



# MINNESOTA FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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December 2012 Volume 26, No. 5

## A Note From The Board

Mark Boen - Bluebird Gardens, Fergus Falls, MN

You certainly learn a lot by doing. Experience is a wonderful teacher. We all know that. But we also learn much from each other. That's what makes being a part of the MN Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association so invaluable.

In fact, it has changed our farm. I remember many years back going to the MFVGA conference to hear Terry Nennich talk about high tunnels. And here I thought that nothing could beat my labor-intensive row covers in the field! Ha! So we started out building two, then four more, until now the three we are building this fall make a dozen. Thanks, Terry, for how you have changed so many farms!!

A few years ago, I attended a session on running a CSA at the MFVGA conference and that changed our farm again. The CSA proved to be a wonderful model for our farm. We like how it connects our members to the farm where their food is grown. We love the stability of income and the focus on doing one mission, the CSA only. If I hadn't learned about this model at conferences, we would never have made the switch.

Over the past recent years, I have begrudgingly attended GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) training classes that MFVGA offered. Thanks to those classes and to one of our interns this summer, we now have a food safety plan. We will always be adding finishing touches. After attending those classes, it is amazing how the common sense of food safety does soak in and how much better one gets at spotting situations that aren't food safe. One of our interns also helped get a farm safety plan in place along with a food and farm safety training video. If you would like help with this, I can get you her number.

But it's not just the sessions and workshops that bring change and growth to a farm. My most favorite part of being an MFVGA member is the friendships that develop with other members. The sharing of ideas with a new friend brings many changes to your farm. I attend many conferences each winter and the spirit of daring to share farming secrets is rampant at the MFVGA conference. Last year I sat in on the apple session. All members were openly sharing the tricks of the trade when they had customers come to their farm. It was beautiful!

When I spoke to the whole group at the conference last January about soil health, one of my points was, "When we all do WELL,

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## SAVE THE DATES

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

January 17 & 18, 2013

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center  
St. Cloud, MN

### Beginning Grower Workshop: Getting Started in High Tunnel Production

January 16, 2013

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center  
St. Cloud, MN

### Beginning Grower Workshop: Starting an Apple Orchard

January 16, 2013

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center  
St. Cloud, MN

### Exploring the Nuts and Bolts of Running a CSA Farm

January 16, 2013

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center  
St. Cloud, MN

### Fruit & Vegetable Pest First Detector Training

January 16, 2013

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center  
St. Cloud, MN

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then we ALL do well!" The more the local food movement succeeds and makes customers happy, the more we all do well. The more we each share our secrets of success, the better we all do. Soon everyone is after those locally grown products.

I have been so excited to see the all important soil on our farm change as we work our way into biological farming. In this science-based Albrecht philosophy, when ALL the elements in the soil are in balance, the soil becomes soft and ready for soil life to do its magic. The bacteria and fungi work symbiotically with the plant roots to bring nutrition to the plant. This promotes nutritional density and flavor. I have been on our family farm many decades and I have seen our soil change from hard, lumpy soil to soft, darker soil teeming with life because of biological farming. I also see the excitement of our CSA members over the flavor of our produce. So it was exciting last January to share this with all of you. The more we all tend to the soil health, the better we will all do! (Feel free to talk to me anytime about what we do to make biological farming happen!)

After many years of receiving ideas from the MFVGA, it is time for me to give something back. This January 16th, I will be leading a day long class on the nuts and bolts of operating a CSA. It is for seasoned CSAs as well as newbies. We will have a blast and learn much from each other. Topics will include:

- I. Developing an overall plan, including the budget and number of members!
- II. Thinking outside the box...creating your own farm personality or niche that attracts members to your farm.
- III. Membership- Getting members, connecting with them and keeping them!
- IV. Filling the box for all those weeks...all it takes is planning, planting, growing and harvesting!
- V. Packing shed...from washing and preparing the crop to boxing it!
- VI. Delivery

I will also be offering a session at the conference called "Taming the Monster on a Vegetable Farm". This is about equipment to make the daunting job easier. One of these pieces is a line washer to sanitize CSA boxes and harvest crates. Ag Resource will have that washer on display at the conference.

I think this year's conference has the chance to be the best ever! I don't think you want to miss it!! It just might...change your farm!!

## Interested in Having an On-Farm Food Safety / GAPs Workshop in Your Area?

This day-long hands-on workshop, led by Michele Schermann (Agricultural Health and Safety Research Fellow with the University of Minnesota) educates producers on how Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) can help minimize food safety risks with their fresh produce.

You will learn the principles of food safety and risk assessment and you will begin to work on your on-farm food safety plan. Even if your buyers are not asking for a food safety plan, it's a good idea to have one. Farmers' market managers, schools and other buyers will be happy to see that you are proactively thinking about food safety on your farm. If you need to have a GAPs or other food safety audit in the future, having a documented food safety plan is the first step and will help streamline the audit process.

Many growers are already doing a lot of record keeping and some of the practices outlined in a food safety plan. In some instances you might just need to tweak your existing record keeping. Templates and log sheets to help you create your own food safety plan will be provided for you and you will learn how to tailor them to your operation.

We are scheduling workshops now for winter 2012 and spring 2013. If you are interested in hosting or attending a workshop in your area, please contact Marilyn Johnson at 763-434-0400, or Michele Schermann at 612-624-7444 or [safety@umn.edu](mailto:safety@umn.edu). Cost is \$40 per person and includes lunch/refreshments, a flash drive loaded with a food safety plan template, log sheets, supporting documents, how-to videos, and a short employee training video.



Merry Christmas



### 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:

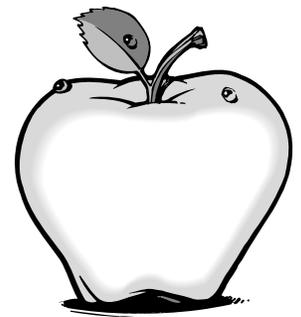
**If you no longer wish to receive our newsletter, please let us know.**

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.



