangle Park. Most of the conference activities will center around two days of tours to outstanding farms, markets and research sites in the area.

State-of-the-art chartered buses will pick up participants from the Sheraton Imperial Conference Center after breakfast on Thursday (October 24) and Friday (October 25). The buses will take different routes so individual farms will not be overwhelmed by visitors, but each tour stop will address one or more of the conference themes which include urban sprawl, organics, direct marketing, limited-resource farmers, environmental issues and production systems in transition.

More than 30 farms and markets will be part of the two-day tour. They range in size from the 2200-acre Center for Environmental Farming Systems to Peregrine Farm's five acres of intense production.

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Dr. Claud Evans of Okemah, Oklahoma, will participate in the farmer panel that opens *On The Road to Sustainable Agriculture*. Evans, a veterinarian, is researching pasture rotation as a method of managing parasites in his cashmere-producing goats.



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Other stops include a bed and breakfast inn that serves guests its own farmstead goat cheese, fresh eggs and local vegetables. Another farm offers gourmet shopping at its own store featuring pastured chicken, beef and pork frozen in dinner-sized packages along with homemade pasta, pasta sauce and frozen apple pies. Visitors will sample old-time apple flavors at the peak of the season when they stroll through a small orchard where espalier growing techniques maximize space so that 450 heirloom varieties grow on 200 trees. Then there's the hydroponic greenhouse that produces 1500 pounds of tomatoes per day during the season. Filtered swine waste water does double duty by fertilizing the tomatoes and producing methane energy for the farm. A trip to the bustling Carrboro Farmers Market will show why it is considered a model for both producer and customer satisfaction.

Besides the farmer panel on opening night, other program activities are planned at the conference center. Thursday evening David Pimentel, ecologist/biologist from Cornell University, will speak on Food, Sustainability and Natural Resources. Saturday morning's wrap up session will feature Jules Pretty, director of the Centre for Environment and Society at the University of Essex, England, addressing the urgent need for the next agricultural revolution. On Friday night buses will be available to take participants to the North Carolina State Fair or downtown Raleigh or Chapel Hill.

Registration Information

The \$140-registration fee will cover the tours, programs at the conference center and all meals from Wednesday dinner through Saturday breakfast except Friday evening's dinner on the town. All meals at the hotel and on the road will feature fresh local foods such as North Carolina pork, chicken, sweet potatoes, apples, greens and dairy products. Rooms at the Sheraton Imperial will be available at a special conference rate of \$99 per night with no charge for additional people in a room.

Registration brochures will be available after June 15 on the Southern SARE web site at www.griffin.peachnet.edu/sare. For a mailed copy contact Gwen Roland at (770) 412-4786 or groland@griffin.peachnet.edu. A registration form also will be printed in the September *Common Ground*.



The Pepper family knows cotton from the ground up. They follow their organic cotton through milling, manufacturing and marketing of finished products.

Research and Education Grants Awarded

LS02-131 Forage/Livestock Systems for Sustainable High Plains Agriculture, Vivien G. Allen, Texas Tech Univ, TX \$251,805

LS02-132 Cover Cropping and Residue Management for Weed Suppression, Soil Fertility and Organic Crop Production, Keith R. Baldwin, NC A&T Univ, NC, \$99,154

LS02-133 Rotational Grazing on Land Receiving Manure Applications; Impacts of Land Management Practices on Soil and Water Quality, Barbara Bellows, Natl. Center for Appropriate Tech (ATTRA), AR , \$195,972

LS02-134 The Importance of Genetics: comparing standard turkey varieties and industrial stocks, Donald E. Bixby, Amer. Livestock Breeds Conservancy, NC, \$182,386

LS02-135 Values, Attitudes and Perceptions of Forestry Constituency Groups Relative to Sustainable Forestry in the South (Planning Grant), Stephen C. Grado, Mississippi State Univ., MS, \$17,969

* **LS02-136 Enhancing the Economic and Environmental Competitiveness of Small Farms Through Agroforestry**, Shibu Jose, Univ of Florida, \$189,600

LS02-137 Participatory Implementation of Sustainable Vegetable Systems for Small and Limited Resource Farmers, Joseph W. Kloepper, Auburn Univ, AL, \$161,280

