

# MINNESOTA FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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December 2008 Volume 22, No. 5

## A Note From The Board

Annette Gilbertson – Gilbertson Farms in Scandia, MN

Greetings from the Board.

WOW! What a fall! The warm weather and no rain on Saturdays sure had people visiting the farm for the Corn Maze and all the fall activities. We sure enjoyed all the visitors. We have closed for the season and Mark is busy trying to get the soybeans and corn in. The weather certainly has not been wonderful for the late fall field work. In fact, the weather this entire season has been relentless. We had such a cool wet spring, the instant hot and dry, and my goodness the hail this year. Have you seen what 30 minutes of hail does to a pepper field? If not, I hope you never do. You would have thought it was snowing in August. What would we do if we did not have Mother Nature to talk about?

By the time you read this Thanksgiving will have come and gone and everyone will be busy getting ready for the Holidays. As you are making plans for the holidays and the winter vacations, don't forget to put a couple of events on your 2009 Calendar.

- January 2, 2009 your Green Acres intent forms are due at your County Assessors office. If you have not received your forms and you are currently a part of the Green Acres Program make sure you contact your County Office. The changes for most are "HUGE" and the regulations are not the easiest to understand.
- January 22-23, 2009 is the MFVGA conference and trade show in St. Cloud. This is a great opportunity to visit with fellow growers you haven't seen for a while, talk to your seed dealer, and much more. We are just finalizing all the speakers for the conference and the banquet. I am personally very excited about the speakers and looking forward to seeing everyone.
- March 10, 2009 is the Minnesota Grown Conference.

As 2008 comes to a close I would like to wish everyone a very Happy Holiday. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in St. Cloud.

This year has been particularly difficult for the Gilbertson Family and I would like to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU to everyone for their support, words of encouragement and help.

## Mark Your Calendars

### Emergency Response Planning Workshop

December 17, 2008

Don Hansen VFW

Ham Lake, MN

(See details on page 16.)

### Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference and Trade Show

January 22 & 23, 2009

St. Cloud Civic Center

St. Cloud, MN

(See details on page 4 & 5.)

### Beginning Grower Workshops Your Future in Vegetable Production Starting an Apple Orchard

January 21, 2009

St. Cloud Civic Center

St. Cloud, MN

(See details on page 6.)

### Making & Marketing Jams & Jellies

January 21, 2009

St. Cloud Civic Center

St. Cloud, MN

(See details on page 15.)

### "Peddling Your Pickles Safely"

Plans are being finalized for spring workshops.

Details will be included

in the next MFVGA Newsletter.

## Higher Prices Means Adjusting Financial Strategies

By Sharon M. Danes, University of Minnesota Extension

Many of us are feeling the pinch of higher food costs and higher gasoline prices. The combination of these two cost increases is causing people to think about financial adjustment strategies that they and other family members might do.

There are four types of financial adjustment strategies that you might think about:

- Decrease money expenditures
- Increase or extend money income
- Increase household labor income
- Increase household management income

Some of these strategies directly involve money and others substitute other resources such as time and energy for money.

Decreasing money expenditures includes such activities as delaying purchases or using free entertainment and parks. Increasing and extending money income includes such things as working additional hours or trading services with a friend or another family.

Increasing household labor income occurs when you substitute your skills, time, and energy for money. For example, repairing clothes rather than throwing them away. Or, canning and freezing food you purchased in quantity for less, extending the dollars you have.

Increasing household management income is substituting time and skills to stretch your current income. You might plan spending carefully with a written spending plan. That plan works best if you include family members in its development. Or you might involve children in financial discussions to help cut costs.

One of the things you can do with children is to discuss with them what they would give up so that the money you have will last longer. This activity works best if everyone in the family indicates what it is they will be giving up, including Mom and Dad. Make a list of what each member identified and place it on the refrigerator for all to see. That way you can support each other in those plans to reduce costs.

You can obtain more cost-cutting and saving ideas through interactive assessments on [www.ruralmn.umn.edu](http://www.ruralmn.umn.edu) and click on "Reduced Income." You can discover your scores on all the types of financial strategies and see how you compare to others like you. You also can review "Ways to Save," a compilation of cost-saving measures used by others like you.

Sharon M. Danes is a family relations educator with University of Minnesota Extension.

## Are you "Peddling Your Pickles Safely?"

The "Peddling Your Pickles Safely" workshops are for people interested in processing and selling their home-canned foods at local farmers' markets. The "Pickle Bill," as passed by the Minnesota Legislature in 2004, has very specific requirements for products that can be sold.

These workshops will address the following "Pickle Bill" questions:

What food safety issues are critical from harvest to processing?

What is the Pickle Bill legislation?

What types of home canned foods meet the requirements?

Can your kitchen pass inspection on sanitation?

What is acceptable home food processing and equipment?

How do I select and document recipes?

How do I label my product?

What are the acid levels of vegetables, fruits and pickled products?

How do I use a pH meter for testing? What types of meters are there?

How do I calibrate a pH meter? How do I test my product?

These are important questions and each person who is selling home processed products must have current and accurate information on these topics. Conducting the workshops will be Deb Botzek-Linn, Carol Ann Burtness, Lou Ann Jopp and Dr. Joellen Feirtag, University of Minnesota Regional Extension Educators in Food Science. The importance of good agricultural practices from planting to harvest will also be discussed.

A separate workshop covering jams and jellies will be held January 21 in St. Cloud MN. More information can be found on page 15.

A brochure with complete information on the "Pickle" workshops will be mailed later this winter. Information will also be posted on the MFVGA website at [www.mfvga.org](http://www.mfvga.org). If you have any questions, please contact Marilyn Johnson at 763-434-0400.

The workshops are sponsored by the Minnesota Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, the University of Minnesota Extension Service and the USDA-Risk Management Agency. These institutions are equal opportunity providers.



**NOTICE TO  
NON-MEMBERS**

**In return for receiving the MFVGA newsletter, we ask a \$10 donation per year to cover printing and mailing costs.**

**Thank You!**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**If you no longer wish to receive our newsletter, please let us know.**

The MFVGA Newsletter is published five times a year (February, April, July, October and December) in cooperation with the University of Minnesota Extension Service and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Editorial office: MFVGA, c/o Marilyn Nysetvold Johnson, Exec. Coordinator, 15125 W. Vermillion Cir. NE, Ham Lake, MN 55304. Phone: 763-434-0400 Fax: 763-413-9585. Please address all correspondence, advertising and membership inquiries to MFVGA at the above address. Deadlines for future issues: The first day of the month preceding publication (For example: March 1st for the April issue).

The information in this MFVGA Newsletter is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Minnesota Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association is implied.

## Scholarships Available to Specialty Crop and Organic Growers

St. Paul, MN – Specialty crop and organic producers in Minnesota can apply for scholarships to offset the cost of farm business management classes through a program offered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) and several partners. Applications are now being accepted for 2009.

MDA Agricultural Specialist Meg Moynihan says the scholarship program has been very successful since it began several years ago.

“In 2009, we’re expanding the scholarship program to more producers,” said Moynihan. “We especially want to reach all types of specialty crop growers as well as organic producers of alternative crops like amaranth, buckwheat, flax and other less common field crops.”

The scholarships defray farmers’ cost to enroll in farm business management education programs, offered by schools in the Minnesota State College and University (MnSCU) system. Farmers in the program work one-on-one with management instructors, learning to keep and use quality records to make sound business management decisions. They receive comprehensive year-end analyses that can be used for tax preparation, discussions with lenders and enterprise planning. Strict confidentiality measures protect the privacy of both participants and their information.

