

**North Central Region SARE Professional Development Program**  
**2012 Michigan Sustainable Agriculture Plan of Work**  
**Dale R. Mutch & Dean G. Baas**

**Section 1: Background**

The Michigan SARE State Sustainable Agriculture PDP program is coordinated through Michigan State University (MSU) Extension (MSUE) under the co-management of Dr. Dale R. Mutch and Dr. Dean G. Baas. Dean is partially funded by SARE, while Dale is supported by other sources. Together, with the input of the advisory board, they jointly develop and set the direction for sustainable agriculture in Michigan. Dale provides overall leadership and coordination with MSU, MSUE, MSU BioAgResearch (formerly Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station) and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Dean manages the implementation of the POW by coordinating initiatives (with leaders), travel scholarships, mini-grants and promotion. Dale and Dean are both located at the W.K. Kellogg Biological Station (KBS) allowing them to meet regularly to discuss, monitor and implement the POW. Tom Rorabaugh, retired County Extension Director, is a part-time, temporary employee assisting in the management and promotion of the Michigan SARE Professional Development Program (PDP).

The major reorganization of MSUE from five regions and 83 counties to four institutes serving 13 multi-county districts continued to present challenges as well as opportunities for the Michigan PDP in 2011. The reorganization produced uncertainty for Extension educators concerning their future roles in the new MSUE structure. However, as those roles have been redefined there has been an opportunity to incorporate sustainable agriculture into educator roles and programming. Some 2011 highlights are:

- 2010 Sustainable Animal Production initiative: Kable Thurlow (MSUE), Jason Rowntree (MSU) and Jerry Lindquist (MSUE) have taken leadership of this initiative and held two events in 2011 with additional events planned for 2012.
- 2010 Sustainable Organic Agriculture – New Agriculture Network (NAN) Webinars initiative: Vicki Morrone (MSUE) coordinated four webinars hosted through eOrganic on organic topics developed by a 21-member advisory group from Michigan, Indiana and Illinois. A total of 488 participants attended the four webinars. Three additional webinars are being planned for 2012.
- 2011 Scaling Up Local Foods initiative: Leveraging the regional training held in 2010 in Wisconsin, three educators continue to develop local foods programs and attended the Making Good Food Work Conference.
- 2011 Other sustainable agriculture support initiative:
  - Underserved audiences: Starting in 2011 and continuing into 2012 we are funding two Native American programs: Through the MSU Native American Institute and C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Agriculture, three Native American Speaker web-conferences, and 2) support to the WiseWoman Cooperative for travel to conferences to learn information to share through mentoring with Native American start-up farmers.
  - NRCS travel scholarship: 2011 marks the first time that a Michigan NRCS employee was able to accept PDP funds thanks to the efforts of Rob Myers. We hope to build on this in 2012.
- 2011 Promotion and Strategic Grant Writing initiative: Our efforts to promote the Michigan PDP and grant writing workshops and assistance have paid off in the diversity of applicants, number of submitted proposals and number funded for a majority of the NCR-SARE grant programs.

There is still work to do on some previous initiatives. Emily Sneller, the leader for the 2011 sustainable nutrient management initiative, left MSUE. We will identify a new initiative leader

and increase our efforts in this area in 2012. A leader has been identified for the practical farm sustainable economic analysis initiative, but programming has not progressed as anticipated. We will work with the leader to get this initiative implemented in 2012. The 2010 youth educator professional development initiative has been delayed due to the reorganization and we will work with the new MSUE Preparing Michigan's Children and Youth for the Future Institute to implement this initiative.

## **Section 2: Stakeholder Involvement**

Late in 2010 the advisory board management changed with 11 members departing and the addition of six new members (Attachment 1). The reduction in the size of the board has improved participation and new members have brought renewed energy to the group. The advisory group took a more active role in leading and promoting initiatives in 2011. We will continue to leverage advisory group members to lead initiatives in 2012. The purpose of this advisory group is to advise the coordinators, participate in identifying educational program and research needs, and assist in the selection of recipients for SARE mini-grants and travel scholarships. The advisory group meets biannually and participates in bimonthly teleconferences. This group has become the voice for SARE in Michigan, informing educators about SARE PDP.

