

Farmland Preservation Workshops Set

A professional development workshop that will provide training in farmland and forestland preservation will be held this summer at three locations in the southern U.S.

The goal of the workshop is to "train the trainer," i.e., educate leaders and educators who will pass on what they learn to those who contact them for assistance. Extension educators and officials; NRCS, FSA, and other USDA personnel; as well as state farm and forestry leaders, are examples of people who will find the workshop helpful. In many cases professional development credits will be available for attending this workshop.

The workshop is being funded by a grant from the southern region of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education

(SARE) program. Participants should come from one of the states in the region: Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, or from the two US protectorates, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

One workshop will be held in **Oklahoma City** at the Holiday Inn/Airport on July 24 and 25; another in the **Memphis** area on August 5 and 6; and the last in **Atlanta** on August 12 and 13. The workshop is being held at various locations to make it easier for people to attend one nearby.

Gerry Cohn and Kevin Schmidt of the American Farmland Trust will be instructors. In addition, knowledgeable local speakers will also participate.

SESSION TITLES INCLUDE:

■ **What is the Problem and Why Should We Protect Agricultural Land?**

Using information from the Southern SARE region and across the country, the speakers will provide an in-depth look at why we are losing agricultural land to development and other uses; the social, environmental and economic impacts of this loss; and why communities across the country have decided to address these issues.

■ **Farmland Protection Toolbox I: Planning for Agriculture**

This session will provide a detailed overview of how communities across the South and the nation have used various tools and techniques to plan for the future of agriculture in their community, including agricultural districts, comprehensive land use plans, agricultural economic development and agricultural zoning.

■ **Farmland Protection Toolbox II: Agricultural Conservation Easements**

This session will provide a detailed overview of how agricultural conservation easements have been used across the South and around the country to protect farm, ranch and forest land. Purchase of Development Rights programs and opportunities in the 2002 Farm Bill will be highlighted.

■ **Farmland Protection Programs at the State Level**

This session will provide a detailed case study of how one or two states have combined the tools and techniques previously discussed as part of their statewide farmland protection strategy.

■ **Group Discussion: Bringing This Back to Your State**

Participants will break into small groups by state to discuss what they see as the opportunities and challenges of addressing farm and forestland protection when they return home. Each state will be asked to prepare an action plan that outlines possible next steps after the workshop.

■ **Special Topics**

Each workshop will highlight a

different topic, targeting a specific interest area identified by SSARE advisory committee.

- Farm Transfer—linking the generations and supporting beginning farmers—Oklahoma
- Minority Land Loss—Tennessee
- Forestry Issues—Atlanta

■ **Responding to Questions from Your Community**

This session will cover how participants can answer common questions from their communities about land use and agricultural and demographic issues. It will identify the major sources available nationwide for data on land use, farm, forest and ranchland, and demographics, and how this data should and should not be used.

■ **Small Group Discussion: Bringing this Back to your Community**

Participants will break into groups that reflect the audiences that they most often work with in their communities, such as farmers, elected officials, Extension/university, etc. Once in these small groups we will ask

participants to create action plans for providing technical assistance and training to their target audiences.

■ **Registration:**

Registration is \$25, which covers the one day workshop, resource notebook and lunch on 2nd day of workshop. Participants are responsible for all other meals, overnight accommodations and travel expenses.

If financial assistance is needed for registration and/or travel and accommodation, please submit a detailed letter of request to Anita Poole at the Kerr Center, PO Box 588, Poteau, OK 74953, apoole@kerrcenter.com by June 25.

Deadline for registration is July 2, 2003. Each workshop is limited to approximately fifty participants. For a registration form or more information about the workshops, instructors and hotel accommodations contact Barbara Chester or Anita Poole at the Kerr Center, 918-647-9123, bchester@kerrcenter.com or visit www.kerrcenter.com