Minnesota farmers eligible for the scholarships include all organic producers as well as non-organic specialty crop growers – including nurseries, greenhouses and fruit, vegetable, and floriculture producers. To learn more about this opportunity, see the brochure at [www.mda.state.mn.us/food/organic/bizmgmt.htm](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/food/organic/bizmgmt.htm) or call Meg Moynihan at 651-201-6616. The number of scholarships is limited, so it’s best to apply early.

Scholarship funds are provided by the United States Department of Agriculture Risk Management Agency and the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant program. In addition to MnSCU, other partners include the University of Minnesota Center for Farm Financial Management, Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota, and Organic Crop Improvement Association Minnesota Chapter #1.

## MFVGA Policy on Conference Registration Cancellations and Refunds:

MFVGA will refund registration fees for the 2009 Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference in full if the MFVGA office is notified before Friday, January 16, 2009. If the MFVGA office is notified after January 16, 2009, but before Monday, January 19, 2009, 75% of the registration amount will be refunded. No refund will be issued if registrations are cancelled after Monday, January 19, 2009.

## Strawberry & Raspberry Plants

MFVGA is planning a group order of strawberry and raspberry plants for the 2009 growing season. If you are on the berry plant order mailing list, you will automatically receive additional information and an order form for the coming year. We are currently working on the pricing and forms will be sent out as soon as details are finalized. Please note the deadlines and place your orders early to guarantee that you will be able to get the plants you request. Certain varieties have been selling out very early.

If you would like to be added to the berry order mailing list, call the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400 or send an e-mail to [mfvga@msn.com](mailto:mfvga@msn.com).



## Conference Scholarships Available

A limited number of scholarships are available for the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference to help defray the registration fees for commercial growers and students attending the Thursday and Friday educational sessions. Scholarships may also be requested for the Beginning Grower workshops to be held on Wednesday, January 21, 2009. The MFVGA scholarship fund was established with dollars from the USDA-Risk Management Agency and our Special Crops Grant. Scholarships cannot be applied to trade show admittance.

Scholarships will be used to pay a portion of the registration fee. Scholarships will be available to commercial fruit and vegetable growers who have not attended the conference in the last five years. A limited number of scholarships are also available to high school and college students currently studying horticultural science.

Completed scholarship applications for the 2009 conference must be received in the MFVGA office and approved before January 9, 2009. Scholarship applications will not be accepted with at-the-door registrations. Scholarships will be awarded to qualified applicants on a first-come, first-served basis.

For additional information and an application form, contact the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400 or e-mail your request to [mfvga@msn.com](mailto:mfvga@msn.com).

# Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference January 22 & 23, 2009

Sponsored by  
The Minnesota Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association  
in cooperation with the  
University of Minnesota Extension Service  
Minnesota Department of Agriculture  
USDA – Risk Management Agency

## Thursday morning, January 22, 2009

### Opening Session

- 8:45 – 9:00 Welcome & Announcements  
9:00 – 10:00 WeedCast – Frank Forcella, Research Agronomist, USDA-ARS Soils Lab, Morris, MN  
10:00 – 10:30 Break to the Trade Show  
10:30 – 11:15 Impact of the New Farm Bill on Fruit & Vegetable Producers – Phyllis Framstad, Stearns County Farm Service Agency  
11:15 – 12:00 Grower Profile – Gilbertson Farms, Scandia, MN  
12:00 – 1:15 Lunch – Trade Show Area

**Send your registration form in today for the  
Upper Midwest Regional  
Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference.**

*Registrations received before  
December 31, 2008  
qualify for the “Early Bird” Drawing –  
A gift certificate for  
a night at the Kelly Inn.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

### TRADE SHOW HOURS:

Thursday – Jan. 22: 8:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.  
Friday – Jan. 23: 8:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



## Thursday afternoon, January 22, 2009

### Session I: Berries and New Fruits

- 1:15 – 2:15 Year in Review – Grower Participation  
2:15 – 3:00 Grower Profile  
3:00 – 3:30 Break to the Trade Show  
3:30 – 4:30 Apricots in Minnesota? – Frank Forcella, Research Agronomist, USDA-ARS Soils Lab, Morris, MN

### Session II: Sweet Corn

- 1:15 – 1:45 New Herbicides for Sweet Corn Production – Dr. Roger Becker, University of Minnesota – Dept. of Agronomy & Plant Genetics  
1:45 – 2:15 Sweet Corn Earworm Update – Dr. Bill Hutchison, University of Minnesota – Dept. of Entomology  
2:15 – 2:45 Multi-state Fungicide Trials for Improved Emergence – Dr. Vince Fritz, University of Minnesota – Dept. of Horticultural Science  
2:45 – 3:15 Break to the Trade Show  
3:15 – 4:15 Structured Roundtable on Fertilizers and Diseases – Dr. Carl Rosen & Michelle Grabowski, University of Minnesota

### Session III: High Tunnel Production

- 1:15 – 2:00 Identifying the Five Major Critical Control Points – Terry Nennich, University of Minnesota Extension  
2:00 – 2:30 Fertility Research – Dr. Carl Rosen, University of Minnesota – Dept. of Soil, Water & Climate  
2:30 – 3:00 Break to the Trade Show  
3:00 – 3:45 Raspberry Research at Grand Rapids and Morris – Dr. Emily Hoover, Steve Poppe and Dr. Shengrui Yao, University of Minnesota  
3:45 – 4:15 Nutraceutical Crop Production – Dr. Vince Fritz, U of M – Dept. of Horticultural Science  
4:15 – 4:45 Management Issues with Different Fruits & Vegetables – Terry Nennich, Carl Rosen, Karl Foord and Jerry Wright, University of Minnesota

### Session IV: Alternative Energy

- 1:15 – 2:15 Is Solar Energy an Option for You?  
2:15 – 2:45 Biomass Gasification – Michael Sparby, Agricultural Utilization Research Institute (AURI)  
2:45 – 3:15 Break to the Trade Show  
3:15 – 3:45 Other AURI Renewable Energy Projects – Michael Sparby  
3:45 – 4:30 Conservation Tips – Phil Smith, Energy Specialist, Minnesota Office of Energy Security  
4:45 MFVGA Business Meeting  
5:15 Social Hour in the Trade Show Area  
6:30 Minnesota Grown Banquet  
Speaker: Craig Edwards – How Meteorology Affects Your Crops

## Friday morning, January 23, 2009

### Opening Session:

8:00 – 9:30 Good Agricultural Practices Are Good Business – Elizabeth “Betsy” Bihn, National GAPs Program Coordinator, Cornell University

### 9:30 – 10:00 Break to the Trade Show

### Session I: Berry Session

10:00 – 10:30 Annual Strawberry Production Update – Steve Poppe & Emily Tepe, University of Minnesota  
10:30 – 11:00 To be determined  
11:00 – 11:30 Using Row Covers in Strawberry Production  
11:30 – 12:00 Variety Updates

### Session II: Asparagus – Advanced Production

10:00 – 10:30 Diseases and Hidden Costs – Michelle Grabowski, University of Minnesota Extension  
10:30 – 11:00 Developing a Fertility Plan – Peter Bierman, University of Minnesota – Dept. of Soil, Water & Climate  
11:00 – 11:30 Tillage Management Options in Highly Productive Operations – Terry Nennich, University of Minnesota Extension  
11:30 – 12:00 Keeping Your Production Fields Weed-Free – Dr. Bernard Zandstra, Michigan State University