## **Section 3: Face of SARE**

The Michigan SARE web site ([www.misare.msu.edu](http://www.misare.msu.edu)) contains information about the Michigan PDP program, application forms for mini-grants and travel scholarships, and links to other SARE grant programs on the NCR-SARE site.

Michigan will promote SARE at a variety of events, field days and meetings in 2012 such as the Michigan Organic Conference, MSU Forage Technology Conference, etc. where sustainable agriculture audiences can be reached. SARE displays are planned for the Small Farms Conference in Grayling, Mich., and the Michigan Family Farms Conference in Lakeview, Mich.

Increasingly, agriculture educators are obtaining a portion of their funding through grants. In addition to numerous workshops held throughout the state, we provided follow-up assistance to grant writers as they prepared their actual grants. These efforts are reflected in the increase in number of Michigan proposals submitted, and number funded in 2011. We will continue to provide support and advice to applicants for Farmer Rancher, Research and Education, Professional Development, Graduate Student, and Youth and Youth Educator Grants. The response to SARE grant programs and the exposure provided by the Michigan PDP program are evidence of expanding commitment to sustainable agriculture in Michigan. These efforts are producing a viable network of agricultural professionals, knowledgeable in sustainable agriculture, working to make Michigan more successful in adopting sustainable agriculture's practices and principles.

## **Section 4: Professional Development Initiatives**

The 2012 Michigan professional development initiatives include two that are outside our typical state POW: 1) the NCR-SARE Diversity Training, a regional project that Michigan was asked to support and 2) the Regional Training Program "Carbon, Energy and Climate," the training selected by the state coordinators being planned and hosted by Michigan. Six additional initiatives have been identified for 2012: 1) Support Regional Training Program "Carbon, Energy and Climate," 2) Scaling-up local food systems, 3) Sustainable animal production, 4) Sustainable Agriculture Programs for Underserved Audiences, 5) Cover crops and 6) Other sustainable agriculture support. We will continue the successful use of advisory group members to lead and implement these initiatives in coordination with Dale, Dean and Tom.

The professional development initiatives will be implemented through the awarding of mini-grants and travel scholarships that contribute to the desired outcomes. The applications for mini-grants and travel scholarships are administered through the Michigan SARE website ([www.misare.msu.edu](http://www.misare.msu.edu)). Co-coordinators and initiative leaders consult on applications to

ensure that awards meet the initiative objectives. Mini-grant recipients are required to complete the SARE on-line sustainable agriculture course prior to receiving funding.

**Initiative: NCR-SARE Diversity Training**

Audience: Admin. Council, State Coords., NCR-SARE Alumni Organization members and staff

Background: The NCR-SARE Diversity Committee is committed to increasing diversity within NCR-SARE. One of the committee's goals is to provide and also encourage diversity training opportunities for NCR-SARE program leadership. The Committee recommended the book, "Privilege, Power, and Difference" as an excellent teaching tool that will move a bit closer in achieving increased awareness and understanding of existing barriers ingrained in ourselves and therefore in our programs. The committee recommended developing a facilitated, on-line professional development training with the author Allan G. Johnson as our instructor. Michigan was asked to plan and support a workshop that will be recorded and developed into the on-line training for NCR-SARE region. This event is being coordinated with another of Dr. Johnson's engagements at Western Michigan University.

Activities: Secure event location and video production. Identify 15 to 20 Michigan participants from Extension educators, advisory group members, NRCS, MDA and NGOs. Purchase and distribute book to participants. Implement workshop and develop webinar.

PDP Budget: \$5,000 (note increase to Chapter 3 funding maximum)

Outcomes/Evaluation: See Program Logic Models, Table 1

**Initiative: Regional Training Program – Carbon, Energy and Climate**

Primary audience: Extension educators, university faculty, specialists and stakeholders engaged in carbon, energy and climate (CEC) work from across the North Central Region (NCR).

