

Field Notes



Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture

Vol. 25, #2 • Summer 1999

◆ PRODUCER GRANTS ◆

Kerr Center Funds Research and Demonstrations

– David Redhage

In March, the Kerr Center awarded five grants through its Oklahoma Producer Grant Program. This is the second year for the program, and once again, many fine grant proposals were received. The proposals were evaluated by an independent technical committee of farmers, ranchers and ag professionals.

Both research projects and demonstrations are eligible for funding in this annual competitive grant program. The program focuses on the Kerr Center's eight criteria for a sustainable agriculture: conserving and creating healthy soil, conserving water and protecting its quality, managing organic wastes and farm chemicals so they don't pollute, managing pests with minimal environmental impact, selecting adapted crops and livestock, encouraging biodiversity, conserving energy

resources, and increasing profitability and reducing risk.

The grants awarded addressed soil conservation and quality, water quality, biodiversity, profitability and pest management.

Kelley Ranch is located in northeast Oklahoma near Vinita and is integrating goats with an existing cow/calf, stocker operation. The \$6,173 research project is for three years and will measure goat impact on vegetation as well as any additional impacts on wildlife. Goats are important as a source of income and non-chemical brush control. Ranch manager Wallace Olson is concerned about the impact goats may have on vegetation, white-tailed deer, and bobwhite quail. The project will explore the optimum stocking rate which allows continuous goat produc-

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The Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture offers progressive leadership and educational programs to all those interested in making farming and ranching environmentally friendly, socially equitable, and economically viable over the long term.

The Kerr Center is a non-profit foundation located on 4,000 acres near the south-eastern Oklahoma town of Poteau. It was established in 1985.

Programs include:

- Oklahoma Producer Grants
- The Stewardship Farm
- Rural Development and Public Policy
- Communications/Education

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I am not bound for any public place,
but for ground of my own
where I have planted vines and orchard trees,
and in the heat of the day climbed up
into the healing shadows of the woods.
Better than any argument is to rise at dawn
and pick dew-wet berries in a cup.

From "A Standing Ground"
by Wendell Berry from his book of poems,
Farming: A Handbook

Promising New Crops: Grapes and Berries

– Alan Ware

The Kerr Horticulture Farm has several new projects. In 1999, we are continuing to focus on perennial fruit crops. After planting 300 plants of the new blueberry variety, *Ozark Blue*, in 1998, we have another new variety from the University of Arkansas that shows promise. It is called *Summit* and will not be available in nurseries until 2000. The *Ozark Blue* has grown well over the last year. We should start production in the spring of 2001. We believe that blueberries are a viable alternative crop if the varieties planted were developed for the region. *Ozark Blue* and *Summit* are two varieties showing promise for our region.

Muscadine, scuppernong, bullace, southern fox... all are names for *Vitis rotundifolia*, a wild grape native to the southern and eastern U.S. including eastern Oklahoma. Horticultural varieties of the native grape have been cultivated since

early colonial times in the southeastern U.S. This type grape is noted for being able to thrive in high heat and humidity. We are planting trials of muscadines at the Horticulture Farm this year. We are looking at varieties (*Fry* and *Nesbitt*) and trellising systems. One acre of muscadine grapes can produce 8 tons of grapes. That is a lot of grapes to hold up, so the right trellising is an important, and expensive, part of muscadine production. We are investigating several trellising systems from other states to see which is most economical and long-lasting. Because commercial muscadine production has been successful in several southern states, and because picking wild muscadines is popular here, we think eastern Oklahoma has a potential market for commercially-produced muscadines.

We continue to develop a no-till planting system for melons. Drought

continued from page 1

tion while minimizing the impact on wildlife. Cooperators include Grant Huggins of the Noble Foundation, Mark Moseley of NRCS, Steve Hart of Langston University, Sam Fuhlendorf of OSU, and Roy Ball, Craig County Extension agent.

Francis

Murphy ranches in Osage County on the Kansas-Oklahoma state line. His \$1,470 grant is for a one year demonstration project. Murphy's project will use organic matter to restore salt damaged land. Salt damage is prevalent in Oklahoma.

