Penn State’s Ag Economics and Rural Sociology department recently hosted two farmers from Mexico who spoke about NAFTA and the free trade crisis in Mexico’s farmland. Jesus León Santos from Oaxaca, representing Mexico’s indigenous south, and Pedro Torres Ochoa from Chihuahua, representing northern farmers, were visiting the United States to speak about trade and farm policy as part of Maryknoll’s “Voices for the South” series.

A very small percentage of farmers in Mexico, perhaps less than 4 percent, actually benefit from free trade, according to Santos.

“Farmers are receiving lower prices for their grains, particularly corn,” Santos said. “Huge quantities of U.S. corn are entering the country at low prices, and farm prices have decreased by 50 percent, even though the cost of fertilizer and seed has risen. The cost of food has likewise increased. Tortillas that were 1.5 pesos per kilo are now 6 to 7 pesos per kilo.”

As a result, a tremendous new wave of immigration out of the countryside has begun. Over 200 million farmers have left the land. Before NAFTA, 14 million farmers in Mexico lived in poverty. Now 40 million live in poverty. As migration to the United States, increases, a record number of American dollars are sent back to Mexico from migrants. Mexican young people must perform manual labor for others—either in Mexican cities or on U.S. farms—and their chances for...
Voices from the South, cont.

Ochoa noted that Mexico has fallen into a sharp food dependency. “Before free trade we imported 16 percent of our grains and basic foods. Now that figure has risen to 40 percent and together with poverty we’re experiencing another side effect of free trade—a huge increase in drug traffic.”

In response to these conditions, campesina organizations have been formed to bring together producers to seek strategies for countering the effects of free trade. “We’ve struggled very hard to get our own marketing organizations,” said Santos. “Campesinas don’t have access to credit and so we’ve had to develop our own sources of financing: a combination of savings and credit. We’ve also stressed diversification for farm families so they can at least grow food for themselves and have a more sustainable way of life. And we’re trying to affect public policy to protect farmers.”

To that end, the campesinas took over the bridges between El Paso and Juarez. “Even though just 50 of us did this, it led to a larger percentage of campesinas in Mexico becoming involved,” Ochoa said. “We mobilized over 100,000 campesinas in Mexico City and forced the federal government to discuss a national accord with farmers. Now, we have to admit we didn’t get all that farmers actually needed from those negotiations, but we made a start.”

Now, Santos and Ochoa said, an alliance is needed—among universities and farmers both in Mexico and in the United States, between young people in both countries, and between poor farmers here and there. The purpose of the alliance is to effect change in the agricultural policies of the United States, for if change doesn’t occur here, it will be difficult to effect it in Mexico.

The influence of large international corporations in the United States is the greatest impediment to changing government farm policies, the men said. “Farm subsidies are just part of the larger corporate system,” Santos said. “In our talks with American farmers, we’ve found that small and medium-sized farmers will go out of business without subsidies. The problem is huge: corporations set low prices, well below the cost of production, which has an inordinate effect on farm prices and requires subsidies if farmers are to survive. In actual fact, the subsidies go to processors and buyers, not to farmers and consumers. Consumer prices stay high and so farmers in effect subsidize processors and buyers. In this game, most lose and only a small minority wins.”

What are the solutions, according to Santos and Ochoa? Farming must reflect the actual cost of production, and corporations cannot be allowed to reap huge profits from farm products they bought for nearly nothing, while farms receive government subsidies to subsist.

Farmers must take back their local markets and encourage local production, protect those local markets from low prices, and promote sustainable agriculture that doesn’t require them to use expensive inputs that they can’t afford. Such a transformation would keep farmers farming their land sustainably in Iowa as well as in Oaxaca.

—Contributed by Linda Moist, (814) 865-7031, lsm9@psu.edu.

Farming must reflect the actual cost of production, and corporations cannot be allowed to reap huge profits from farm products they bought for nearly nothing.