LS02-138 An Investigation of the General and Niche Market Goat Meat Demand, Mack C. Nelson, Fort Valley State Univ, GA, \$161,074

LS02-139 Developing Sustainable Stored Grain IPM Systems in Oklahoma and Texas, Ronald T. Noyes, OK State Univ, OK, \$133,371

LS02-140 A System Approach for Improved Integration of Green Manure in Commercial Vegetable Production Systems, Johan Scholberg, University of Florida, FL, \$171,840

LS02-141 Sustainable Year-Round Forage System for Goat Production in the Southern USA, Sandra Solaiman, Tuskegee University, AL, \$178,120

LS02-142 Defining the Research Needs of Farmers in Organic Horticultural Production in the Southeast (planning grant), Andrew Stocklinski, Georgia Organics, GA, \$21,080

LS02-143 Novel Methods for Sustainable Control of Gastrointestinal Nematodes in Small Ruminants, T.H. Terrill, Fort Valley State Univ, GA, \$242,677

* *Funded in part by NRCS National Agroforestry Center*

Professional Development Grants Awarded

ES02-60 Enhancing Educator Knowledge of Sheep and Goat Production, Linda Coffey, NCAT, AR, \$49,998

ES02-61 A Statewide Journey of Sustainable Success: Hands-On Training, Rob Holland, University of Tennessee, TN, \$48,000

ES02-62 A Training and Educational Program to Ensure the South's Future Farmland and Forestland, Jim Horne, Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture, OK, \$119,905

ES02-63 Adding Value with Small-Scale Fruit and Vegetable Processing, Betty S. King, University of Kentucky, KY, \$41,965

ES02-64 Calhoun Fields Laboratory: A Program for Experiential Training in Organic Farming Systems, Geoff Zehnder, Clemson University, SC, \$49,926



Graduate Student Grants Awarded

GS02-012 Optimizing Water Use for Three Old World Bluestems in the Texas High Plains, Vivian G. Allen/Dirk Philipp, Texas Tech Univ., TX, \$10,000

GS02-013 Developing a System to Produce Organic Plug Transplants for Organic Strawberry Production, Danial J. Cantliffe/Ashwin V. Paranipe, University of Florida, FL, \$9,500

GS02-014 Streambank Erosion Associated with Grazing Activities in Kentucky, Dwayne R. Edwards/Carmen T. Anderson, Univ. of Kentucky, \$9,836

GS02-015 Evaluation and Characterization of Reaction Products from Ozonated Aflatoxin Contaminated Corn, Joan M. King/Alfredo D. Prudente, Jr., Louisiana State Univ., LA, \$10,000

GS02-016 Collaborative Learning by Family Farmers: A Participatory Model of Agriculture Alternatives, John M. Peters/Robin A. Fazio, The University of Tennessee, TN, \$9,540

GS02-017 Velvet Bean as a Biological Control of Weeds and Pathogens, Sharad C. Phatak/Nicole L. Martini, UGA Coastal Plain Exp Station, \$8,000

GS02-018 Analysis of a Biological Control Strategy and its Potential in a Pest Management Program in Florida Cabbage, Stuart Reitz/Nathan Herrick, Florida A&M Univ., FL, \$10,000

GS02-019 Chemical Ecology of *Microtheca ochroloma*, Mickie Swisher/Kristen Bowens, Univ. of Florida, \$3,057

Producer Grants Awarded



FS02-145 Cotton Mill Farmer's Market – Linking the Community to the Farm, Meredith Barr (Carroll Co. Farmland & Rural Preservation Partnership), GA, \$15,000



FS02-146 Farmscaping Organic Broccoli to Increase Beneficial Insect Numbers, Charles Church (Watauga River Farms), NC, \$9,855

FS02-147 Appropriate-Scale, Inexpensive Cheese Vat for the Farmstead Cheesemaker, Vicki H. Dunaway, VA, \$6,430

FS02-148 Market Enhancement and Outreach Project, Janet Eaton (Farm & Garden Market Cooperative Asso.), KY \$12,800

FS02-149 Ultraviolet Light Absorbing Films and Nets for Insect and Disease Control in an Organic Greenhouse, Jim Gibbons, FL, \$8,010



FS02-150 Fixed Film Anerobic Methane Digester, Michael H. Green, OK, \$9,184

FS02-151 Increasing Soil Organic Matter in Citrus Soils, Jim Hoffmann, TX, \$8,112