### Session III: Specialty Crops

10:00 – 10:45 Minor Root Crops and Health Benefits – Veronica Justen, University of Minnesota  
10:45 – 11:15 Garlic Update – Dr. Carl Rosen, University of Minnesota – Dept. of Soil, Water & Climate  
11:15 – 12:00 Critter Control and Alternative Fencing – Kathleen Koelbl-Crews, Minnesota DNR

### Session IV: Apple Session

9:45 – 10:15 Year in Review – Grower Participation  
10:15 – 10:45 Abandoned Orchards – Dr. Thaddeus McCamant, Northland Community & Technical College  
10:45 – 11:30 Honeycrisp Susceptibility to Black Rot – Michelle Grabowski, University of Minnesota Extension  
11:30 – 12:00 Secondary and Minor Pests in Apples – Dr. Thaddeus McCamant, Northland Community & Technical College

### 12:00 – 1:15 Lunch in the Trade Show Area

Note: As far as we know, this educational program will be presented as printed. However, there may be some changes. If you have any questions, call the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400. Program updates can also be found on the MFVGA website at [www.mfvga.org](http://www.mfvga.org).

## Friday afternoon, January 23, 2009

### Session I: Developing Local Markets

1:15 – 1:45 What Is Local?  
1:45 – 2:45 Wholesale Markets – Panel of buyers and producers  
2:45 – 3:00 Break  
3:00 – 4:00 Insurance, Formal Agreements & Getting Paid  
4:00 – 4:30 Pay-Per-Click Advertising: What is it and how can it benefit my farm? – Paul Hugunin  
Minnesota Department of Agriculture

### Session II: Pumpkins

1:15 – 1:45 Fertility Management Strategies – Peter Bierman, University of Minnesota – Dept. of Soil, Water & Climate  
1:45 – 2:15 Weed Control Options – Dr. Bernard Zandstra, Michigan State University  
2:15 – 2:45 Odd Ball Varieties  
2:45 – 3:00 Break  
3:00 – 3:30 Managing Powdery Mildew through Variety Selection – Terry Nennich, University of Minnesota Extension  
3:30 – 4:00 Time to Irrigate? – Jerry Wright, University of Minnesota – WCROC  
4:00 – 4:30 Economics of Pumpkin Production – Dr. Karl Foord, University of Minnesota Extension

### Session III: Food Safety Audits

1:15 – 4:30 Introduction to Developing Your Own Food Safety Plan and Preparing for a Food Safety Audit – Michele Schermann, University of Minnesota and Harley Olinske, Jr., Minnesota Department of Agriculture

### Session IV: Tomatoes & Peppers

1:15 – 3:00 Structured Roundtable – Consumer State Fair Survey – Dr. Chengyan Yue, University of Minnesota – Dept. of Horticultural Science  
Hot Peppers  
Weed Management – Dr. Bernard Zandstra, Michigan State University





**Beginning Grower Workshops**  
**January 21, 2009**  
**St. Cloud Civic Center – St. Cloud, MN**



Sponsored by the  
**Minnesota Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association**  
**University of Minnesota Extension Service**  
**USDA – Risk Management Agency**  
**Community Outreach & Assistance Partnership Program**

The Beginning Grower Workshops are designed for people thinking about starting or expanding a commercial vegetable operation and individuals considering starting an apple orchard. The workshops are for people with no experience in farming, people transitioning from other types of agricultural production and people already in commercial production who are looking for a good review of the basics.

**Your Future in Vegetable Production – 8:00 a.m. – 5:45 p.m.**  
**(Lunch is included in registration.)**

- Planning Your Future in Vegetable Production
- Being a Business – Marketing, accounting, licenses, permits, tax numbers, etc.
- Location, Location, Location
- Principles of Raised Beds, Mulches, and Rowcovers
- Soils 101
- Water When You Need It
- Disease Identification 101
- Dealing with Insects
- Weed Biology
- Getting Safe & High Quality Product to Market
- Managing the Logistics of Multiple Crops and Markets – Grower Panel

**Starting an Apple Orchard**  
**1:00 pm – 4:30 pm**

- Site selection
- Understanding Rootstocks
- Apple Varieties
- Planting Methods
- Pruning and Training

(More information on the apple workshop can be found on page 15.)

More information on the topics and speakers will be included in the next newsletter.

The Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference & Trade Show will be held on Thursday and Friday, January 22 & 23, 2009 at the St. Cloud Civic Center. We encourage you to review the schedule in this newsletter and attend those sessions also. Scholarships are available for the Beginning Grower Workshops and the main conference. For more information contact the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400 or [mfvga@msn.com](mailto:mfvga@msn.com).

**Beginning Grower Workshop Registration Form:**

Names of Additional Participants:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Farm Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Method of payment:**

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

- Check (payable to MFVGA)
- VISA     MASTERCARD

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ V Code \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetable Workshop \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$80 = \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Apple Workshop \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$50 = \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form with payment to:

**MFVGA**  
**15125 W. Vermillion Cir. NE**  
**Ham Lake, MN 55304**

There will be an additional \$5 per person charge for those registering at the door.

# Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference & Trade Show

January 22 & 23, 2009 – St. Cloud, MN

All educational sessions will be held at the St. Cloud Civic Center.

Sponsored by: *Minnesota Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, University of Minnesota Extension Service, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, USDA-Risk Management Agency, Community Outreach & Assistance Partnership Program*



Attendee's Name (Please print)

Attendee's Name (Please print)	Full Registration Conference & Trade Show (Thursday & Friday) January 22 & 23			Thursday Night Banquet	One-day Registration Circle One			Trade Show Only	Total
	First member* from farm/company	Each additional mbr. from farm/comp.	Non-member (Per person)		First member* from farm/company	Each additional mbr. from farm/comp.	Non-member (Per person)		
	\$85.00	\$25.00	\$160.00	\$25.00	\$65.00	\$25.00	\$90.00	\$10.00	

\*Member registration rates are available to members of the MFVGA. Pre-registration is encouraged. There will be an additional \$10.00 per person charge for those registering at the door. Registration forms must be received in the MFVGA office by Friday, January 16th to be considered pre-registered.

Individual or Farm Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

What is your primary crop?  Vegetables  Berries  Apples  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Thursday and Friday registration includes admittance to all educational programs, trade show and a copy of the *Proceedings* book. It does not include the Thursday banquet. Trade show only registrations do not include admittance to the educational sessions or a copy of the *Proceedings* book.

TOTAL ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate method of payment:

Check (payable to MFVGA)  VISA®  MASTERCARD®

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ V Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form with payment to:

MFVGA  
 15125 W. Vermillion Cir., NE, Ham Lake, MN 55304

## WeedCast

An easy-to-use web-based model for predicting weed emergence on your farm

WeedCast is a computer model that simulates the timing of emergence of weeds, as well as the growth of weed seedlings after they emerge. The model can be used on any farm in Minnesota and surrounding states and provinces. It requires that the user supply local weather data and some simple information on soils. The weather data can come from the weather station nearest the farm or directly from the farm itself. Mandatory weather data are simple: only daily minimum and maximum air temperatures and daily rainfall. Optional data include average daily soil temperature measured at 2" depth. The model internally calculates soil temperature based on air temperature and soil information, but it works better if the user supplies the optional measured soil temperature data. The model also internally calculates soil water stress in the upper 2" of soil based upon rainfall and measured or simulated soil temperature.

