



Southwest Marketing Network

Expanding Markets for Southwest Small-Scale, Alternative, and Minority Producers

Promoting Local Agricultural Marketing in the Southwest

January 2007

Southwest Marketing Network Conference is back in Flagstaff this March!

The purpose of the Southwest Marketing Network is to promote local agricultural marketing in the Four Corners states. We do this through a quarterly newsletter, specialized trainings, and an annual conference. Our Fifth Annual Conference will be held in Flagstaff, Arizona March 26–28th, 2007. Previous years' participants noted that this is the best conference concentrating on agricultural marketing that they have attended, and they also welcome the opportunity to network with other producers and service providers in the winter—not to mention all the local foods we provide in the reception and meals. That's not always an easy feat in March, but we try! Also, be sure to check out the new Farm to School Video which will be available there.

There will be a tour of farm sites in the Chino Valley area on Monday. Once a thriving agricultural area, the Chino Valley region has changed radically in the last several years. Many of the farms in the area have turned these demographic changes to their advantage by developing direct market opportunities: Burnin' Daylight Farm—A mother daughter team growing diversified vegetables and some livestock. They have developed many direct markets including the Prescott College Cafe and CSA, the Farmers' Market, and a farm stand. Whipstone Farm—Extraordinary direct farm marketers will give a brief tour of their fields and talk about some of their farmers' market and value added marketing techniques. Lost Cabin Ranch—They have a grass fed beef ranch as well as a garden that provides food through the year for the entire family. Granite Creek Winery—(not confirmed) A terrific example of agri-tourism, they have developed a vineyard and winery at the oldest homestead in the Chino Valley.

This year's conference will concentrate on subjects such as:

- ◆ Livestock and Produce Marketing
- ◆ Entrepreneurial and Business Planning
- ◆ Diversifying Organic Marketing for Meat and Produce
- ◆ Farm to Cafeteria
- ◆ Farmers' Market Development
- ◆ Food and Agriculture Policy
- ◆ Increasing Local Production

Some highlights are:

- ◆ Native American Issues in Nutrition and Farmers' Markets
- ◆ Institutional Sales
- ◆ Medicinal and Culinary Herbs
- ◆ Pricing, Processing and Marketing of Livestock
- ◆ Direct Marketing Linked to Rural Lands Protection

To Do List for Participants:

1. Save the date, March 26-28 in Flagstaff
2. Watch for the conference brochure and registration info in later January on our website at: www.swmarketingnetwork.org
3. If you don't normally get the conference brochure, call Lē at the number below to have one sent to you.
4. Register early in February, especially if you want one of our first-come, first served scholarships.

For further information contact Lē Adams in Santa Fe at 505-473-1004.

See you in Flagstaff!

Lē Adams, Farm to Table

Cracking health code restrictions to allow value added product sales at farmers' markets

It was a beautiful night at the Farmers Market Twilight Festival in Woodford County, Kentucky. But the local health department picked that evening to close down several vendors who were selling value added products made from their home kitchens. These products have always been illegal to sell in Kentucky, but in many rural communities, a lively network of illegally traded jams, salsa, and pickles helps keep the economy humming. This particular incident put a sequence of events into action that changed the options available for sale at farmers' markets in Kentucky.

The farmers market legislation broke a bottleneck that had been strangling value added enterprises. Signed into law November 1, 2003, Kentucky House Bill 391 creates some exceptions to food manufacturing requirements. While adding value boosts the bottom line for many small farms, the expense of setting up an inspected kitchen would readily wipe out profits. In fact the farms that could most benefit from the value added enterprises are usually too small to even finance such an investment. This visionary legislation allows Kentuckians to sell home-based products in certain locations if the final product contains a primary or **predominant Kentucky-grown ingredient that was grown, harvested, and processed by the farmer.** HB 391 addresses only horticulture or agronomic food ingredients. The regulations allow food to be sold only from: Kentucky Department of Agriculture approved farmers' markets, the processor's farm or a Farm Bureau Certified Roadside Stand. Growers must have a commercial permitted kitchen to sell anywhere else.