Sustainable Ag Field Days and Workshops

Soil Healthcare: New Perspectives for Landscapes and Nurseries

Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2005. 8:00 am - 5:00 pm at the Connelly Center. Villanova University, Villanova, PA. Pre-registration $75, $85 at the door. For more information, contact Susan Barton at Delaware Cooperative Extension, 302-831-1375.
Managed grazing has become increasingly popular with Wisconsin dairy farmers. Grazing systems reduce labor requirements and provide environmental benefits, as the cows harvest much of their own feed and spread their own manure. In addition to these benefits, a new report from UW-Madison shows that these grazing farms are economically competitive with confinement dairy operations.

"Farms using managed grazing produce less milk per cow on average than confinement farms," said Tom Kriegl of the UW-Madison Center for Dairy Profitability, who co-authored the report. "But these farms more than offset this production disadvantage through their control of operating expenses, investment and debt."

Kriegl has been analyzing the financial performance of grazing dairy farms since 1995. In the report Pastures of Plenty, he and Ruth McNair of the UW Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems compared grazing and confinement farms in Wisconsin and the Great Lakes. Some of their key findings include:

- In Wisconsin and New York, grazing dairies are more profitable per cow and per hundredweight equivalent of milk sold than confinement dairies in these states.
- Farms using managed grazing consistently show higher profits and lower costs per hundredweight equivalent than traditional and large modern confinement farms in Wisconsin.
- Farmers who switch from confinement dairy farming to managed grazing need not suffer financial hardship during the transition.

Managed grazing is different from continuous grazing in that farmers move animals to fresh pasture on a regular basis and manage their pastures to maximize the quality and quantity of feed. While continuously grazed dairy cows benefit from fresh air and exercise, these pastures do not provide much quality feed.

"Managed grazing is economically competitive, probably at all sizes," said Kriegl. "A grazing dairy can provide a family with a good living from a farm they can operate and manage themselves."

In addition to comparing confinement and managed grazing farms, the report compares grazing farms and identifies qualities that make for successful operations. It also discusses making the transition from traditional dairy farming to managed grazing.

Pastures of Plenty is available online from the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems web site: http://www.cias.wisc.edu/pdf/grzgfin.pdf. Print copies are also available free of charge; call (608) 262-5200 or email phaza@wisc.edu to order.

---Contributed by Cris Carusi, (608) 262-8018, cecarusi@wisc.edu

Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns recently announced the addition of California, Minnesota and Nebraska to the list of states participating in the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Land Contract Guarantee Pilot Program.

"USDA is committed to helping beginning farmers and ranchers preserve their family farms and prosper in the marketplace," said Johanns. "Expanding the Land Contract Guarantee Pilot Program gives new producers another tool for acquiring property that will help them accomplish their goals of becoming successful farm operators."

Since 2003, the pilot program has been tested in Indiana, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Iowa. The program, created by the 2002 Farm Bill, will continue in all nine pilot states through fiscal year 2007. Every year, up to five land contracts in each of the nine pilot states may be guaranteed. The pilot program provides the seller of the land a 10-year "prompt payment" guarantee of the sale to the beginning farmer or rancher (buyer). If the buyer does not pay an annual installment due on the contract, or pays only part of an installment, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides the scheduled payment or the unpaid portion to...
USDA Expands Land Contract Pilot Loan Program, cont.

the seller through an escrow agent after the seller unsuccess-
fully attempts collection. The defaulted amount then be-
comes a federal debt of the buyer. If the buyer does not
restructure the debt into a re-
payment plan or other FSA-
approved plan, FSA may use
other means to collect the
buyer's debt. The guarantee
is limited to the total of two an-
nual installments and also cov-
ers the amount of unpaid taxes
and insurance for a period of
two years.

To be eligible for the Begin-
ning Farmer and Rancher Land
Contract Guarantee Pilot Pro-
gram, a prospective buyer
must:

■ Be a beginning farmer or
rancher and the owner and
operator of a family farm after
the contract is completed;
■ Have participated in the
business operations of a farm
or ranch for at least three
years;
■ Be unable to obtain suffi-
cient credit elsewhere without
a guarantee to finance actual
needs at reasonable rates and
terms;
■ Have an acceptable credit
history demonstrated by satis-
sory debt repayment; and
■ Meet other requirements of
the program.