Once soil temperature and soil water stress are calculated by WeedCast, they are combined into a single variable called "hydro-thermal time" or HTT. This is just like growing degree days, except that it also includes the effects of water stress. Fortunately, germination and emergence of each weed species respond to HTT uniquely, but consistently. Thus, if HTT is calculated correctly, it can predict the timing of emergence of any of several weed species equally well in any field in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Manitoba and the Dakotas. Accurate predictions of the timing and extent of weed emergence on a daily basis in the spring and early summer allow growers to better time their herbicide applications as well as mechanical weed control tactics. These predictions can be made by WeedCast, which is easy to use, and can be downloaded at no cost from [www.weedcast.net](http://www.weedcast.net).

Frank Forcella, Research Agronomist at the USDA-ARS Soils Lab in Morris, MN, will talk about how area fruit and vegetable producers can use WeedCast to predict weed emergence during the Opening Session at the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference on January 22, 2009. Frank Forcella will also share information on some new projects they've been working on. The conference schedule can be found on pages 4 and 5.

## Elizabeth Bihn, Program Coordinator for the National GAPs Program to Speak at Conference

Elizabeth Bihn is a Senior Extension Associate in the Department of Food Science at Cornell University. Betsy received her B.S. in Zoology from Ohio State University and her M.S. in Horticulture from the University of Florida. Since 1999, she has been the program coordinator for the National Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) Program. The goal of the National GAPs Program is to reduce microbial risks to fresh fruits and vegetables through a comprehensive education and extension program for growers and farm workers. The program has produced over 10 GAPs publications including the award winning *Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower's Guide* and *Fruits, Vegetables and Food Safety: Health and Hygiene on the Farm*. These publications were created to assist with understanding and implementing GAPs on farms and in packinghouses and have become standard teaching materials throughout the US. Betsy has conducted many food safety workshops throughout the U.S., as well as internationally.

## Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference & Trade Show

St. Cloud Civic Center, St. Cloud, MN  
January 22 & 23, 2009

### Beginning Grower Workshops: Your Future in Vegetable Production Starting An Apple Orchard

St. Cloud Civic Center, St. Cloud, MN  
January 21, 2009

### Making and Marketing Jams and Jellies

St. Cloud Civic Center, St. Cloud, MN  
January 21, 2009

Accommodations are available at:

### Best Western – Kelly Inn 320-253-0606

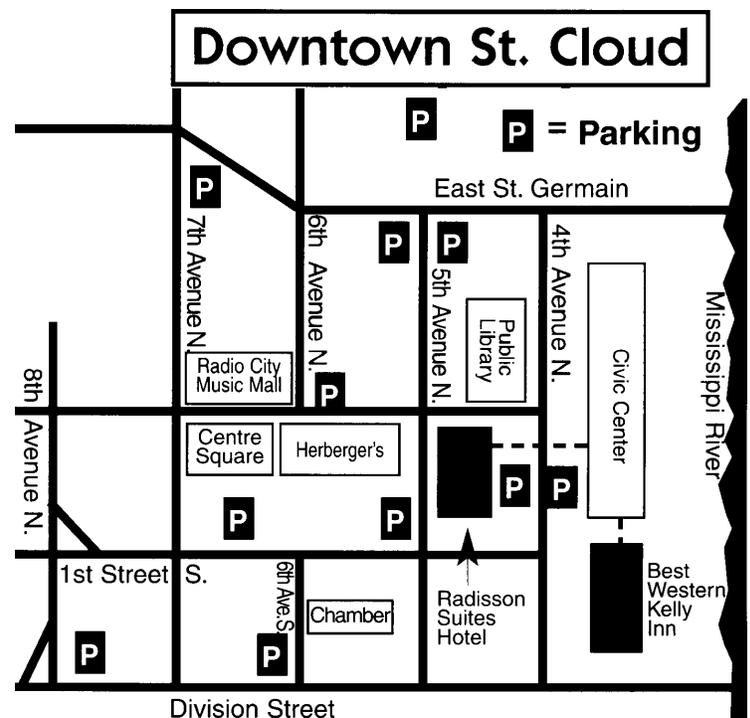
Single Rate - \$78 Double Rate - \$84

There is direct access to the Civic Center from the Best Western-Kelly Inn.

Mention "Minnesota Fruit & Vegetable Growers" to receive conference room rates.

### The Radisson Suites Hotel 320-654-1661

The Radisson Suites Hotel is connected by a skywalk to the St. Cloud Civic Center.



## Craig Edwards to Speak at Banquet

Craig Edwards is a retired chief meteorologist of the National Weather Service located in Chanhassen, Minnesota. He is currently providing daily weather coverage on Minnesota Public Radio. His background includes service as deputy meteorologist in charge, lead forecaster and warning preparedness specialist at the National Weather Service in Indianapolis, Inc. He has won dozens of meteorological service awards, has authored nine published articles on forecasting and has made numerous appearances on CBS and ABC National Evening News, CNN and the Weather Channel.

Watch for more information on Craig Edwards in the next newsletter. This will not be a 'dry' talk about the weather, so plan to attend the banquet on Thursday, Jan. 22, 2009.



## Food Safety is Good Business.

The safety of fresh fruits and vegetables impacts consumers as well as EVERYONE who grows and harvests fresh produce. When a foodborne illness associated with fresh produce happens, it impacts the entire fruit and vegetables industry. Although you may have been growing fresh produce for years and never have had a food safety problem, you still need to be aware of how outbreaks have occurred and the impact they may have on your business even though you were not involved. Foodborne illness associated with fresh produce happens as highlighted by the *E. coli* O157:H7 outbreaks in spinach in 2006 and this year's *Salmonella* outbreak in tomatoes (or was it peppers or was it cilantro?). Many buyers demand a food safety/GAPs audit of any farm that is supplying them fresh produce. Being aware and being prepared will keep you competitive and productive. Come join other fresh produce growers from Minnesota and the Upper Midwest to learn about Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), food safety, and how to keep the fresh produce industry strong.

Join Elizabeth Bihn for the Friday morning Opening Session on January 23, 2009 for an engaging discussion of how good food safety practices are good business and how incorporating Good Agricultural Practices can protect your business and help you prepare for the future.

## Biomass Gasification

Taken from the AgInnovation Update, Nov. 2008

Roseau, Minn. - A project in Minnesota's northland is attempting to take biomass into entirely new places.

Gasification technology will be used to convert biomass to fertilizer for a demonstration project in Roseau. Biomass will be gasified and the hydrogen from the resulting syngas will be precipitated through a catalyst to produce ammonia, which can in turn be returned to the soil to increase nitrogen content. The technology has been used to convert coal to ammonia, but it's not been done on a near-commercial scale with biomass.

"The first phase of this project is essentially to prove the concept works," says Michael Sparby, AURI project development director. "It will demonstrate hydrogen gas cleanup and create a research platform to test hydrogen to ammonia or renewable fertilizer from biomass."

Sparby says the gasifier in Roseau will be powered using local biomass sources like grass seed screenings and straw from rye, wheat and barley. A 100 kilowatt unit will be built and installed in Roseau with the capacity to burn about 1,500 tons of biomass per year - a fairly small system, but one large enough to prove the concept works. A one megawatt unit could consume over 18,000 tons of biomass per year and produce more than 8,000 tons of ammonia.