Background: The PDP typically encourages states to take a bottom-up approach through their SARE state advisory committees in identifying PDP initiatives each year. However, in 2009 a consensus developed among state coordinators to start having a region-wide training focus for PDP, with the tentative goal of a new training topic area every two years. The first regional training, "Scaling-up Local Foods, was held in Wisconsin in 2010. Given the goal of a two-year cycle, state coordinators held a discussion in early 2011 on training topic ideas to launch in 2012. Consensus developed around a systems-oriented training that could connect some of the major issues between changes in energy and climate as they pertain to agriculture. This regional training titled "Carbon, Energy, and Climate" will be hosted by Michigan who will work closely with the other states in the region on conference planning, material development and follow-up.

Activities:

- Involve stakeholders from across the region in planning the training through conference calls and an e-mail discussion list.
- Hold a 2½-day conference, September 26-28, 2012 at the Michigan State University W.K. Kellogg Biological Station in Hickory Corners, Mich.
- Provide follow-up to state teams attending the conference (2012 and 2013)
- Conduct evaluation

PDP Budget: Funded by other NCR-SARE Regional funds

Outcomes/Evaluation: See Program Logic Models, Table 2

**Initiative: Support Regional Training Program – Carbon, Energy and Climate**

Primary audience: Extension educators, university faculty, specialists and stakeholders engaged in carbon, energy and climate (CEC) work from across the North Central Region (NCR).

Background: In 2011, a consensus developed among state coordinators to start having a region-wide training for PDP around a systems-oriented training that could connect some of the major issues

between changes in energy and climate as they pertain to agriculture. This regional training titled “Carbon, Energy, and Climate” will be hosted in Michigan, working closely with the other states in the region on conference planning, material development and follow-up. A team of seven educators from across Michigan will be identified to lead CEC professional development for local sustainable agriculture educators and professionals. This team will attend the NCR-SARE CEC regional training to be held on September 26-28, 2012, at the Michigan State University W.K. Kellogg Biological Station in Hickory Corners, Mich.

Activities:

- Select a state team to participate in the CEC regional training.
- Provide travel support to attend the 2½-day conference, September 26-28, 2012.
- Provide follow-up with and support to the team attending the conference

PDP Budget: \$500

Outcomes/Evaluation: See Program Logic Models, Table 3

**Initiative: Scaling-up local food systems**

Audience: Extension educators, Extension Specialists, NGOs, MDA

Background: Leverage the regional training implemented through Wisconsin in 2010 to provide local professional development in scaling-up local food systems to agricultural educators in Michigan. The participating Michigan team will continue their work to share the regional training information and resources with state agricultural educators to increase their knowledge of structures and processes to more effectively scale-up local food systems. The demand for local foods has been increasing as consumers recognize the benefits of locally grown products. Current supply chains do not have the capacity to supply local food on a large scale. Scaling-up offers producers an opportunity to diversify their markets into the wholesale, fresh markets. Entering these markets requires new organizational structures and rules for transparency, aggregation and differentiation when dealing with supply chain partners.

Activities: The Michigan team is developing workshops and events to provide professional development in scaling-up local foods systems. The Michigan local foods team is developing programs to address the scaling-up local foods issues and needs in the state. This initiative will be integrated with other local foods programs where appropriate.

PDP Budget: \$2,400

Outcomes/Evaluation: See Program Logic Models, Table 4

**Initiative: Sustainable animal production**

Audience: Extension Educators and Specialists, NRCS, MDA, Cons. Districts

Background: Total livestock and livestock products represent around 40% of total agriculture cash receipts in Michigan. The livestock sector is equally diverse in species raised and farm size. As land and livestock inputs and energy costs escalate, small- and medium-sized producers can look toward developing sustainable systems that maximize a complementary mix of crops and livestock and at the same time meet social and environmental demands of consumers. The goal is to encourage a more comprehensive approach to integrating crop and livestock systems on Michigan farms. Livestock producers face several pressures in Michigan—not least of all increasing energy and input costs, environmental concerns and community and regulatory issues at the rural-urban interface. Consumers are increasingly concerned about food safety and demanding verification of source and management methods, and questioning the impact of livestock on the environment. A team of three educators, Kable Thurlow (MSUE), Jason Rowntree (MSU) and Jerry Lindquist (MSUE) have taken the lead on integrating sustainable practices into animal agriculture in Michigan. They held two workshops partially funded through MI PDP mini-grants in 2011 and have another planned for 2012. Their programs are making a difference promoting sustainable animal production in Michigan and this

initiative will continue to support their efforts.