Erosion is severe on such sites and recovering them is difficult. Murphy's ranch has several salt damaged areas and he wishes to find an economical way to put such land back into productive use. Cooperators include Jackie Badley of the NRCS, Dee Cooper of OSU Extension and Randall Jones, District 1 county commissioner.

Charley Chambers has a 75 head cow/calf operation, 300 head of stockers and a small meat goat operation in Osage County. His three year, \$2,630 demonstration project will focus on improved rotational grazing and riparian area management. Mr. Chambers will be fencing out a riparian area and cross-fencing a pasture for better forage use. In

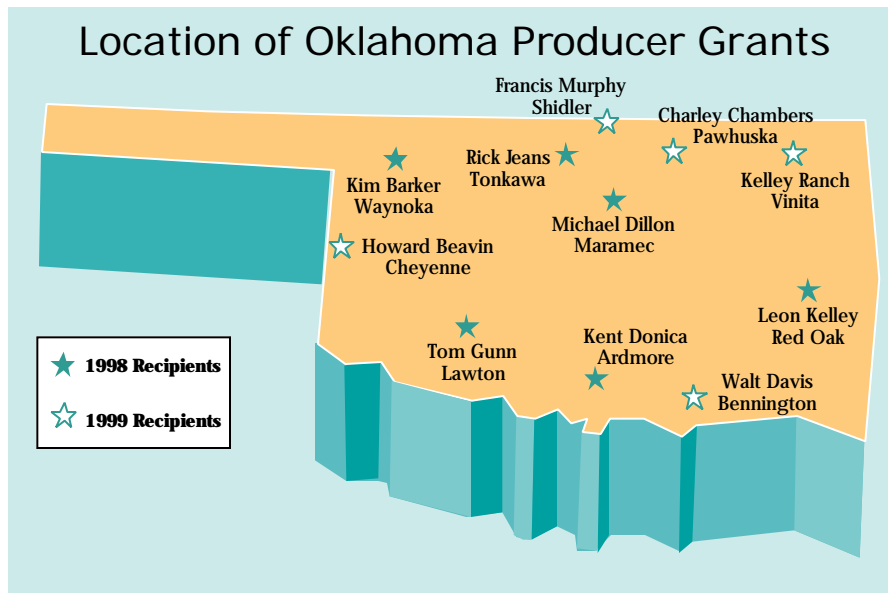
order to water the paddocks more efficiently, a pipeline will be installed from a pond and water piped to the paddocks. Results will be measured by monitoring for increased canopy cover in a riparian area and an increase in pounds of forage per acre. Cooperators include Jackie Badley of the NRCS and Dee Cooper of

Austin, Dr. R. H. (Dick) Richardson, professor of integrative biology for the University of Texas at Austin, and Clay Jones, Bryan County Extension agent.

Howard Beavin has a 320 acre property near Cheyenne, Oklahoma. Fifty-five acres are in wheat and 255 acres in pasture. The \$5,318 demonstration grant

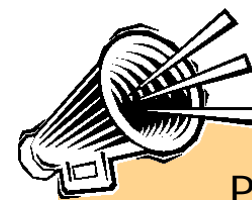
is for three years. Mr. Beavin will develop a planned grazing system in an attempt to improve the native pasture. Cross fencing and rotational grazing will be used. The project is in the Sergeant Major Creek watershed, where currently there is a national pilot project underway invest-

igating how to rehabilitate aging conservation lakes. Cooperators include Nena Wells, district manager for the Upper Washita conservation district and Greg Allen, NRCS district conservationist.



OSU Extension.

Walt Davis operates a 2,500 acre cow-calf and stocker operation in Bryan County, Oklahoma. His research grant is for three years and \$7,220. The research project is titled "Effects of Dung Beetle Activity on Soil Health, Ecosystem Processes, and Farm/Ranch Profitability." The project abstract indicates that dung beetles are a very effective tool for moving manure and moisture into the soil. The project will try to evaluate the benefits of dung beetles, specifically looking at dung desiccation, dung burial, soil health and water infiltration. Cooperators include Dr. Patricia Richardson, rangeland ecologist for the University of Texas at



Call for Proposals

A Call for Proposals for next year's grants will be issued this fall, and grants will be awarded next spring. Please call Alan Ware or David Redhage at the Kerr Center for further information.