FS02-152 Biodiverse-Organic Christmas Tree Production, Mark Lackey, NC, \$9,333

FS02-153 Making Honey Bee Pollination More Sustainable by Reducing Miticides to Control Varroa Mites, Wyatt A. Mangum, VA, \$9,340

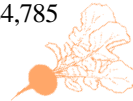
FS02-154 Scott County Hair Sheep Faire, Martha Mewbourne, VA, \$3,068

FS02-155 Cooperating for Success: Building a Value-added Marketing Cooperative for Advantage in the Marketplace, Paul Miller (Appalachian Spring Cooperative), TN, \$15,000

FS02-156 Winter and Summer Cover Crops for Organic Pecan Production, Kim M. Moore, GA, \$9,766, GA

FS02-157 Northern Tennessee Farmers' Association Cooperative Farmers' Market Project, Michael Osborne (Northern Tennessee Farmer's Association Cooperative), TN, \$13,755

FS02-158 Winter Green Manure Crops for Organic Vegetable Production in the Tidewater Virginia Region, J. W. Phillips, VA, \$4,785



FS02-159 Improving Stocking and Insect Control Procedures to Increase Survival of Saltwater Shrimp Post-larvae in Inland Ponds, David Teichert-Coddington (Greene Prairie Aquafarm), AL, \$6,667

FS02-160 Small Dairy Business Plan For On-Farm Mini-Processing Facility, Sam Ward, AR, \$9,980



On-Farm Research Grants

OF02-001 Production, Marketing and Financial Analysis of Seedless Watermelons Growing in Tobacco Transplant Greenhouses, Paul Chambers, Virginia Tech CES, \$12,118, VA

OF02-002 Specialty Flowering Bulbs as a Sustainable Alternative Crop for Tobacco Farmers in Middle Tennessee, Stephen Garton, Univ of Tennessee, TN, \$14,910

OF02-003 Central Alabama Soil Quality Improvement for Cotton Growers, Leonard Kuykendall, AL, \$2,116

OF02-004 Incorporation of Triticale/Clover into Existing Grazing Management Systems to Enhance Beef Cattle Production Sustainability, Perry Mobley, AL, \$967

OF02-005 Direct Marketing Assessment for the Potential of Ethnic Crops, Jason D. Murray, VA, \$9,775

OF02-006 Evaluation and Maintenance of Sustainable Systems for Alfalfa Production and Marketing Strategies on Coastal Plain Soils, Larry Redmon, Texas A&M Univ., Agricultural Research and Education Center, TX, \$15,000

OF02-007 Developing Sustainable Internal Parasite Control Programs for Small Ruminants, Joseph P. Tritschler, Virginia State University, VA, \$14,995



Sustainable Community Innovation Grants

CS02-001 Agri-tourism: A Strategy Toward Sustainable Farm, Business, Family and Community, D. Brian Calhoun (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University), VA, \$8,230

CS02-002 Downtown Farmers' Market– Linking the Farm to the Community, Rob Gordy (Carroll County Farmland and Rural Preservation Committee), \$8,600

CS02-003 Making the Connection: Enhancing Agricultural Understanding in an Urbanizing Area, Suzanne Heflin (Prince William County Farm Tour Inc.), VA, \$7,300

CS02-004 Homegrown, From Our Farms to Your Table: Growing a Farmers' Cooperative in East Tennessee, Steve Hodges (Jubilee Project, Inc.), \$6,436

CS02-005 SE North Carolina Agri-Tourism Corridor Development, Nancy Hunt (The Conservation Fund), NC, \$7,000

CS02-006 Keen on Beans: Establishing Edamame Awareness and Demand for Kentucky Consumers and Growers, Martha W. Lee (Daviss County Extension Service), University of Kentucky, \$8,712

CS02-007 Pioneering the Way to the Future, Dianne Neal (Okemah Chamber of Commerce) OK, \$6,900

CS02-008 Test Marketing of New Label in Southwest Florida for USA Grown /Living Wage Produce, Richard J. Nogaj (Harvest for Humanity, Inc.), FL, \$5,200

SCI grants are co-funded by the Southern Rural Development Center

Which SARE grant program for you?