The movement started when state legislator Joe Barrows heard the festival story at a Kentucky State University Third Thursday event. It was the first time he had looked at the food processing laws from a farmer's point of view. He started investigating what could be done to provide a value added option so that farmers would not have to make a choice between breaking the law or investing thousands of dollars just to see if their prized salsa recipe would be successful. Fellow lawmakers Charlie Huffman and Mike Denham combined forces to initiate House Bill 391. The resulting law allows for two levels of home-based food processing.

A home-based Processor can sell low risk foods, such as jams, jellies, cakes, and pies. The grower needs only to fill out a form and follow labeling requirements to sell as a home-based processor. No training is required and there are no kitchen inspections or fees involved.

The second level, home-based Microprocessor allows a grower to sell pressure canned vegetables and pickled products like pickles, bbq sauce, and relish. These are considered higher risk items because of the potential for causing botulism if improperly processed. A home-based microprocessor must be well versed in the basics of time, temperature, and acidity as they relate to *Clostridium botulism* and the microorganism's growth in contaminated home canned products.

There are four steps to home-based Microprocessor certification: attend a day-long workshop, passing two short exams; have each recipe (schedule process) approved, including step-by-step instructions; and, have the product label approved by the state Food Safety Branch. The applicant then submits proof of completing these steps, along with a \$50 fee. For the home-based Microprocessor there is also an initial inspection of the home kitchen and then follow-up inspections every two years by state Food Manufacturing Inspectors instead of local health inspectors.

As soon as the bill passed, University of Kentucky Extension Professor Sandra Bastin, who had been the liaison between the health officials and the extension/legislative team swung into action to design the curriculum. Using FDA's Better Process Control School as a guide, she worked with all members of the food system in Kentucky to implement the workshop. To date, over 200 farmers have been trained with 36 farmers producing diverse products such as salsa, pickled squash, and corn relish. Over 289 farms are selling items such as pumpkin bread, blueberry jam, and tomato preserves. These products allow farmers to add economic value to their raw produce, reduce waste, and use blemished but otherwise quality produce. Extending the selling season allows the opportunity to strengthen the farm's links to the community. Farmers' markets across the state have benefited from the larger assortment of products available, drawing a wider audience than in years past.



A SARE grant helped initiate Kentucky's policy change, which is now a model for other states. A total of 81 Cooperative Extension Agents and other professionals and over 200 farmers have received technical expertise and knowledge from 22 home-based Microprocessor Workshops.

The workshops were presented in a variety of locations so everyone had access to the training. Four workshops per year are offered and locations are based upon demand. Because of the requests from farmers, this number is expected to continue to rise.

So what's the secret to getting this kind of cooperation from the health code officials? Communication is a key issue for any farm friendly legislation and it gets even more complicated when you add food safety issues into the mix. To get something like this moving, farmers need a friend who is well versed in microbiology, sanitation, and other aspects of food safety. That person needs to be respected by health department officials and be able to make convincing arguments for change.

No one likes change, even if it looks like it will work out well or have great benefits. Changing the perception of the health department that home processing wasn't as risky as they thought was imperative to

receiving cooperation from the state Food Safety Branch. In most cases, decisions were based on lower risks to the health of consumers buying the product or the risks were covered by training for processors. This is a win-win, positive change for the state of Kentucky, but all the partners involved had to make sure their areas were covered and that concessions did not increase food safety concerns.

The ranks of food safety researchers and extension specialists are logical places to start looking for such a partner. Our team in Kentucky not only included the University of Kentucky and Kentucky State University's Cooperative Extension and the state Food Branch, but also included the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Farm Bureau Insurance, Farmers' Market Managers, Farmers and nonprofit Farm Organizations. Once the team is assembled, then it's time to find one or more interested legislators. It's important to approach the representatives with the plan as an entrepreneurial activity, not just as a plea to help out poor farmers. In Kentucky's case the legislators loved the idea and took off with it.

Outside of Kentucky, others are requesting information about the program. Additional information is available from Dr. Sandra Bastin at sbastin@uky.edu or from home-based Processor and Microprocessor web page at www.ca.uky.edu/agc/micro.