A Tale of Nature, Ag, and Rocket Ships

—Maura McDermott

Ponce de Leon named it Florida, meaning “full of flowers.” It is the kind of place that made the first Spaniards who came there dream about finding a fountain of youth. After drinking from the fabled fountain, they would be forever young in this warm, watery paradise among the blue springs and green palms. It was not to be, of course, but the Spaniards settled in anyway, bringing with them their guns and diseases, and also, their orange trees, with their waxy flowers and wonderful fruit.

It was for later settlers to discover that among the islands and lagoons was indeed a wonderful place to grow citrus fruits – oranges and grapefruits—

commercially. Along the east coast of Florida, conditions were best, especially near the Indian River. On two islands, Orchid and Merritt, in particular, there was grown perhaps the most luscious grapefruit in the world: thin-skinned and very sweet. Indian River fruit was renowned in northern cities and European capitols, bringing growers premium prices. And the islands offered another big benefit, namely protection from the periodic freezes that killed trees in groves where the temperature was not moderated by surrounding waters. Families devoted themselves to their trees – sons grew up in the groves and

learned how to grow perfect grapefruit.

Then one day, far from the Florida citrus groves, the Russians launched Sputnik into orbit, and the space race was on. By the time John F. Kennedy proclaimed that it was the intention of the United States to land a man on the moon, the Merritt Island fruit growers had learned something new about their island: that not only was it the perfect spot for growing oranges, but it was also, from the point of view of the U.S. space program, the perfect spot for shooting off rockets. NASA settled on Cape Canaveral, on the southern tip of the island, bringing with them their rockets and astro-

nauts and before long, tourists.

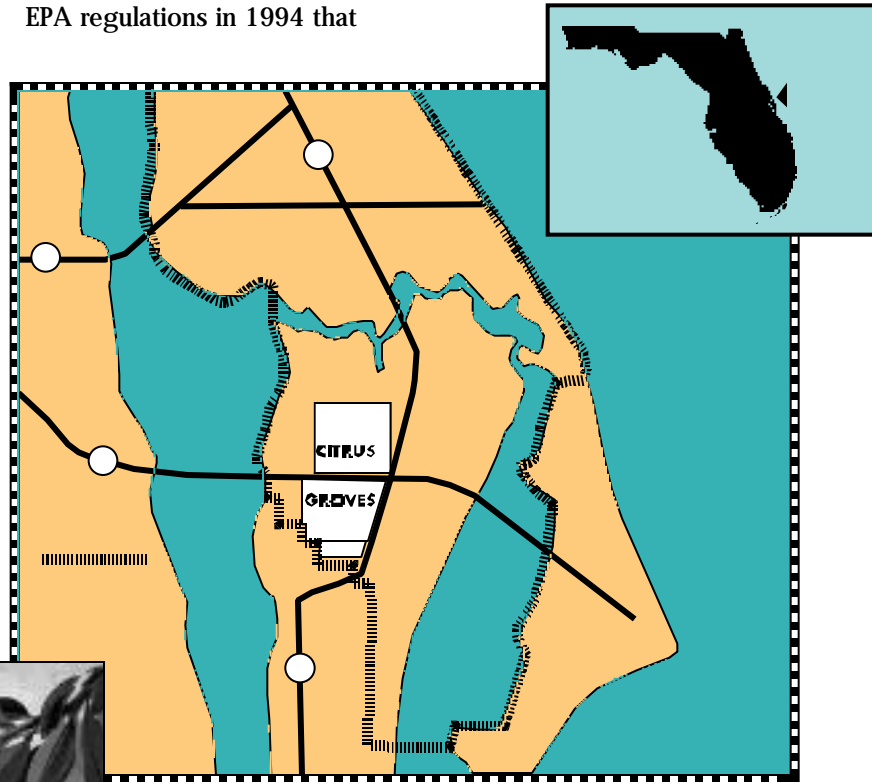
The citrus growers faced a new world. The U.S. government asserted its right of eminent domain and bought the island, creating the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. Growers could continue to raise fruit, but did so on contract, bidding every ten years for the rights to the groves. So amidst the marshes and now, the space ships, growers continued to raise their famous Indian River fruit as they had for decades.