Southern SARE administers six separate grant programs, each with its own priorities and audiences. The process begins with the release of calls for proposals for each of the programs. The SSARE web site www.griffin.peachnet.edu/sare is the quickest way to receive the calls for proposals as soon as they are released. If you prefer a mailed copy of any of the calls for proposals, contact Paige Patton at (770) 412-4787 or ppatton@griffin.peachnet.edu

Research and Education Projects generally are conducted by interdisciplinary, multi-institutional, and often, multi-state research teams coordinated by a principal investigator from a non-governmental organization, university or governmental agency. These projects include farmers as participants.

2002

June Call for 2003 preproposals released

August 2003 Preproposals due

2003

February Full proposals due

March Full proposals reviewed

April Administrative Council announces grant awards

Professional Development Program Projects train agricultural information providers in sustainable agriculture techniques and concepts.

2002

June Call for 2003 preproposals released

August 2003 Preproposals due

2003

February Full proposals due

March Full proposals reviewed

April Administrative Council announces grant awards

On-Farm Research Projects are conducted by agricultural professionals such as extension agents, NRCS and/or NGO personnel who currently work with farmers and ranchers. Cooperators must include at least three producers at all stages of the project. Funded for a maximum of \$15,000 for up to two years of activities.

2002

September 15 Call for 2003 proposals released

2003

January 24 Proposals due

March Proposals reviewed

April Administrative Council announces grant awards

Producer Grant Projects are developed, coordinated and conducted by producers or producer organizations. These projects are generally located in one state, often on one farm. There is a \$10,000-limit for funding proposals submitted by an individual producer and a \$15,000-limit on proposals submitted by producer organizations.

2002

September 15 Call for 2003 proposals released

2003

January 24 Proposals due

March Proposals reviewed

April Administrative Council announces grant awards

Graduate Student Awards are intended for full-time graduate students (masters or Ph.D.) enrolled at accredited colleges and universities in the Southern Region. Up to \$10,000 will be awarded to each successful applicant for up to three years of project activities. The funds are paid directly to the university for use on the graduate student's project.

2002

May Call for 2003 proposal released

2003

January 8 Proposals due

April Administrative Council announces grant awards

Sustainable Community Innovation Projects link sound farm and nonfarm economic development with agricultural and natural resource management. Applicants may be farmers, ranchers, researchers, community organizations, environmentalists, ag and community development professionals, entrepreneurs, governmental and non-governmental organizations. Funded for a project maximum of \$10,000 for up to two years of activities.

2002

September Call for proposals released

November Proposals due

2003

Spring Awards announced

Producer vacancy on SARE Administrative Council

Hiu Newcomb of Potomac Vegetable Farms in Virginia is rotating off the Administrative Council after serving two terms, a total of six years. Nominations are being accepted until October 1 for a producer who has demonstrated sustainable agriculture expertise.

There are seven slots reserved for producers. Other producers currently serving on the AC raise cashmere goats, catfish, cattle, sugar cane, vegetables and fruit. While nominations are welcomed from anywhere in the southern region, they are encouraged from South Carolina, Texas, the Virgin Islands and Virginia, which otherwise will not be represented.

Since the AC is the governing body of Southern SARE, it depends on outstanding nominees to guide the program. Elected council members serve a three-year term, which can be renewed once for a total of six years. Duties include attending two council meetings each year, usually April and November. Each meeting is expected to last two days. Between meetings members may meet or participate in conference calls to accomplish committee work.



Hiu Newcomb does it all as a certified organic grower of a wide variety of vegetables, cut flowers, berries, and herbs. She also has about 125 laying hens. Crops are sold at the roadside farm stand, farmers' markets, a 100+ member CSA, and restaurants in the Washington DC metropolitan area.

You may nominate yourself or someone else. The criteria include:

- Experience in sustainable agriculture
- Demonstrated ability and willingness to help address sustainable agriculture needs and methods
- Ability to work effectively as team member dealing with contemporary issues facing agriculture

If you or someone you know meets the criteria and is willing to serve, a written nomination must be submitted. It should include:

- A statement of the nominee's ability to work collaboratively to address sustainable agriculture needs
- A description of the person's interest in and contributions to sustainable agriculture
- Confirmation of the nominee's consent to be nominated
- Demographic information (sex, type of farm, commodity interest, and contact information.

Mail the nomination to:

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