

MINNESOTA FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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December, 2004 Volume 18, No. 5

A Note From The Board

By David Macgregor – Fair Haven Farm, South Haven, MN

Greetings. I am one of the newer Board members taking his turn struggling to write an obligatory introduction article for the Newsletter. The Board has been busy putting the final touches on this winter's Growers Conference, and I take my cue from one of the upcoming roundtable discussion titles "Best Mistakes I Ever Made – Ideas that didn't quite work." In my case, this brought to mind a mistake that was anything other than insignificant, pretty much wiping out a year's strawberry production; but even it had a silver lining.

Years of various problems with strawberries, and the attendant declining yields, led to an experiment with alternative renovation methods. Inadequate shields resulted in a far more thorough renovation than anticipated. Lack of subsequent regrowth pointed to underlying problems more fundamental than bad aim. A timely presentation at last year's conference on the association between strawberry root rot and the length of time a piece of ground has been in strawberry production led us to move our new plantings to a different part of the farm. So far, this has resulted in the best stand of new plants we've had in years and an encouraging new start in strawberry production.

This is only one example of the kind of benefit we all derive from membership in the MFVGA. In my few short months on your Board I've been impressed with the experience and diligence of your representatives. At the last meeting there was talk of some of the discouraging effects of last season's weather, but encouraging signs from your association: rising enrollment, a positive fiscal balance, and plans for another interesting and informative conference.

Hope to see you there.

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

February 3 & 4, 2005

**Beginning Grower
Workshop**

February 1 & 2, 2005

**St. Cloud Civic Center,
St. Cloud, MN**

***Plan now to attend.
Look inside for details
on both programs.***

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

***Registrations received before
January 7, 2005
qualify for the "Early Bird" Drawing –
a gift certificate for
a night at the Kelly Inn.***

USDA Awards \$19.8 Million in Partnership Agreements to Develop Risk Management Tools and Education

Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced awards of \$19.8 million in risk management partnership agreements on October 22, 2004. The agreements will support the development of new risk management tools, outreach and education opportunities for traditionally underserved producers.

“The Bush Administration is committed to providing farmers and ranchers additional risk management tools to more effectively manage their businesses,” Veneman said. “These projects create opportunities for underserved, small and limited-resource producers to become better risk managers.”

Funding for these agreements is available under the Federal Crop Insurance Act provisions for risk management and implementation of research and development, community outreach and assistance, and crop insurance education in targeted states. The projects are administered by USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA).

“Through these partnerships, women, minority, limited resource and other underserved agricultural producers will receive assistance in understanding and using risk management tools to improve their economic viability,” said RMA Administrator Ross J. Davidson, Jr. “We’re striving to expand the risk management options and educational possibilities for all producers.”

Education Partnership Agreements and Targeted States - \$9.7 million

The Targeted States Program will use \$4.4 million to deliver crop insurance education to producers in 15 historically underserved states through cooperative agreements. Specialty crop, livestock, nursery and horticulture producers will benefit from \$5.3 million, which will be spent on 41 education partnership agreements for commodity partnership programs.

Community Outreach and Assistance Agreements - \$5 million

Fifty-nine competitively awarded partnerships with community-based, educational and nonprofit organizations will use \$5 million to educate women, limited resource, and other traditionally underserved farmers and ranchers.

Research and Development Agreements - \$5.1 million

Twelve research partnerships were awarded \$5.1 million for the research and development of new non-insurance risk management tools.

How does this impact MFVGA and you? See article on page 9.

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.

SESSION SPOTLIGHTS:

Please Pass the Horseradish

Ever wonder how horseradish really grows? Ever think about incorporating some horseradish into your farmers’ market, roadside stand or other direct sales? Did you know Minnesota is one of the larger horseradish producing states in the US and major production areas are in far Northern Minnesota? Join Terry Nennich in the Specialty Crops session as he presents the basic aspects of horseradish production and marketing. (No hotdogs allowed in the session.) The Specialty Crops schedule can be found on page 4.

Controlling the Protein Content in Your Sweet Corn – The Real Truth About Corn Earworm Control

Corn earworm is a major concern for fresh market sweet corn producers in Minnesota. Terry Nennich and Bill Hutchison will look at the CEW cycles, how they get here and how to monitor for them. Recently, CEW has been picking up some resistance to the customary insecticides that producers have been using for the last several years. It is extremely important to understand why this is happening and how to control CEW on your farm this next season. The Sweet Corn sessions are on Friday, February 4th. The complete program can be found on pages 3 & 4.

Taking the Hoe Hoe Hoe Out of Growing Pumpkins

Weed control has always been a major problem with pumpkin producers in Minnesota. In this session Terry Nennich will focus on the different herbicides available for pumpkin production and how to use them in combination to develop a season-long weed control strategy. See pages 3 & 4 for details on the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference.



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.

**Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and
Vegetable Growers Conference
February 3 & 4, 2005
St. Cloud Civic Center
St. Cloud, MN**

Sponsored by the
Minnesota Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association

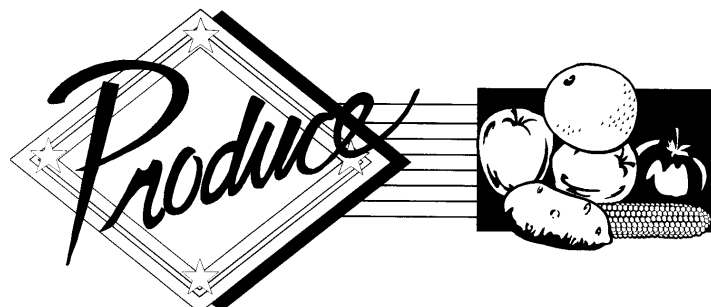
In cooperation with the
University of Minnesota Extension Service
Minnesota Department of Agriculture
USDA - Risk Management Agency