Under the pilot program, the
purchase price of the farm,
ranch or other agricultural op-
eration, cannot exceed the
lesser of $500,000 or its current
market value as determined by
FSA.

The interest rate charged to the
buyer for the 10-year term of
the guarantee cannot exceed
FSA’s direct farm ownership
loan interest rate in effect at
the time the guarantee is is-
sued, plus three percentage
points. Currently, the direct
farm ownership interest rate is
4.875 percent. Rates change
monthly and can be found at
http://www.fsa.usda.gov/
dafl/rates.htm. Contract pay-
ments must be amortized for a
minimum of 20 years. In addi-
tion, balloon payments are
prohibited, and payments on
the contract must be of equal
amounts.

FSA offers direct and guaran-
teed loans to farmers, ranchers
and other agricultural produc-
ers to buy farms, equipment,
feed, livestock and other farm-
ning essentials. FSA also offers
farm loan programs for socially
disadvantaged (minorities and
women) persons and rural
youth. Every year, FSA makes
thousands of loans to producers
who cannot obtain private,
commercial credit. More infor-
mation about FSA programs
can be obtained by visiting a
local FSA office or USDA
Service Center and online at

Wanted: Certified Organic Livestock Feed

Because of the dry summer,
Northeast organic dairy farm-
ers are in dire need of feed.
With low yields across the
region, many farmers are al-
ready short on hay, silage and
grain, and supplies for winter
months are especially low.
Pennsylvania Certified Or-
ganic (PCO) is working to put
certified dairy farmers in con-
tact with certified producers
who have organic feed for
sale. If you are a producer or
know of a producer selling the
following organic crops or
hay, please notify Pennsylvania
Certified Organic (814-364-
1344) immediately: Farmers
need mixed hay, alfalfa, or-
chard grass, corn silage or
corn, soybean meal, oats, bar-
ley, wheat, haylage.

--Contributed by Erin James,
PCO Dairy Specialist, (814)
364-1344, erin@paorganic.org

2006 PASA Farming for the Future Conference
To be held February 2, 3, & 4, 2006 at the Penn Stater Conference Center, State
Penn State Offers Meat Goat Home Study Course

Though it hasn't turned up on many restaurant menus, goat meat is one of the most widely consumed meats in the world. With a taste somewhere between beef and venison -- and even less fat than chicken -- goat meat is a healthy, tasty alternative for dinner and a growing option for livestock producers.

Penn State Cooperative Extension in Bedford County is offering a distance education course, “Meat Goat Home Study,” to provide a better understanding of the basics of meat goat production. The course will be valuable for beginners, as well as for seasoned full-time and part-time producers.

Anyone interested in raising meat goats may participate in the course, and the lessons can be completed either over the Internet and e-mail or as a print-based correspondence course.

The six lessons of the course cover basic production information, reproduction, nutrition, health, marketing, and financial information for meat goat production. The course is designed to help individual producers by tailoring work-sheets to specific operations. Participants in the course read one lesson per week and then complete and return work-sheets to Greg Strait at Penn State Extension's Fulton County office. Strait will answer questions and provide personal comments and suggestions for how to improve each participant’s operation.

“The course is a great way for producers to learn new information without having to rearrange their schedules to accommodate a meeting,” says Melanie Barkley, Bedford County Extension educator. “Producers can study the lessons at their leisure in their own home.”

The cost of the course is $35 if completed through the Internet/e-mail option and $50.00 if completed through print-based correspondence. The lessons are available anytime on the Web at http://bedford.extension.psu.edu/agriculture/goat/Goat%20Lessons.htm.

The registration deadline for the next course is Jan. 25, 2006, and sessions will not begin until Feb. 1, 2006. The registration form is also available online and must be submitted by mail to the Penn State Cooperative Extension Office in Bedford County.

Anyone interested in course information can visit the Web site or contact Melanie Barkley by phone at (814) 623-4800 or by e-mail at meh7@psu.edu.

PA Dairy Goat Producers’ Survey

Dairy goat producers have recently become aware of an opportunity to market significant quantities of goat milk to a specialty cheese maker in Pennsylvania. Meeting the needs of this cheese maker will require an organized initiative of Pennsylvania dairy goat producers.

