

# Healthy Farms, Communities Focus At 11th PASA Conference

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — More farmers use more land in more healthy ways to build stronger communities.

These will be the topics featured at the 11th annual Farming for the Future Conference Feb. 8-9 in State College.

"Healthy Farms, Healthy Communities: Our Link to a Sustainable Future" is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) at the Penn State Conference Center Hotel.

PASA members and guests will gather "for the sake of our farmers, our food system, our communities and our world," according to the invitation of Brian Snyder, PASA executive director. Fully 14 of the weekend's 48 workshops relate to some aspect of health — from human nutrition to compost-enriched soil to farms that heal communities.

A second strong emphasis will be farm economics, featuring a series titled "The Farmers' Own School of Family Farm Economics." Using the same budget forms, six vegetable and livestock farmers will share their personal farm financial figures — to track what works and what doesn't, and how to use careful record keeping to know the difference.

Other workshops, which will be held during five different time slots, will cover direct marketing, pasture-

based production and sales, niche enterprises (fiber animals, farm B&B, microdairies), timber management for wood harvest, and reforming the agricultural economy and land-grant ag education.

Keynote speaker Dr. John Ikerd will kick-off the weekend with his refreshingly unconventional message. After serving 30 years as an agricultural economist with the Cooperative Extension Service in four states, he came to a radical conclusion from the farm crises of the 1980s. "I started to understand that a focus on the bottom line eventually destroyed the viability of the farm environmental resources and the farm family, and led to bankruptcy."

Retired now from the University of Missouri, he speaks extensively to farm groups and even urban audiences that want to understand how to build a better "food system" — the complex mix of producers, consumers and distributors who interact through economics, community values, and political policy. Rather than production-oriented efficiency, Ikerd believes the best opportunities for farming now lie in knowing a particular piece of land well and developing resilient relationships with a particular customer base. When a farmer finds how to express personal and farm uniqueness in the marketplace, it will be hard for corporate agriculture to duplicate, he said.

By shifting to diverse enterprises that use more management-intensive systems to enhance biological cycles, farmers find profit areas not offered in commodity production. He is a student of farmers who make these kinds of changes, and sees an expanding field of opportunity. "We have less than 2 percent of our population in production agriculture, and only about 1 percent are fully employed at it. What would be wrong with having 4 percent of the population farming for a living?" he asks. For more of his thoughts, check <http://hometown.aol.com/jeikerd>.

Offering the closing keynote at 3 p.m. Saturday will be Cathrine Sneed, founder of The Garden Project in San Francisco. A former law student, she now heads a comprehensive effort to give former inmates the personal values, job skills and community support to become positive contributors to society. She started with a jail garden in 1982 that many men enjoyed, then followed with The Garden Project a decade later. By adding reading and math, counseling and a supportive environment to horticultural excellence, the project gives the former prisoners enough advantages that more than 75 percent do not return to jail.

The Sustainable Trade Show and Marketplace will fill the center's exhibit area with companies offering the latest agricultural hardware, ag

products and services. Farm and food advocacy organizations will exhibit their efforts to build new markets and educate consumers. As a convenience, vendors selling farm-fresh and ag products will be grouped together. Three of the conference meals will feature sustainably, organically, and regionally raised foods.

For details, contact PASA, 114 West Main St., P.O. Box 419, Millheim, PA 16854-0419, (814) 349-9856, fax (814) 349-9840, info@pasafarming.org. Complete de-

tails and online registration are at [www.pasafarming.org](http://www.pasafarming.org).

Sponsors for the PASA Conference include Fertrell Company, Eberly Poultry Farms, Tuscarora Organic Growers, Pennsylvania Certified Organic, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Penn State University, College of Agriculture, Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture, and Rodale Institute.

## PASA Conference Workshops Related To Marketing

Five workshops will address marketing formats to increase profitability.

- **B&B, Cabin, Home-Stay: How to Bring Paying Guests to Your Farm.**

Sharon Kazary, Blackberry Ridge Farm, Md. is a former innkeeper who currently runs a vacation cottage on her farm. Introducing tourists to farming can be profitable as well as socially beneficial as it introduces guests to an agricultural lifestyle and farm values. Kazary will describe how to set up and operate a home-stay, cottage, or B&B on the farm. She has 11 years' experience in the tourism industry.