Activities: Support development of and attendance at workshops and training for agricultural educators expanding their knowledge of sustainable animal production.

PDP Budget: \$2,400

Outcomes/Evaluation: See Program Logic Models, Table 5

**Initiative: Sustainable Agriculture Programs for Underserved Audiences**

Audience: Extension educators, university faculty, specialists NRCS, NGOs, MDA, Cons. Districts engaged in sustainable agriculture programs to underserved audiences.

Background: Beginning in 2010 with the Indigenous Gardening Conference and continuing in 2011 with the Native American Sustainable Agriculture Speaker Series and support to the WiseWoman Cooperative, the Michigan PDP has increased support to Native American populations. There is an opportunity to continue support to these types of programs and identify organizations to provide sustainable agriculture education to other underserved audiences.

Activities: Support development of and attendance at workshops and training for educators engaged in programs on sustainable agriculture for underserved audiences.

PDP Budget: \$2,400

Outcomes/Evaluation: See Program Logic Models, Table 6

**Initiative: Cover crops**

Audience: Extension educators and specialists, NRCS, NGOs, MDA, Cons. Districts

Background: In the past two years farmer interest in cover crops and their use has dramatically increased in Michigan and the NCR. As a result educators are seeking information and professional development to increase their knowledge of cover crops. The goal of this initiative is to create a greater understanding of the role cover crops play in environmentally friendly farming systems and a greater appreciation of ecosystem functionality provided by a landscape that is green the entire year. This will prepare educators to deliver programs to and consult with farmers on the benefits and method to incorporate this sustainable practice into their farming systems.

Activities: Support development of and attendance at workshops and training for educators. Support attendance at cover crop meetings and conferences. Support projects to develop outreach materials, tours and demonstration/research projects.

PDP Budget: \$2,400

Outcomes/Evaluation: See Program Logic Models, Table 7

**Initiative: Other sustainable agriculture support**

Audience: Extension educators and specialists, NRCS, NGOs, MDA, Cons. Districts

Background: Mini-grants and travel scholarships can help educators, NRCS, governmental and non-governmental organizations develop and deliver professional development programs or demonstrations that promote sustainability of rural and urban communities. To receive these funds, applicants must submit a professional development proposal that addresses the sustainability of agriculture or sustainability in their communities. These funds need to be used for their professional development and incorporated into their programs and educational activities. The advisory group has recommended focusing a majority of Michigan NCR-SARE PDP resources toward the four major initiatives. However, educator support for other sustainable agriculture programs outside of those initiatives must be available and considered. This initiative addresses support for those deserving proposals.

Activities: Promote mini-grants and travel scholarships for educator programs in sustainable agriculture.

PDP Budget: \$2,400

Outcomes/Evaluation: See Program Logic Models, Table 2

**Table 1. NCR SARE Diversity Training**

Intermediate Outcomes**	Short Term Outcomes *	Outcome Measures	Outputs (including # participating)	Activities	Inputs
-NCR-SARE state personnel and programs are motivated to address diversity issues and barriers. -Increase in programs and funds to underserved audiences.	-Increase knowledge and awareness of diversity barriers in general and in NCR-SARE programs.	-Number of State personnel participating in the regional training webinar. -Follow-up survey of participants.	-NCR-SARE program video taped and edited for use by other states. -NCR-SARE on-line diversity training program produced for region-wide webinar.	- Secure event location and video production. -Identify 15 -20 MI participants. -Purchase and distribute books. -Implement workshop -Develop webinar.	-SARE funds. -State Coordinator time. -PDP Assoc. Director time.