A steering committee of dairy goat producers has been formed to evaluate production capacity, the market, and the economic feasibility of an organization to market milk. If you know dairy goat producers in your area who may be interested in responding to this survey and in the possibility of selling dairy goat milk through a new marketing alliance/ cooperative, please refer them to the contact people listed below.

Answers to this survey will be held confidential. Responses will only be reported in combination with the responses of other producers.

To obtain a copy of the dairy goat survey, please feel free to contact Betty Bronson at 570-966-1723, Melanie Reich at 570-966-5952, Gerald Ely at 570-836-4383 x 119, or Melissa Piper Nelson at 717-920-8454.

For information about dairy goat milk inspections and sanitation issues, contact Roy Malik at 717-346-3223.
"We think the average customer believes organic dairy cows are grazing full time, and we would like organic standards to be more rigorous so the perception meets the reality."

Does Organic Imply Grazing?

“John Mackey, chairman of Whole Foods Market, with the buying power of his 173 stores across the country behind him, said in a telephone interview yesterday that he wants the Department of Agriculture to strengthen its standards for organic milk.....The current organic standards, which took effect in 2000, require that cows have "access to pasture," but do not require cows to be put in the pasture.

"We think the average customer believes organic dairy cows are grazing full time," Mr. Mackey said, "and we would like organic standards to be more rigorous so the perception meets the reality."

.... In public comments, two companies opposed the proposal: Aurora Dairy and Wild Oats, the 111-store chain of natural food supermarkets.

.....Within the next 12 months Whole Foods will announce what it calls "compassionate" standards for treatment of dairy cows.

Mr. Mackey said he was almost certain the company would go beyond the standards the National Organic Standards Board is seeking. "We don't want to see organic standards diluted down to where they don't mean what consumers think it means," he said.

New "Sustainable" Label Aims to Compete with Organic

“A coalition of farmers, environmentalists, and public officials is promoting an alternative that they say will be less costly than organic: a "sustainable" certification system and label.

The system sets standards for water quality, soil management, and wildlife protection, but, in a notable departure from organic farming, it allows use of synthetic pesticides. Still, participating growers are rated on their pesticide practices, and supporters say that Wisconsin russet potato growers certified under the system used 54 percent less toxic chemicals than conventional growers.

Folks in the organic farming industry are skeptical about the new label, saying it may confuse consumers. And some retailers have hesitated to add a new type of product to their shelves. But the sustainable scheme's supporters say the label will appeal to green-minded shoppers who can't afford to buy organic. "When you explain the concept to the consumer, it is very, very well received," says one Wisconsin farmer."

Farming Technique Developed in U.S. Is Embraced Abroad

“First developed by American scientists in the 1960s, the technique, also known as conservation tillage, has taken root here faster than in any other country and has helped Brazilian farmers become some of the world's most productive, competitive exporters....

While there were some 5 million acres of no-till farmland in Brazil in 1992, by the end of 2004 more than 54 million acres, or half the country's farmland, was no-till, according to the Brazilian No-Tillage Federation, in the southern city of Ponta Grossa.

The no-till methods, along with genetically modified seed, transformed the Cerrado region here into the breadbasket of Brazil, responsible for half of the country's soybean production and a third of its corn.

... The practice is growing apace worldwide. Farmers in neighboring Argentina and Paraguay, for example, have begun following Brazil's lead. In Western Australia—Australia's biggest, but one of its driest states—conservation tillage increased wheat and barley production so much that the practice grew to cover 92 percent of the state's farmland over the past decade, according to Rolf Derpsch, a German and Chilean agronomist.