*Dr. Sandra Bastin, University of Kentucky
and Gwen Roland, Southern SARE*

Take a look at our new website: www.swmarketingnetwork.org

As part of our original plan to move all our SWMN administrative functions into the region over time, our mailing list database is now being managed at Farm to Table, and our website is now hosted in Durango at www.swmarketingnetwork.org. Don't worry, the old web address still works for now and redirects to this new URL. We greatly appreciate the development and management of these two critical functions to this point by the National Center for Appropriate Technology—we could not have gotten to this point without them.

We have added a new look to the website, added more navigational aids, and background material on our

activities. Our calendar page focuses almost exclusively on events in our four states, and directs the reader to the ATTRA and SARE sites for events outside our region. We encourage you to submit events through the website. You can also e-mail us suggestions for the site through the homepage.

Soon, we will be adding a Food and Ag Policy page, a Directory of Expertise for alternative marketing, and a series of specific Marketing Topic resources. Keep an eye out for these new features.

Jim Dyer, Southwest Marketing Network

Before you plant

*The vast majority of men die poor,
not because their intentions were not right,
but because their plans were not right.*

Anonymous

This quote pretty much sums up what you need to think about when deciding what to do with that piece of high value farm land that you want to keep in agricultural production. The following is an outline of some of the things that you should consider before you plant those fields.

Deciding what you want out of your farm is the most important factor in deciding what to plant. This is true both for new farmers and for those who have been farming for some time. For instance, do you need the land to produce income for you to live on or just pay for itself? Do you want it to provide pasture for your livestock or just an aesthetically pleasing open-space? These are all valid agricultural uses of the land but require vastly different types and amounts of inputs.

Farming for your sole means of support is extremely difficult anywhere in the United States and is particularly difficult in areas with small tracts of very high value land such as the irrigated valleys of the West. High-value specialty crops are capable of very high gross returns per acre but may require very high inputs. These inputs include especially high levels of time, skill, determination, and resources. Therefore, some people may choose to maintain irrigated pasture, forage crops or agricultural open-space, all of which require far fewer inputs. Those fields, however, return far less on the investment, and will probably require funding from other sources to maintain.

Regardless of what type of farming enterprise you decide on, especially if you choose the higher revenue yielding crops, you must:

- Do your homework
- Set priorities and goals
- Develop a comprehensive business management and marketing plan
- Evaluate your progress

These processes should be committed to paper so you are accountable to yourself.

Perhaps the most important step in the planning process is “doing your homework”. If done thoroughly it will let you know if your idea is feasible or if you should try to come up with an alternate plan. One of the first steps of doing your homework should be to inventory your assets. These include not only physical and monetary assets, but time and quality-of-life issues. As you take these inventories you will be able to begin to develop critical parts of your overall farm plan.

Physical—Cash, loans, land (a map of the farm and how it will be used), irrigation system, equipment, existing perennial crops, livestock etc.

Family—You must consider all family members and their stake and/or interest in the farming operation.

Lifestyle—Many people that farm do it for the lifestyle and not for the money. This lifestyle should not include working seven days a week, 365 days a year. A healthy farm depends on a healthy farmer so you must plan ahead to spend time on other interests and with family and friends.

Estate—It is never too early to plan what will happen to the farm when you're gone. There are many excellent estate planning options for farmers and ranchers today. This is particularly important if one of your main objectives is for the land to remain productive.

Retirement—Retirement and estate planning go hand-in-hand. Hopefully you will live beyond your ability to physically do the work. What will happen to the farm at that time? How much money do you really need to live? It is never too early to start thinking about it.

Personal Development—This is one aspect that many farmers neglect. You must continue to educate yourself not only in best practices for the farm but in your communication, financial, and marketing skills. This can be accomplished through consultation with your peers, reading, conferences, and seminars. In other words you must become a lifelong learner to succeed.