Thursday morning, February 3, 2005

- 7:00 a.m. Registration Opens
- 8:15 – 10:00 GENERAL SESSION**
- 8:15 – 8:30 Welcome / Announcements
8:30 – 9:00 What's New at the U – Dr. Thomas Michaels, University of Minnesota, Dept. Head of the Horticultural Science Department.
9:00 – 10:00 Keynote: Building a Framework for Success in Agriculture – John Monson, State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency
- BREAK TO THE TRADE SHOW**
- 10:45 – 12:00 SESSION I: BERRY PRODUCTION**
- 10:45 – 11:45 Year in Review – Grower Participation
11:45 – 12:00 SARE Update – Bill Jacobson & Kevin Edberg
- 10:30 – 12:00 SESSION II: TOMATOES**
- 10:30 – 11:00 Disease and Variety Trial – Robert Olson, U of M Extension Service
11:00 – 11:30 Ripening and Postharvest Handling – Dr. Cindy Tong, U of M – Dept. of Horticultural Science
11:30 – 12:00 Plastics and Rowcovers – Terrance Nennich, U of M Extension Service
- 10:30 – 12:00 SESSION III: MELONS**
- 10:30 – 11:00 Maximizing the Benefits of Plastics and Row Covers – Terrance Nennich, U of M Extension Service
11:00 – 11:30 Melon Varieties – Jake Jordan, Jr.
11:30 – 12:00 Pollination – Dr. Marla Spivak and Gary Reuter, U of M – Dept. of Entomology
- Noon – 1:15 LUNCH in the Trade Show Area**

Thursday afternoon, February 3, 2005

- 1:15 – 4:45 SESSION I: BERRY PRODUCTION & MARKETING**
- 1:15 – 2:00 Grower Profile: John Cooper – Strawberry Tyme
2:00 – 2:30 Foliar Feeding – Dr. Thaddeus McCamant and Sabrina Ruis
2:30 – 3:00 BREAK TO THE TRADE SHOW
3:00 – 3:45 How to Set Up On-Farm Trials for Berry Growers – Dr. Thaddeus McCamant, Northland Community Technical College
3:45 – 4:15 Best Mistakes I Ever Made – Ideas that didn't quite work, but have potential – Grower Participation
4:15 – 4:45 Small Fruit Variety Update – Strawberries & Blueberries
- 1:15 – 4:45 SESSION II: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**
- 1:15 – 2:45 Return on Investment: What's the Real Bottom Line? – Karl Foord, U of M Extension Service
2:45 – 3:15 BREAK TO THE TRADE SHOW
3:15 – 4:45 Estate Planning – Gary Hachfeld, U of M Extension Service
- 1:15 – 4:30 SESSION III: PUMPKINS**
- 1:15 – 1:45 Insect Pest Update: Advantages of Living "Up North" – Dr. William Hutchison, U of M – Dept. of Entomology
1:45 – 2:15 Diseases – Dr. Janna Beckerman, U of M – Dept. of Plant Pathology
2:15 – 3:00 BREAK TO THE TRADE SHOW
3:00 – 3:30 Using Herbicides to Develop a Season-Long Weed Control Strategy – Terrance Nennich, U of M Extension Service
3:30 – 4:30 Pumpkin Variety Discussion – Terrance Nennich, U of M Extension Service
- 1:15 – 2:45 SESSION IV: ORGANICS WORKSHOP**
Led by Dr. Sieglinde Snapp, Michigan State University, Horticulture Dept.
- 1:15 – 1:45 Cover Crops, Crop Rotations, Fertility
1:45 – 2:15 Soil Biology
2:15 – 2:45 Manure Management
- 4:45 MFVGA Annual Business Meeting**
- 5:15 Social Hour in the Trade Show Area**
- 6:30 "Minnesota Grown" Banquet
Entertainment: Comic Magician Tim Gabrielson**



Friday morning, February 4, 2005

- 8:00 – 9:00 GENERAL SESSION**
 Grower Profile - Isabel Barrett-Prescott, Riverview Orchards in Rexford, New York
- 9:00 – 9:45 BREAK**
- 9:45 – 12:15 SESSION I: BERRIES / GRAPES**
- 9:45 – 10:15 Raspberry Variety Trials – Dr. Brian Smith, UW-River Falls – Dept. of Plant & Earth Science
- 10:15 – 10:45 Strawberry IPM Procedures – Growers’ Attitudes – Dr. Thaddeus McCamant, Northland Community & Technical College
- 10:45 – 11:15 Results of Worker Protection Standard Inspections Conducted At Fruit & Vegetable Farms – Steve Poncin, MN Dept. of Agriculture
- 11:15 – 11:45 Asian Ladybeetle Update – Robert Koch, U of M – Entomology Dept.
- 11:45 – 12:15 How Can Grapes Fit Into Your Operation? – John Marshall, Great River Vineyard
- 10:00 – 12:00 SESSION II: SPECIALTY CROPS**
- 10:00 – 10:30 Potatoes – Dr. Carl Rosen, U of M – Dept. of Horticultural Science
- 10:30 – 11:00 Peanuts – Dr. Thomas Michaels, U of M – Dept. of Horticultural Science
- 11:00 – 11:30 Cut Flower Production – Dr. John Erwin, U of M – Dept. of Horticultural Science
- 11:30 – 12:00 Horseradish – Terrance Nennich, U of M Extension Service
- 10:00 – 12:00 SESSION III: SWEET CORN – Part 1**
- 10:00 – 10:30 The Real Truth About Corn Earworm Control – Terrance Nennich, U of M Extension Service
- 10:30 – 11:00 Weed Management – Robert Olson, U of M Extension Service
- 11:00 – 11:30 Types of Sweet Corn – Dr. Vincent Fritz, U of M – Dept. of Horticultural Science
- 11:30 – 12:00 Soil Fertility – Dr. Carl Rosen, U of M – Dept. of Soil, Water & Climate
- 10:00 – 12:00 SESSION IV: APPLES AND OTHER TREE FRUIT**
- 10:00 – 10:30 Year in Review – Grower Participation
- 10:30 – 11:00 Tree Supports – What type of materials do you use and when do you use them? – David Macgregor and Grower Participation
- 11:00 – 11:30 Varieties That Do Well in Northern Climates – Dr. David Wildung, U of M – Dept. of Horticultural Science
- 11:30 – 12:00 Plums – Dr. Brian Smith, UW-River Falls – Dept. of Plant & Earth Science

