

Northeast SARE Professional Development Program Annual Report

State: Delaware

Land-Grant Institution: Delaware State University

Report Period: May 1, 2005 to April 30, 2006

Title: Conserving Agricultural Resources for Future Generations
Sustainable Agriculture for Delaware
Professional Development in Delaware

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Project Narrative: Sustainability has been in the forefront of Delaware State University's Professional Development initiative in the past year. Through the cooperation with the University of Delaware and Delaware Department of Agriculture, we joint hosted the first annual "Ag Week", at the Delaware State Fairgrounds, in Harrington, Delaware. We had 378 professionals from the Agricultural Industry including: local Ag- businesses, Delaware State University, University of Delaware, Delaware Department of Agriculture, USDA Agencies, and Cooperative Extension personal from Delaware and Maryland, gathered for meetings covering many diverse topics, including pole bean propagation, small ruminant care and feeding, high tunnel production of tomatoes and ethnic vegetables, and two separate topics on the equine industry. Although the public was invited, the collaboration between federal, state, and local agricultural professionals was quite effective, and we plan on expanding the agenda to accommodate additional items for next year.

The Professional Development agenda also included two forestry seminars targeting professional foresters. This first was titled "Forestry Spin-offs; Sustainable Agriculture-Community Forestry Symposium". Over 50 Forestry professionals attended, as well as 10 students majoring in Agriculture and Forestry. We hosted another professional forestry meeting focusing on Paulownia trees. "Delmarva Paulownia" was the annual meeting of the American Paulownia Association. Paulownia professionals from over 30 states and two foreign countries attended.

Current Northeast SARE-funded PDP Activities:

- A. Professional Development for DSU Extension
- B. Student Worker/Project technical assistance
- C. Forestry Symposium
- D. High Tunnel workshop series

Sustainable Publications/Educational Materials and Products:

- A. Pole Lima Bean yield and quality data
- B. "Paulownia Trees for the Small Farm"
- C. "Getting into a Meat Goat Enterprise"

Performance Targets:

Increased cooperation within the farm community and the implementation of new technologies will be the performance target for the farmer groups attending the workshops. The most significant impact of the program has been the increased awareness in sustainable agriculture to the local farming community.

Accomplishments/Milestones:

The "Ag Week" meeting series has been a model for surrounding states. The farm animal workshops were well attended by both farmers and agricultural professionals, and there were requests for more detailed workshops in the future. The successful propagation of ethnic vegetables was a great success, and we hope to build on that data in the coming years. The Forestry Series of workshops was again well attended, and the subject material continues to grow into Suburban Sustainable Forestry. Since continuing education credits are given by various regulating agencies, the attendance is usually quite high among professionals.