

Resources for Community Food Systems and Sustainable Agriculture

Community Food Systems and Sustainable Agriculture, University of Missouri

University of Missouri-Outreach and Extension has initiated a new outreach and extension program in food systems and sustainable agriculture. The program's focus is:

- To enhance opportunities for Missouri communities and citizens to participate in community food systems and consumer-farmer linked programs;
- To increase the economic viability of farms and communities across Missouri through the integration of sustainable production and marketing practices into current and new farm operations; and
- To conserve and improve Missouri's natural resources through the application of sustainable production practices.

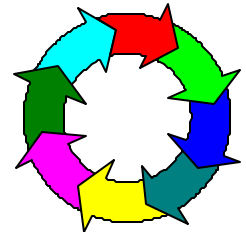
The program provides information, training and technical assistance to farmers and consumers through 114 county extension offices across the state. In addition, the program connects farmers and consumers with researchers to promote research that seeks solutions for community food systems and sustainable agriculture problems.

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Website: <http://www.agebb.missouri.edu/sustain/index.htm>

Food Circles Networking Project, University of Missouri Outreach and Extension

The Food Circles Networking Project works to create the infrastructure for local food systems across Missouri. The goals of the Food Circles project are:

- To encourage limited resource families to get involved in food production for their household and for market.
- To help existing farm families focus on producing food for local markets.
- To connect farmers and consumers directly together in community relationships centered on food and to support these connections by encouraging community based processing and distribution.
- To work with consumers and their communities to encourage more consumption of locally grown food.



FCNP staff provide resources, education and networking for farmers, restaurants, grocers, processors and consumers trying to create community food systems. For more information about the Food Circles Networking Project, visit our website at: <http://www.foodcircles.missouri.edu> or contact our staff listed below.

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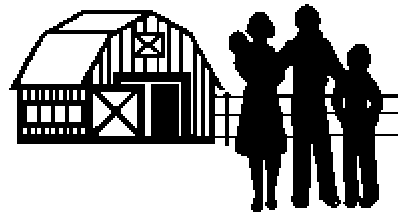
Email: HeffernanW@missouri.edu

Tom Kerr, Networker
Jackson County Extension
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Small Farm Family Program, Lincoln University

Small Farm Family Program educational assistants work one-on-one with limited resource and minority small farm families and rural residents who do not otherwise access traditional Outreach and Extension programs. Educational assistants help families to improve their quality of life by exploring family goals and resources and by providing practical on-farm/at-home "how-to" information aimed at meeting those goals. Each staff member works with 40-50 families. The SFFP is a cooperative project between Lincoln University and the University of Missouri System with funding and leadership from Lincoln Cooperative Extension.

Dr. K.B. Paul, State Coordinator
Small Farm Family Program
Lincoln University
PO Box 20
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0029
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Email: PaulK@lincolnu.edu



Missouri Alternatives Center, University of Missouri Outreach and Extension

The Missouri Alternatives Center serves as a communications center for Missouri farmers, Extension staff, government personnel and people who want to begin farming, diversify their current operation, or find ways to profit from small amounts of acreage. With its extensive library of information collected from around the country, MAC's mission is to provide Missourians with timely information about alternative agricultural opportunities, to evaluate diverse enterprises, improve management decisions, increase economic returns and enhance the quality of their lives. On MAC's website, one can find information about producing and marketing everything from Alpacas to Walleye. Missourians can also check out books and videos from MAC's library.

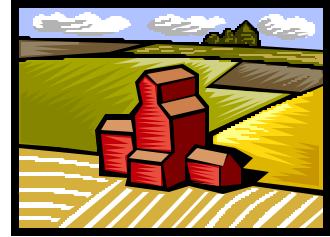


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Missouri Alternatives Center
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Tele: 573-882-1905 or 800-433-3704 (MO only)
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Missouri Sustainable Agriculture Demonstration Award Program, Missouri Department of Agriculture

This program provides grants to Missouri farmers to help them test, evaluate, and adopt sustainable agriculture practices on their farms. Projects must be designed to reduce dependency on nonrenewable resources such as minerals and petroleum, and protect and conserve natural resources such as soil, air, and water. There are 23 grants of up to \$3,000 each available for 2002, and recipients can take up to

three years to complete their projects. A main objective of the program is to provide the opportunity for Missouri growers to demonstrate innovative techniques in sustainable agriculture. Growers are encouraged to share their experiences and information through field days, articles, reports, and poster sessions. The project results are summarized in a published report. The deadline for grant proposals is November 30.