And probably would still be doing if not for a few more twists of fate. First, there was the bad weather in the 80s, when freezes killed thousands of trees around the state, but not the Merritt Island trees, and caused the price of citrus to skyrocket. Some of those with healthy groves became millionaires. So when it was time to bid on new contracts in 1990,

growers bid high, reflecting the high prices they had been receiving for their fruit. Unfortunately, by the mid-90's, when trees planted after the freeze came into production, supply outstripped demand, prices plunged, and growers went broke.

The second twist was the new EPA regulations in 1994 that

banned the use of many pesticides in federal wildlife refuges. This along with low prices seemed to make it likely that the Merritt Island groves would be absorbed back into the Florida jungle that the Spaniards first saw almost 500 years before.



Merritt Island is a 25-mile-long barrier island just off Florida's east coast. Three groupings of citrus groves totaling 758 acres are being managed under the Kerr Center's Sustainable Citrus Program. Navel, Temple, Pineapple and Valencia oranges and red, pink and white grapefruit grow near the NASA Parkway, just a short drive from Kennedy Space Center.

On the twenty-five-mile-long barrier island called Merritt there lives 310 species of birds, 25 of mammals, 117 of fishes, 65 of amphibians and reptiles. In addition to the American Alligator, there are 21 species of wildlife listed as endangered or threatened by the federal or state government, more than any other single refuge in the U.S. Manatees, wood storks, bald eagles, peregrine falcons, and five rare sea turtles find safety there.

Is there a place for oranges and grapefruits in this landscape? If there is, then to paraphrase the

man who first walked on the moon, it will be a giant leap for sustainable citrus. As JFK once said "We choose to go to the moon...in this decade, not because these things are easy, but because they are hard." Going to the moon certainly wasn't easy—but neither is growing commercially viable oranges and grapefruits in the middle of an environmentally-sensitive, heavily-monitored, highly-visible wildlife refuge.

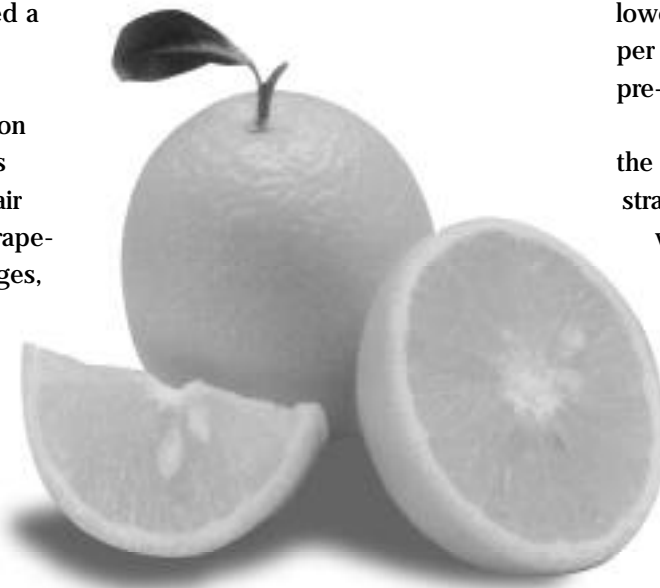
Robert Adair, Jr. and the Kerr Center's Vero Beach Research Station (VBRS) decided to meet the

challenge. Adair has formulated a Sustainable Citrus Program for three citrus areas within the refuge. The program is based on the program at VBRS, 90 miles south of the island, where Adair and his crew grow ruby red grapefruit, tangelos, pineapple oranges, and sunburst tangerines on 35 acres.

Adair went to Florida from Oklahoma and established the citrus research station in 1986. He says he was “tantalized” by tales of Indian River grapefruit— not just their superb quality, but the way they were grown in their heyday. Organic fertilizers were routinely applied, says Adair, and nontoxic spray oils were commonly used to control pests.

Since then Adair has experimented with organic fertilizers, using compost to meet seventy-five per cent of the trees’ nutritional needs. He composts chicken litter obtained from the state’s commercial chicken houses with grass clippings and other yard wastes (known as Urban Plant Debris) obtained from a nearby landfill to make a slow release fertilizer.