Another part of doing your homework is conducting a simple business analysis of your proposed farming enterprise. The analysis will help you determine whether or not the enterprise is worth pursuing. The

following are suggestions for conducting the analysis:

1. It may seem unnecessary, but writing a mission statement will help you understand why your business should exist and how it will benefit you and your customers.
2. Conduct a basic market analysis to help you determine:
 - Who your customers are and how many are out there
 - Where the markets are located
 - Market price for the product you plan to produce
 - The supply of and the demand for your product(s)
3. Conduct a simple breakeven analysis:
 - Determine your cost of production. Be realistic, include everything like interest payments and the cost of your own labor
 - Determine how much of your product you have to sell at current market prices to break even
 - Estimate profitability under best-case and worst-case production scenarios to help determine risk

When the analysis is complete it should help you decide if you want to go forward with your idea or modify it before you develop a comprehensive business/management plan for the farm.

Much of the information for this article came from two Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program funded publications:

Building a Sustainable Business—A Guide to Developing a Business Plan for Farms and Rural Businesses
<http://www.sare.org/publications/business/business.pdf>
Marketing Strategies for Farmers and Ranchers
<http://www.sare.org/publications/marketing/index.htm>

If you are not familiar with SARE or have not visited their web page, you are missing a wealth of information on all aspects of sustainable agriculture. SARE is a USDA program which provides grants and information to improve profitability, stewardship and the quality-of-life of farmers and ranchers across the country. Your local extension office, small business development center, and/or SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) office are also great resources for assistance with farm and financial planning.

For more on this subject, be sure to check out the several related sessions on Business Planning at the Southwest Marketing Network Conference, Flagstaff, Arizona, March 26-28, 2007.

*Jeff Bader, Ed.D, Bernalillo County
Extension Program Director*



photo by Lē Adams

Reflections on Terra Madre, 2006

Slow Food is an international organization that has chapters (Convivia) throughout the US. The second Terra Madre event took place in Torino, Italia this Fall. This event brought together 5000 food producers from around the world as well as 1000 observers and 1500 chefs and educators. Originally devised as an antidote to “fast food” restaurants popping up everywhere, over its 15 year history it has developed into a gathering of like minded people wishing to retain the pleasures of the table, support local agriculture, bring back heritage foods that are being lost from many cultures, and to rebuild a food system that is good, clean, and fair.

The opening ceremonies for the conference reminded me of a food Olympics. 148 countries were present and a representative from each came in with their country’s flag to put on the stage. The opening speakers included Carlo Petrini (SF founder), Alice Waters, Michael Pollan, and the President of Italy. Next door, the largest tasting event in the world was happening also, the Salone del Gusto. The total experience provided a new framework to view the global context of our work. The overwhelming response from delegates now back home has been that being at Terra Madre validated their work and renewed their commitment to sustainable food practices. Being at Terra Madre gave me the chance to think more about the bigger issues in food and agriculture than those I work with every day at Farm to Table. There are many people throughout the world who are bothered by and very motivated to work toward solutions to a myriad of cultural problems wrapped around food.

Here are a few ideas and concepts that I brought back: One of the integrated agricultural system models that was discussed is in a large and still partly wild French olive tree orchard. They use geese to go after the fruit borers. They have dogs to protect the geese from the wild boars. In return, the dogs eat the goose eggs that they find in the landscape. The olives and the boars are harvested by the grower. A neat little cycle.

Mike Hamm of Michigan State University gave a few statistics, including this one: In the US, the average number of servings of fruits and vegetables that people get per day is 3.2 (well below the 5 to 9 recommendation.) If people in Michigan ate 5 servings per day, they

would need to increase agricultural production in that state by 78,000 acres. Wow! Let’s get planting!

We have spoken a lot about encouraging the general public (“co-producers” as Carlo Petrini would say) in their coalescing desire for “food with a face on it” or *Teikei* as it’s known in Japan. What is the story behind the food? Who are the farmers that do this hard work so that we can live and be nourished? People really want to know the details of the story and this can be used in marketing of agricultural products.

This is a new era of the political consumer, a real ‘food citizen’. There is a myth of consumer sovereignty. Powerful food corporations marginalize and pacify us with a focus on **convenience** and **low prices**. We must challenge these two things. Are they really the most important aspects of food purchasing decisions? The basis of low quality foods (often low priced as well) are **anonymous** low quality fats, sugars, salt and additives. As markets are more important, more **values** become important. Some of these values are trust, culture, individualism and belonging, and the need for protection and security. Are we talking about the food system here? These are the things that count. These are the things that matter:

- Eating is an agricultural act
- Producing is a gastronomical act and
- Purchasing is a political act

Food citizens are already among us. We need to turn the rest of our community into co-producers. The Slow Food movement is critical in this process. Find out more about Slow Food at www.slowfoodusa.org.