Noon – 1:15 LUNCH in the Trade Show Area
Friday afternoon, February 4, 2005

- 1:15 – 4:30 SESSION I: DIRECT MARKETING**
- 1:15 – 1:45 Minnesota Grown Opportunities for Direct Marketers – Paul Hugunin
- 1:45 – 2:30 Marketing New York Style – Isabel Barrett-Prescott, Riverview Orchards
- 2:30 – 2:45 Break
- 2:45 – 3:45 Making Your Customers A Key Part of Your Marketing Program – Karl Foord, U of M Extension Service
- 3:45 – 4:30 Marketing to the Metro Consumer
- 1:15 – 4:00 SESSION II: HIGH TUNNELS & PLASTICULTURE**
- 1:15 – 1:45 High Tunnel Raspberry Production – John Cooper, Strawberry Tyme
- 1:45 – 2:15 Minnesota Research Update – Dr. David Wildung, U of M – Dept. of Horticultural Science
- 2:15 – 2:45 Minnesota Research Update – Terrance Nennich, U of M Extension Service
- 2:45 – 3:00 BREAK
- 3:00 – 3:30 General Information on Colored Mulches, etc. – Dr. Vincent Fritz, U of M – Dept. of Horticultural Science
- 3:30 – 4:30 Drip Irrigation – Jerry Wright, U of M Extension Service
- 1:15 – 2:15 SESSION III: DOING ON-FARM TRIALS**
- 1:15 – 1:45 How to do On-Farm Trials – Robert Olson, U of M Extension Service
- 1:45 – 2:15 SARE Grower Grants – Beth Nelson, MISA, University of Minnesota
- 1:15 – 2:45 SESSION IV: SWEET CORN – Part 2**
- 1:15 – 1:45 Get a Handle On Your Sweet Corn Production Budget: Key Costs and Income Potential – Dr. William Hutchison & Terry Nennich
- 1:45 – 2:15 Beneficial Impact of Silk Clipping by Rootworm Beetles...plus Other Recent Insect Control Trends – Dr. William Hutchison, U of M – Dept. of Entomology
- 2:15 – 2:45 Canopy Density & Competition – Dr. Vincent Fritz, U of M Extension Service
- 2:45 – 3:00 3 Years of Research Data With Row Covers & Sweet Corn - Terrance Nennich, U of M Extension Service
- 3:00 – 4:30 SESSION V: PUMPKIN REDUX**
- 3:00 – 3:30 Growing Pumpkins on Plastic
- 3:30 – 4:00 Diseases – Dr. Janna Beckerman, U of M – Dept. of Plant Pathology
- 4:00 – 4:30 Insect Pest Update: Advantages of Living "Up North" – Dr. William Hutchison, U of M – Dept. of Entomology

★ ★

TRADE SHOW HOURS:

Thursday – Feb. 3: 8:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Friday – Feb. 4: 8:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

★ ★

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.

Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference & Trade Show

February 3 & 4, 2005 – 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*



Attendee's Name (Please print)

Attendee's Name (Please print)	Full Registration Conference & Trade Show (Thursday & Friday) February 3 & 4			Thursday Night Banquet	One-day Registration Circle One Thursday Friday			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	\$20.00	\$160.00	\$25.00	\$65.00	\$20.00	\$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 28th, to be considered pre-registered.

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

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.

Please indicate method of payment:

Check (payable to MFVGA) VISA® MASTERCARD®

Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Return this form with payment to:

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

MFVGA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

October 1, 2004 - September 30, 2005

Farm/Company Name _____

Phone (_____) _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip Code _____

E-mail Address _____

Primary Crop Apples Berries Vegetables

Crops _____

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
- ____ Northland Berry News

(An additional \$10.00 fee is required to receive the Northland Berry News.) \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

**Be sure to tell our advertisers
"I saw your ad in the MFVGA Newsletter"**

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 Fax: 763-413-9585

VISA® MASTERCARD®

Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

ATTENTION TRADE SHOW EXHIBITORS

**The 2005 Upper Midwest Regional
Fruit and Vegetable Growers
Conference and Trade Show
will be held February 3 & 4, 2005
at the
St. Cloud Civic Center
in St. Cloud, MN.**

Have we received your application?

**Return it as soon as possible to
reserve the booth(s) you want.**

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

BEGINNING GROWER WORKSHOP

February 1 & 2, 2005

St. Cloud Civic Center, St. Cloud, MN

**Sponsored by the
Minnesota Fruit & Vegetable Growers
Association**

**U of M Extension Service
USDA – Risk Management Agency**

Who Should Attend?

This workshop is for people thinking about starting a commercial fruit or vegetable operation and people already in commercial fruit & vegetable production. It is for people with no experience in farming, people transitioning from a "large garden" to commercial production, people who are transitioning from other types of agricultural production as well as commercial fruit & vegetable producers who are looking for a good review of the basics.

This workshop will help growers learn to identify a variety of potential problems and learn options and methods to control those problems and help minimize the potential for economic loss.

What's Included?

Registration includes two full days of educational sessions, meals (supper on Tuesday and lunch on Wednesday) and a copy of the newly revised and expanded Minnesota Fruit & Vegetable Growers Manual for the Beginning Grower. (One manual per farm.)

Class is limited to 40 participants.
Scholarships are available.
Contact the MFVGA Office at 763-434-0400 or
mfvga@worldnet.att.net for more information.



The Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference & Trade Show will be held on Thursday and Friday, February 3 & 4, 2005. We encourage you to review the schedule included in this newsletter and attend both the Beginning Grower Workshop and the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference. Special registration is offered for those attending both the Beginning Grower Workshop and the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference.