The rest of the trees’ fertility needs are met with foliar fertilization. Nitrogen, phosphorus and potash are sprayed directly onto the leaves, where they are absorbed quickly. These practices dramatically reduce movement of excess nutrients into ground and surface water. They have also allowed reduction of nitrogen rates to less than 60% of what the University of Florida recommends, while maintaining high grapefruit yields. Adair took another cue from the old-timers and began



using non-toxic horticultural oil sprays to control pests. One unique spray he has experimented with is an extract from the seed of the Neem tree, which can disrupt the life cycle of molting insects, trapping them in the pupa stage. Adair has also tried a number of other natural pest control techniques— such as insect predators and parasites. Over the last few years, the station has been researching various methods to control the *Diaprepes* root weevil, a serious citrus pest. The Center has also developed a low-rate herbicide program which can

lower herbicide costs up to twenty per cent and eliminate the use of pre-emergent herbicides.

Other growers have adopted the Station’s anti-*Diaprepes* strategy. “I think a lot of growers would vouch for the Kerr Center.

They’ve helped a lot of people,” Steve Hale, president of Hale Groves, said recently in the Vero Beach *Press Journal*.

Adair’s background as a research chemist has served him well in formulating and testing the effectiveness of various sprays. His work on Merritt Island began in 1993, when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service made him the IPM coordinator for the groves. He began working on ways to cut or eliminate the use of chemicals, as was mandated by the EPA. At first, he recalls, while the growers were polite to him, they did not listen to his suggestions. So he went to the foremen operating the sprayers, who were interested, and who eventually demonstrated to their bosses that Adair’s ideas were sound. The number of pesticides used was cut to two that were approved by EPA.



In 1996 VBRS took over the contract to one grouping of groves on the island, and last year took over two more groups. These latter areas are currently being rejuvenated after a few years of neglect. He works with two long-time citrus families, Roy Roberts and Son, and Jay Parrish III of Nevins Fruit in Titusville. Adair hopes to eventually market the fruit at the NASA Visitor Information Center, advertising it as premium, sustainably-grown fruit.

Challenges remain. Adair is currently working with a local engineer to develop a compost spreader which will apply litter and Urban Plant Debris in three-foot-wide bands at the trees' root zone. As Adair points out, often the "infrastructure" is not in place for new ways of doing things— while commercial fertilizer spreaders are readily available, one that can handle compost in the way he wants is not. Working with landfills



to get weed-free plant debris is another challenge.

Knowing that there are trees on Merritt Island that can be once again coaxed into bearing their superlative fruit keeps Adair hopeful, as does the realization that efforts at VBRS and Merritt Island are more than just idle experiments. The program at VBRS has reduced pesticide and chemical fertilizer inputs, reduced water consumption, increased soil fertility via the recycling of waste products back to agricultural land, and increased beneficial organisms in the grove and the soil. The agricultural and environmental benefits

derived from a sustainable citrus program like the one adopted on Merritt Island could be enormous if adopted by the state's citrus growers. There are 850,000 acres of citrus in Florida, Adair has written: "Think of the environmental advantages if a sustainable citrus program was adopted on even ten per cent of this acreage."

Merritt Island is leading the way: the place where nature and agriculture, as well as rocket ships, can co-exist.



The Vero Beach Research Station researches and demonstrates sustainable agricultural practices that are economically and environmentally efficient and which help to reduce growers' dependence on non-renewable resources. Located on 35 acres of citrus groves in Florida's Indian River Citrus District, it is the subtropical research station of the Kerr Center. Robert C. Adair, Jr., is the director.

Free information available (add \$1 s&h) from Vero Beach include copies or reprints of the following papers authored or

co-authored by Adair on the *Diaprepes* root weevil: "A Revision to the Bibliography of the Sugarcane Rootstalk Borer Weevil," "Ovipositional Preferences of *Diaprepes Abbreviatus*," "A Four-Year Field Trial of Entomopathogenic Nematodes for Control of *Diaprepes Abbreviatus* in a Flatwoods Citrus Grove," "*Diaprepes Abbreviatus* Host Plant Associations," "Use of Visible and Near-Infrared Spectral Reflectance in Determining Damage from *Diaprepes Abbreviatus*."

Also available is a fact sheet on the VBRS low-rate herbicide program.

