

2009 Annual State Report to the Southern Region SARE Program

DATE:	25 January 2010
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CURRENT REPORTING PERIOD:	January 2009 to December 2009
SSARE FUNDING AMOUNT:	\$40,000 (\$10,000 – UKy MSP; \$10,000 KSU MSP, \$20,000 Program Asst)

Kentucky 2009 Southern SARE Model State Program Report

Abstract: Collaborative and comprehensive programming is Kentucky's major accomplishment for the 2009 Southern SARE Model State Program. Kentucky State University created a Master's Degree in Environmental Studies; the University of Kentucky launched its Farm Transitions and KyFARMSTART programs, with Kentucky State University as a collaborator; and, agent training has included topics ranging from production to marketing to leadership.

Report Narrative: The broad goal of Kentucky's SARE Model State Program is to build a demand among agents and other agriculture professionals for training in sustainable agriculture, to provide that training, and for those training efforts to result in the adoption of sustainable agriculture practices by farm clientele as a result of enhanced local support.

Kentucky, due to progressive success over the past few years, is actively achieving this goal. Agent training programs now include a fair amount of topics in sustainable agriculture, which in turn has influenced the type of interaction and resources agents are offering to their clients. Institutional changes at both of Kentucky's land grant universities have served as a catalyst for this development, however much of the credit can be attributed to the outreach, itself. By facilitating fellowship as part of education, Kentucky has created a strong network of new and veteran producers, agents, and specialists.

Highlights:

The University of Kentucky's College of Agriculture created an extension specialist position in sustainable agriculture and soon thereafter initiated a College Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems working group during the fall of 2008. This, in combination with a new undergraduate program in sustainable agriculture (2007), built the momentum necessary for more comprehensive programming and collaborative efforts among faculty, extension, producers, and advocates. As a result, The University of Kentucky's program was especially successful in 2009. Some highlights:

- Implementation of the Farm Transitions Program continued (funded by SARE PDP Enhancement Grant). A training focused on Community Supported Agriculture programs (CSA) was facilitated for Louisville area producers and agents during the winter, in preparation for 2010's growing season.
- In partnership with Kentucky State University, the KyFARMSTART program was developed and is set to launch on January 28, 2010. With \$750,000 in USDA funding for Beginner Farmer/Ranchers, this comprehensive program is designed specifically for producers with less than 10 years of experience. KyFARMSTART will begin as a multi-week course presented (by extension specialists) at county extension offices across the state. By summer of 2010, the curriculum will also be available as an online class. Topics will include production, marketing, management, leadership and finance.

- Extension agents attended a Sustainable and Organic Fruit/Veggie Production workshop, facilitated by the Department of Horticulture.
- Ag Economics Extension Specialists presented a workshop, to approximately 80 ANR agents, which focused on Niche & Alternative Market Development.
- UK hosted the annual conference of the American Grassfed Association, and used SARE PDP funds to support agent participation in this training opportunity.
- For the first time, sustainability-themed GEN 100 courses were offered. GEN100 is a curriculum requirement for UK freshmen, and a number of topics are available.

In 2009, Kentucky State University made the decision to initiate a College of Agriculture, Food Science, and *Sustainable Systems*. A significant influence was SARE funded programming such as The Annual Small, Limited-Resource/Minority Farmers Conference and KSU “Third Thursdays” (with over 18,000 participants from about 25 states and six foreign nations over the past 12 years). KSU is currently conducting a nationwide search for the Dean of the College.

During the February “Third Thursday” on Organics, the Organic Association of Kentucky (OAK) was formed. The association now has officers, a website, and is actively promoting and recruiting farmers who are involved in sustainable agriculture. The KSU Organic Working Group website currently serves as the sustainable agriculture website for Kentucky State University and announces and advertises “Third Thursdays”.

Kentucky State University continues to emphasize its “Third Thursday Thing” monthly educational workshops as the core of its SARE Model State Program activities. During 2009, the workshops continued to draw professionals from many sources, including Extension agents, Extension paraprofessionals, USDA and state agencies, farmer leaders and mentors, farmers and consumer advocates for sustainable agriculture. The workshops continue to draw a diverse clientele including professionals, small farmers, women, African Americans and Native Americans.

2009 Third Thursday Summary:

AgrAbility and Managing Farm Stress (*November 19, 113 participants*)

- Dr. Tamea Evans, MD, Richmond, KY, Stress Management
- Dr. John Sedlacek, KSU, Insects in the Barn?
- Mr. John Hancock, UK, AgrAbility and specialized equipment
- Mr. Wayne Keith, AL, Wood-burning truck demonstration
- Dr. Avinash Tope, KSU, & Mr. Fred Bebe, Pesticides and Health Risks in Farm Workers
- Dr. Ken Andries, KSU, Overview of KSU Goat program

Goat Day (*October 15, 56 participants*)

- Mr. Dick King, Monroe Co. & Joe Bentley, Lewis Co. producers, “Master Goat Grazer Herds”
- Dr. Jim Neel, USDA-ARS Appalachian Farming Systems Research Center, Beaver, WV,

“Silvopasture : A Natural Choice”

Dr. Ken Andries, KSU, Hoof Care

Mr. Terry Hutchens, UK, “Somatic Cell Count and Milk Quality in Dairy Goats”

Dr. Jason Tower, Purdue, Dr. Mike Flyfthe, USDA-ARS, Terry Hutchens, Ken Andries –
Research update and future programs with goats