**Beginning Grower Workshops  
January 16, 2013  
St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center  
St. Cloud, MN**



Sponsored by the  
**Minnesota Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association  
University of Minnesota Extension  
USDA – Risk Management Agency**

The Beginning Grower Workshops are designed for people thinking about starting or expanding a commercial apple operation and individuals considering high tunnel vegetable production. 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.

**Getting Started in High Tunnel Production**

Registration: 8:30 – 9:00 a.m.  
Workshop: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
(Lunch is included with registration.)

- Topics:
- Introductions
  - Starting in High Tunnel Production – Why and How
  - Developing Markets, Utilizing Labor and Dealing with the Unexpected
  - Investigating Crops for High Tunnels
  - Using Drip Irrigation in High Tunnels
  - Pricing Your Product: Am I Selling Too Cheap??
  - Soils and Plant Growing Media – Managing and Amending
  - Soils for Productive Yields in High Tunnels
  - Concerns About Getting into High Tunnels
  - Educational Materials / Wrap Up

**Starting an Apple Orchard**

Registration: 12:30 p.m.  
Workshop: 1:00 p.m. to approximately 4:30 p.m.

- Topics:
- Site Selection
  - Understanding Rootstocks
  - Apple Varieties
  - Planting Methods
  - Weed Control
  - Pruning and Training

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 17 & 18, 2013 at the St. Cloud River's Edge Convention 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:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Farm Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

High Tunnel Workshop \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$75 = \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Apple Workshop \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$50 = \_\_\_\_\_

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

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**

## Beginning Grower Workshops Planned

Beginning Grower Workshops will be held on Wednesday, January 16, 2013 at the St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center (formerly the St. Cloud Civic Center) in St. Cloud, MN before the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference.

If you are wondering what you need to know before adding a high tunnel to your operation or how to start a commercial apple orchard, plan to attend the Beginning Grower Workshops.

Additional information and a registration form can be found on page 3. The Beginning Grower Workshops are sponsored by MFVGA, University of Minnesota Extension and the USDA Risk Management Agency. These institutions are equal opportunity providers.

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## Farm Business Management Scholarships Available to Growers of Several Specialty Crops

What's my cost of production? Am I making any money? How are my margins? How should I budget for next year?

Do these questions sound familiar? This scholarship program defrays growers' costs to enroll in farm business management education programs, offered by schools in the Minnesota State College and University (MnSCU) system. Growers 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. Growers of the following fresh market crops currently qualify: apples, berries, grapes, pumpkins, sweet corn and vegetables (mixed).

For more information about the program and how to contact an instructor, contact Meg Moynihan at 651-201-6616 or visit [www.mda.state.mn.us/fbm](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/fbm).

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## 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 16, 2013. 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 2013 conference must be received in the MFVGA office and approved before January 4, 2013. 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).

## Wholesale Success with Produce Workshops in Minnesota

Three day-long workshops given by Atina Diffley, a Wholesale Success trainer, will be held December 6, 2012 at Gale Woods Farm in Minnetrista, January 4, 2013 at Beltrami Electric Co-op in Bemidji and January 26, 2013 at Community Resource Bank in Northfield. Times for the workshops differ by location. Workshops will focus on wholesale marketing and post-harvest handling of fruits and vegetables.

More information including an online registration form and workshop brochures are available on the MISA website at [www.misa.umn.edu](http://www.misa.umn.edu).

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## 2013 Trade Show Exhibitors

The following exhibitors have already signed up for the 2013 Trade Show held in conjunction with the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference. The Trade Show will be held at the St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud, Minnesota on Thursday and Friday, January 17 & 18, 2013. More exhibitors and additional exhibitor information will be included in the next issue of the MFVGA Newsletter.

Ag Resource, Inc.

Agro-K Corporation

Agricultural Utilization Research Institute

Carlin Horticultural Supplies

Crop Production Services – Big Lake, MN

Crop Production Services – Galesville, WI

Honeyberry USA

Minnesota Crop Improvement Association

Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Minnesota Farmers Union

Minnesota Grown

Mississippi Topsoils, Inc.

Rispens Seeds, Inc.

Rupp Seeds, Inc.

Second Harvest Heartland

Seedway, LLC

Siegers Seed Company

Stokes Seeds, Inc.

Tessman Company

**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.

# Fruit and Vegetable Pest First Detector Training

Wednesday, January 16, 2013

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center  
St. Cloud, MN

Registration/Check-in: 8:00-8:30 a.m.  
Workshop runs from 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Registration: \$15.00 per person  
(Registration does NOT include lunch.)

First Detector training for new invasive pests of fruit and vegetable crops will be offered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and University of Minnesota Extension in conjunction with the 2013 Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference in January 2013. First Detectors are volunteers trained to help citizens diagnose and report possible infestations of invasive species to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. First Detectors are a part of the National Plant Diagnostic Network (NPDN) First Detector Program which promotes the early detection of invasive plant pathogens, arthropods, nematodes and weeds.

The First Detector workshop will address the identification, biology and impacts of the following invasive pests of fruit and vegetable crops:

- Spotted wing drosophila
- Brown marmorated stink bug
- Goss's wilt of sweet corn
- Exotic downy mildews of basil and cucurbits

First Detector training will be held as a half-day special workshop on Wednesday, January 16, 2013, prior to the regular agenda of the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference (January 17 and 18, 2013) in St. Cloud.

## Registration Form: – First Detector Training

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

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

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

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

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

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional registrants from this farm business:

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_ individuals @ \$15.00 each      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Send registration form and payment to:

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



## Order Minnesota Grown Bags Early

MFVGA is planning the next 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.