Contact VBRS at 7055 33rd St., Vero Beach, FL 32966
561/562-3802
kerrvbrs@sunet.net

An Open Letter to Dan Glickman: The Response

– Maura McDermott

In the last *Field Notes*, Kerr Center president Jim Horne discussed a number of crucial issues in an open letter to USDA secretary Dan Glickman. Horne challenged the prevailing wisdom that says consolidation and concentration in agribusiness is good, that ag exports will save us, that ag efficiency is more important than keeping people on the farm, and that corporate agriculture always brings prosperity to rural areas. He ended by suggesting that the USDA make sustainable agriculture – agriculture that is economically viable, ecologically sound, and equitable to farmers – a priority in its programs.

We did not receive a direct response from Secretary Glickman, but did receive a letter from Economic Research Service administrator Susan E. Offutt, who wrote on behalf of the secretary.

In response to Horne's concerns about the hidden environmental costs of full-throttle agricultural production, Offutt replied that USDA programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program and the Environmental Quality Incentive Program work to limit "the environmental and natural resource impacts of agricultural exports." In response to the letter's thoughts on the devastating effect of concentra-

tion in agriculture, Offutt acknowledged the growing concentration in the meat-packing industry, and stated that "the Secretary shares your concerns about increasing concentration in agriculture." She outlined USDA efforts in this area through the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA). Recent efforts include investigations into packer competition, plant closings and changes in kill capacity, and hog procurement contracts and marketing agreements.

Offutt also mentioned three recent USDA initiatives to help small-scale producers: The Farmer Direct Action Marketing Plan to help small farmers sell agricultural products directly to consumers; the opening of the Office of Small Farms and Sustainable Development to "energize small farm activities within the Department of Agriculture," and the educational campaign "Farming for Profits, Stewardship and Community."

Unfortunately, says Horne, the letter "didn't adequately deal with issues we presented." While glad that the secretary opened up a line of communication, Horne still believes that USDA rhetoric in support of small farms and environmental quality is not backed up by adequate funding. (To read Offutt's

letter in its entirety, go to our web site at www.kerrcenter.com under Rural Development/Public Policy)

Horne was most gratified by the letters he received from farmers and others in rural America. The mood ranged from enthusiastic support to pessimism about the chances for change. A sampling of the response:

Our administrators in Washington need that kind of input from the professionals out where the disc hits the dirt.

I have just finished reading your letter to Dan Glickman in the spring 1999 issue of your publication Field Notes. It is well written and well thought out— I compliment you. Unfortunately, I think I have become somewhat cynical with the passing of time and have lost my earlier confidence in having our voice heard in Washington.....

I often review my Soil and Water Conservation Plan of 1941, when government assistance was available in that farm plan. With my participation in the Farm program I

was able to make some worthwhile improvement to my farm...I hope that your comments on the new agricultural policy will be carefully considered by the Secretary of Agriculture...

Thank your for your letter to Mr. Glickman. You said it well... I am afraid that so many of us are either too apathetic about what is happening to the farmers or just don't know what to do about it. I feel like NAFTA has affected my little farm in a big way. I have been embarrassed to send my farm results to my tax preparer, because the farm has lost money every year since NAFTA. It's a good thing that I don't have to depend on my farm for all of my income...

Small farmers do not have the numbers or funds to provide a realistic con-

stituency. ...If small farmers are to survive, they must create an effective political constituency by utilizing Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) concepts to join with consumers...CSAs will also allow small farmers to sell directly to their own group(s) of supportive consumers acting to protect mutual interests. To help the CSAs survive and prosper, Grameen-type banks should be created to help small farmers circumvent federal denial of usual farm credit.

I read your letter with great interest and awe. I think that every newspaper in the U.S. should print this letter in its entirety. Now that Janet Reno is investigating packing houses I hope that you also forward a copy to her. (see next letter)

Every farmer around here knows that the packing houses dictate the

price we get at market. It is time that this is brought to the table and the "big guys" are called in and made to toe the line...

The Attorney General has forwarded to me the copy you sent her of your most recent newsletter, including the "Open Letter to Dan Glickman." As the Assistant Attorney General for Antitrust, I appreciate having the benefit of the Kerr Center's perspective on the market challenges facing agricultural producers.