Joan Benjamin, SADA Coordinator
Missouri Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 630
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Tele: (573) 522-8616 or (573) 751-5505
Website: <http://agebb.missouri.edu/sustain/sagdemo/index.htm>

Market Development Division, Missouri Department of Agriculture

This division has several excellent domestic marketing programs that can be of assistance for small farmers and their communities. The department provides assistance with horticultural marketing – including publishing guides to blueberry farms, pumpkin farmers, and entertainment farms – and helps farmers and communities across Missouri to establish farmers' markets. Last year, the department received a grant from USDA's Federal State Marketing Improvement Program to develop a communication channel between farmers and restaurants, which has resulted in the *Harvest Connection*, a joint project with the Food Circles Networking Project at the University of Missouri. For more information on farmers' markets and specialty horticulture crops, contact:

Tammy Bruckerhoff
Horticultural Marketing Coordinator
Missouri Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 630
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Tele: 573-751-3394
Email: Tammy_Bruckerhoff@mail.mda.state.mo.us



AgriMissouri

The AgriMissouri program was created to help Missouri's producers and processors more effectively market their goods. This promotional program helps Missouri firms identify their products as Missouri-made. Research conducted by the program

shows that Missourians prefer to buy products made in Missouri to support the state's farmers, food producers, factory workers, brokers, distributors, clerks, and grocers. Matching funds are available for farmers, food producers and farmers' markets for advertising and promotion. In addition, a buyer's guide published by the department lists AgriMissouri products so consumers can identify these products directly or in their own grocery stores.

Chris Heard, AgriMissouri
Missouri Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 630
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Tele: 1-888-MO-BRAND (toll free) or 573-751-9266
Email: agrimeo@mail.mda.state.mo.us
Website: <http://www.mda.state.mo.us/c2b.htm>

Neighborhood Assistance Program, Missouri Department of Economic Development

This state program is aimed at helping communities and their residents improve their quality of life. This is a tax credit program which allows donors to redirect their Missouri tax dollars to local projects. Tax credits can be granted to neighborhoods or to a qualifying not-for-profit organization. The nonprofit organization assumes full responsibility for securing the desired financial support through their own fundraising efforts. Donors secured by the organization can receive up to 50% of the value of most contributions (or up to 70% for some projects in rural communities) in tax credits to reduce Missouri state taxes. Eligible projects for the NAP program include community services, education, physical revitalization and job training. Farmers' markets are specifically targeted for the NAP tax credit program. In addition, a special program for New Generation Cooperatives engaged in producing, marketing, distributing or retailing Missouri grown food products was instituted in 2001; however, the state law governing this program was overturned in the courts in August 2001. More information can be obtained from regional Department of Economic Development offices, or by contacting the state office at:



**MO Dept. of Economic Development
Neighborhood Assistance Program
301 W. High St., Rm 770
P.O. Box 118
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone: 573.751.4849
Fax: 573.522.4322
E-mail: nap@mail.state.mo.us**

USDA - Community Food Projects Program

The Community Food Projects grant program was initiated as part of the 1996 Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act (FAIR). The grant program funds projects designed to increase food security in communities by bringing the whole food system together to assess strengths, establish linkages, and create systems that improve the self-reliance of community members over their food needs. Community Food Projects must be designed to meet the needs of low-income people by increasing their access to fresher, more nutritious food supplies; to increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own food needs; and to promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues.

Community food projects should strive to

- Develop linkages between two or more sectors of the food system
- Support the development of entrepreneurial projects
- Develop innovative linkages between the for-profit and non-profit food sectors
- Encourage long-term planning activities and multi-system, interagency approaches.

These grants are intended to help eligible private non-profit entities that need a one-time infusion of Federal assistance to establish and carry out multi-purpose community food projects. Projects are funded from \$10,000-\$250,000 and from one to three years. These are one-time grants that require a dollar for dollar match in resources. Funds have been authorized through the year, 2002 at \$2.5 million per year. The program has been maintained and expanded to \$7.5 million per year in the House of Representatives 2002 Farm Bill provisions; action has not yet occurred in the Senate. For more information contact:

**Dr. Elizabeth Tuckermanty
CSREES, USDA
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The Community Food Security Coalition has prepared a resource for groups planning to apply for Community Food Project grants. "A Guide to Preparing Winning Proposals for the USDA/ SREES Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program," written by Hugh Joseph of Tufts University, is available at <http://www.foodsecurity.org/proguide.html>.

