



Speaker Information

January 8-10, 2009

Stacy Adams, Firth Flower Farm, Firth, NE. Stacy and his wife grow seasonal specialty planters, baskets and large containers of annuals in their family greenhouse and field operation for direct marketing through local farmers markets. Stacy is employed at the University of Nebraska as Horticulture Greenhouse and Field Manager and teaches Greenhouse Management. 10500 Gage Rd., Firth, NE 68358. (402) 472-2513 sadams1@unl.edu

Terry Blank is the greenhouse manager at Lincoln University Cooperative Research and Extension Program. She worked with Dr. Sanjun Gu on Vegetable Research and Extension in Missouri. She has been conducting Poinsettia variety trials for many years and has been interested in research in floriculture. She is getting her Master's Degree from University of Missouri this year. (573) 681-5455 blankt@lincolnu.edu

Earnie Bohner and his wife Martha started Persimmon Hill Farms in 1982 in Lampe, Missouri (SW of Branson), starting with blueberries, persimmons, and honeybees. Since then they have also grown blackberries, raspberries, gooseberries, plums, and shitake mushrooms. Their products are diversely marketed- U pick, directly as fresh and frozen product (both on farm and delivered), and through a lively array of value added products, such as baked goods, preserves, sauces, soups mixes, and more! 367 Persimmon Hill Lane in Lampe, MO 65681 (417) 779-5443 <http://www.persimmonhill.com/>

Mike Bollinger. After leaving the Midwest with a degree in Psychobiology, Mike found himself in western Mali, Africa, volunteering and focusing his energy on women's health and sustainable agriculture. Mike met his wife, Katie, in Mali, where they both worked sharing their knowledge with local families. When they returned to Iowa, their interest in agriculture continued as they worked for the Seed Saver's Exchange, preserving heirloom seeds for the seed bank. Mike and Katie then moved to Maine where they managed a five acre homestead, working to educate the public on growing food, sustainable living, and social activism. In the two years following, they managed Eliot Coleman's Four Season Farm, growing for chefs and local markets. Moving back to the Midwest, Mike and Katie were looking for a family farm closer to their roots. After a short interlude at the Chicago Botanic Gardens, Katie and Mike brought their knowledge of health, nutrition and farming with them to Heritage Prairie. 2N308 Brundige Road, Elburn, IL 60119. (630)443-8253 mdbollinger@gmail.com

Don Boyer is Executive Director of the Platte County Farm Service Agency and has worked with growers (including vegetables) on the use of the Noninsured Crop Assistance Program (NAP). FSA Platte County P.O. Box 1220 Platte City, Mo 64079 (816) 431-2101 Don.Boyer@mo.usda.gov www.fsa.usda.gov/

Henry Brockman raises over 600 varieties of organic vegetables on 12 acres in Central Illinois. He sells at the Evanston Farmers' Market in the suburbs of Chicago and has a 200-member CSA in the Bloomington/Normal area. henhiroko2@netscape.net.

Dr. Johann Bruhn is a Research Associate Professor at University of Missouri-Columbia. He holds a B.S. in forest science from Utah State University, an M.S. in forest health from the University of Michigan, and a Ph.D. from the University of California-Berkeley in plant pathology. He has built his career studying the various influences of fungi in forest communities. In recent years, he has gradually emphasized studies of fungi of value to agroforestry (*i.e.*, truffle, shiitake, oyster, and Stropharia mushrooms). Nearly all plants require mutualistic root associations with mycorrhizal fungi (*e.g.*, truffle fungi) to survive. Dr. Bruhn is currently studying the biology and cultivation of the Burgundy truffle on the root systems of pedunculate oak trees in orchard settings. A second diverse group of fungi is indispensable in nature as recyclers of dead wood (*e.g.*, shiitake, oyster, and wine-cap Stropharia mushrooms). Dr. Bruhn has studied the outdoor cultivation of shiitake mushrooms on natural solid wood logs in Missouri for much of this decade. This research will be the topic of his presentation. (573) 882-1471 bruhnj@missouri.edu

Pat Byers recently became the Horticulture Specialist for the University of Missouri Extension Southwest Region. Prior to this, for about 2 decades, Pat was the Fruit Grower Advisor for Missouri State University based at the Mountain Grove Fruit Experiment Station. Greene County Extension Center 833 Boonville Avenue Springfield MO 65802. (417) 862-9284 byerspl@missouri.edu