As you know, the Department is committed to enforcing the antitrust laws as vigorously in agricultural markets as in the rest of the economy. – Joel I. Klein



“Farming for Profit, Stewardship and Community” is a new educational effort by the USDA Office of Communications and the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program. Ten free “tip sheets” list resources (books and web sites) for small-scale farmers and ranchers in these areas: Improving Soil Quality, Adding Value Through Marketing, Preventing Pest Problems, Exploring Organic Production, Cut Livestock Costs, Managing Weeds Wisely, Planning for Profit, Networking, Using Trees, and Diversifying Crops. Available at FSA and NRCS offices and from the Kerr Center.

Pigs, Profits, and Rural Communities

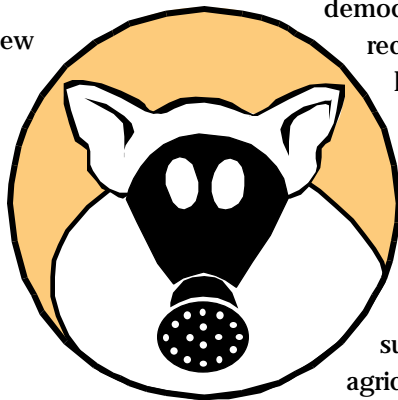
Kendall M. Thu and E. Paul Durrenberger, editors
State University of New York Press: Albany, 1998, 208 pages

Would you like to know an independent hog producer's thoughts about the recent explosion of corporate growers in the industry? Or the concerns that a professor of biology expresses about the effect of large-scale hog production on water quality? These are just two of the eleven essays presented in *Pigs, Profits, and Rural Communities*.

This recent book, compiled and edited by anthropologists Thu and Durrenberger, provides an overview of the current issues surrounding the industrialization of hog farming. The editors have gathered a diverse set of voices in order to "identify, analyze, and assess patterns of food production and their relationship to human adaptations." In general, the essays give brief outlines of the debate surrounding corporate hog production. Those readers wishing for a more in-depth study may find useful the reference lists following each selection.

The book is divided into four sections: Rural Community Consequences, The Environment, Justice and Equity, and Alternatives. The central debate

addressed in these chapters is whether the proponents of corporate agriculture have accurately depicted the costs and benefits associated with this industry. This book explores the effects of the "external costs" to rural America. The authors propose that industrialized hog production contributes to the loss of our rural culture, the degradation of our environment, and the undermining of our democratic society. The recurring theme,



however, is that the trend to industrialize agriculture is not inevitable. The authors suggest that one viable option is the development of a sustainable system of agriculture which grows and develops from within the community.

Pigs, Profits, and Rural Communities can be read as a reflection of the problems facing agriculture as a whole, not just swine production. This book encourages us to evaluate the "benefits" of rural life, a healthy environment, and social equality when establishing our farming practices.

— **Janell Smalts**, intern,
Public Policy Program

Concentration Threatens Farms and Ranches

According to a recently released report, a small number of dominant "clusters" of firms and corporations control the decision-making throughout all levels of the U.S. food chain, threatening America's system of independent family farms and ranches. The report was prepared by University of Missouri rural sociologist Dr. William Heffernan.

Prepared for the National Farmers Union, the study details the relationships forming the three major clusters now dominating the food system: Cargill/Monsanto, ConAgra, and Novartis/ADM. Each cluster is a vertically integrated "food chain" controlling the system from the gene to the supermarket shelf.

The study is available on the NFU website: www.nfu.org or contact the Kansas Rural Center at 785-873- 3431.

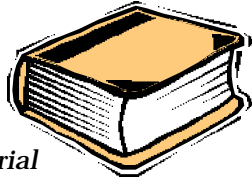
— taken from *Rural Papers*, the voice of the Kansas Rural Center, 304 Pratt St., Whiting, KS, 66552

For Your Information

Knowledge is of two kinds: we know a subject ourselves,
or we know where we can find information upon it.

– Samuel Johnson

New Publications from the Kerr Center



■ *Studying the Impacts of Industrial Confined Animal Feeding Operations: A Review of the Literature*

The impact of large-scale corporate-owned confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) on the social, human, economic, and environmental resources in rural areas is the subject of a recent booklet prepared by Mark Lawrence for the North Central Region Center for Rural Development and the Kerr Center. Lawrence summarizes the arguments for and against these swine CAFOs and includes an extensive bibliography. For any citizen, student or group interested in this hot issue.