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 River's Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud, MN on January 17 & 18, 2013. Samples of the plastic bags can also be requested from the MFVGA office. **You must be licensed to use the Minnesota Grown logo to order the bags.**

## Reusable Bags

These large SmarTotes are hunter green with white printing. Made of non-woven polypropylene, the bags have a reinforced bottom and fold together and snap closed for easy storage.

The reusable bags can be customized with your logo for a minimal fee. The SmarTotes must be ordered in quantities of 50. A minimum order of 500 bags is required to customize the bags. Samples of the reusable bags are not available, but we will have some on display at the conference in January.

We are currently finalizing pricing, etc. for both bag styles. 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.

If you have ordered bags in the past or have expressed an interest in the bags, you will receive order forms for both styles. 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 these bags next year, you need to place your order by the deadline. Minimums will apply.

# Exploring the Nuts and Bolts of Running a CSA Farm

Wednesday, January 16, 2013

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center

Cost: \$75.00 per person

Registration: 8:00 – 8:30 a.m.

Workshop: 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.



Join Mark Boen from Bluebird Gardens in Fergus Falls, MN for a workshop exploring the nuts and bolts of running a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) Farm. Bluebird Gardens adopted the CSA model for their farm a few years ago and they are currently supplying 1,870 shares weekly.

Increased interest in local foods and strengthening the connection between producer and consumer has led to rapid growth in the number of farms offering their customers a weekly “share” from the farm. Customers pay a set fee in exchange for a weekly box filled with the farm’s bounty. Not a good year? The customer also assumes some of the farmer’s risk if weather conditions or pests negatively impact production.

This workshop is for people who are considering starting a CSA or transitioning part of their operation to a CSA as well as people who have been operating a CSA and are looking for new strategies.

Workshop topics include:

- Developing an overall plan and budget – including the number of members you can effectively manage.
- Thinking outside the ‘box’ – how do you create your own farm personality or niche that will attract members to your farm.
- Building your base – how do you find members, connect with them and keep them?
- Filling the box every week – all it takes is planning, planting, growing and harvesting!!
- The packing shed – washing, preparing and boxing your crop.
- Delivery

Is a CSA right for you and something you should consider? Are you ready to give your existing CSA a facelift? Join us on January 16, 2013 to explore the many possibilities.



## Registration Form: – CSA Workshop

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

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

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

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

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

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional registrants from this farm business:

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_ individuals @ \$75.00 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Send registration form and payment to:

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

**Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable  
Growers Conference  
January 17 & 18, 2013**

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

**Thursday morning, January 17, 2013**

**OPENING SESSION – THE IMPORTANCE OF HEALTHY SOIL**

- 8:45 – 9:00 Welcome & Announcements
- 9:00 – 10:15 Soil Fertility for Your Farm – Dr. Deborah Allan, University of Minnesota - College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences & Dr. Carl Rosen, University of Minnesota – Department of Soil, Water and Climate
- 10:15 – 10:45 Break to the Trade Show
- 10:45 – 11:30 The Role of Microorganisms in Maintaining Soil Quality – Dr. Michael Sadowsky, University of Minnesota – Department of Soil, Water and Climate
- 11:30 – 12:00 Compost – Tom Halbach, University of Minnesota – College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences

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

***Registrations received before  
December 31, 2012  
qualify for the  
“Early Bird” Drawing –  
A gift certificate for  
a night at the Kelly Inn.***

**Thursday afternoon, January 17, 2013**

**SESSION I: MANAGING FARM LABOR**

- 1:15 – 2:45 Labor Management – Planning for Success (Tax and Regulatory Aspects) – Rob Holcomb, University of Minnesota Extension
- 2:45 – 3:15 Break to the Trade Show
- 3:15 – 4:30 International Options: H2A/H1B & J-1 Visa Programs

**SESSION II – Part 1:**

**ENCOURAGING POLLINATORS FOR  
INCREASED PRODUCTION**

- 1:15 – 1:45 Managing Alternative Pollinators – Elaine Evans, Conservation Consultant with the Xerces Society
- 1:45 – 2:15 Plants for Pollinators – Dr. Karl Foord, University of Minnesota Extension
- 2:15 – 2:45 Native Pollinators in Fruit Crops – Dr. Karl Foord, University of Minnesota Extension
- 2:45 – 3:15 Beehives – Gary Reuter, University of Minnesota – Entomology Department
- 3:15 – 3:45 Break to the Trade Show

**SESSION II – Part 2:**

**TAMING THE MONSTER**

- 3:45 – 4:30 Option 1 – Cooling & Storing Your Vegetables – Jim Lacey, Lacey J Ranch – Zimmerman, MN
- 3:45 – 4:30 Option 2 – Practical Equipment for a Vegetable Farm – Mark Boen, Bluebird Gardens – Fergus Falls, MN
- 4:45 – 5:15 **MFVGA Business Meeting**
- 5:15 – 6:30 **Social Hour in the Trade Show Area**
- 6:30 **Buffet Supper 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. Updated information will be printed in the February Newsletter. Program updates can also be found on the MFVGA website at [www.mfvga.org](http://www.mfvga.org).