Ted Carey is the Extension Specialist for Food Crops, Kansas State University, at the Olathe Research & Extension Center. He conducts applied research on vegetable production in eastern and south-central Kansas with emphasis on season extension. 35125 W. 135th St., Olathe, KS 66061. (913) 645-0007. tcarey@ksu.edu

Ray Cloyd is the Extension Entomologist at Kansas State University, 123 Waters Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506. (785) 532-4750 rcloyd@ksu.edu

Al Cordle moved to Missouri in 1999 to start a Bonnie's Plant Farm (greenhouse) franchise operation. Bonnie's specializes in providing vegetable plants to retailers for the home gardener, but also grows herbs and a limited line of flowers. Al's heart is with vegetables, as fresh out of college in the early 70's, he jumped into the truck farming business in the Southeastern US. 38009 State HWY AA, Anabel, MO 63431. (877)-699-4300 showmebonnie@hughes.net

Jim Crawford is a Natural Resource Engineer with University of Missouri Extension and is headquartered in Atchison County. He has programming responsibilities in the NW 15 counties of Missouri. He also serves as the coordinator for the Graves-Chapple Demonstration Farm near Corning Mo. His areas of focus are energy conservation, renewable energy, tillage systems, water quality and farm structures. (660) 744-6231 crawfordj@missouri.edu

Rebecca Davis (& Kent Ryun assisting as an "insurance resource person") is the Director of the Risk Management Agency (RMA) Regional Office serving Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. RMA operates and manages the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC). RMA, via the FCIC, provides crop insurance to American producers. Sixteen private-sector insurance companies sell and service the policies. RMA Regional Office 2641 SW Wanamaker Rd, Suite 2, Topeka, KS 66614. (785) 228-5512. Rebecca.Davis@rma.usda.gov & http://www.rma.usda.gov/aboutrma/fields/ks_rso/.

Dan Dermitzel is Associate Director and Farmer with KCCUA (Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture) and is former co-owner of Trailside Farm in Calhoun, MO, a certified-organic vegetable farm. Dan's interests lie in the interwoven processes of globalization, urbanization and social integration especially as they relate to small-scale urban agriculture around the country and the world. As a farmer, Daniel is primarily concerned with finding ways to increase farm productivity through the introduction of new, appropriate technology. KCCUA P.O. Box 6043 Kansas City, KS 66106. (913) 831-2444 daniel@kccua.org & <http://www.kccua.org/>

Dr. Dan Egel is the vegetable pathologist for Purdue University and is located in Vincennes, the focal point of much of the vegetable production in Indiana. Dan has worked for Purdue University since 1995, conducting on-farm visits across Indiana, giving extension and research presentations nationally and carrying out field and greenhouse research. In 2007, Dr. Egel was awarded the Eric G. Sharvelle Distinguished Extension Specialist Award. Dan has a BS degree from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, an MS degree from Purdue University and a Ph.D degree in Plant Pathology from the University of Florida. Before joining the staff of Purdue University, Dan was plant pathologist for a watermelon seed company. Southwest Purdue Agricultural Center, 4369 N. Purdue Rd., Vincennes, IN 47591. (812) 886-0198 egel@purdue.edu.

Dr. Jonathan Egila is a Research and teaching Assistant Professor at Lincoln University Cooperative Research. He graduated with a Ph.D and M.S. in Horticulture from Texas A&M University and a B.S. in Horticulture from Washington State University. Dr. Egilla has extensive training in Commercial Horticulture, Plant Tissue Culture, and Plant Physiology. He has been conducting hydroponic research in Lincoln University since 2005. His research covers hydroponic techniques for vegetables, herbs, and small fruits.

Diana Endicott is the founder and Coordinator of Good Natured Family Farms, a brand name for selling a range of products produced on small family farms around Kansas City. She has been heavily involved in helping family farmers to produce and market a range of products including produce, particularly through Balls Foods, a Kansas City grocery store. Farm: (620) 939-4933. Cell: (913) 636-9989. Fax: (631) 739-0357. allnatural@ckt.net

Karen Funkenbush is a Research Assistant in Agricultural Systems Management Rural Safety at University of Missouri in Columbia. Her extension programming focuses on rural safety and health and she directs the Missouri AgrAbility Program. Univ. of Missouri 211 Agricultural Engineering Building Columbia, MO 65211 (573)-884-1268 FunkenbuschK@missouri.edu