... Adoption in the United States has been slower. Though many farmers in the Plains use no-till planting—overplowing, combined with drought, created the dust bowl of the 1930's—other American growers have been loathe to alter conventional methods. No-till plots at account for 23 percent of United States farmland, according to the Conservation Technology Information Center in West Lafayette, Indiana.”
Great Lakes Dairy Sheep Symposium
Nov. 3 – 5, 2005, Burlington, Vermont.
New, aspiring and seasoned dairy sheep farmers and artisanal cheese-makers from across North America will gather to discuss dairy sheep farming, cheese-making and marketing. Symposium presentations by international researchers and veteran farmers will offer ideas to sheep dairy producers, cheese-makers, researchers and dairy industry consultants to improve and support this growing industry. The symposium will conclude with a tour of Vermont farmstead cheese operations: Three Owls Farm in Granville and Bonnieview Farm in Craftsbury, and award winning sheep cheese company, Creek Road Cheese Company in Irasburg. Optional farm open houses will also be offered at two well-known farms in New York, Old Chatham Sheepherding Company and 3-Corner Field Farm. In addition, as pre-conference offerings, the Vermont Institute of Artisanal Cheese will offer an advanced French cheese-making-workshop and a starter culture short course.

The registration fee is $135 per person. There are discounts for members of the Dairy Sheep Association of North America (DSANA), students, and children under 12. Registration is available on-line; visit www.uvm.edu/sustainableagriculture/smallrumi.html for details.

For more information about registration, please contact Candice Huber at (802) 656-5459 or sustainable.agriculture@uvm.edu. For symposium questions, please contact Small Ruminant Dairy Specialist and conference organizer Carol Delaney at 802-656-0915 or carol.delaney@uvm.edu.

The New Farm Entrepreneur: 12th Annual New and Beginning Farmer Workshop
Saturday Nov. 5, 2005, 8 am to 4:30 pm. Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
The New and Beginning Farmer Workshop includes real-world discussions with innovative farmers from a variety of backgrounds and enterprises. Hear from those taking reins from other family members, taking over a non-family operation, or starting on their own from scratch. Enterprises include dairy, livestock, fruits and vegetables, direct-marketed and value-added products. Hear from industry leaders about the way to start your farming career. Deadline for registration and payment is November 2, 2005. Contact Pennsylvania Farm Link: (717) 664-7077.

American Society of Agronomy/Crop Science Society of America/Soil Science Society of America (Tri-Societies) Annual Meetings
November 6-12, 2005, in Salt Lake City, UT.

Identifying Strategies to Support Sustainable Agriculture
November 6 - 9, 2005. Loew’s Le Concorde Hotel, Quebec City QC.
Conference Administrator: Elizabeth Muckle-Jeffs, Conference Administrator, 1027 Pembroke Street East, Suite 200, Pembroke ON K8A 3M4 Canada T: 800-868-8776 or 613-732-7068; F: 613-732-3386, E: profedge@renc.igs.net

7th Annual Future of Our Food and Farms Summit: Farm and Schools: Growing Our Future
December 14, 2005. Harrisburg, PA. In conjunction with the 2nd Annual Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture commodity Processing Food Show. For more information visit www.foodfarm.org

Facilitating Sustainable Agriculture: A Participatory National Conference on Post-Secondary Education
The UC Davis College of Agr-
Sustainable Ag Events, cont.

Nearly 2,000 fruit and vegetable growers from Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, and other states are expected to gather at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center for the 2006 Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Convention.

Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention.

January 31 – February 2, 2006. For more information contact the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association at pvga@pvga.org or visit http://www.pvga.org/.

What We’re Reading

Emerging Concepts in Plant Health Management


R.T. Lartey and A.J. Caesar highlight research currents that represent some of the most interesting thinking in plant health research. The hardbound work published in 2004 covers a wide array of topics ranging from dual-purpose biocontrol (activity against both pest insects and plant pathogens) to somewhat more mainstream material concerning weed management in organic production systems.

The chapter on public policy and health management includes a paper on bio-terrorism as well as another describing a concept for applying IPM to leaf diseases of cereals and sugarbeets. The 306-page publication includes several full color plates as well as black and white illustrations. --Contributed by A.J. Caesar, ARS-NPARL, 1500 N. Central Ave., Sidney, MT 59270, USA. CaesarA@sidney.ars.usda.gov. Phone: 1-406-482-2020.
Sustainable Ag Learning Resources

Proceeding of the 2nd International Symposium on the Biological Control of Arthropods

Organizers of the September 2005 2nd International Symposium on the “Biological Control of Arthropods” (ISBCA) convened in Davos, Switzerland, have announced production of a softbound, 2-volume, 734-page proceedings containing articles, with color illustrations, by the event’s invited speakers. Additionally a CD-ROM of these papers also includes abstracts from over 100 poster presentations. Copies of both the printed proceedings and CD are available for free.