**Friday morning, January 18, 2013**

**GENERAL SESSION**

- 8:00 – 9:30 Online Agrimarketing: Planning before you plant. – Scott Skelly, Corn Mazes America
- 9:30 – 10:00 Break to the Trade Show

**SESSION I: BERRY SESSION**

- 10:00 – 10:45 Grower Profile
- 10:45 – 11:30 Climate Change and Planting Zones – Which Varieties Are Safe to Plant Here? – Dr. Thaddeus McCamant, Central Lakes College - Specialty Crops Management
- 11:30 – 12:15 Marketing Impacts of the Berry Survey Results – Paul Hugunin and Dustin Vanesse, Minnesota Grown Program

**SESSION II: VINE CROPS**

- 10:00 – 10:45 Insect Pests in Vine Crops – Eric Burkness, University of Minnesota – Entomology Department
- 10:45 – 11:30 Pumpkin & Squash Varieties – Jennifer & John Thull, University of Minnesota, Horticultural Research Center
- 11:30 – 12:00 Grower panel

**SESSION III: WOOING THE MEDIA FROM PRESS RELEASE TO INTERVIEW**

- 10:00 – 12:00 Fun, hands-on workshop covering the proper structure and formatting of a press release while getting the important information across to the media. Led by Scott Skelly, Corn Mazes America

**SESSION IV: SPECIALTY CROPS**

- 10:00 – 10:30 Sweet Potatoes – Terry Nennich, University of Minnesota Extension
- 10:30 – 11:00 Green Ginger – Dr. Vince Fritz, University of Minnesota – Southern Research & Outreach Center
- 11:00 – 11:30 To Be Determined
- 11:30 – 12:00 Tomato Grafting – Cassie Boadway & Dr. Cindy Tong, University of Minnesota

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**TRADE SHOW HOURS:**

**Thursday – Jan. 17: 8:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.**  
**Friday – Jan. 18: 8:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

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

**Friday afternoon, January 18, 2013**

**SESSION I: HIGH TUNNELS**

- 1:15 – 2:15 Managing Six Critical Control Points in High Tunnel Production – Terry Nennich, University of Minnesota Extension
- 2:15 – 2:45 Disease Identification Program – Michelle Grabowski, University of Minnesota Extension
- 2:45 – 3:00 Break
- 3:00 – 3:45 Blossom End Rot Control in High Tunnel Tomatoes – Dr. Carl Rosen, University of Minnesota – Department of Horticultural Science
- 3:45 – 4:30 Grower Panel – Group Q & A – Terry Nennich & Karl Foord, University of Minnesota Extension

**SESSION II: COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE**

- 1:15 – 2:15 Members: How to get them, manage them and keep them – Laura Frerichs, Loon Organics – Hutchinson, MN
- 2:15 – 3:15 Filling the Box Week After Week: Plan, plant, grow and harvest – Mark Boen, Bluebird Gardens – Fergus Falls, MN
- 3:15 – 3:30 Break
- 3:30 – 4:30 Thinking Outside the “Box” and Finding Your Market Niche/Connecting Members to their Farm – Mark Boen, Bluebird Gardens – Fergus Falls, MN

**SESSION III: BERRY SESSION**

- 1:15 – 2:15 Year in Review – Grower Participation
- 2:15 – 2:45 Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD): Invasion & First Year Experience in Minnesota – Mark Asplen & Bill Hutchison, University of Minnesota Extension; Thaddeus McCamant, Specialty Crops Management, Central Lakes College
- 2:45—3:15 SWD & the Michigan Experience Mark Longstroth, Small Fruit Educator, Michigan State Extension
- 3:15 – 3:30 Break
- 3:30 – 4:00 Blueberry Growth Dictates Insect & Disease Control – Mark Longstroth, Michigan State Extension
- 4:00 – 4:30 Additional discussion of insect issues and effective communication between the University of Minnesota and Minnesota berry growers

**Session IV: TREE FRUITS**

- 1:15 – 2:00 Preparing Fruit & Vegetable Growers for a New Invasive Species: the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug as a Pest of Apples, Grapes, Sweet Corn, and ..... ? – Theresa Cira and Bill Hutchison, University of Minnesota – Department of Entomology
- 2:00 – 2:45 Grower Profile – Dan Whitcomb, JQ Fruit Farm – Princeton, MN
- 2:45 – 3:00 Break
- 3:00 – 3:45 2012 Frost Review – Grower Participation
- 3:45 – 4:30 Fruit Wines – Dennis Emslie-Dummond, Central Lakes College

## River's Edge Location & Parking Information

The St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center is located at  
10 Fourth Avenue South  
St. Cloud, MN 56301

Parking for the St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center is available in the ramp, located below the building, along with metered spots in both the parking lot in front of the building and along the west end of the building. There is also parking available in the Grand Central Ramp located across the street from the building.

The fee for event parking in the River's Edge ramp is \$5.00 per entry paid on arrival.

## Directions to River's Edge

### From the East on Interstate Highway 94

1. Take I-94 to Highway 15 N.
2. Turn right at Highway 23.
3. Turn left at Fifth Avenue S.
4. Turn right at First Street S.
5. The convention center will be straight ahead on the left.

### From the West on Interstate Highway 94

1. Take I-94 to Highway 15 N.
2. Turn right at Highway 23.
3. Turn left at Fifth Avenue S.
4. Turn right at First Street S.
5. The convention center will be straight ahead on the left.

### From Highway 10

1. Take Highway 23 W. to Fourth Avenue.
2. Turn right at Fourth Avenue.
3. The convention center will be on the right.

### From Highway 15

1. Follow Highway 10 S. to Highway 23 W.
2. Turn right at Fourth Avenue.
3. The convention center will be on the right.



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

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, MN  
January 17 & 18, 2013

### Beginning Grower Workshops:

#### Getting Started in High Tunnel Production

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, MN  
January 16, 2013

#### Starting an Apple Orchard

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, MN  
January 16, 2013

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#### Exploring the Nuts and Bolts of Running a CSA Farm

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, MN  
January 16, 2013

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#### Fruit and Vegetable Pests First Detector Workshop

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, MN  
January 16, 2013

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Accommodations are available at:

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

Single or Double Rate – \$82 per night

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

#### Mention “Minnesota Fruit & Vegetable Growers” to receive conference room rates.

Block will be released on Dec. 15, 2012.

\* \* \* \*

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

The Radisson Suites Hotel is connected by a skywalk to the St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center.