Lē Adams, Farm to Table. The Community in Terra Madre that she represented as a delegate is the Farm and Food Educators of the Southwest US.



photos by Lè Adams

Conference season news

The **Southwest Marketing Network Conference** is happening in Flagstaff March 26-28, 2007. We hope that we will see you there. See the details on page 1. Additionally, there are several other conferences happening in our region for farmers and ranchers. Conferences can be the best places to learn more about your business from other experts as well as great places for networking.

The **Quivira Coalition**, Albuquerque, NM, January 18-20, 2007. Keynotes Wendell Berry and David Kline. Sessions include Young Entrepreneurs; Fresh Eyes on Taxes, Inheritance and Conservation Easements; Protecting Water Resources; Custom Grazing on Leased Land; How Stories of our Relationship to the Land Add Value; Special Youth Poster Session; and, more. Contact www.quiviracoalition.org or 505-820-2544, x5.

The **New Mexico Organic Farming Conference**, Albuquerque, NM, February 16-17, 2007. Keynote Miguel Altieri. Sessions include Top Vegetable Varieties; Open Networking Sessions; Applying for Organic Certification; Dairy Goats; Drip Irrigation;

Building a Website; Weeds; Southwest Soils; Recordkeeping; E. Coli, Spinach and You; Bees; Worms; 25 Top Pests; Merchandising: AgroEco Health Checkup; and, more. Contact 505-473-1004 or 505-841-9067 or email ladams@cybermesa.com.

The **Diversified Agriculture Conference**, Lehi, Utah, February 21-23, 2007. Designed to benefit agricultural producers who are interested in more than just traditional agriculture, including recreation, tourism, direct marketing, farmers' markets, further processing, and more. Contact <http://diverseag.org/html/conference>.

Colorado Agriculture Big and Small, Greeley, CO, February 22-23, 2007. Sessions include Conventional and Organic Production for Vegetable and Field Crops; Natural and Organic Livestock Production; Water Issues; Labor Issues; Ag Business Management; Organic Marketing; Food Safety; Financing; and, more. Contact <http://www.coloradoagriculturebigandsmall.com/>.

Hope to see you in Flagstaff and keep learning!

The Farm Bill and healthy food, communities and farming

The Farm Bill is the most important piece of Federal legislation that effects U.S. food and farm policy. The Farm Bill sets the course for some of the nation's most important farm and food programs that affect the well being of our nation's most at-risk families as well as farmers and ranchers. It is scheduled to be reauthorized by Congress in 2007. The programs of the farm bill include everything from Food Stamps to commodities, to disenfranchised small farming families, to the way we treat our environment—land, water and resources.

Over the past two years a coalition called the Farm and Food Policy Project (FFPP), including more than 80 groups representing agriculture, health, anti-hunger, and environment, has been working together to develop a set of Farm Bill recommendations. They support a comprehensive approach to programs and current issues. These partners and groups include the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Community Food Security Coalition, Northeast Midwest Institute, American Farmland Trust, Environmental Defense Fund, Congressional Hunger Center, Rural Coalition, Southwest Marketing Network, and Sustainable Agriculture Working Groups to name a few. Excerpted below is the declaration "Seeking Balance in U.S. Farm and Food Policy" that will be officially launched on January 22nd at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Organizations and businesses (including farmers) are encouraged to endorse this declaration by calling 202-543-1300 or by email at info@farmandfoodproject.org.

The diverse groups working on the FFPP have worked to consider what is best for our country's children and their future—strong local economies and the ability to buy healthy and affordable food. All Americans, whether farmers or not, recognize that agriculture is vital to the nation and must remain productive, profitable and sustainable.

But what we want from our food system and what our farm and food policies deliver are increasingly out of balance. This is especially true for the Farm Bill which addresses such critical issues as agricultural production, food and nutrition assistance, rural development, renewable energy, equity and conservation policies. These public policies need to result in better management of the farm and food system that serves us all.