---Contributed by R.C. Reardon, Mailto:RReardon@fs.fed.us. Phone: 1-304-285-1566.

Invasive Plants Field and Reference Guide: an Ecological Perspective of Plant Invaders of Forests and Woodlands

C.D. Huebner, et al., have prepared a U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Forest Service document, Invasive Plants Field and Reference Guide: an Ecological Perspective of Plant Invaders of Forests and Woodlands. The guide is a referenced source for information about the behavior of key plant invaders in the U.S. in managed, disturbed, and pristine forested systems. The 2004 work examines 15 main species in four plant categories and presents extensive information about each plus, in a separate section, citations for numerous supporting references. Full color photos appear throughout. The publication is NAFP-05-04; it can be freely downloaded from: http://wwwna.fs.fed.us/pubs/misc/ip/ip_field_guide.pdf.

-- contributed by C.D. Huebner, USDA FS, Northeastern Research Station, Morgantown, WV 26505, USA. CHuebner@fs.fed.us.

Do you have a favorite website, video or other resource to recommend? Let us know and we’ll include it in the next issue of Sustainable Ag News.

Sustainable Ag Funding Opportunities

Biopesticide Grant Program

The IR-4 Biopesticide Research Program announces a request for grant proposals for funding of efficacy research in 2006. With newer targeted conventional chemicals there is interest in resistance management to maintain the utility of those products. Therefore, IR-4 is especially interested in proposals containing biopesticides as resistance management tools, rotated with conventional products. While resistance management is an important interest, the proposal must still have a majority focus on biopesticides. Selection of treatments and experimental design should be considered to elucidate the contribution of each component to the pest control system.

Project proposals will be accepted in three different stage categories. The three project stages are Early, Advanced and Demonstration.

The total amount of funding available will be around $400,000. Most successful grants have generally ranged from $5,000 to $10,000 with the largest grants generally around $20,000.

The primary objective of the IR-4 Biopesticides Research Program is to further the development and registration of biopesticides for use in pest management systems for specialty crops or for minor uses on major crops. NOTE: The three project stages have specific proposal forms. If you are submitting a proposal for the Early or Advanced stage project, please use the forms on pages 13-24. If you are submitting a proposal for a Demonstration project, please use the forms on pages 25-34. Proposals are due November 18, ’05.

You can download Grant Procedure and Application in Word format at http://ird.rutgers.edu/Docs/Early%20Advanced%20&%20Demo%20Guidelines%20&%20Forms-2006.doc and submit it by e-mail.
For more information contact: Michael Braverman, Ph.D, Biopesticide Manager, IR-4 Project, Rutgers University, Technology Centre of New Jersey, 681 U.S. Highway 1 South, North Brunswick, New Jersey 08902-3390, braverman@aesop.rutgers.edu
IR-4 Website: www.ir4.rutgers.edu

Northeastern Region IPM Competitive Grants Program

The FY 2006 Request for Applications (RFA) for the Northeastern Region Integrated Pest Management (NE-IPM) Competitive Grants Program is now posted on the Northeastern IPM Center’s website. The RIPM program funds IPM projects in research, extension, and combined research and extension with project limits as high as $180,000 depending on project type and number of states involved. In the 2005 funding cycle, approximately $604,000 was awarded to 7 projects. For the first time some awards were made in the "critical step" project type, with limits of no more than $15,000 over no more than 2 years. Letter of intent due: Monday, Oct. 7, 2005. Proposals due: Monday, Nov. 18, 2005. The URL is: http://neipmc.org/about_fund.cfm

SARE Farmer/Grower Grants

The Northeast Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (SARE) has recently released updated application materials for its Farmer/Grower grant program. These grants support Northeast farmers who want to explore innovative sustainable practices on their farms. The Farmer/Grower Grant program, which began in 1993, allows farmers to conduct experiments, try new approaches, and test emerging ideas about agricultural sustainability. The emphasis is on new ideas that advance good stewardship, improve farm profitability, and strengthen rural communities. The average grant is about $5,800, and awards are capped at $10,000.