Workshop Schedule

Tuesday, February 1, 2005

- 12:30 – 1:00 p.m. Registration
- 1:00 – 1:45 p.m. Why Are You Here?
Introductions and discussion
Developing Your Future Plans
- 1:45 – 2:30 p.m. Break
- 2:30 – 2:45 p.m. The Basics of Marketing
- 2:45 – 3:30 p.m. Your Farm and It's Opportunities
 - Location
 - Farm Size
 - Soil Type
 - Micro Climate
 - How the Area Population Impacts Your Business
- 3:30 – 4:15 p.m. Educational Resources for Beginning and Advanced Producers
- 4:15 – 4:45 p.m. Supper (Included with registration)
- 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Grower Panel – How I Got Started and Where I Went Wrong
- 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

- 8:30 – 9:15 a.m. Soils 101
- 9:15 – 10:00 a.m. Season Extension Options
- 10:00 – 10:15 a.m. Break
- 10:15 – 11:00 a.m. Weed Control Strategies
- 11:00 – 12:00 noon Risk Management Strategies – Record Keeping and Crop Insurance
- 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. Lunch (Included with registration)
- 1:00 – 1:45 p.m. Insect Control
- 1:45 – 2:30 p.m. Water Management
- 2:30 – 2:45 p.m. Break
- 2:45 – 3:30 p.m. Disease Identification 101
- 3:30 – 4:15 p.m. Handling the Crop from Harvest to Sale
- 4:15 – 5:00 p.m. Developing a Cash Flow Strategy for Your Operation
- 5:00 p.m. Evaluation and Wrap Up

Registration Fee:

- Tuesday Only Registration: \$100 per person
 - Wednesday Only Registration: \$100 per person
 - Tuesday and Wednesday Registration: \$150 per person
- Add the Thursday and Friday Conference sessions and Trade Show for a full four-day package: \$250 per person
(Includes one year of MFVGA membership for new members.)

**Beginning Grower Workshop
Registration Form:**

Name _____

Farm Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

One-Day Registration

Tuesday only _____ @ \$100 = _____

Wednesday only _____ @ \$100 = _____

Two-Day Registration

Tues. & Wed. _____ @ \$150 = _____

Four-Day Package

Tuesday – Friday _____ @ \$250 = _____

Total Enclosed: _____

Please indicate method of payment:

- Check (payable to MFVGA)
- VISA MASTERCARD

Number _____

Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Return this form with payment to:

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

Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference & Trade Show

February 3 & 4, 2005

SESSION SPOTLIGHTS:

Dr. Brian Smith from UW-River Falls to Speak at February Conference

Dr. Brian Smith, an Extension Fruit Specialist at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, will share information on his work with raspberry cultivar trials and plums on Friday, February 4th, during the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference. More information on the sessions will be included in the February newsletter.

Beginning Grower Workshop

February 1 & 2, 2005

Dr. Smith grew up on the family produce farm near Mitchell, SD. Major crops grown included strawberries, watermelons and tomatoes. Dr. Smith's childhood interest in his father's on-farm watermelon and strawberry breeding programs greatly influenced his later career choice. He received his B.S. in Horticulture from South Dakota State University and M.S. and Ph.D. in Horticulture with emphasis in Plant Breeding from the University of Minnesota. He currently teaches fruit and vegetable production courses at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls and serves as a State Extension Fruit Specialist. His research programs have involved strawberry, raspberry and stone fruit breeding, apple evolution and compost use feasibility for commercial strawberry production.

ACCOMMODATIONS ARE AVAILABLE AT

Best Western-Kelly Inn 320-253-0606

Room block will be released 1/1/05

Single Rate – \$72.00 Double Rate – \$78.00

Be sure to mention the MFVGA to receive special conference room rates.

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

The Radisson Suites Hotel 320-654-1661

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

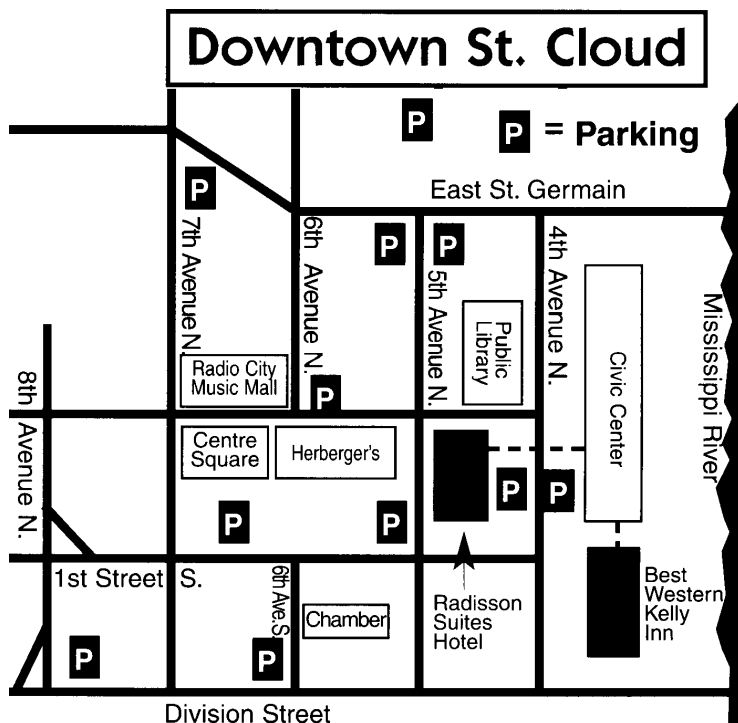
Dynamic Farmers' Markets Conference Held

The recent growth in the demand for local foods has created a dynamic interest in farmers' markets throughout Minnesota and the United States. The first set of one-day conferences geared towards addressing the needs of farmers' market managers and vendors was held November 16th in Staples, MN and November 17th in Owatonna, MN. Keynote speaker was Vance Corum from Washington State University and Advanced Marketing. Mr. Corum has helped develop more than 65 large certified farmers' markets, has written numerous magazine articles and has scripted several television programs. His recently published book *The New Farmers' Market* gives fresh ideas for producers, managers and communities.

The conference included discussions on key ingredients for a successful farmers' market, challenges facing local markets, making the market an integral part of the community, promotional ideas from area markets, how to get the right vendor mix and tips on managing the market.

The Dynamic Farmers' Market Conference was sponsored by the University of Minnesota Extension Service, the Minnesota Farmers' Market Association, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, the Central and Northwest Minnesota Partnerships, MFVGA, the USDA Risk Management Agency and the Staples Community College. These organizations are equal opportunity providers.