### MFVGA Policy on Conference Registration Cancellations and Refunds:

MFVGA will refund registration fees for the 2013 Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference in full if the MFVGA office is notified before Friday, January 11, 2013. If the MFVGA office is notified after January 11, 2013, but before Monday, January 14, 2013, 75% of the registration amount will be refunded. No refund will be issued if registrations are cancelled Monday, January 14, 2013 or later.

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

January 17 & 18, 2013 – St. Cloud, MN

All educational sessions will be held at the St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center.

Sponsored by: *Minnesota Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, University of Minnesota Extension, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, USDA-Risk Management Agency*



Attendee's Name (Please print)

Attendee's Name (Please print)	Full Registration Conference & Trade Show (Thursday & Friday) January 17 & 18			Thursday Night Dinner	One-day Registration Circle One			Trade Show Only	Total
	First member* from farm/company	Each additional mbr. from farm/comp.	Non-member (Per person)	Per person	First member* from farm/company	Each additional mbr. from farm/comp.	Non-member (Per person)	Per person	
	\$90.00	\$30.00	\$170.00	\$15.00	\$70.00	\$30.00	\$100.00	\$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 11th to be considered pre-registered. A soup/salad/sandwich lunch will be available for purchase in the Trade Show area on Thursday and Friday.

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

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate method of payment:

Check (payable to MFVGA)  VISA®  MASTERCARD®

Return this form with payment to:

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

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 night dinner. Trade show only registrations do not include admittance to the educational sessions or a copy of the *Proceedings* book.

# MFVGA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

## October 1, 2012 - September 30, 2013

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

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Wooing the Media from Press Release to Interview

Bring your pen and paper or laptop computer and get ready to dig into an awesome form of marketing that can be (almost) completely free. Even in a digital age, press releases can be an excellent way to get your name on the front page of tomorrow's paper. Any note to the media is good, but a properly formatted and well-written press release sticks out to the media. Learn the proper way to format a press release from header to footer, who to send them to, how to submit digitally, and how to know what topics would even be newsworthy. Once we have a great release, we need to create our media packet and be ready to talk to reporters. With mock interviews you will be ready for your big hour. How do you handle those negative events when you prefer not to talk to reporters? We will look at some pointers there, too. This two hour workshop will put you in the driver's seat for a crash course in public relations. The workshop will be led by Scott Skelly, Corn Mazes America, on Friday morning, January 18, 2013. See page 8 for the complete Friday schedule.

**MFVGA is –**

- A leader in education for specialty crop producers.
- A leader in consumer outreach.
- An advocate for our members, markets and industry.
- Building partnerships to expand opportunities for members.
- Working to stimulate and support research and advancements in good agricultural practices.

Join or renew today.

**Hail Netting Publication Available**

*Hail Netting for Minnesota Apple Producers*, a publication researched and written by Thaddeus McCamant, Ph.D., Specialty Crops instructor, is now available free of charge from the MFVGA office. Funding for the publication was provided through a partnership agreement between the Minnesota Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association and the United States Department of Agriculture – Risk Management Agency, Community Outreach & Assistance Partnership Program.

The publication includes sections on the science of hail and hailstorms, structures that support hail netting, materials and costs, the influence of hail netting on tree growth and fruit quality, the economics of hail netting, grower perspectives, planning and constructing a hail netting structure and a reference section.

To request a copy, contact the MFVGA office at 15125 W. Vermillion Cir. NE, Ham Lake, MN 55304 or call the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400 or send an e-mail to [mfvga@msn.com](mailto:mfvga@msn.com).



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## New things coming for Minnesota Grown!

Minnesota Grown is in the middle of a website overhaul. We plan to launch our new website in May, along with the 2013-14 *Minnesota Grown Directory*. We have selected a design team and are digging through our current website and finding better ways to deliver your information. We will develop a website that is clean and easy to use. We are putting a larger focus on getting consumers out and about, so we want a fun and lively page. Through the next six months, we will be asking our members for suggestions, ideas and dislikes about our website. We need input from you to make sure the Minnesota Grown website works for you and consumers! Watch for specific questions in our Member Update. However, feel free to email or call Jessica at any time if you have something regarding the website you'd like to share.

While you're waiting in anticipation for the new website to deploy, don't forget about our current website! We still have ways for you to customize your detailed page and reach new customers. First of all, **ADD PICTURES!** We can add up to three photos or logos to your detailed page. This helps to personalize your page and make it stand out. It's true that a picture is worth a thousand words, so show consumers why they should choose your farm or product.

Second, keep your information up to date. We have an events and announcements section at the bottom of each detailed page that only appears if you provide content. Tell customers that you are open or closed for the season, let them know if there is a special event going on or if you are having a short sale on a certain product. Remind them that you have hay rides or face cutouts. It can be almost anything! We can have up to three announcements running at one time. We also have the ability to pre-schedule announcements, meaning we can write it up and tell it when to show online and when exactly to disappear. Keep messages short and don't leave the same message up for too long. We want these announcements to be new and fresh!

The more information you share with us through your detailed page, the more likely we can share your information through Facebook. Our Facebook page is a great way to connect with consumers and allow them to pass your message throughout their friends and family. It's also FREE! We have over 7,000 fans and we share posts, pictures, events and ideas at least five times a week. Also, if your business has a Facebook page, please be sure to like our page, so we can tag you in posts and share content (and fans!)

## Renewal season is here!

As the year winds down and the holidays are in full swing, it's time to join or renew your membership in the Minnesota Grown Program. We're very happy to help you connect with businesses through our new online database and hope you'll participate in that new opportunity if you haven't already done so. Here are three specific ways you can get involved in Minnesota Grown for 2013.

**I. Minnesota Grown Member:** The annual membership (license) is only \$20 and provides use of the trademarked Minnesota Grown logo and unlimited free promotional items, such as an assortment of stickers, veggie tags, price cards and twist ties. The license is always required to be a part of the Minnesota Grown Directory.