Sarah Gehring serves as the AgriMissouri™ Member Services Coordinator. She works with beginning food entrepreneurs and coordinates promotional activities for AgriMissouri™ members and brand development. Prior to working with the AgriMissouri™ program Sarah worked in the Ag Innovation Center where she counseled agricultural producers on a variety of value added agriculture topics. Her areas of expertise were equine, sheep, food products, cotton, rice and aquaculture. Additional responsibilities included coordinating statewide value-added conferences, targeted market research, and identifying trends in food product development. (573) 522-9213. www.agrimissouri.com & Sarah.Gehring@mda.mo.gov

Sanjun Gu is the Extension Vegetable Specialist in Missouri. He received a B.S. in Vegetable Production and a M.S. in Vegetable Breeding and Tissue Culture from China; and a Ph.D. in Viticulture from University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Dr. Gu joined Lincoln University of Missouri in 2008 with state-wide responsibility for commercial vegetable production. His research interests include vegetable grafting and vegetable production in high-tunnels and other solar plastic greenhouses. (573) 681-5524 Sanjun.gu@lincolnu.edu.

Travis Harper is an agronomy specialist with the University of Missouri Extension covering Cass, Henry, and Johnson counties in west-central Missouri. Growing up in Oklahoma he worked for a local beekeeper, taking care of more than 250 hives. A hobby beekeeper with nearly 20 years of experience, Travis has managed colonies in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Illinois, and Missouri; and now enjoys helping new beekeepers in west-central Missouri get started in this “honey of a hobby”. (660) 885-5556 harpertw@missouri.edu

Tammy Hinman works for the National Center for Appropriate Technology as a horticulture specialist, in Butte, Montana. Before her work with NCAT she did a long stint of farming and sustainable agriculture work in the New York State and Arizona. In addition to market farming for several years, she has worked at Cornell University Cooperative Extension as a communications specialist in the area of sustainable agriculture and small farms, the Northeast Organic Farming Association and the Finger Lakes Culinary Bounty on organic certification under the National Organic Program and regional food identity campaigns. (800) ASK-NCAT tammyh@ncat.org

Laurie Hodges is the Extension Vegetable Specialist for commercial production of field and high tunnel crops (except potatoes) for Nebraska. For the past 7 years her emphasis has been on specialty cut flower production in high tunnels and learning organic production systems for horticultural crops. The objective is to support high value, profitable, intensive systems for diversification of farm enterprises in Nebraska and enhancing entrepreneurial opportunities in rural communities. Dept. of Agronomy & Horticulture, 377 Plant Sciences Bldg-UNL, Lincoln NE 68583. lhodges@unl.edu

Rick & Marianne Holgate are owners and operators of Holgate Heirloom Produce, David City, NE. We began our greenhouse produce business, Holgate Heirloom Produce, in December 2004. We have always loved growing vegetable gardens and particularly enjoyed growing tomatoes and peppers. Looking for a lifestyle and career change we moved to a five acre farm in David City from Lincoln, NE in 2004. Rick was previously a Paramedic for 15 years and Marianne was a professional Firefighter. Neither of us had any Agricultural experience but decided this was definitely for us. We educated ourselves about growing and greenhouses for four years prior to our move. We have now been growing Heirloom varieties of tomatoes and peppers for 3 years in a 3600 square foot 2 bay greenhouse. We market primarily to restaurants, grocery stores, and do direct sales through Farmers Markets and a local customer base. We have plans to add another greenhouse for lettuce and herbs in the next year and next spring we are starting an Aronia Berry Plantation. Long term plans are for our farm to become a destination farm in agritourism. We use Sustainable Practices on our farm and are working towards Organic Certification. We belong to the Nebraska Sustainable Ag Society, NE Buy Fresh Buy Local Program, REAP, and the Butler County Chamber of Commerce. rholgate@diodecom.net

Dan Hollingsworth is recognized internationally as a peony breeder, having registered with the American Peony Society dozens of new varieties of herbaceous peonies as well as the very challenging intersectional hybrids (tree peony X herbaceous peony), which brought us the yellow herbaceous peony. He knows his peonies! And, as a former County Extension person, he understands the practical aspects plant, flower, post-harvest, and production aspects that cut flower growers are interested in and will share these with us. He will also lend his experiences in a Q&A session on starting a commercial cut flower farm. Hollingsworth Peonies, 28747 290 Street, Maryville, MO 64468. (660)562-3010 hpeonies@asde.net & www.hollingsworthpeonies.com/