- **Intro to Pricing for Direct Marketing.** John Berry, Penn State Extension, Lehigh County, regional marketing specialist; Ed Herrmann, Penn State Extension, sustainable ag specialist. This lively workshop will explore how to set prices for profitability in your target market. Berry spent 20 years on a Pennsylvania dairy and forestry-products farm before obtaining his MBA. He focuses on whole-farm oriented risk management and agricultural retailing. Herrmann brings years of market-farming and market development to his extension role.

- **Planning Strategies for Successful Producer Co-Ops.** Dick Poorbaugh, Penn State Cooperative Extension, business education and research. How farmers can benefit from pooling production, and how to manage farmer-based co-op endeavors.

- **Intro to E-Commerce.** Ed Herrmann, Penn State Extension, Lebanon County, sustainable ag specialist. E-business connects small- to medium-sized businesses to the Internet, electronic commerce, and global trade. This seminar will introduce farm marketers to how e-commerce can dramatically increase access to resources and expand marketing opportunities.

- **Appealing to and Selling to the Urban Consumer.** Rochelle Kelvin, Appalachian Natural, Md.; Virginia Phillips, Slow Food Pittsburgh, Pa.; and Bill Fuller, Big Burrito Group, Pittsburgh, Pa. Rochelle Kelvin has spent the past 10 years developing market-based initiatives to increase support for sustainably produced foods. She provides cost-shared sales representation to growers and manufacturers of organic and sustainably produced processed foods.

Phillips is a former editor and current freelance food and travel writer from Mt. Lebanon. She co-founded Slow Food Pittsburgh to support biodiversity, sustainability, and preservation of agricultural and culinary heritage.

Chef Fuller has been corporate chef at the Soba Lounge since 1997. He holds a master's degree in chemistry and has 17 years' experience in the restaurant trade. A "Chef of the Year" winner (*Pittsburgh Magazine*), Fuller dedicates time to developing relationships with individual farmers and the Penn's Corner Farm Alliance of PASA's Community Farm Initiative-West.

## PASA Conference Workshops Related To Grazing

### Sustainable Graziers Alert! Dairy, Beef, Poultry Topics Await At PASA

Pasture-based dairy, beef, and poultry operations will be featured in the 11th annual Farming for the Future Conference Feb. 8-9 in State College.

"Healthy Farms, Healthy Communities: Our Link to a Sustainable Future" is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA). Location is the Penn State Conference Center Hotel.

#### Pasture workshops include:

- **After 16 Years of Grazing: Keeping It Simple Works the Best.** Art Thicke, Enchanted Meadows Farm, Minn. This veteran grazer will give an overview of his 16 years in dairy grazing, stressing simplicity, diversity, longer rest periods for pastures and overwintering cattle. He will also talk about the importance of finding balance between profitability, lifestyle, and protecting the environment. He milks 85 Ayrshire cattle.

- **Not Just Chicken Scratch-100 to 10,000 in Four Years.** Ron and Sheila Hamilton, Ardena, Alberta, will explain in two workshops how they went from producing 100 to 12,000 birds on pasture in four years. They will describe the basics of raising chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese and laying hens. Topics covered will include brooding, pasture raising, processing, health problems, weather concerns, feed programs and marketing, from fargate to white-tablecloth restaurants.

- **Biodynamic, Pastured Beef: A Doctor's Comparison.** Dr. John Foster, associate director of the Integrative Medical Center of the Thomas Jefferson Medical Center in Philadelphia. Dr. Foster operates a 325-acre biodynamic cattle farm in Chester County. He will make a nutritional comparison between the meat from his farm and commercial beef.

- **Establishing and Managing Diverse Pasture Mixes.** Matt Sanderson, USDA Ag Research, State College. Results on best mixes, best species to establish, and animal preference by species gleaned from research throughout the northeast U.S., including locations on Pennsylvania farms.