**II. Minnesota Grown Directory Listing:** Directory listings are available to Minnesota growers including nurseries, ranchers, meat markets selling MN Grown meats, farmers' markets and others who raise or grow agricultural products and sell them direct to consumers. The directory listing is only \$40 and if you sign up before February, you will be in both the printed and online directory.

- A. We print 190,000 copies of the directory and distribute them statewide – through listed farms and markets, tourist information centers, libraries, real estate agents, and about anybody that can find an audience of local foods lovers. MFVGA members are encouraged to help us get those guides into the hands of consumers.
- B. The online directory has had over 200,000 unique visitors this year! On your online listing, you can add a picture of your farm or feature your products. You also have the ability to post upcoming events or needed information in the News & Events section of your page. This content should be changed periodically to ensure online information is fresh and up-to-date.

**III. Minnesota Grown Wholesale Database:** This is designed for chefs, grocers, distributors and schools or other food service buyers to use to find a local provider. Buyers can search based on geographical location as well as other criteria, such as whether or not a farm is GAP certified, certified organic and/or carries a certain level of liability insurance. We will also be working with the Farm-2-School program on new initiatives and ways to promote this database. This is free for all Minnesota Grown members.

Don't miss your opportunity; call Jessica Miles today for more information or to sign up. 651-210-6170 or [Jessica.miles@state.mn.us](mailto:Jessica.miles@state.mn.us).

*Minnesota Grown information is supplied to MFVGA by Paul Hugunin (651-201-6510) and Jessica Miles (651-201-6170) from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. If you have any questions about Minnesota Grown, contact them at the numbers listed above.*

## Online Agrimarketing: Planning before you plant

Websites, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, texting emails, smartphone compatibility, banner ads, costs per click: oh my! The old days of simply using road signs, newspaper ads and word of mouth have certainly evolved into a much more complex job of marketing our farm products. Without a plan, we can quickly get lost in it all. Just as we carefully plan where, when, how, and why we plant each of our crops, we need to plan our farms' online marketing plan before we dive in. Just because more than one billion people are on Facebook does not mean your farm should be, but are your reasons for your choice of online 'crops' business driven decisions? In the General Session on Friday morning, January 18, 2013, Scott Skelly will help you look past the hoopla of online marketing and social media and help you determine what online machinery are the best tools for your farm.

## Scott Skelly to Share Marketing Insights

Scott Skelly has literally spent his entire life in farm marketing. As soon as he was old enough to walk, Skelly began selling sweet corn and vegetables out of his family's garage with his siblings. That summer college fund project grew as the kids grew, and today Skelly's Farm Market of Janesville, Wisconsin, has more than 100 acres of produce sold directly to consumers. Skelly has handled the farm's marketing since high school and later went on to receive degrees in Agribusiness and Public Relations from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. As a high school sophomore, he also launched Corn Mazes America which now provides custom corn mazes and marketing assistance to farms around the world. Scott is also the author of [Corn Mazes: Is There A Pot of Gold in Your Cornfield?](#) and [Agritourism: A Beginner's Guide](#).

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This issue of the MFVGA Newsletter is sponsored, in part, by the USDA – Risk Management Agency, Risk Management Education Division.

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).

## Join Us for Something New

The Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference and Trade Show has traditionally included a 'Minnesota Grown' banquet. This year the MFVGA board has decided to break with tradition and try something new. Instead of a more formal banquet, we are planning an informal Thursday night dinner buffet in the trade show area. We think you will all have a lot to talk about this year and would enjoy more opportunity to talk with each other and with the trade show exhibitors.

Tickets for the Thursday night dinner are required and we ask that you pre-register if you plan to attend. Tickets may not be available if you plan to register at the conference on January 17th. The registration form can be found on page 10.

## New Invasive Pest: Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD)



*SWD Male, with characteristic spots on wings, and red eyes (3 mm)*

The Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD) was discovered in Minnesota berry crops (raspberry, blackberry, blueberry, strawberry and grapes) this past fall. SWD represents one of the most invasive and damaging insect pests Minnesota has experienced in many years. Because of SWD's extensive host range and the direct damage causing unmarketable berries, this pest could be a true "game changer" for the Minnesota berry industry which historically hasn't needed to use insecticides. SWD has also been found in Wisconsin and Iowa.

How do you identify the Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD) and how will you know if your fruit is infected? If your fruit is infected, how can you manage the situation? Can you take a proactive approach? Will SWD be a problem next year and in the years to come?

How can you get more information? Attend the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference on January 17 & 18, 2013. Dr. Mark Longstroth, Small Fruit Educator from Michigan State Extension, Dr. Bill Hutchison and Dr. Mark Asplen, entomologists from the University of Minnesota and Dr. Thaddeus McCamant, Specialty Crops Instructor with Central Lakes College, will share their experiences and observations from 2012 and update you on future expectations and on-going research.

Information on SWD will also be shared during the First Detector training on Wednesday morning, January 16, 2013. For more information on the Fruit & Vegetable Pest First Detector training, see page 5.

# U of M GLEANINGS

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

You may have heard that the average healthy human body has 10 times MORE bacterial cells than human cells – on our skin, in our guts, mouths, noses, and other parts. If you think about plant bacteria (and fungi) at all, you probably think about them in relation to plant diseases with names like blight, wilt, and spot. You might also think about them relative to bean relative plants (the legumes), which can harbor nitrogen-fixing bacteria in root structures called nodules. However, like the human body, plants host a lot of bacteria, and not just the disease-causing or nitrogen-fixing ones. There is an average of one to ten million bacterial cells on a square tenth of an inch of a leaf surface<sup>1</sup>. That's a lot of bacteria, and nobody really knows if they're just using the plant as a support to grow on, feeding off nutrients seeping out of leaf cracks or pores, fighting with each other, or helpful to plants.