Wendy Johnson, a PhD candidate in the department of Entomology at Kansas State University. Her dissertation research involves assessment of the efficacy of organic insecticides and plant chemistry affecting insect herbivores. She has a MS in plant pathology and a BS in Horticulture Science from Montana State University. Wendy is originally from Kansas. wendyann@ksu.edu

Dr. Rufus Jones is a Research and Teaching Professor at Lincoln University Cooperative Research. He has been conducting research in sweet potatoes for over 15 years that has covered large ground of sweet potato physiology and production techniques. He holds a Ph.D. and M.S. in Agronomy from University of Wisconsin-Madison and a B.S. in Plant Science from Fort Valley State College. (573) 681-5391 JonesR@lincolnu.edu

Katherine Kelly is the Executive Director of the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture. She began farming by working on vegetable farms as a field worker in 1991 in the Boston area, then moved back to the Midwest in late 1996, where she started and ran Full Circle Farm for eight years. In 2005, she co-founded the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture, a non-profit organization promoting entrepreneurial agriculture in the metropolitan area. She has also worked professionally since the early 1980s with grass roots community organizations in the Twin Cities, Boston, and Kansas City, doing program management, fundraising, marketing, financial management, and organizational development consulting. She co-founded the Growing Growers Training Program and the Farmers Community Market at Brookside. katherine@kccua.org

Dan Kuebler has been a consistent and key producer at the Columbia Farmers Market for about two decades with 'The Salad Garden' which he operates with Diane La Mar in Ashland. They have been growing with organic methods since 1989, achieved organic certification in 2005, and received a sustainable ag grant in 2006 for energy conservation. Dan has been a staunch advocate in Columbia Farmers Market's quest for a permanent structure, experiencing the ups and downs in this effort over the years. (573) 657-1125 dlkuebler@yahoo.com

Terry & Kathy Labs have a market garden in Elm Creek, in central Nebraska west of Holdrege - urban gardening in a small town city lot. They've built their reputation on quality tomatoes for the full season. Over the years, they've had many adventures in growing and marketing to other rural communities and make the 300 mile rdtrip to the Lincoln Haymarket Farmers Market each week. Innovators and inventors, season extension is achieved through a wood-fired boiler and below ground heat. Tomato Acres, Box 427/ 325 Easy Street, Elm Creek, NE 68836. (308) 856-4181 Kalabs@charterinternet.com

Charles Marr, Professor Emeritus and retired Extension Vegetable Specialist, KSU, 2021 Throckmorton Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506. (785) 532-6173. cmarr@ksu.edu

Lane McConnell has been the Marketing Specialist with the Missouri Department of Agriculture, Ag Business Development Division, for just under two years, but it seems much longer. She has tirelessly promoted farmers' markets, organics and Agritourism across the state with many activities. Two successful examples are her spritely blogs and comprehensive off-season workshops. MDA 1616 Missouri Blvd., Jefferson City, MO 65109 (573) 751-4339 Lane.McConnell@mda.mo.gov.

Bob Muth , Muth Family Farm, Williamsport, NJ. Bob Muth grew up on a farm, raising crops with his father while holding a second job. Bob left New Jersey after college to work as a cooperative extension agent in South Carolina. After three years few years he returned to his home state of New Jersey to work on his Master's Degree. "One day, I looked out the window and realized I'd rather be sitting on a tractor seat than working in a lab, and I've never been back." In 1990, Bob returned to farming full time, and has never looked back. Through the years, Muth Farm has gained recognition as one of the leading regional farmers in areas of sustainable agriculture, soil development, community supported agriculture and organic farming. Muth Farm received the 2007 Mid-Atlantic Master Farmer Award for his work in these areas and more. MuthCSA@aol.com.

Greg Naber and his family started in conventional farming. One thing lead to another, with strengths in strawberries and sweetcorn leading the pack. Converting old equipment, buildings, and using his welding skills he looks for efficient ways to be profitable, including smart marketing diversification. His strawberry harvest-aid led to international exposure to high tunnel production, complemented by initial interest generated by the Great Plains Conference. He continues to expand his high tunnel production for season extension and weather protection. Naber's Produce Farm, 1008 Road R, York, NE 68649-7533 (402) 728-5565 nabersproduce@hotmail.com