A second set of one-day conferences is being planned for the spring. Watch upcoming issues of the MFVGA Newsletter for more details.



MFVGA Awarded USDA-RMA Partnership Agreement

The Minnesota Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association is pleased to announce a partnership agreement with the USDA – Risk Management Agency. This agreement through the Commodity Partnership Program will provide direct benefits to MFVGA members and growers throughout the region. A number of components are included in the agreement and we will be working with the University of Minnesota Extension Service and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture on many of the projects.

Included in the agreement is funding for the following:

Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference

– Funding will allow us to bring in additional out-of-state speakers and help defray the promotional costs of the conference. This allows us to provide quality educational opportunities while keeping the registration fees reasonable. Funding will also provide scholarships that can be applied to registration fees for the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference or the Beginning Grower Workshop.

Beginning Grower Workshop

– Funding will allow us to expand the Beginning Grower session to a full two-day workshop which will address the needs of beginning growers in more depth. More information on the Beginning Grower Workshop is included on the insert.

Farmers' Market One-day Seminars

– MFVGA is working with the University of Minnesota Extension Service, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the Minnesota Farmers' Market Association to provide full-day seminars that address the unique issues faced by farmers' markets.

MFVGA Newsletter

– Funding will allow us to provide risk management information in the newsletter and will help to defray some of the printing and postage costs.

MFVGA Website Development

– Watch for changes to the MFVGA website in the coming months. We are revamping the site to make it a more useful resource for growers in the region.

Minnesota Fruit & Vegetable IPM News

– RMA funding will continue the production of the Minnesota Fruit & Vegetable IPM News for the 2005 growing season. The publication is a joint project of the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and has become a valuable resource for fruit and vegetable growers throughout the region. The publication will be available on the web and via regular mail.

Communicating Risk Management Benefits of IPM for High-Value Hort. Crops

– Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a concept and practice that has the potential to greatly improve productivity or profits and / or reduce pesticide use for agricultural commodities. The benefits of IPM as a management tool, however, are not always measured or communicated to producers. This project, led by Dr. Bill Hutchison, will use results from research done with cabbage and sweet corn over the last four years

and will develop materials that will clearly show that an IPM management system can increase profits and decrease profit risk over conventional systems.

Updating of the Nutrient Management Bulletin

– Adequate plant nutrition is one of the most important components of producing fruit and vegetable crops. The U of M Extension Service's Nutrient Management Bulletin for Commercial Fruit and Vegetable Crops, last revised in 1996, will be updated to incorporate production using plastics and hoop houses/high tunnels as well as the use of more organic sources of nutrients. The updated bulletin will address changes in nutrient management and specific nutritional needs of new fruit and vegetable varieties. The updated bulletin will be a useful tool for all fruit and vegetable growers.

Development of a Web-Based Vegetable Diagnostics Tool

– Dr. Cindy Tong from the University of Minnesota will head this project to develop a diagnostics tool that will include information on diseases, insect pests, nutritional problems and chemical injury due to drift. The tool will help growers determine what problems they might have with their crops, identify the risks associated with those problems and take appropriate action to minimize that risk. The tool will be especially helpful to growers who have limited access to Extension personnel, a diagnostics clinic or other timely help.

Watch for updates to these projects in upcoming issues of the MFVGA Newsletter.

Conference Scholarships Available

A limited number of scholarships are available for the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference to help defray registration fees for commercial growers and students attending the Thursday and Friday educational sessions. Scholarships may also be requested for the Beginning Grower Workshop on February 1 & 2, 2005. The MFVGA scholarship fund was established with dollars from the USDA-Risk Management Agency and our Specialty 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 2005 conference must be received in the MFVGA office and approved before January 21, 2005. 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@worldnet.att.net.



Plan Now to Order Your Minnesota Grown Produce Bags

We are currently planning our third group order of the “Minnesota Grown” produce bags. Over 500,000 bags have been distributed during the last two growing seasons to producers licensed to use the Minnesota Grown logo. These bags are designed to hold a dozen ears of sweet corn without tearing, but they’re not just for

produce. Producers have been very happy with the quality of the bag.

The bags are a heavy 1 mil white plastic 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”. 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 5,000 bags. You have the option of having the bags drop-shipped directly to you 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 ordering deadlines. It is very important that you place your order by the deadline.

Samples of the bags and order forms will be available at the Upper Midwest Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference and Trade Show in St. Cloud, MN on February 3 & 4, 2005. Samples can also be requested from the MFVGA office. You must be licensed to use the Minnesota Grown logo to order the bags.

If you are interested in the bags and want more information, please contact the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400 or mfvga@worldnet.att.net and you will receive information when the details are available. If you contact the office via e-mail, please reference the produce bags in the subject line.

MFVGA Board Positions Open

The Minnesota Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association is looking for members who are willing to serve a three-year term on the Board of Directors. We are looking for representatives from both the fruit and vegetable industries. If you are interested in serving the MFVGA as a Board member, or would like more information, please call Marilyn at the MFVGA office (763-434-0400). Your name will be forwarded to the nominations committee.

MFVGA Policy on Conference Registration Cancellations and Refunds:

MFVGA will refund registration fees for the 2005 Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference in full if the MFVGA office is notified before Friday, January 28, 2005. If the MFVGA office is notified after January 28, 2005, but before January 31st, 75% of the registration amount will be refunded. No refund will be issued if registrations are cancelled after Monday, January 31, 2005.

Join us for the "Bull Session"

If you are coming to the Educational Conference and plan to be in St. Cloud on Wednesday, February 2, 2005, you are invited to join other growers and educators for an informal “Bull Session” beginning at 7:00 p.m. This is an excellent chance to visit with other growers, meet new people and renew old acquaintances.

Bring samples of jellies, jams, salsa, etc. to share – crackers and chips will be provided.

The “Bull Session” will be held at the Best Western – Kelly Inn. If you have any questions, please call the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400.

2005 Trade Show Exhibitors

The following exhibitors have already signed up for the 2005 Trade Show held in conjunction with the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference. The Trade Show will be held at the St. Cloud Civic Center in St. Cloud, MN on Thursday and Friday, February 3 & 4, 2005. Additional exhibitor information will be included in the February 2005 issue of the MFVGA Newsletter.