"If we can prove it works technically and efficiently on a smaller scale, we could increase the size to provide fertilizer to a regional area," Sparby adds. "It would then be feasible to place similar units around the state to provide nitrogen. The result would be a fertilizer source from locally-produced materials that is equal to or cheaper than fossil-fuel based fertilizer, and it would be carbon neutral."

Mayor Jeff Pelowski was among a group of Roseau's economic development authority who heard Sparby deliver a presentation in Williams, Minnesota to produce electricity from grass seed screenings. The group wondered about the potential for doing something similar in Roseau to produce either electricity or fertilizer.

The gasification system is being built to determine the engineering and economic feasibility of the biomass to fertilizer concept. Once the demonstration portion of the project is complete, the system will be used to provide electrical power to the elementary and high schools in Roseau.

"We are looking at this as an economic development project - the beginning of something larger," Pelowski notes. "The feasibility evaluation will be important to show if this works to produce either fertilizer or electricity. Either way there is potential for long-term development."

Sparby expects the gasifier to be doing test burns by November of 2009.

Michael Sparby will be discussing this project at the 2009 Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference in January along with other renewable energy projects that the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute has been involved in. The program schedule can be found on pages 4 and 5.



in Rochester on January 22, and at the WCROC in Morris on February 5th. We expect to add one additional date for Part I of the presentation later this winter. More information is available in the members section of [www.minnesotagrown.com](http://www.minnesotagrown.com).

### **Regional Media Partners Added for 2009**

With the goal of increasing distribution of the *Minnesota Grown Directory* outside of the metro area, we are forging partnerships with several outstate media outlets. We are providing them with at least 5,000 copies of their own customized edition of the Minnesota Grown Directory in exchange for airtime. We hope to add five or six regional radio station partners interested in this arrangement similar to what we did this year with KAXE radio from Brainerd/Grand Rapids/Bemidji. So far, we've reached agreement with Pioneer Public TV in Appleton and 98 Country (98.1 FM, WJJO) in St. Cloud. We expect to add similar partnerships in Rochester, Fargo/Moorhead and Duluth in the next month or two.

### **Minnesota Grown Label Satisfies COOL**

Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) is now required for most perishable agricultural commodities including fruits and vegetables. State identity logos like "Minnesota Grown" do satisfy COOL requirements so if you're labeling your produce labels or boxes with the Minnesota Grown logo you're in compliance. However, at least one retailer is requiring one of our members to add "Product of USA" to their labels. As a result, we've added a new laminated card with the Minnesota Grown logo and the "Product of USA" statement. Like all of our promotional items, these signs are free to members and retailers. Minnesota Grown members can order the items on-line at [www.minnesotagrown.com](http://www.minnesotagrown.com) (click on the blue "members" box) or by calling Jessica at 651-201-6469. For more information about COOL you can visit [www.ams.gov](http://www.ams.gov)

### **Marketing Education Opportunities**

*National Marketing Expert to Headline the Annual Minnesota Grown Marketing Conference:* In partnership with the Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association, we've booked David Stillman, an internationally acclaimed expert on generational marketing as our keynote speaker for the annual Minnesota Grown Marketing Conference. Reserve Tuesday, March 10 on your calendars for this exciting presentation that will be held at the Landscape Arboretum. Learn more about David Stillman on-line at [www.generations.com](http://www.generations.com) David Stillman will address the group in the morning. The afternoon includes three concurrent breakout sessions that will be repeated to allow attendees to attend 2 of the 3 breakout sessions. The three topics include: 1. Attracting and retaining good employees, 2. Tips for designing your ads, brochures and websites, and 3. The language of marketing – tips for making your ad copy come alive to attract more customers. Minnesota Grown members will receive registration materials in early January and the materials will also be posted in the "members" section of [www.minnesotagrown.com](http://www.minnesotagrown.com).

*Mike Lorentz to Conduct Direct Marketing Workshops for Livestock Producers:* The Minnesota Grown Program is sponsoring a series of workshops presented by Mike Lorentz, a nationally known authority on direct marketing of livestock. Part I of the series will be offered at the 2009 Minnesota Organic Conference in St. Cloud on January 16, at the Midwest Value Added Conference

### **New Cost Share for Retail Sampling**

Minnesota Grown has worked with the Minnesota Apple Growers Association for several years to offer a retail sampling cost share program for MAGA members who wish to sample their apples in grocery stores. That program is still available but we've added a similar opportunity for other Minnesota Grown products, including produce, wine, cheese and any other Minnesota Grown item that could be sampled in a retail grocery store, restaurant or liquor store. We can reimburse you for half the fees associated with the sampling event (except for the cost of the product being sampled). You must be a Minnesota Grown member to participate and you must be signed up for the cost share program before sampling can begin. Contact Paul Hugunin at 651-201-6510 or by e-mail at [paul.hugunin@state.mn.us](mailto:paul.hugunin@state.mn.us) for details.

### **Progress on Minnesota Grown Web Site**

Look for a February 1st launch for the newly remodeled Minnesota Grown website. The improved site will be much more user-friendly and give the customer options for finding locations based on proximity to a city or zip code. Listed farmers will be able to submit information (including a photo or logo) that will only appear in the on-line version of the Directory.

### **Carrie Featured on Cover of Runners World**

Minnesota Grown Spokesperson Carrie Tollefson continues to receive lots of local and national attention. Carrie was on the front cover of the October issue of *Runners World* (a national magazine) and featured in an article discussing the benefits of eating fresh locally grown foods. The magazine includes a full page photo of Carrie shopping at the Minneapolis Farmers' Market.

**MN Grown continued on page 11**

*Minnesota Grown information is supplied to MFVGA by Paul Hugunin (651-201-6510) and Brian Erickson (651-201-6539) from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Ag Marketing Services Division. If you have any questions about Minnesota Grown, contact them at the numbers listed above.*

Carrie has also been featured twice on KSTP-TV's Twin Cities Live program. She was an in-studio guest on the day of the Olympics opening ceremonies and they did a feature story from the State Fair highlighting local foods available at the fair. Her segment included a visit to the honey booth, roasted sweet corn booth, Dairy Goodness booth, and the Minnesota Grown booth. You can see all the Twin Cities Live segments featuring Carrie as well as other Twin Cities Live segments that feature Minnesota Grown members and the Minnesota Grown Directory by visiting [www.twincitieslive.com](http://www.twincitieslive.com).

## Order Minnesota Grown Bags Early

MFVGA is planning the seventh annual order of the Minnesota Grown bags. Originally designed to hold a dozen ears of sweet corn without tearing, more than one million of these bags have been used by a wide variety of Minnesota Grown producers to hold a wide variety of Minnesota Grown products.

The bags are a heavy 1 mil white plastic t-shirt style bag printed with a dark green "Minnesota Grown" logo that includes the "Fresh From Your Neighbor" tag line. The bags are 23" x 7" x 12" and the bags are recyclable. Bags must be ordered in increments of 1,000. The bags can be customized to include your farm name, market name, etc. The minimum for customized orders is 5,000 bags. You have the option of having the bags drop-shipped directly to you for an additional charge, or you can pick them up at a location in the Twin Cities area.

If you have ordered bags in the past or have expressed an interest in the bags, you will receive an order form. The order information will include pricing and ordering deadlines. Please note, in order to ensure timely delivery, your order must be received by the order deadline. This is a group order which means MFVGA compiles the individual orders and places one large order with the manufacturer in early spring. We plan for bags to arrive in early May. MFVGA does not stock an inventory of the bags, so if you are interested in using the bags next year, you need to place your order by the deadline.