USDA – Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program

The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program was established in 1988 "to increase knowledge about - and help farmers and ranchers adopt - practices that are economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible." The national program is program down into four regions and Missouri, Illinois and Kansas lie in the North Central Region, with the regional office at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln.

SARE offers three different competitive grant programs aimed at different audiences that can be used for projects that are creating community food systems. The Research and Education program funds projects normally in the range of \$30,000 to \$100,000 that are led by universities or nonprofit organizations taking an interdisciplinary approach to understanding sustainable agriculture problems. A short pre-proposal is required in September of the year preceding the grant. Some pre-proposals are selected for full grant proposals that are then peer-reviewed and awarded for work to begin in September. Producer grants support farmers who are protecting natural resources, enhancing communities, and boosting profitability. Awards of \$3,000 to \$15,000 require a short five-page proposal in late March or early April. The professional development program trains agency professionals from extension and USDA on cutting-edge producer and researcher generated knowledge.

Besides financial resources, SARE offers incredible publications and other resources through both the regional office and the national program. In addition, an active listserv provides a forum for folks to discuss sustainable agriculture and food issues.

North Central Region SARE
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
13A Activities Bldg.
PO Box 830840
Lincoln, NE 68583-0840
Tele: 402-472-7081
Fax: 402-472-0280 (fax)
Email: ncrsare@unl.edu
Website: www.sare.org/ncrsare or www.sare.org



USDA – Rural Development

The Rural Business and Cooperative Services (RBS) division of Rural Development should not be overlooked for financial and technical assistance. The division provides technical assistance through its cooperative services, and fund cooperative development centers in many states. In addition, RBS makes grants under the Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) Program to public bodies, private nonprofit corporations, and Federally-recognized Indian Tribal groups to finance and facilitate development of small and emerging private business enterprises in rural areas. The Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG) promote sustainable economic development in rural communities with exceptional needs. Grants pay costs of providing economic planning



for rural communities, technical assistance for rural businesses, or training for rural entrepreneurs or economic development officials.

For information on USDA Rural Development programs, contact:

Nathan Chitwood
USDA-Rural Development
601 Business Loop 70 West
Parkade Center, Suite 235
Columbia, MO 65203
Tele: 573-876-0995
Fax: 573-876-0984
Website: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/sostaff.htm>
Website: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/index.html>

Missouri also has two USDA funded Cooperative Development Centers. They are:

Family Farm Opportunity Center
Missouri Farmers Union
325 Jefferson
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Tele: 573-659-4787
Email: mfu@earthlink.net

Missouri Enterprise Center
800 W. 14th Street, Suite 111
Rolla, Missouri 65401
Tele: 573-364-8570
Fax 573-364-6323
Website: www.missourienterprise.org

Technical Assistance Resources for Community Food Systems and Sustainable Agriculture

Missouri Department of Agriculture – Agriculture Innovation Center

This new center was established in 2000 to provide assistance to Missouri producers trying innovative agriculture ideas. The center provides one-on-one assistance to producers, and groups of producers, trying value-added agriculture. The Center provides technical assistance in identifying market opportunities, business organization, and business start-ups. The Center also provides a number of training opportunities for farmers and other community members such as attorneys, lenders, consultants and facilitators who are interested in value-added agriculture. The Center also the lead contact for the Ag Innovation Network, a group of consultants and facilitators for value-added agriculture located throughout the state of Missouri.



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Missouri Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 630
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Email: AgInnovationCenter@mail.mda.state.mo.us
Call toll-free at: 1-866-INOVATE (1-866-466-8283)
Website: <http://www.mda.state.mo.us/h.htm>***

Missouri Value-Added Development Center, University of Missouri

This Center provides business development services to Missouri farmers and farmer groups seeking to develop value-added ventures. Areas of expertise include business development and marketing. Increasing producer profitability and supporting rural communities are the goals of the Center. The Center is specifically focused on helping small farms market high value commodities to smaller markets.