Besides hanging out on the surface of plants, bacteria live inside of plants, too. Because they're inside of plants, they're called "endophytes" (endo = inside, phytes = plants). Some of these bacteria *have* to live in plants, and are dependent on plants for their growth and survival; some live in plants for only part of their life cycle; and some just get swept inside by accident (wrong place at the wrong time?)<sup>2</sup>. Most endophytes come from soil, but some can arrive courtesy of insects or nematodes, through wounds, or through leaf pores. The ones that come from soil seem to mainly get through cracks in roots. Bacteria can move fast. One day after putting tomato plants in hydroponic solution containing *Salmonella* (the human disease-causing bacteria), the bacteria were found in the plant stems. Three days after the plants had been in the *Salmonella*-inoculated solution, the bacteria were found in plant leaves. Bacterial numbers were high enough inside the plants that the scientists doing this experiment didn't think that the bacteria got inside through surface contamination.

Bacterial endophytes don't *always* seem harmful to plants, and there can be lots of different kinds of bacteria inside a plant at any time. Nobody knows how much the different kinds of bacteria interact (exchange information, fight, or ignore each other). The community of bacteria within a plant can change with the seasons, as the plant ages, with the nutritional state of the plant, and in the different parts of the plant (leaves, roots, stems, flowers, or fruit). As you might guess, all this variation has provided lots of entertaining work for scientists, who have known about endophytes since the 1920s!

The possibility that some bacteria hanging around plants could be used as biocontrol agents is tantalizing. In one experiment<sup>3</sup>, Canadian researchers extracted and isolated 49 different endophytic bacterial species from marigolds. They then dipped cuttings of laboratory-grown potato plantlets (less than three inches tall) into solutions containing the bacteria, using a different solution for each

bacterial isolate and testing a total of 150 isolates. The potato cuttings were planted in field soil containing nematodes. After two months, the experiment was stopped, and lots of measurements were taken, including numbers of nematodes in the soil, and numbers and weights of potato tubers. Some of the bacterial treatments decreased the numbers of SOME species of nematodes, but had no effect on OTHER species of nematodes. Happily, the bacterial treatments did not decrease potato tuber numbers or weights. On the other hand, none of the treatments increased tuber numbers or weights, and only 21 out of the 150 bacterial isolate treatments produced potato plants vigorous enough to use for the experiments. This suggests that either the researchers had a problem growing potato plants, or that 129 of the bacterial isolates hindered growth of the plants!

In a search of about 2,648 bacteria on, in, and around field-grown potato plants<sup>4</sup>, German scientists found 349 isolates that slowed the growth of *Verticillium dahliae*, a fungus that causes Verticillium wilt in lots of different kinds of plants, and/or *Rhizoctonia solani*, a fungus that can cause root rot and damping off diseases. All this testing was done in the lab, and it hasn't yet been shown if these bacteria work in the field where it rains, temperatures go up and down, and there are a lot of different co-existing organisms. In one field trial done in Alabama<sup>5</sup>, a test of four different plant-growth promoting (PGP) bacteria was done with cucumbers. The PGP bacteria were applied as seed treatments, or seed treatments plus a soil drench at transplanting. Cucumber plants were planted into soil sterilized with methyl bromide, and leaves were injected with solutions containing *Pseudomonas syringae* bacteria, which cause angular leaf spot. The plants that had gotten the PGP bacterial seed treatments had less leaf spot than the controls that hadn't gotten the treatments. They also had less naturally-occurring anthracnose (caused by a fungus).

Some bacterial endophytes have been used to develop commercial biocontrol products to aid in plant defense. Some of these products have been approved for use on vegetable and fruit crops, and some have approval from Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI). A partial list of these products and their approved uses can be viewed at <http://www.apsnet.org/publications/apsnetfeatures/Pages/biocontrol.aspx>. They differ in their effectiveness against plant diseases (see for instance, <http://oarc.osu.edu/sallymiller/Extension/presentations/Healthy%20Organic%20Gardening%2063005.pdf>), so they shouldn't be thought of as cure-alls. Remember, the microbial community on your farm is a complex place!

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Lindow & Brandl 2003 Appl Environ Microbiol 69: 1875-1883.
- <sup>2</sup> Rosenblueth and Martínez-Romero 2006 Molec Plant-Microbe Inter 19: 827-837.
- <sup>3</sup> Sturz and Kimpinski 2004 Plant Soil 262: 241-249.
- <sup>4</sup> Berg et al. 2005 FEMS Microbiol Ecol 51: 215-229.
- <sup>5</sup> Wei et al. 1996 Phytopathology 86: 221-224.



## 2013 Strawberry and Raspberry Orders

Plan NOW to order your strawberry and raspberry plants for the 2013 season. If you have specific varieties that you are looking for, let us know now. If there are new varieties you'd like to try, let us know. **PLACE YOUR ORDER EARLY!!** MFVGA will be submitting a pre-order based on the varieties and quantities ordered last year. Every year there are varieties that sell out early. If you wait too long to order, we may not be able to get the varieties and the quantities that you want.

If you would like a berry plant order form, contact the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400 or [mfvga@msn.com](mailto:mfvga@msn.com).

## 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.

The workshop will address the operational guidelines for the sale of jams & jellies, how to produce a quality product, food safety from harvest to process, home processing and canning 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 and Vegetable Growers Association, University of Minnesota Extension and the USDA Risk Management Agency. These institutions are equal opportunity providers.

We are currently finalizing details for workshops to be held in the Spring. Registration information will be included in the February newsletter.

## Do you sell your home-canned foods at farmers' markets? Are you "Peddling Your Pickles Safely?"

The "Peddling Your Pickles Safely" workshop is 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 regarding what types of products can be sold and where those products 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 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 and where can I get one?
- 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. The workshop will be conducted by University of Minnesota Regional Extension Educators in Food Science.