Dr. Michael Bomford – “Sweet Sorghum” production demonstration

Sheep, Cattle, PawPaw, & Sweet Sorghum (*September 17, 89 participants*)

Ms. Tracy Burden, UK – Starting a sheep operation

Mr. Bob Maurer, producer, A year in the sheep business

Mr. Tony Silvernail, Brian Geier, and John Rogers, KSU – sorghum syrup demonstration

Dr. Kirk Pomper, Ms. Sheri Crabtree, Mr. Jeremy Lowe, KSU– Pawpaw propagation, Pawpaw
101, pawpaw tasting, and tour of orchard

Dr. Ken Andries, KSU – Planning your winter feeding program for cattle and Beef Quality
Assurance refresher

Home Gardens (*August 20, 70 participants*)

Dr. Marion Simon, KSU, The Economic Importance of Home Gardens

Mr Eddie Reed, KSDU – Container Gardens

Mr. John Clay, KSU – Traditional home gardens and demonstration

Dr. John Sedlacek, KSU – What will you find in the garden? Spiders? Beneficial insects? Pests

Dr. Michael Bomford, KSU – Organic home gardens

Ms Sheri Crabtree, KSU – Pawpaws and blackberries

Dr. George Antonious and Mr. Eric Turley, KSU – Mitigation of Pesticides in runoff water

Mr. Steve Skelton, KSU – Dealing with animal pests

Field Day (*July 16, 72 participants*)

Dr. John Sedlacek – “Pest and Beneficial Insect Identification”

Dr. Kirk Pomper – Quince, Gooseberries, Currants, and Ornamental pawpaws

Ms Sheri Crabtree – Pawpaw Production

Mr. Jeremy Lowe – Blackberry Production

Dr’s. Wang & Bomford – Sweet Potato greens

Dr. Robert Durborow – Aquaculture Research Facility

Dr. Kenneth Andries – Pasture renovation, clover, fescue, soybeans for forage, Goat production

Dr. Michael Bomford – “Energy Use on Crop Production”

Primocane Blackberry, Gooseberry, and Currant Production (*June 18, 97 participants*)

Ms. Sheri Crabtree & Dr. John Sedlacek – Summer Fruit Disease and Insect Problems

Dr. Kirk Pomper – Growing Gooseberries and Currants in Kentucky

Mr. Jeremy Lowe and Dr. Kirk Pomper – Primocane Blackberry Trial Update

Pastured Poultry Day (*May 21, 92 participants*)

Mr. John Brumley – Pastured Poultry

Dr. Tim Eggers – Annie’s Project

Mr. Steve Skelton – Hands-on Pastured Poultry

Mr. Tim Eggers – Women’s focus group

Soil & NRCS (*April 16, 81 participants*)

Statewide NRCS professionals performed the training which included NRCS programs and cost-share, know your soils and the soil profile, pasture and woodland management, pond development, and sustainable alternatives including grazing livestock on erodible soils.

Goat Day (*March 19, 99 participants*)

Mr. Scott Bowdrige – Parasite Control and Young Lambs and Kids
Dr. Kenneth Andries – Meeting Nutritional Needs without breaking the bank
Mr. Todd Harp – Cost Share Programs, revisions and information
Ms. Judy Morley – Scrapie Program in Kentucky

Organics (*February 19, 73 participants*)

Mr. Michael Fitzgerald – Kentucky organic program
Mr. Eric Walles – A farmers’ perspective on certification
Dr. Michael Bomford, Mr. Ben Abel, Mr. Sean Clark – University organic program

Farm Equipment Maintenance and Safety for the Small Farmer (*January 15, 40 participants*)

Mr. Jim Brown, KSU Research and Demonstration Farm mechanic
Mr. “Hank” Schweickart, KSU Research and Demonstration Farm Technician
Mr. Eddie Reed, KSU Research and Demonstration Farm Manager

Future:

In 2010, Kentucky State University will host 11 “Third Thursday” workshops in addition to its Annual Small, Limited-Resource/Minority Farmers Conference. In its 13th year of existence, the “Third Thursday Things” will have a new home in February, as KSU will open *The Center for Sustainable Farms & Families*, a 12,000 sq. ft facility to seat 650 people. KSU will host a Small Farm Field Day on the “Third Thursday” of July, 2010 which will also constitute a celebration of Sustainable Agriculture as it will include one of the opening ceremonies for The Center.

Kentucky has a new Program Assistant who will be investing time into advisory board development. In an effort to ensure that program growth will be efficient, appropriate, and effective in 2010, the Kentucky Advisory Council completed an assessment of “un-met needs” to determine important areas considered by council members to be most deprived of development. As a result, the council established sub-committees to focus on specific needs for producers, agents, and consumers. By acknowledging “consumer awareness” as a necessary part of continued growth in sustainable agriculture, Kentucky’s SARE program will impact a greater segment of its communities. The sub-committees will work to facilitate “follow-through” of planned programming for Kentucky SARE.

A special emphasis will also be placed upon online training and use of web resources. County Agents will be given training credit for their participation in the SARE on-line training programs “Sustainable Agriculture: Basic Principles and Concept Overview” as well as the “IPM for Organic Growers” course.

Promotional information will be sent directly to county offices and extension administrators will be part of the agent “buy-in” effort.

Social networking will become an important resource for Kentucky SARE programs in the future. A new website is in the works, and will serve as a “hub” for sustainable agriculture in the state. Using Facebook, WindowsLive, and other internet technology to distribute newsletters, event invitations, or new resources, Kentucky will continue to grow its network of producers, educators, and advocates in the coming year.