Samples of the bags and order forms will be available at the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference and Trade Show at the St. Cloud Civic Center in St. Cloud, MN on January 22 & 23, 2009. Samples can also be requested from the MFVGA office. **You must be licensed to use the Minnesota Grown logo to order the bags.**

We are currently finalizing pricing, etc. If you would like more information, please contact the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400 or [mfvga@msn.com](mailto:mfvga@msn.com) and you will receive information when the details are available. If you contact the office via e-mail, please reference the "MN Grown bags" in the subject line.

MFVGA is also evaluating whether to expand the group order to include re-usable bags. See page 12 for more information. If you are interested in re-usable bags, please complete the form on page 12 and return it to the MFVGA office as soon as possible.

## MFVGA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION October 1, 2008 - September 30, 2009

Farm/Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Crops \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Crop \_\_\_\_\_

### Names of Direct Members:

(grower, spouse, employees, partners)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### MEMBERS

Gross Sales	Dues	
Up to \$25,000	\$ 75.00	
\$25,000 - \$75,000	125.00	
\$75,000 - \$225,000	225.00	
Over \$225,000	325.00	\$ _____

Direct membership includes a subscription to one of the following periodicals. Please indicate which publication you would like to receive. Choose one.

- \_\_\_\_\_ American Fruit Grower
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Fruit Growers News
- \_\_\_\_\_ American Vegetable Grower
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Vegetable Growers News

### ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:

(Dues are \$25.00 per year.)

Associate members are related agri-business firms, educators, and suppliers. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions or gifts to MFVGA are not tax deductible as charitable contributions; however, they may be tax deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses.

### MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO MFVGA

Mail to: MFVGA  
c/o Marilyn Nysetvold Johnson, Exec. Coordinator  
15125 W. Vermillion Cir. NE  
Ham Lake, MN 55304  
Questions? Call 763-434-0400

## MFVGA Evaluating Re-usable Minnesota Grown Bag

Are you interested in offering your customers a re-usable bag with the Minnesota Grown logo? For the past several years MFVGA has coordinated a group order of heavy-duty plastic bags with the Minnesota Grown logo. These bags have been very popular, but some of our customers, as well as some of their customers, are asking us to consider adding a re-usable bag. Before we add options to the group order, we need to know how many of you would be interested in ordering re-usable bags, how many bags you would be interested in, whether you would like to customize the bag with your own information or have just the Minnesota Grown logo and how much you might be willing to pay for the bags. Approximate size: 12.5" x 13.5" x 8.5"

Please return the form below if you are interested in a re-usable Minnesota Grown bag. We will use this information to evaluate whether to expand our group order. Producers who return this form will receive order information when it is available.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

How many bags would you plan to order? \_\_\_\_\_ (please use increments of 100)

Do you want to include your own farm/market information?

Yes  No

What type of bag would you prefer?

Canvas  Non-woven polypropylene  Polyester/PVC

What is your color preference?

Green with white logo  Tan with green logo

What would you be willing to pay **per bag**? Shipping, handling and charges to customize bags will be added.

Less than \$2.00  \$2.00  \$3.00  \$4.00  \$5.00

Would you prefer bags that contain recycled material?

Yes  No

Would you prefer bags that can be recycled?

Yes  No

If you currently order Minnesota Grown bags, would you order re-usable bags in addition to plastic bags?

Yes  No

Would you order re-usable bags instead of the plastic bags?

Yes  No

Please return this form to the MFVGA office at the address below as soon as possible. Thank you.

MFVGA  
15125 W. Vermillion Cir. NE  
Ham Lake, MN 55304

## NEW Farm Business Management Scholarship Program for Specialty Crop Growers!



*Apply now for 2009*

*Help your operation maintain a competitive edge*

- 80% scholarships for MN specialty crop growers
- Work 1:1 with a local instructor
- 85 instructors available statewide
- Focus on your own business goals
- Learn to maintain and use quality records to make sound business decisions

Brochure at [www.mda.state.mn.us/food/organic/](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/food/organic/) or request by calling Meg at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 651-201-6616. Funds are limited.

Offered by the **Minnesota Department of Agriculture** with funds from the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. These organizations are equal-opportunity providers.

Paid Notice

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This issue of the MFVGA Newsletter is sponsored, in part, by the USDA – Risk Management Agency, Community Outreach and Assistance Partnership Program.

For more information on the Risk Management Agency visit their website at [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov).

Information on the Farm Service Agency can be found at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

# U of M GLEANINGS

**Dr. Cindy Tong**  
Dept. of Horticultural Science  
University of Minnesota

The University of Minnesota is having a hiring “pause”. All open positions throughout the system (Twin Cities, Crookston, Duluth, Morris, and Rochester) have to be examined and deemed essential before they can go forward. Two positions open in the Department of Horticultural Science will probably (IMHO) be considered essential – Department Head and Arboretum Director. By the time this newsletter goes to press, we might have a new Department Head. The department was asked to do an internal search for this position (a lot cheaper than an external one), and the only person who stepped up to the plate was Emily Hoover. Emily, whom many of you are familiar with, has been in the department first as a graduate student, then an assistant professor, associate professor, and now full professor. She has won numerous teaching awards, and is a multitasker. She teaches students; leads research on apple rootstocks, strawberry mulch trials, and high tunnel raspberry production; educates growers about fruit production; and serves on important University committees (she occasionally bends the ear of President Bruininks, and reminds him that there is still a campus in St. Paul). We thank Emily for throwing her hat into the ring.

In December, we will be interviewing candidates for the Arboretum Director position. Why should fruit and vegetable growers care about who the Arboretum Director will be? After all, isn't the Arboretum all about pretty gardens? The Arboretum does have pretty gardens, but it also encompasses the Horticultural Research Center, where Jim Luby and David Bedford keep their apple germplasm, Emily Hoover has some of her apple rootstock trials, Peter Hemstad and Jim Luby maintain their grape germplasm, and the enology laboratory tests grape varieties and wine making methods. Not only does the Arboretum Director need to understand how to bring in lots of people, supporters, and money to the Arboretum to keep the pretty gardens going, he will need to understand the importance of nurturing its ornamental plant germplasm and restoration projects, as well as the work at the Horticultural Research Center. Without that work, there would be no future winter hardy apple varieties to tempt consumers after they get tired of

Honeycrisp, Zestar!, and SweeTango. If some new disease or pest wipes out existing varieties (think of fruit versions of the potato famine), including rootstocks, there won't be any idea where to turn to for resistant genetic material.

In 2009, the Department of Horticultural Science will also lose Joe Sowkinos, who is based in East Grand Forks and researches cold-induced sweetening in potatoes; Laura Kalisch, our Administrative Director; and Anna Katharine Mansfield, our enologist. Like a lot of Minnesotans, the University will have to bite the economic bullet, and we are expecting another budget cut, this time of at least 10%, so it's not yet clear if we will be able to rehire these positions.