**Table 2. Regional Training – Carbon, Energy and Climate (CEC)**

Intermediate Outcomes**	Short Term Outcomes *	Outcome Measures	Outputs (including # participating)	Activities	Inputs
-Local educators are confident leading agricultural stakeholders in examining how they are affected by and how they influence carbon, energy and climate. -Participants motivate, engage and train local educators on topics relating agriculture, and carbon, energy and climate.	-Increase knowledge of the biophysical processes linking CEC and their relationship to agriculture. -Understand how agriculture affects and is affected by CEC within the NCR. -Understand the range and impact of projected climate change for the NCR. -Understand the sources and magnitude of uncertainties surrounding climate projections at local to global scales. -Increase climate literacy and awareness of the differing viewpoints on CEC. -Develop skills and knowledge to frame discourse on carbon, energy and climate within the agricultural community. -Understand carbon markets and federal and state programs related to CEC that are available to farmers. -Increase awareness of specific farming practices that can enhance carbon capture and organic matter.	-The number of states participating in conference planning. -The number of educators attending the 2½-day workshop. -End-of-workshop evaluations indicating amount learned and intention to act on the information. -Team activity in the states one year after the workshop.	-80 to 100 educators from across the NCR participate in CEC training. -Each state team has developed a plan for CEC professional development in their state. -Materials to assist during and after training are identified, assembled and available for educators. -Networks are developed across the region to support local CEC training.	-Involve stakeholders from across the region in planning the training through conference calls and an e-mail discussion list. -Hold a 2½-day conference, September 26-28, 2012, at MSU W.K. Kellogg Biological Station. -Provide follow-up to teams attending the conference (2012 and 2013). -Conduct evaluation.	-SARE funds. -Expertise of steering group. -Expertise of program group. -Conference coordinator time. -State Coordinator time. -Participant time and expertise. -Evaluation time and expertise.

**Table 3. Support Regional Training – Carbon, Energy and Climate (CEC)**

Intermediate Outcomes**	Short Term Outcomes *	Outcome Measures	Outputs (including # participating)	Activities	Inputs
-See Regional Training Program initiative logic model in the 2012 Michigan POW.	-See Regional Training Program initiative logic model in the 2012 Michigan POW.	-The number of educators attending the 2½-day workshop. -End-of-workshop evaluations indicating amount learned and intention to act on the information. -Team activity in the state one year after the workshop.	-7 educators selected to form state CEC team. -7 educator team attends CEC regional training. -State team has developed a plan for CEC professional development in their state. -Networks are developed across the region to support local CEC training.	-Identify and select 7 educators for the state CEC team. -Provide travel support for the state team to attend the 2½-day conference, September 26-28, 2012. -Provide follow-up and support to the state team after the conference.	-SARE travel funds. -State Coordinator time. -Participant time and expertise.

**Table 4: Scaling-up Local Food Systems**

Intermediate Outcomes**	Short Term Outcomes *	Outcome Measures	Outputs (including # participating)	Activities	Inputs
-5 educators will deliver educational programs addressing scaling-up local food system issues. -Increase in the number of local producers supplying wholesale, fresh markets.	-Leverage and disseminate information and resources from the regional training for Michigan educators. -10 educators will increase their knowledge of structures and processes necessary to scale-up local food systems.	-Educator workshop attendance. -Mini-grants awarded. -Pre- and post-project surveys will be used to assess professional development and changes in knowledge and attitudes. -Follow-up surveys to evaluate increase in wholesale fresh market supply and effectiveness of direct delivery to producers.	-1 to 4 mini-grants will be funded supporting programs in scaling-up local food systems. -New partnerships across disciplines will be established.	-Develop and promote scaling-up local foods programs. -Survey participants post event. -Evaluate mini-grant projects.	-NCR-SARE funds. -Partner funds. -State coordinators' time. -MSU specialists' time. -MSU educators' time. -Workshops/conferences.