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Email: Valadag@missouri.edu
Website: <http://agebb.missouri.edu/valueadded/index.htm>***

Small Business Development Centers, University of Missouri Outreach and Extension

The 14 Small Business Development Centers located throughout the state provide individualized counseling in such areas as business plan development, financial management, market feasibility, marketing and more. These centers can be important resources for farmers trying value-added enterprises on the farm, and for small businesses involved in food processing, distribution or retailing.

The Centers are a good source for basic training in accounting, marketing, getting started in business, taxes, financial analysis, cash flow analysis, computer software packages, customer service and business plans. In addition, there are Business and Industry Specialists located in University Outreach and Missouri offices in every extension region.

To find the office nearest you, contact the Small Business Development Centers state office at:

University of Missouri-System
1205 University Avenue, Suite 300
Columbia, MO 65211
Telephone: (573) 882-0344
Fax: (573) 884-4297
Website: <http://www.mo-sbdc.org>



The Small Business Development Centers also serve as the coordinators for NxLevel training throughout the state. NxLevel has produced a 15-week training course, ***Tilling the Soils of Opportunity***, designed specifically for agripreneurs trying new farm or business level enterprises. The full schedule of *Tilling the Soils of Opportunity* courses scheduled for Missouri can be accessed at <http://www.mo-sbdc.org/nxlevel.shtml#dates>.

Resources on Community Nutrition

Farmers Market Nutrition Program – Missouri

The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) is associated with the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, popularly known as WIC, which is administered in cooperation with the States by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of USDA. WIC provides supplemental foods, health care referrals and nutrition education at no cost to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding post-partum women, and to infants and children up to 5 years of age, who are found to be at nutritional risk. Established by Congress in 1992, the Farmers Market Nutrition Program provides fresh, nutritious, unprepared foods (such as fruits and vegetables) from farmers' markets to women, infants and children who are nutritionally at risk, and expands the awareness and use of farmers' markets by consumers.

More information about the Missouri Farmers Market Nutrition program, as well as at which markets it operates, can be obtained from:

Victoria Warren, WIC Director
Missouri Department of Health
P.O. Box 570
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570
Telephone: (573) 751-6204
Fax: (573) 526-1470
Email: warrev@mail.health.state.mo.us
<http://www.health.state.mo.us/NutritionServices/Farmers.html>



Missouri Nutrition Network

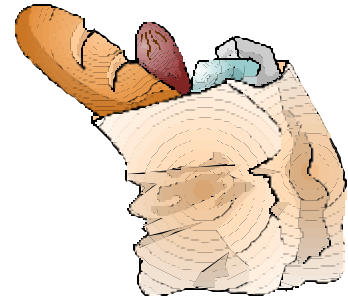
The Missouri Nutrition Network facilitates collaboration among nutrition, health and education providers to expand and integrate effective nutrition education efforts in food stamp and other nutrition programs for low-income households. The network:

- Researches, creates and evaluates methods so community partnerships can unite to promote good nutrition and build healthier families.
- Improves the food purchasing skills of food stamp program participants.
- Improves the nutritional health status of food stamp program participants.
- Increases the number of food program participants who are receiving nutrition education.
- Strengthens and expands state and community nutrition networks.
- Increases the number training opportunities for providers of nutrition education in the community.

Missouri Nutrition Network
Missouri Department of Health
Bureau of Nutrition and Child Care Programs
930 Wildwood
PO Box 570
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570
Telephone: (573) 751-6183 or (888) 435-1464
Website: <http://www.health.state.mo.us/NutritionServices/EatForHealth.html#MNN>

University of Missouri Department of Nutritional Sciences

This department maintains an information center that includes consumer tip sheets; nutrition newsletters; information about food preparation, storage and preservation; and fitness information. The Department also coordinates the Family Nutrition Education Program, a University Outreach and Extension program that provides nutrition and lifeskills information for families in most Missouri counties. The website maintained by Melinda Hemmelgarn is a treasure trove of information.



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Website: <http://outreach.missouri.edu/hes/food.htm>

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, St. Louis University

This department has several faculty members interested in community food systems. Currently they are developing programs with the Chefs Collaborative in St. Louis, and students from the program volunteer at the Clayton Farmers Market. With a small but active faculty, the department provides a number of nutrition resources to groups operating in the St. Louis area.

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