Regardless of budget cuts, we University folks are looking forward to new projects in 2009. Thanks to grant funding, you can look forward to New Year surveys (please fill them out!) asking about your knowledge of Good Agricultural Practices and reducing your costs in distributing and marketing product. The first survey is to help us develop an easy-to-use Minnesota-centric guide to Good Agricultural Practices, useful if you ever have to pass a farm audit, now required by some wholesalers (one of the topics at the 2009 conference). You will be able to volunteer to have us come and test your soil and manure, too, at no direct cost to you! The second survey, a student project, is to determine “if product aggregation or distribution could work within the local foods system”. Some of us are also looking forward to testing consumer ranking of SweeTango apples in comparison to other apple varieties. Raspberry high tunnel work will be ongoing at Morris and Grand Rapids, as well as high tunnel cabbage and nutraceutical research at Waseca, and a new project on garlic uptake of antibiotics from animal manure will be initiated at Staples.

## “Green Acres” Reminder

January 2, 2009.

Taxpayers must indicate the INTENT to the county assessor's office in writing of their desire to withdraw any land from Green Acres or grandfather their non-productive land into Green Acres. If you have questions about how the Green Acres changes impact you, contact your county assessor.

# Now is the Time to Organize Household Family Records

By Glenice Johnson, University of Minnesota Extension Service

As tax time approaches, people start gathering the documents and receipts necessary for filing income tax returns.

In some households, these papers can be found easily in organized home filing systems, while others search frantically through boxes, drawers, bags and vehicles. If you find yourself in the latter category, use tax time as an incentive to organize your important papers.

A well-organized record-keeping system offers the following benefits:

- Less time in preparing income tax returns, with receipts for deductions;
- Records and inventories help obtain insurance compensation or replacement of stolen/lost possessions if your home is damaged or burglarized;
- In emergency situations, organized records can help others locate documents for settling estates, filing claims and reducing stress;
- Records provide proof of ownership, satisfaction of debts and other transactions;
- Easier, faster financial management – budgets, bill paying, tracking of bank accounts and investments, and more.

Getting started can be overwhelming. Begin now by gathering all records and papers you have randomly stored. Sort them into categories: unpaid bills; receipts; insurance policies; retirement plans and/or investment accounts; and records for banking, real estate, vehicles, education, employment, medical, and legal documents.

Next, set up your record-keeping place. It can be a filing cabinet, a portable file box or accordion folders. Label one section “current files” for folders used regularly, such as unpaid bills, paid receipts, bank statements, credit card information, employment and benefit records.

Another section will be labeled “permanent files” for folders holding on-going records needed for reference and updates. These records include investments, property owned, loans, insurance policies, family health records, employment records (including benefits, retirement plans and Social Security), appliance manuals and warranties, income tax working papers, household inventory, copies of wills, power of attorney and other legal documents.

Finally, a “dead storage file” holds records more than three years old, such as income tax returns and records, property records and legal transactions/documents.

A safe deposit box is recommended as storage for papers that are difficult or expensive to replace. These include birth, marriage and death certificates, divorce decrees, wills, deeds, property abstracts, stock certificates, vehicle titles, military papers and passports.

Finally, develop an index or “road map” to your filing system, plus a list of contact people. Your index should include your employer, banker, attorney, insurance office, doctor and immediate family

contacts. Share your system with significant others so they can find information efficiently and effectively.

Additional resource materials are available on the Extension website, [www.extension.umn.edu/moneyeveryday](http://www.extension.umn.edu/moneyeveryday). Click on “Dollar Works.”

Glenice Johnson is a family resource management educator with the University of Minnesota Extension Service.

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## Learn How to Push the Limits of Minnesota's Growing Season

Sign up now for “Extend Your Zone – Expand Your Season” workshop

St. Paul, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) and the University of Minnesota Southwest Research and Outreach Center are offering a workshop to help Minnesota growers meet the increasing demand for locally grown food. The workshop will focus on lengthening the growing season and growing crops not normally grown in northern zones.

The workshop, Extend Your Zone – Expand Your Season, will feature Eliot Coleman, a nationally known grower who will share his expertise on how to select suitable crops, soil and fertility management, high tunnel construction and use, and timing of planting. Coleman has hosted The Learning Channel's TV series, *Gardening Naturally*, and has published three books, including *The New Organic Grower*.

Otter Tail County commercial gardener Gary Brever grows 50 varieties of fruits and vegetables for sale to customers in Alexandria, St. Cloud, Minneapolis and St. Paul. He says Coleman's books are required reading for interns working on his farm.

“*The New Organic Grower* was like a *Bible* for me during my first five years,” said Brever. “Eliot's books are essential for anyone interested in growing vegetables organically for market or for their own use. I'm excited to see that he's coming to St. Cloud.”

Extend Your Zone – Expand Your Season will be held Thursday, January 15, 2009 from 1:00 to 5:30 p.m. at the St. Cloud Civic Center in St. Cloud. A \$50 registration fee includes a copy of Coleman's latest book, *Winter Harvest Manual*.

In addition to the workshop, Coleman will keynote the two-day Minnesota Organic Conference, January 16-17, also at the St. Cloud Civic Center.

Information and registration materials for both events are available at [www.mda.state.mn.us/food/organic](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/food/organic) or by calling the MDA at 651-201-6012.

The workshop is underwritten by financial contributions from the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy Sow the Seeds Campaign, Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, Wedge Co-op, Organic Valley and University of MN Southeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnership.

## Beginning Grower Workshop: Starting an Apple Orchard

Minnesota has a proud history of growing apples for over 100 years in a climate that Horace Greeley referred to when he said "I would not live in Minnesota since you cannot grow apples there." Modern day apple growing has become much more complex than it was in the days of Johnny Appleseed, when it was just a matter of planting a few seeds and hoping for the best. Our climate poses special challenges that other areas don't have to face. However, the fruit breeding program at the University of Minnesota has developed 27 apple varieties that are suited to these conditions and with the basic information provided in this workshop (and lots of hard work) you may be able to join the ranks of apple growers who have proven Horace Greeley wrong.

This workshop will be aimed at new apple growers or those who are interested in becoming apple growers. It will focus on the basic information needed to grow apples in Minnesota. Some of the possible topics covered in the workshop are site selection, understanding rootstocks, apple varieties, planting methods, weed control and pruning and training.

The workshop will be led by David Bedford, an apple breeder and research scientist at the University of Minnesota. For the last 30 years David has been involved in the development and introduction of multiple fruit varieties including strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, pears, plums and apples. He has been involved with the development and introduction of five apple varieties: Honeycrisp, Zestar! SnowSweet, SweeTango and Frostbite.

## Featured Speaker: Dr. Bernard Zandstra

Dr. Bernie Zandstra is a professor at Michigan State University. He does research on weed control in fruit, ornamental and vegetable crops. Current projects include weed control alternatives for methyl bromide in herbaceous ornamental production, weed control in seedling Christmas trees, controlled flaming for weed control between rows of vegetables, reduced rates of herbicides in vegetable crops, and new herbicides for residual control in fruit crops.

Dr. Zandstra authors the Michigan Weed Control Guide for Vegetable Crops bulletin and the weed control section of the Michigan Fruit Management Guide. He also is Field Research Director of the IR-4 Center (National Program for Minor Use Registrations) at Michigan State University. Dr. Zandstra does weed control research on most vegetable crops, including asparagus, snapbean, carrot, celery, sweet corn, cruciferous crops, cucumber, herbs, lettuce, mint, onion, pepper, strawberry and tomato; also apple, blueberry, cherry, peach and raspberry.

Dr. Zandstra will be sharing his expertise during the Asparagus, Pumpkin and Tomato/Pepper sessions on Friday, January 23, 2009. See pages 4 and 5 for the complete schedule of educational sessions.

