

Northeast SARE PDP Annual Report -2005

1. State: MARYLAND
2. Land Grant Institution: University of Maryland Eastern Shore
3. Report Period: May 1, 2005 to April 30, 2006
4. Title: Expanding the focus for sustainable agriculture training and education - current and future efforts to insure the viability of rural Maryland.
5. Project Contact
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6. Project Narrative: Growing concerns over environmental issues and the viability of farming has sparked additional, growing interest in sustainable, alternative agricultural enterprises in Maryland. This is especially true on the Eastern Shore where the 1890 Land-Grant institution (UMES) and an abundance of rural communities are located. The focus of the 1890 sustainable agriculture professional development program is to provide training in areas that support but do not necessarily duplicate efforts of Maryland's 1862 University, including training and Extension educator research support in alternative livestock enterprises and alternate feedstuffs/natural livestock supplements among others. Some efforts are documented *in links* from www.sheepandgoat.com (including: <http://www.sheepandgoat.com/news/index.html>) and www.smallfarmsuccess.com (<http://www.smallfarmsuccess.com/sheepandgoat.cfm>) as well as www.umes.edu/livestock (has Extension, research and general farm livestock links).
7. Current Northeast SARE-funded PDP State activities:
 - Cooperatively establishing web site for MD SARE, including PDP activities
 - Two Extension faculty presented sustainable agriculture research at professional meetings; 2 graduate student presented as well
 - Two sustainable agriculture research projects by Extension faculty were/are being supported
 - A brochure for Maryland's past Farmer/Grower grants was completed and several copies were made (more planned for this granting period); will be on-line in the future; a small farms and niche market brochure was also printed
 - Extension faculty traveled to sustainable professional meetings or Extension agent training workshops involving practices that could help support small farms
8. Sustainable Publications/Educational Materials/Products:
 - Publication of relevant information supported at:
<http://www.sheepandgoat.com/news/main.html>
 - A brochure for Maryland's past Farmer/Grower grants was completed (will be online also).
9. Performance Targets were:
 - 2 Eastern Shore extension faculty will develop a workshop or seminar on a sustainable animal production practice(s)
 - 1-2 Eastern Shore Maryland extension faculty will attend the organic farming conferences, the Future Harvest/CASA conference or other sustainable agriculture related events

-3 research summaries in popular press or newsletter articles will be written because of training received by Extension faculty and will be posted to the new Maryland Sustainable Ag website/NE SARE link

-3 applied research projects/demonstration projects will be conducted

10. Accomplishments/Milestones:

-Develop a workshop for Cooperative Extension faculty, farmer-growers or other agricultural professional (USDA/NRCS) and representatives of UMES Department of Agriculture to evaluate current sustainable agriculture training efforts and coordinate/plan new efforts (Summer/Fall, 2005); **One seminar was held; a website discussion continued for quite a while but was put on hold when the agent working on it needed to postpone discussions due to technical issues**

-Invite 5 Extension faculty to a seminar on sustainable livestock production research/practices and help set-up 2 similar seminars for farmer/grower training; **one was conducted and faculty invited on IPM; only 2 Extension faculty participated and worked with the Extension Specialist to hold similar one elsewhere in the State; one was offered on assisting producer groups in collaborative marketing during a producer association meeting and 3 Extension faculty attended and the producer association officers also attended**

-Invite 10 extension faculty and other agricultural professionals (including NRCS) to a professional Animal Science meeting for the Extension sessions for training and SARE-sponsored conferences/seminars; select 1-2 to attend so that advances in sustainable animal agriculture can be brought back to Maryland/expanded in Maryland; **5 were invited, one attended; others specified that they didn't have time**

-Announce funding availability for SARE mini-grants to 10 extension faculty and selection and at least 1 will be conducted that will further the understand of sustainable, profitable, small farm animal production systems; at least 2 popular press publications about the sustainable practice/research results will be published to further the outreach potential; **Funding was announced, 2 projects were conducted, 1 popular press publication was printed; most agents request money for producer-focused sustainable ag workshops, not those focused on ag professionals**

-Assist in development of Maryland Sustainable Agriculture website (with a link to NESARE PDP); recruit at least 2 Extension or other Ag Professionals to post information to the website; Estimated date of availability for website update – February 30, 2006; **a small website was developed by UMCP and there have been discussions to further develop that one;**

Attachments:

Information at websites above