Evidence of the current imbalance is apparent in the following:

- Most farms and ranches don't benefit from current farm policies. According to current USDA estimates, commodity subsidy programs directly supported 39 percent of the nation's farms in 2003.
- Fewer farmers: lost farmland.
- A legacy of unfair treatment: A long history of discrimination in farm program delivery has prevented many minority farmers from obtaining credit and participating in crop insurance, commodity, and conservation programs.
- Rural communities are losing population and lagging in job growth: Between 2000 and 2005, nearly 80 percent of farm-dependent counties in the United States lost population.
- Health care costs are rising because of diet-related diseases: The Institute of Medicine estimates that national health care expenditures related to obesity range from \$98 billion to \$117 billion annually. Due to these diet related diseases, the U.S. Surgeon General predicts that children of this generation may be the first to be less healthy and have a shorter life span than their parents.
- Too many Americans face hunger in a land of plenty: Over 35 million Americans, a population equivalent to those of Pennsylvania and Texas combined, live in households that are not able to afford food they need throughout the year.
- Many communities lack access to healthy foods: Experts know that limited access to supermarkets reduces the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, a problem especially acute in lower-income and minority neighborhoods.
- Farmers seeking to improve the environment are turned away: Conservation programs designed to address water, air and wildlife challenges are not available to 75 percent of farmer applicants.

The renewal of the Farm Bill in 2007 creates a rare opportunity to take significant steps towards reversing these trends. The diverse alliance of farm, rural, public health, nutrition, anti-hunger, conservation, renewable energy, faith-based, and other groups have joined together, as stated above, and are calling for a new direction in farm and food policy—one that takes the

patchwork of existing programs that serve too few and creates instead a system that advances the interests of all Americans.

Prosperous Farms and Ranches: Renewing American Agriculture: Herein we are focusing on a strong agricultural economy and healthy food supply which are part of the foundation of our society (see the full document for further details on health and food security). We depend on a vital farm sector to provide food and fiber. We also look to agriculture for renewable resources and the open lands that maintain America's scenic vistas, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat. Core Farm Bill priorities include:

- Create fair and cost effective farm programs that serve the needs of all farmers and ranchers, support diversified farming systems, reward conservation, and minimize adverse impacts on producers in developing countries.
- Ensure that farm policies are implemented fairly and increase outreach and assistance to minority and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Fostering Farm-Based Solutions include:

- Create a balanced marketing support structure to address local, regional, national, and global markets.
- Provide targeted investments to assist fruit and vegetable growers and other producers to meet the increasing consumer demand for foods recommended in the federal dietary guidelines.

Innovations to Advance New Opportunities in Farming:

- Encourage greater consumption of fruits and vegetables by enabling federal nutrition program beneficiaries to purchase food at local farmers markets and other retail food outlets.
- Expand innovative, community-based food programs to increase the scale and scope of institutional and emergency food purchasing programs, including through changes in procurement policy and support for infrastructure development.
- Provide funding for school nutrition programs to provide fruits and vegetables in schools, implement wellness policies, and expand nutrition education.

Build Rural Businesses and Improve Rural Communities:

- Promote local and farmer ownership and investment opportunities in farm-based renewable energy production.
- Promote rural entrepreneurship and micro-enterprise development.

Diversity and Equity:

- Ensure that farm policies and programs are developed and implemented fairly and that current disparities in service are eliminated.
- Expand opportunities for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and communities of color to shape the future of the food system.

These are excerpts from the full document created by the Farm and Food Policy Project. To review the full document, go to www.farmandfoodpolicyproject.org to learn more about farm and food policy and to read the specific recommendations of allied organizations. Or contact Allen Hance, Coordinator, Farm & Food Policy Project at ahance@nemw.org or 202-464-4015.

The Southwest Marketing Network Conference will offer several Policy sessions including an update on the 2007 Farm Bill; SW food and agriculture policy council roundtable; food outlet development in rural areas; and, rural lands and health issues related to policy options.

Summarized by *Pam Roy*, Farm to Table

Thank you!