## Are You Thinking About Making & Marketing Jams & Jellies?

Did you know that some fruits won't jell? Do you know the difference between a "spread" and a "jam"? Why is rapid boiling important? Do I really have to follow directions? Can I triple the recipe and get done faster? Why didn't it set? What kind of label do I need if I want to sell my product?

Jams and jellies can be processed in the home and sold at farmers' markets and community events in Minnesota. If you sell your jam and jelly at farmers' markets or community events, we encourage you to attend the "Making and Marketing Jams and Jellies" workshop on Wednesday, January 21, 2009 at the St. Cloud Civic Center in St. Cloud, MN from 1:00 – 4:30 p.m.

This workshop will address the operational guidelines for the sale of jams and jellies, how to produce a quality product, food safety from harvest to process, home processing and equipment, labeling and documentation, cleanliness and sanitation.

The workshop will be led by Deb Botzek-Linn and Lou Ann Jopp, Food Science Educators with the University of Minnesota Extension.

The workshop is sponsored by the Minnesota Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association, University of Minnesota Extension and the USDA Risk Management Agency. These institutions are equal opportunity providers.

Registration Fee: \$25.00 per person  
Pre-registration is requested by January 14, 2009.

Registration Form:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Attendees:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Total number attending: \_\_\_\_\_ at \$25.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail registration form with check made payable to "MFVGA" to:  
MFVGA  
15125 W. Vermillion Cir. NE  
Ham Lake, MN 55304

# ERP Workshop

## Wednesday, December 17, 2008

Don Hansen VFW  
1438 Crosstown Blvd., Ham Lake, MN  
(Intersection of Hwy 65 and Crosstown Blvd.)

Registration – 9:00 am Workshop – 9:30 am – 3:30 pm  
Registration fee: \$40.00 per person  
Registration includes lunch.

### Salmonella outbreak in 2008, Floods and drought in 2007, tornadoes in 2006, fresh spinach E-coli O157:H7 in 2006 -- You never think it will happen to you until it does.

If an unexpected natural disaster or an emergency happened, as a grower or farmers' market manager, would you know what actions to take? Would your employees know what to do? What would happen to your family? Your business?

As growers and markets, we benefit from consumer interest in locally produced vegetables, fruits, and other food products. Consumers have increased their intake of fresh fruits and vegetables thanks to health promotion efforts. We know our customers prefer locally-grown products and are increasingly willing to support our efforts to bring fresh and wholesome products into their homes and communities.

We also face a variety of hazards and risk-filled situations such as natural weather-related disasters, employee or personal injuries, fires, theft, vandalism, or product tampering. Some disasters trigger additional damage and bad outcomes like power outages; damage to equipment, buildings, or plants; or injuries to employees or customers.

Emergency Response Planning (ERP) is a grower-centered/manager-centered process to help you identify the types of supplies and other things you need to take appropriate action in certain situations, the key actions that need to be taken in those situations and important people who can assist. Emergency Response Planning can help you keep an event from becoming a disaster that could potentially ruin your business.

Boost your ERP "IQ." Learn how to protect yourself, your business and your assets from emergencies and disasters. Attend the Emergency Response Planning workshop to learn about developing your own business emergency plan. The workshop includes fun activities and many opportunities for participation. You will leave with a baseline plan that will be immediately useful for your business. Your insurance company will also be happy that you have a business emergency plan!

The Emergency Response Planning workshop will be held on Wednesday, December 17, 2008 at the Don Hansen VFW in Ham Lake, MN. The workshop will be led by Michele Schermann, Agricultural Safety Specialist from the University of Minnesota. Michele and John Shutske developed the ERP curriculum and workbook with funding provided through a partnership agreement with MFVGA and the USDA Risk Management Agency. The workshop is sponsored by MFVGA and the USDA Risk Management Agency. These institutions are equal opportunity providers.



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### Emergency Response Planning Workshop Registration Form:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Number Attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$40 = \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Additional Participants:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Method of payment:

- Check (payable to MFVGA)  
 VISA     MASTERCARD

Number \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ V Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form with payment to:

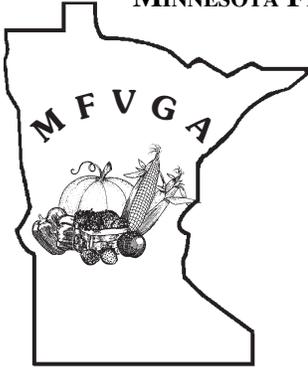
**MFVGA**  
**15125 W. Vermillion Cir. NE**  
**Ham Lake, MN 55304**

## MINNESOTA FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION

c/o Marilyn Nysetvold Johnson, Exec. Coordinator  
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### Growers' Marketing and Distribution Survey to be Sent in December

While consumer and institutional demand for fresh, local fruits and vegetables may be on the rise, some farmers face significant challenges distributing goods to these markets. Challenges such as long travel distances, lack of distribution options, and rising fuel prices may be particularly important.

Annalisa Hultberg, a graduate student at the University of Minnesota, is researching issues relating to local foods distribution for her M.S. thesis. The MFVGA office will be assisting her in December by sending out a survey to document the challenges associated with marketing, distributing, and selling fruits and vegetables in Minnesota. The survey will be compiled by the University and mailed to fruit and vegetable producers by MFVGA. Responses should be returned to the University in the envelope provided.

The survey also asks about your interest in finding alternative distribution models or new marketing tools, and strategies to improve distribution of fresh produce in Minnesota.

The results of this survey will be made available to local, regional and statewide planners and policy makers, farming organizations, and non-profits, including at conferences like Colin Peterson's Homegrown Economy Conference. Minnesota will benefit from the perspective of growers like you, and may use the information to create public policies to support infrastructure and investment where it is most needed.

The results of this survey will also be included in an upcoming MFVGA newsletter.

Please contribute to this important work by filling out and returning the survey promptly in the stamped envelope enclosed with the survey. If you do not receive a survey in the mail and want to participate, please contact Annalisa at 612-532-4888 or [hultb006@umn.edu](mailto:hultb006@umn.edu) to request a copy.

Your responses are greatly appreciated and the results will be used to improve distribution of local fresh fruits and vegetables for all Minnesotans.

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### 2009 Trade Show Exhibitors

The following exhibitors have already signed up for the 2009 Trade Show held in conjunction with the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference. The Trade Show will be held at the St. Cloud Civic Center in St. Cloud, Minnesota on Thursday and Friday, January 22 & 23, 2009. More exhibitors and additional exhibitor information will be included in the next issue of the MFVGA Newsletter.

Ag Resource, Inc.  
Agro-K Corporation  
Central Landscape Supply  
Crop Production Services  
Farm Service Agency  
GreenStar / Watkins  
Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture – IPM Program  
Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources  
Minnesota Grown  
Minnesota Valley Testing Laboratories, Inc.  
Rispen Seeds, Inc.  
Rupp Seeds, Inc.  
Seedway, L.L.C.  
Siegers Seed Company  
Stokes Seeds, Inc.

**EXHIBITORS: Sign up today so your information will be included in the next newsletter. Contact the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400 or [mfvga@msn.com](mailto:mfvga@msn.com) for an application for exhibit space.**

## ATTENTION TRADE SHOW EXHIBITORS

The 2009 Upper Midwest Regional  
Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference and Trade Show  
will be held January 22 & 23, 2009 at the St. Cloud Civic Center in St. Cloud, MN.

**Have we received your application? Return it as soon as possible to reserve your booth(s).**

**If you need an application or more information, contact the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400.**