Eric & Anne Nordell have been growing organic vegetables, small fruits and herbs in north-central Pennsylvania since 1982. Initially, they wholesaled storage crops and medicinal herbs to growers coops and distributors that served the big cities on the Eastern Seaboard. They now direct market a wide range of perishables through restaurants, stores and a farmers market in nearby Willamsport. Four horses provide the power and fertility for the seven acres of cultivation. Anne and Eric are longtime contributors to The Small Farmers Journal and are popular speakers at conferences across North America. 3410 Rt 184, Trout Run, PA 17771

Pat O'Malley is Iowa State University Extension's Commercial Horticulture Field Specialist for the Eastern 1/3 of Iowa. Pat has worked extensively with vegetable and fruit growers, and had programming activities with the green industry. Pat was one of the recipients of an ISU 2008 Extension Team Award, for his activities in a project involving Iowa's produce auctions. 4265 Oak Crest Hill Rd., SE Iowa City, IA 52246. (319) 337-2145 omall@iastate.edu

Marc Peterson Marc Petersen is a championship pumpkin grower from Iowa who took top place at the Iowa State Fair this year for a 1,238-pound pumpkin he grew with Dan Carlson. Dan and he have been competing for years in one of the nation's premier giant pumpkin competitions- the Anamosa Pumpkinfest. Anamosa, designated Iowa's pumpkin capital, received national recognition by weighing in the second largest pumpkin in the world in 2007. This year's 20th annual October event day attracted thousands over two days with a variety of activities, including pumpkin launching with the 'Pumpkin Trebuchet'. 736 Highview Dr Clinton, IA 52732. (563) 242-4980 pamarcole@msn.com

Karen Runkle and her husband, Pat, bring their experiences in building a successful market gardening business from the border of the High Plains and Sandhills (Sheridan County) in western Nebraska, with all the weather and market challenges of the wide open spaces. Emphasis on communicating with their customers and suppliers is a strength, tripling business in 3 yrs. Using wood heated high tunnels and microclimates inside and outside the tunnels, they provide fresh fruits and vegetables from late May through October through a CSA, farmers' markets, and on-farm. Karen is a REAP graduate. Lil' Ladybug Gardens and Greenhouse, 4283 460th Road, Hay Springs, NE 69347. (308) 232-4474 runkle@haysprings.net & <http://littl ladybuggardens.com>

Rebecca Graff & Tom Ruggieri established Fair Share Farm in 2003 after apprenticing on CSA farms in the northeast and Midwest. Situated on Graff family land, the farm grows a wide variety of vegetable, herbs, flowers and small fruit for its CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) members. 18613 Downing Rd., Kearney, MO 64060. (816) 320-3763 tom@fairsharefarm.com

Dr. Reid Smeda is a Weed Scientist at the University of Missouri, Columbia. He conducts research on characterization and management of herbicide-resistant weeds; biology and management of teasel and poison hemlock; management of difficult to control weeds in pastures, along roadsides, and on railroad right-of-ways; and management of weeds in agronomic and horticultural cropping systems. Plant Science Division, 204 Waters Hall, Columbia, MO 65211. (573) 882-1329 SmedaR@missouri.edu

Mercedes Taylor-Puckett. Mercedes recently joined the staff of the Kansas Rural Center as project coordinator for farmers' markets and the Kansas River Valley's Buy Fresh, Buy Local chapter. During her tenure as coordinator for the Downtown Lawrence Farmers' Market, the DLFM relocated to a larger market site, increased its membership by 40%, and instituted numerous market enhancements such as a wireless POS to accept food stamps and debit cards, a customer dining area, weekly e-newsletters and a website. The market also developed partnerships with restaurants, a food writer, a bank and area food pantries to promote local food. Mercedes enjoys working on issues of local, sustainable agriculture and served as local foods purveyor, with Karen Pendleton, for the 2008 National SARE Conference held in Kansas City. Kansas Rural Center, PO Box 133, Whiting, KS 66552. (785)873-3431 localfoods@earthlink.net & www.kansasruralcenter.org.

Randy Wattermann and his wife Trina and their eight children live on a small farm near West Point, Nebraska, which is 1 ½ hr north of Omaha. They have promoted sustainable agriculture and local foods since moving to Nebraska in 1998 and currently farm part-time, raising heritage breed turkeys and Berkshire pork for resale. Randy recently completed serving two, three-year terms as a member of the Board of Directors for the Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society, and has been intimately involved in the startup of the Nebraska Food Cooperative, serving as founding Chairman. He currently serves as Treasurer of NFC. He is also active in his community, serving as Chairman of the Cuming County Board of Adjustments. wattermann@skyww.net