Ag Resource, Inc.
 Ag-Tec
 Agro-K Corporation
 Barr, Inc.
 Chesmore Seed Company
 Farm Service Agency
 Farmers’ Choice Food Brands
 Jordan Seeds, Inc.
 Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture – IPM Program
 Minnesota Grown
 Monte Package Company
 Nelson’s Vegetable Storage Systems, Inc.
 Rispens Seeds, Inc.
 Rupp Seeds, Inc.
 Stokes Seeds, Inc.
 UAP – Great Lakes – LaCrescent
 USDA – Risk Management Agency

It’s not too late to sign up – contact the MFVGA office at 763-434-0400 for an application for exhibit space.

U of M GLEANINGS

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

Remember the August freeze? Those of you who had melons and squash in low spots might remember, especially if those cucurbits got zapped by the freeze! Some of you who grow 'Honeycrisp' apples might remember, if your fruit show symptoms of chilling injury or soggy breakdown. I've been hearing about soggy breakdown in 'Honeycrisp' apples from my colleagues in New York and Ontario, but up until now, Minnesota-grown 'Honeycrisp' seemed immune to this disorder. The problem is that chilling injury and soggy breakdown cannot be detected without cutting the fruit open.

Here's what chilling injury in apples looks like:



Susceptibility is associated with (but not necessarily caused by) low calcium and phosphorus levels in the fruit, light crops and large fruit, and cool weather during the time when fruit are rapidly expanding. When really severe, the skin will become discolored.

If frozen, the apples will soften and become mealy.

With soggy breakdown, the apple flesh has distinct brown patches. The patches coalesce when the disorder is severe. Like chilling injury, whether or not a fruit has soggy breakdown cannot be determined without cutting the fruit open except in severe cases, when the fruit becomes soft. New York researchers have found that higher crop load is associated with a greater incidence of soggy breakdown. They are recommending crop loads of five fruit per cm² of trunk cross-sectional area for 'Honeycrisp'. Storage of the fruit at 38°F decreases soft scald, soggy breakdown, and superficial scald, but more bitter pit, rot, and senescent breakdown.



We can't prevent another weird freeze in the summer, but if it happens again, I recommend that if you've seen chilling injury and/or soggy breakdown in your 'Honeycrisp' fruit this year, to harvest the fruit earlier rather than later, and store fruit at 38°F. Late harvesting of 'Honeycrisp' seems to lead to a higher prevalence of physiological disorders.

One kind word can warm three winters.

Japanese proverb

SESSION SPOTLIGHTS:

GROWER SHOWCASE:

Isabel Barrett-Prescott - Riverview Orchards in Rexford, New York

Located in upstate New York, Riverview Orchards is an apple farm and country store open year round. Riverview Orchards has been an apple farm for almost 100 years. Originally settled by the Dutch, the farm is located on an old Indian trail along the Mohawk River. After the Erie Canal was built, the farm was used as a stopping point for stabling the horses and mules that pulled the packet boats. Around the turn of the century, the Leversee family planted apple trees on the gently rolling land. In 1945, the Barrett family purchased the farm and grew both wholesale and retail apples and other produce for the next 40 years.

Today the farm is run by that same family, and is a favorite place for parents to bring their kids to visit, a step back to Grandma's day, where the land is open, the food is homemade, and there's lots of old-fashioned goodness.

Riverview Orchards has Pick-Your-Own apples, a bakery, a beehive and a honey house. They do hayrides, theme birthday parties and school tours.

Isabel Barrett-Prescott will talk about the Riverview Orchards operation during the general session on Friday morning, February 4, 2005, during the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference. She will share additional marketing ideas during the Direct Marketing session on Friday afternoon. The full conference schedule can be found on pages 3 and 4.

Keep It Funny!

Comic magician Tim Gabrielson has one goal in mind when he steps on stage: "Keep it funny!"

We are fortunate to have Tim as our banquet entertainment for the 2005 Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference. Tim's quick wit, dry sense of humor, and captivating delivery, presents a high energy, side-splitting comedy magic show, appropriate for all ages. Tim's audience driven, interactive performance will leave you in an uncontrollable state of laughter.

Whether he is on stage in Las Vegas or entertaining nationwide at state fairs, colleges, or corporate events, Tim has an amazing ability to captivate and hold any audience throughout his entire performance.

Join us for the banquet on Thursday night, February 3, 2005, for good food, first-class entertainment from Tim Gabrielson and laughter galore. Tickets are required. The registration form can be found on page 5.



MINNESOTA GROWN

Fresh From Your Neighbor

Search for 2005 Media Partner Underway

The Minnesota Grown Program is currently seeking a media partner for 2005. Proposals from TV stations, radio stations and other media vendors are being accepted through December 8. Applications will be reviewed during December in hopes of being able to announce the winner in time for association meetings in January and February. Minnesota Grown license renewals and 2005 Directory applications will be mailed in late November/early December.

Web Promotions Update

The Minnesota Grown Promotion Group website (minnesotagrown.com) has averaged over 40 unique visitors per day from June through October this year. Unique visitors measures the number of different computer addresses that visit the site and is more accurate than the number of hits (during the same time period we are averaging over 7,000 hits per month). The tile ad and promotional page on wcco.com has accounted for roughly half of the visitors to our web site. In October alone, over 1,000 visitors came to minnesotagrown.com directly from wcco.com.

Plan to Attend Marketing Conference

The 2005 Minnesota Grown Marketing Conference will be held on Tuesday, March 15, at the Continuing Education Center on the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus. This year will build on the strength of the 2004 conference which was attended by over 140 producers.

Attendees were asked to rate each speaker on a 1-5 scale with 5 being the best. The average ranking was a remarkable 4.55! The conference is fortunate to draw a variety of producers including garden centers, fruit and vegetable growers, Christmas tree growers, farmers' marketers, livestock producers and other specialty crop producers.

Here's what attendees had to say about the 2004 Conference:

"I've got an advantage over my competitors because of what I learned at this conference."