- **Sustainable Pastures and Warm-Season Grasses.** Jose Taracido, University of California of Pennsylvania. Focus on how grasses with higher production in mid-summer can even out grazing capacity. These grass species

also provide good forage production on low-fertility, high-acidity soils and create excellent wildlife habitat in farm settings.

- **Farmer-to-Farmer Learning Circle: Dairy Grazing.** Free-wheeling discussion for advanced practitioners.

Glenn Moyer, of the well-known Cove Mountain Farm, Mercersburg, will be one of several presenters in the "The Farmers' Own School of Family Farm Economics: Family Livestock and Dairy Farmers Reveal Their Annual Finances." Grass-based beef, pastured poultry, and or-

ganic dairy producers will also use a common spreadsheet style to present their farm's actual economic data, providing unusual insights into budgetary details.



## Registration

### 1. Who will be attending?

Please list yourself and all members in your party who be attending

Name	_____
Spouse	_____
Student/Youth	_____

Farm, Company (as you would like it to appear on name tag)

Address	_____
City	_____
County	_____
State	_____
ZIP+4	_____

Are you farming?  YES  NO

Daytime Phone ( )	_____
E mail	_____

### 2. PASA Membership

Join PASA today and save on conference registration fees!

You are invited to become a member of PASA. With your support we can restore a vital agriculture and create a thriving and economically viable farming system. Benefits of membership include a subscription to the quarterly newsletter, a Membership Directory for networking communication, access to PASA databases, voting privileges, **discounted admission to the Farming for the Future Conference**, invitations to special events and more! Your tax deductible membership contribution will help create a brighter future for Pennsylvania farms and farmers. We all have a stake in making sure agriculture has a healthy future — please take this opportunity to join PASA now! To join PASA or renew your membership complete below

Are you a currently member of PASA?  YES  NO

If YES, what is the expiration date on mailing label

Under what name would you like your PASA membership recorded

Select one membership category	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual/Family/Farm	\$35
	<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$15
	<input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit Organization	\$50
	<input type="checkbox"/> Business	\$150
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Lifetime	\$500

Save on conference fees, join PASA now!

### 3. Conference Fees

TWO DAY REGISTRATION

Members	Number	Amount
Members	@	\$95
Early Bird Members*	@	\$85
Member Spouse	@	\$65
Nonmembers	@	\$160
Early Bird Nonmembers*	@	\$150
Nonmember Spouse	@	\$110
College Student	@	\$50
Student	@	\$40
Youth Program	@	\$30
		Subtotal

\* For Early Bird discount registration must be post marked by **January 11, 2002**

ONE DAY REGISTRATION

Indicate day	Friday	Saturday
Members	@	\$60
Nonmembers	@	\$95
College Student	@	\$30
Student	@	\$25
Youth Program	@	\$20
		Subtotal

### 4. Conference Meals

Please preregister to guarantee all meals you plan to eat at the Conference

	Number	Amount
Friday Brown Bag Lunch	@	\$8
Friday Evening Awards Banquet	@	\$19
Vegetarian	@	\$19
Meat	@	\$19
Special Kids Banquet Meal	@	\$8
Saturday Lunch	@	\$10
Vegetarian	@	\$10
Meat	@	\$10
Kids Lunch (Youth 12 & under)	@	\$6
		Subtotal

### 5. Youth Program

Please list the name and age of each child attending the program in the field below. Parents will be contacted with more program details and for chaperoning hours.

Name	_____	Age	_____
Name	_____	Age	_____
Name	_____	Age	_____

### 6. Contributions

Yes I would like to be a Friend of the Conference @ \$100

Yes I would like to contribute to the Anas Brownback Memorial Scholarship Fund

Subtotal

### 7. Payment

Add membership dues (Section 2) and subtotals from Sections 3, 4 and 6

PASA Membership	_____
Two Day Registration	_____
One Day Registration	_____
Conference Meals	_____
Contributions	_____
Total	

Check Make check payable to PASA and return with this form

VISA Complete below

MasterCard Complete below

Card No.	_____
Exp. at Date	_____
Cardholder Name	_____
Signature	_____

### Mail this form to:

PASA — Farming for the Future Conference  
P.O. Box 419  
Millheim PA 16854 0419