Free; contact Kerr Center Public Policy Program
580-772-7870

■ *Controlling Odor and Gaseous Emission Problems from Industrial Swine Facilities; Recent Laws and New Ideas*

In this update to last year's publication by the same name, Yale Environmental Clinic students go beyond analysis of the odor problems associated with Industrial Swine Facilities to discuss economics, clean water, recent court cases, and alternative methods of raising hogs. Included is a description of a Minnesota "hoop house," an alternative swine production system. The lack of odor from the hoop house is described thus by the producer:

At our sustainable agriculture field day... We had pork burgers, beans and potato salad, and we had this ten feet away from the hoop house. Now I don't know any

other system...where you could have people enjoy a meal right next to a hog barn. Plus I had six months worth of manure being stored in a compost pile nearby.

Also included: the pluses and minuses of Oklahoma Senate Bill 1175, and recent voter and legal actions in other states. Free; contact Kerr Center Public Policy Program 580-772-7870.

■ The precursor to the above booklet, *Controlling Odor and Gaseous Emission Problems from Industrial Swine Facilities: A Handbook for All Interested Parties* is still available from the Kerr Center.

**All three reports can be accessed online at
www.kerrcenter.com**



Coming soon from the Kerr Center:

■ *The Effects of Industrial Swine Production*

This speaker's packet was written by Amy Chapin and Charlotte Boulton, master's candidates at the Yale University School of Public Health, and authors of two previous publications on the odor problems of industrial hog farms. The packet includes a color brochure, 160 slides, and a narrative to go with the slides. An informative presentation for civic, public policy or agriculture groups, it includes facts about pork production, and sections on adverse environmental outcomes, health effects on neighbors, occupational health effects, effects on community dynamics, and solutions. Check our web site this summer for more information.

CALENDAR

GOATS FOR BRUSH CONTROL AND PROFIT

June 24-25

Are goats the livestock of the future in Oklahoma? More and more people think so. These days there is a tremendous market for meat goats, says Wally Olson, who has raised a large herd for three years. Olson and his assistant Brian Russ will share what they have learned about raising meat goats at this workshop near Vinita. Bob Steger, an international consultant on multi-species grazing, will also be an instructor. Steger has a Texas ranch where he raises goats, cattle and sheep.

Olson has used goats for “brush utilization.” Goats will eat what cows won’t, including blackberries, ragweed, and multiflora roses. The workshop will cover goats from A to Z including how to acquire them, marketing, health, and pasture management. They will also discuss the possible effect of goats on wildlife habitat. There will be one day of discussion indoors, and one day in the field. The workshop is limited to 25 and

the fee is \$200, with \$100 payable in advance. For further information contact Olson at 918-256-8195 or Steger at 915-835-4583.

CONTAINER HERB GARDENING

Saturday, September 11, 9 - noon.

Want to grow herbs but find you are short on space? Herbs are wonderful plants to grow in containers on patios and on sunny windowsills. When summer ends bring your herbs inside, and Anne Louise Potochnick will show you how. She will demonstrate the creation of culinary and tea herb planters for the home and patio. She will discuss companion plants, types of containers, soil, moisture and location.

Workshop will be held at the Overstreet-Kerr Historical Farm ten miles south of Sallisaw. Fee is \$15. Contact Jim Combs at 918-966-3396

ROTATIONAL GRAZING SCHOOL

September 14, 15, 16

Learn how to make your wallet fatter

and your pastures healthier at this three-day workshop at Connors State College in Warner. Instructors are among the most knowledgeable in Oklahoma— ranchers Kim Barker and Walt Davis, and Noble Foundation consultant Charles Griffith. Workshop limited to 30; five scholarships available. Contact the Kerr Center at 918-647-9123 for information.

FALL FARM-FEST

October 8 (schools) 9 (general public)

This annual event at the Overstreet-Kerr Historical Farm has volunteers demonstrating crafts and activities common on farms one hundred years ago in Oklahoma: woodworking, basket-making, rug making, rifle-making and blacksmithing are just a few. See antique farm equipment and watch the cooking of the sorghum – Oklahoma’s answer to maple syrup! Organizers are looking for craftspeople to demonstrate Native American or pioneer skills and crafts. Contact Jim Combs at 918-966-3396.

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