Phil Hartley, Pinestead Tree Farms

"The agenda, location, speakers and food were very good and well planned. Thank you for hosting a great day and getting us pumped up again for another season!"

Leslie Axdahl, Axdahl Farms

Save March 15 on your calendar for a conference you won't want to miss. You can request a detailed agenda and registration form by visiting www.minnesotagrown.com or by calling Paul Hugunin at 651-297-5510.

Looking for Gift Ideas?

Consider giving a unique Minnesota Grown item like T-shirts, hats, sweatshirts and denim shirts with the Minnesota Grown logo. A complete list of items and an order form is available at www.minnesotagrown.com. You'll also find plenty of other great Minnesota gift ideas in the Minnesota Grown Directory. Minnesota wine, cheeses, specialty meats, honey, jams, jellies and maple syrup are just a few of the great ways to make a lasting impression with your gift giving and to do business with other great Minnesota companies.

New TV Ads Promote Apples, Pumpkins, and Wine

Two new television ads promoting Minnesota Grown specialty crops were produced and aired this year as part of the partnership with WCCO television. The first ad in late September featured apples, pumpkins and wineries. The second ad ran during the 2nd and 3rd weeks of November and highlighted Minnesota apples available in grocery stores. It was filmed at Kowalski's store in Woodbury.

Dine Fresh – Dine Local

The Minnesota Grown Program was a proud partner in a new event that highlighted locally grown foods and the restaurants that serve them. Over 200 dining parties showed their support for local foods on October 5 by eating at one of the 13 participating restaurants. Participants received copies of the Minnesota Grown Directory and the 2005 Blue Sky Guide. In addition to the Minnesota Grown Program, other partners included the Food Alliance Midwest and the Land Stewardship Project. More details about the event and future plans are available online at www.dinefreshdinelocal.com.



Minnesota Grown information is supplied to MFVGA by Paul Hugunin (651-297-5510) and Brian Erickson (651-296-4939) 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.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

(This information is from the Farm Service Agency Online FACT SHEET dated September 2003. It is printed here as an update to information included in the Risk Management Toolbox for Specialty Crop Growers.)

Background

USDA's Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occurs due to natural disasters.

Eligible Producers

An eligible producer is a landowner, tenant, or sharecropper who shares in the risk of producing an eligible crop. The annual gross revenue of the eligible producer, and any individual or entity combined as one "person" with the eligible producer, cannot exceed \$2 million.

Eligible Crops

To be eligible for NAP assistance, crops must be noninsurable crops and agricultural commodities for which the catastrophic risk protection level of crop insurance is not available, and must be any of the following commercially produced crops:

- crops grown for food;
- crops planted and grown for livestock consumption, including, but not limited to, grain and forage crops, including native forage;
- crops grown for fiber, such as cotton and flax (except for trees);
- crops grown under a controlled environment, such as mushrooms and floriculture;
- specialty crops, such as honey and maple sap;
- value loss crops, such as aquaculture, Christmas trees, ginseng, ornamental nursery, and turfgrass sod;
- sea oats and sea grass; and
- seed crops where the propagation stock is produced for sale as seed stock for other eligible NAP crop production.

Please contact a crop insurance agent if you have questions regarding whether a crop is insurable in your county. For further information on whether a crop is eligible for NAP coverage, please contact your local FSA office.

Eligible Natural Disasters

An eligible natural disaster is any of the following:

- damaging weather, such as drought, freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind, or hurricanes;
- an adverse natural occurrence, such as earthquake or flood; or
- a condition related to damaging weather or an adverse natural occurrence, such as excessive heat, disease, or insect infestation.

The natural disaster must occur before or during harvest and must directly affect the eligible crop.

Applying for Coverage

Eligible producers must apply for coverage of noninsurable crops using Form CCC-471, "Application for Coverage," and pay the

applicable service fees at their local FSA office. The application and service fees must be filed by the application closing date as established by the producer's FSA state committee. The service fee is \$100 per crop per county or \$300 per producer per county, not to exceed a total of \$900 per producer with farming interest in multiple counties.

Limited resource producers may request a waiver of service fees.

A limited resource producer has:

- an annual gross income not exceeding \$20,000 from all sources (including income from a spouse or other household members) for each of the 2 prior years; or
- less than 25 cropland acres for all crops, where a majority of the producer's annual gross income is derived from farming and this income from all farming operations does not exceed \$20,000.

Coverage Period for NAP

The coverage period for NAP may vary depending on whether the producer grows annual, perennial, or value loss crops.

The coverage period for annual crops begins the later of:

- 30 days after application for coverage and the applicable service fees have been paid, or
- the date the crop is planted, and does not exceed the final planting date.

and ends the earlier of:

- the date the crop harvest is completed;
- the normal harvest date for the crop;
- the date the crop is abandoned; or
- the date the entire crop acreage is destroyed.

The coverage period for perennial crops always begins 30 calendar days after the application closing date and ends the earlier of:

- 10 months from the application closing date;
- the date the crop harvest is completed;
- the normal harvest date for the crop;
- the date the crop is abandoned; or
- the date the entire crop acreage is destroyed.

Please contact your local FSA office for information on the coverage periods for perennial forage crops, controlled-environment crops, specialty crops, and value loss crops.

Information Required to Remain Eligible for NAP

To remain eligible for NAP assistance, the following crop acreage information must be reported annually:

- name of the crop (lettuce, clover, etc.);
- type and variety (head lettuce, red clover, etc.);
- location and acreage of the crop (field, sub-field, etc.);
- share of the crop and the names of other producers with an interest in the crop;
- type of practice used to grow the crop (irrigated or non-irrigated);
- date the crop was planted in each field; and
- intended use of the commodity (fresh, processed, etc.).

It benefits producers to report crop acreage shortly after planting (early in the risk period) to ensure reporting deadlines are not missed and coverage is not lost.

In addition, producers must annually provide the following production information:

- the quantity of all harvested production of the crop in which the producer held an interest during the year;
- the disposition of the harvested crop, such as whether it is marketable, unmarketable, salvaged, or used differently than intended; and
- verifiable or reliable crop production records (when required).