To apply, you must be a full- or part-time commercial farmer in Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, West Virginia, Vermont, or Washington, D.C. Community farms and farms associated with a nonprofit institution may apply, but only if they are growing and selling agricultural products under the same economic constraints that affect commercial growers. Farmer/Grower Grant applications can be downloaded from the Northeast SARE web site at www.uvm.edu/~nesare, or a printed application can be requested by calling 802/656-0471 or by sending e-mail to nesare@uvm.edu. The deadline for applications is December 6, 2005.

- Contributed by Helen Husber, NESARE

IPM Partnership Grants for the Northeast

A Request for Applications (RFA) is posted at http://northeastipm.org/

The deadline for applications for SARE Farmer/Grower Grants is December 6, 2005.
Sustainable Ag Funding Opportunities, Cont.

Organic Planning Grants
The Organic Center for Education and Promotion is offering grants up to $5,000.00 for research teams working to develop proposals for submission to public or private research programs.

Application Process: Letters of application may be submitted to the Center at any time during 2005 and may support the preparation of a proposal for submission in a 2006 program cycle. Please limit your description of the team and proposed work to four single-spaced pages; the additional information requested (resumes, research articles) should be included as attachments. Requests for more information and letters of application shall be sent to: Dr. Charles Benbrook. Chief Scientist, Organic Center for Education and Promotion, 5085 Upper Pack River Road, Sandpoint, Idaho 83864 Email: cbenbrook@organic-center.org Phone: 208-263-5236

Pig Farmer Assistance Program
Fair Food—a project of the White Dog Cafe Foundation in partnership with the SVF Foundation—is looking to help independent pig farmers raise heritage breed pigs on pasture by offering small grants ($1,000 to $10,000).

Timeline: Grants will be dispersed between January 1st, 2005 and October 31st 2005. We recommend that farmers apply early, as we will be accepting applications on a rolling basis until funds run out. What the grant can be used for: Equipment/ materials/ infrastructure, breeding stock/animals, technical assistance. For more information or for clarifications, contact Bridget Croke at 215-386-9224 x123 or www.whitedogcafefoundation.org

First Industries Fund
First Industries provides $100 million for agriculture. Projects in production agriculture, agricultural processing, farmers markets, wholesalers, and retail grocers in rural and underserved urban areas are eligible. Applications are processed through the Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) via the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Contact: For more information call Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Market Development, (717) 787-6041.

Sustainable Ag Student Profile, Cont.

possibly at the University of California. And eventually, I’d love to work with the United Nations.”

Although after-college plans are certainly a concern for Kate, her student days are not over yet. Before she graduates, she hopes to guide the Sustainable Agriculture Club to new growth and development.

As president of the club, Kate plans to help promote environmental and sustainable agriculture-related issues in the Penn State community, issues like the proposed student farm, the Center for Sustainability, the downtown farmers’ market, and the Farm to College Program.

With enthusiasm like this, we’re pleased to have her as a member of the SAWG team. The Sustainable Ag club meets every other Wednesday, starting Sept. 21 at 8pm in 118 ASI Building. If you have any questions about the club, please e-mail Kate at kate.nickles@psu.edu or vice-president Erin Beasley at ebeasley@psu.edu.
Fall Harvest Dinner

Don’t miss this special event to benefit the Farm to College Program.
Only 100 tickets will be sold for this wonderful dinner!
Visit Cafe Laura any day (Monday - Friday) from 8am - 5pm to purchase your ticket...
or call 814-865-7441...
or go to http://www.cafelaura.psu.edu/SpecialEvents/FarmtoCollegeReservations.htm to reserve your ticket now.
Cash, checks, A-La Board points, Lion Cash+, Visa and MasterCard will be accepted.

Penn State Sustainable Ag Working Group
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University Park, PA 16802
http://susag.cas.psu.edu

This publication is available in alternative media on request.
Where trade names appear, no discrimination is intended, and no endorsement by the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences is implied.
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