All of us at the Southwest Marketing Network would like to say thank you to the USDA Risk Management Agency Outreach Program and the USDA Farm Service Agency for funding our newsletters. We appreciate your support!

Sustainable agriculture marketing project

The Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) has assembled a team of regional experts to offer a mentor training workshop May 29, 2007, in Logan, Utah. The project, “Entrepreneurial Sustainable Agriculture: Alternatives for Processing, Packaging, Labeling and Marketing in Retail/Internet Environments” is funded by WSARE and will include a one-day mentor workshop and DVD video complete with training materials.

John Allen, WRDC Director and team leader for the WSARE project said, “Our goal is to support sustainable farmers and ranchers as they reach more markets and increase their income while enhancing the quality of life in their local community.”

The training workshop will offer a new model by partnering technical experts with successful sustainable agriculture entrepreneurs forming mentoring teams who will be trained to deliver this content in their areas throughout the Western U.S. Further, these partnerships will foster increased networking across the region with the hope of increasing access to the many

resources available to sustainable agriculture producers. Current data argue for increased support of sustainable agriculture producers through solid technical training on processing, packaging, labeling, marketing and competitive retail/Internet sales.

The Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) is one of four regional centers funded by United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Services (CSREES) to strengthen the capacity of local citizens to guide the future of their rural communities. Each Center links the research and extension capacity of regional land-grant universities with local decision-makers to address a wide range of rural development issues.

For information regarding the training workshop and the DVD training materials, contact the WRDC by calling 435-797-9732 or sending e-mail to wrdc@ext.usu.edu.

Betsy Newman, Western Rural Development Center



photo by Le Adams

Calendar of Events

January 6-21, 2007 • National Western Stock Show. Denver, CO

Contact: www.nationalwestern.com, or Wendy.White@ag.state.co.us.

January 18-20, 2007 • Annual Quivira Coalition Conference. Albuquerque, NM

Contact: www.quiviracoalition.org or 505-820-2544, x5.

January 27, 2007 • Small Acreage Workshop. Ephraim, Utah

Contact: scottm@ext.usu.edu or 435-797-3591.

February 7-8, 2007 • Utah Hay & Forage Symposium. St George, Utah

Contact: tgriggs@ext.usu.edu or 435-797-2259.

February 8, 2007 • School Food Appreciation Day at the NM Legislature. Santa Fe, NM

Contact: pamelaroy@aol.com or 505-473-1004.

February 16-17, 2007 • New Mexico Organic Farming Conference. Albuquerque, NM

Contact: 505-473-1004 or 505-841-9067.

February 17, 2007 • Small Acreage Workshop. Price, Utah

Contact: scottm@ext.usu.edu or 435-797-3591.

February 21, 2007 • Colorado Ag Outlook Forum: "Agriculture's Stake in Global Climate Change". Denver, CO

Contact: Wendy.White@ag.state.co.us.

February 21-23, 2007 • Diversified Agriculture Conference. Lehi, Utah.

Contact: <http://diverseag.org/htm/conference>.

February 22-23, 2007 • Colorado Agriculture Big and Small. Greeley, CO

Contact: <http://coloradoagriculturebigandsmall.com/>.

March 4-6, 2007 • Western Pecan Growers Annual Conference. Las Cruces, NM

Contact: rjheerem@nmsu.edu or 505-646-2921.

March 10, 2007 • Small Acreage Workshop. Heber City, Utah

Contact: scottm@ext.usu.edu or 435-797-3591.

March 16-19, 2007 • The Third National Farm to Cafeteria and Food Policy Conference. Baltimore, MD.

Contact: www.foodsecurity.org or 310-822-5410.

March 26-28, 2007 • **The 5th Annual Southwest Marketing Network Conference. Flagstaff, AZ.**

Contact: www.swmarketingnetwork.org or 505-473-1004.

More details on several of these conferences can be found on pages 1 and 7.

Go to www.swmarketingnetwork.org to find updated information on the Southwest Marketing Network and other activities in our region.

For more events outside our region, visit the ATTRA calendar at www.attra.ncat.org

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Major funders of this project are the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and USDA, Risk Management Agency



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