Producers must provide production information in a manner that can be easily understood by the FSA county committee. Questions regarding acceptable production records should be directed to your local FSA office.

Failure to report acreage and production information may result in reduced or zero NAP assistance. Be aware that acreage reporting and final planting dates vary across the United States. Contact your local FSA office for your local dates.

For aquaculture, floriculture, and ornamental nursery operations, producers must maintain records according to industry standards, including daily crop inventories. Unique reporting requirements apply to beekeepers and producers of Christmas trees, turfgrass sod, maple sap, mushrooms, ginseng, and commercial seed or forage crops. Please contact your local FSA office for these requirements.

FSA Usage of Reported Acreage and Production

FSA uses acreage reports to verify the existence of the crop and record the number of acres covered by the application. Also, the acreage report in combination with the production report are used to calculate the approved yield (expected production for a crop year). The approved yield is the average of your actual production history (APH) for a minimum of 4 to a maximum of 10 crop years (5 years for apples and peaches). To calculate your APH, FSA divides your total production by your crop acreage.

The approved yield may be calculated by using substantially reduced yield data if you do not report acreage and production, or report less than 4 years of crop production.

Applying for NAP Assistance When a Natural Disaster Strikes

When a crop or planting is affected by a natural disaster, you must notify your local FSA office by completing Part B, Notice of Loss, on Form CCC-576, Application for Payment, within 15 calendar days of the:

- natural disaster occurrence;
- final planting date, if your planting was prevented by a natural disaster;
- date damage to the crop or loss of production becomes apparent to you; or
- the normal harvest date.

To receive NAP benefits, producers must complete Form CCC-576, Application for Payment, no later than the immediately subsequent crop year acreage reporting date for the crop. The CCC-576 requires producers to provide evidence of production and note whether the crop was marketable, unmarketable, salvaged, or used

differently than intended.

Amount of Production Loss to Receive a NAP Payment

The natural disaster must have either:

- reduced the expected unit production of the crop by more than 50 percent; or
- prevented the producer from planting more than 35 percent of your intended crop acreage.

Expected production is the amount of the crop produced in the absence of a natural disaster. FSA compares expected production to actual production to determine the percentage of crop loss.

Defining a NAP Unit

The NAP unit includes the specific crop acreage in the county in which the producer has a unique crop interest. A unique crop interest is either:

- 100 percent interest; or
- a shared interest with other producers.

How Much Loss NAP Covers

NAP covers the amount of loss greater than 50 percent of the expected production, based on the approved yield and reported acreage.

Information FSA Uses to Calculate Payment

The NAP payment is calculated by unit using:

- crop acreage;
- approved yield;
- net production;
- 55 percent of an average market price for the specific commodity, established by the FSA state committee;
- a payment factor reflecting the decreasing cost incurred in the production cycle for the crop that is harvested, unharvested, or prevented from being planted.

More Information

Further information on NAP is available from your local FSA office or on FSA's Web site at www.fsa.usda.gov.

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

For more information on the Risk Management Agency visit their website at www.rma.usda.gov.

Information on the Farm Service Agency can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov.

SESSION SPOTLIGHTS:

GROWER SHOWCASE:

John Cooper - Strawberry Tyme, Inc. in Ontario, Canada



Strawberry Tyme is a partnership of John and his wife, Diane, and John's parents, Gary & Sandra Cooper. They grow nursery plants of strawberry, raspberry, asparagus, and black currants and they broker different raspberries, blueberries and rhubarb plants. They also grow June bearing strawberries, day neutral strawberries, summer & fall bearing

raspberries, grape tomatoes and slicer cucumbers. They have a processing facility to process strawberries, a pack line for cucs, a pack line for tomatoes and they operate a custom cooling business. Strawberry Tyme is now farming about 925 acres including grain and rotational crops. They employ seven people year round, ten people for ten months, twenty people for eight months and 70-100 people for five to six months during the harvest season.

Strawberry Tyme is also the Canadian distributor for a tunnel company from England selling multi bay crop tunnels. These tunnels are used to protect many crops including strawberry, raspberry, blueberry, cherry, flowers & high value vegetables. They now have 4.6 acres of fall bearing raspberries under tunnel & are in the process of putting up 12 more acres for strawberries, raspberries & tomatoes. They are undertaking a three-year program to erect 10-15 acres of tunnels per year for the next three years.

Hear about Strawberry Tyme during the Thursday afternoon berry session on Feb. 3. John will also talk about his experiences with high tunnel raspberry production on Friday afternoon, February 4. The full educational program is on pages 3 and 4.

Short and Long-Term Improvements in Soil Quality: Can you have your cake and eat it too?

Dr. Sieglinde Snapp from Michigan State University will be joining us to conduct an organics workshop during the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference. Her focus will be on organic cropping systems and the ingredients for building soil quality. Her presentation will include a balanced program of mixed quality organic amendments that enhance soil aggregation for immediate improvements in soil quality, and improve soil organic matter over the long-term as well. The gains from a mixture of soil-improving cover crops, including brassicas, legumes and small grains or grasses will be discussed. The integrated use of manure and cover crops will be emphasized, and practical examples given from Michigan cropping systems, both vegetable and field crop systems. Dr. Snapp looks forward to learning from organic farmers who are building soil quality on their farm, as well as sharing the latest in research on soil quality.

The Organics Workshop will be on Thursday afternoon, February 3, 2005. A full schedule of the educational sessions can be found on pages 3 and 4.

Are You Making A Profit on Fresh Market Sweet Corn????

Fresh market sweet corn is one of the major vegetables grown and consumed during the growing season in Minnesota, but what are your actual net returns? Are you just going through a fun exercise in production? There are many factors that add or subtract from the bottom line in fresh sweet corn production. Come and see how your operation rates. Get answers to many questions like, "what do I really need to charge my customers?" "Can I save money on insect control and still produce high-quality product?" Terry Nennich and Bill Hutchison will discuss the economical aspects of fresh market sweet corn production on Friday afternoon, February 4, 2005 during the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference. The full program schedule can be found on pages 3 and 4.

MINNESOTA FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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