We are currently working on the scheduling details for Spring workshops. Details and registration information will be included in the February newsletter and 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 and the USDA Risk Management Agency. These institutions are equal opportunity providers.

## Farmers, Ag Businesses and Entrepreneurs Targeted for New Grant Program

St. Paul, Minn. – Minnesota agricultural producers and processors can now apply for grants to implement value added projects in their operations. A total of \$700,000 in funding was made available through the Agricultural Growth, Research and Innovation Program (AGRI), established by the legislature to advance Minnesota's agricultural and renewable energy industries. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) will distribute the funds through its AGRI Value Added Grant Program which aims to increase sales of Minnesota agricultural products by diversifying markets and by increasing market access and food safety.

Specifically, these grants are intended to:

- initiate or expand livestock product processing;
- create feasibility, business, marketing and succession plans for existing and new businesses;
- purchase equipment to initiate, upgrade, or modernize value added businesses;
- increase on-farm food safety, such as implementation of a food safety plan;
- increase farmers' processing and aggregating capacity to enter farm-to-school and other markets.

Proposals that have a meat processing, farm-to-school (or other institution) component, or are addressing Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) or similar type of food safety plan will receive priority, but all value added proposals are encouraged to apply. Small to medium sized operations will also receive special consideration.

Proposals that include business planning, feasibility studies, marketing planning and succession planning are eligible for 50 percent of the total project cost up to a maximum grant award of \$30,000.

Equipment purchases or physical improvements are eligible for 25 percent of the total project cost up to a maximum grant award of \$70,000 with a completed business plan or food safety plan. A business or food safety plan must outline what equipment and improvements are necessary to fulfill the plan.

The grants will be distributed in two rounds. Round one applications must be received by the MDA no later than 4:00 p.m. on December 31, 2012. Round two applications must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on March 1, 2013. Proposals may be delivered by mail, in person, or by email. If a proposal is emailed, the time and date it is received by the program administrator will be considered the received-by date.

Applications are available at [www.mda.state.mn.us/valueadded.aspx](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/valueadded.aspx). For more information, contact David Weinand, MDA grants administrator, at 651-201-6646 or [david.weinand@state.mn.us](mailto:david.weinand@state.mn.us).

## Grant Funds Now Available for Sustainable Farming Innovations

Deadline to apply is January 11, 2013.

St. Paul, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Agriculture's (MDA) Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grant Program will award up to \$100,000 in 2013 for on-farm sustainable agriculture research or demonstration projects.

The MDA is now accepting applications for the grant program which promotes environmental stewardship and conservation of resources and strives to improve profitability and quality of life on farms and in rural areas.

Minnesota Agriculture Commissioner Dave Frederickson says the MDA's Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grant Program has helped move new ideas and concepts into viable production practices.

“With these grants, farmers and researchers have the opportunity to pursue their ideas, track the results and then share this valuable information with others,” said Frederickson. “For example, we've seen the development of high tunnel systems to increase fruit production and new successes with cover crops.”

Grant applications are available on the MDA website at <http://go.usa.gov/YBSj> or by contacting the Agricultural Marketing and Development Division at 651-201-6012. Completed applications must be received by MDA no later than January 11, 2013.

Since 1989, the MDA Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Grant Program has awarded 281 grants. Examples of eligible projects include fruit and vegetable production, conservation tillage and weed management, integrated pest management, livestock production, organic farming, alternative energy crop production, and use of cover crops.

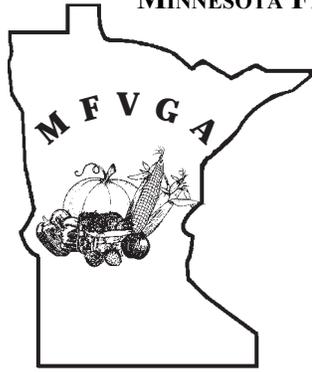
These and other grant projects are highlighted in the Greenbook, which is free and available at [www.mda.state.mn.us/greenbook](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/greenbook).

**MINNESOTA FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

c/o Marilyn Nysetvold Johnson, Exec. Coordinator  
15125 W. Vermillion Cir. NE  
Ham Lake, MN 55304  
Phone: 763-434-0400  
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E-mail: mfvga@msn.com  
www.mfvga.org

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TWIN CITIES, MN



**Results of Customer Research to be Unveiled at MFVGA Conference**

Come to the MFVGA conference to get the inside scoop on results from the Minnesota Grown Program’s berry customer research project this past summer. We received completed surveys from more than 1,000 Minnesota berry customers who provided us with feedback on everything from their age and how much they spent to how they heard about your farm and whether or not they plan to come back next year. This is easily the largest statewide survey of berry customers ever conducted in Minnesota so you won’t want to miss out on the results.

Minnesota Grown staff Dustin Vanasse and Paul Hugunin will be presenting the findings, complete with marketing implications and recommendations. Farms that participated in the survey by handing out postcards to their customers will receive their confidential results comparing the responses from their customers to the statewide averages.

Dustin also conducted similar surveys of Minnesota apple orchard customers and Minnesota farmers’ market shoppers.

**We’re Planning More Workshops**

“Peddling Your Pickles Safely”

Making and Marketing Jams & Jellies

Taking Your Pickles to the Next Level – From Home Canning to Commerical Production

Farm Business Management Workshop

Beginning Berry Grower Workshop

Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) Workshops

PLUS workshops on

Marketing

Market and Business Feasibility and New Crop Initiatives

Soil Analysis, Interpretation and Amendment

Watch for Details in future issues of the MFVGA Newsletter.



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**ATTENTION TRADE SHOW EXHIBITORS**

**The 2013 Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference and Trade Show will be held January 17 & 18, 2013 at the St. Cloud River’s Edge Convention 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.**