**Table 5: Sustainable Animal Production**

Intermediate Outcomes**	Short Term Outcomes *	Outcome Measures	Outputs (including # participating)	Activities	Inputs
-Changes in attitude toward nutrient management and the inclusion of sustainable principles in a wider range of Extension and education programming. -10 educators will deliver educational programs addressing sustainable animal production and nutrient management.	-20 educators will increase their knowledge about sustainable animal production systems. -Mini-grants funded for plot and animal demonstration projects will reach 60 farmers and stakeholders.	-Educator workshop attendance. -Mini-grants awarded. -Pre- and post-project surveys will be used to assess professional development and changes in knowledge and attitudes. -Follow-up surveys to evaluate increase in sustainable animal production programming and effectiveness of direct delivery to farmers.	-2 to 4 mini-grants will be funded supporting education and demonstration projects. -3 to 6 travel scholarships will be funded for educator training in sustainable animal production. -New partnerships across disciplines will be established.	-Promote sustainable animal production mini-grants and travel scholarships. -Survey participants post event. -Evaluate mini-grant projects.	-NCR-SARE funds. -Partner funds. -State coordinator time. -MSU specialists' time. -MSU educators' time. -Subcommittee time. -Field days/ tours.

**Table 6. Sustainable Agriculture Programs for Underserved Audiences**

Intermediate Outcomes**	Short Term Outcomes *	Outcome Measures	Outputs (including # participating)	Activities	Inputs
-Increase access to sustainable agriculture programs, materials and practices by underserved audiences	-5 educators will deliver sustainable agriculture programs to underserved audiences. -Mini-grants and travel scholarships funded for sustainable agriculture education and projects to underserved audiences.	-Workshop attendance. -Mini-grants and travel scholarships awarded. -Pre- and post-project surveys to assess professional development. -Follow-up surveys to evaluate direct delivery to underserved audiences.	-1 to 2 mini-grants will be funded supporting education projects to underserved audiences -2 to 4 travel scholarships will be funded for underserved audience professional development.	-Promote mini-grants and travel scholarships. -Survey participants post event. -Evaluate mini-grant projects.	-NCR-SARE funds. -State coordinators' time. -Educators' time.



**Table 7: Cover Crops**

Intermediate Outcomes**	Short Term Outcomes *	Outcome Measures	Outputs (including # participating)	Activities	Inputs
-Changes in attitude toward cover crops and their inclusion in a wider range of Extension and education programming. -20 educators will deliver educational programs including cover crop practices.	-30 educators will increase their knowledge about cover crop systems. -Mini-grants funded for cover crop demonstration projects will reach 60 farmers and stakeholders.	-Educator conference attendance. -Mini-grants awarded -Pre- and post-project surveys will be used to assess professional development and changes in knowledge. -Follow-up surveys to evaluate increase in cover crop systems programming and effectiveness of direct delivery to farmers.	-2 to 4 mini-grants will be funded supporting education and demonstration projects. -3 to 6 travel scholarships will be funded for educator training in cover crop systems.	- Support development of and attendance at workshops and training for educators. -Promote cover crop mini-grants and travel scholarships. -Survey participants post event. -Evaluate mini-grant projects.	-NCR-SARE funds. -State coordinator time. -MSU specialists' time. -MSU educators' time. - Field days/ tours.

**Table 8: Other sustainable agriculture support**

Intermediate Outcomes**	Short Term Outcomes *	Outcome Measures	Outputs (including # participating)	Activities	Inputs
-Changes in attitude toward sustainable agriculture and its inclusion in a wider range of Extension and education programming. -10 educators will include sustainable agriculture in their programming.	-15 educators will increase their knowledge about sustainable agriculture practices. -Mini-grants and travel scholarships funded for sustainable agriculture education and projects.	-Educator conference attendance. -Mini-grants and travel scholarships awarded. -Pre- and post-project surveys to assess professional development and changes in knowledge. -Follow-up surveys to evaluate direct delivery to producers.	-1 to 2 mini-grants will be funded supporting education and demonstration projects. -2 to 4 travel scholarships will be funded for educator training in sustainable agriculture practices.	-Promote mini-grants and travel scholarships. -Survey participants post event. -Evaluate mini-grant projects.	-NCR-SARE funds. -Partner funds. -State coordinators' time. -Educators' time.

**Attachment 1.** Advisory Group/Stakeholder Group Membership and Tentative Schedule of Meetings

<b>Member</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Elaine Brown	MIFFS (NGO)
Betsy Dierberger	NRCS
Julie Doll	MSU KBS
Rufus Isaacs	MSU Entomology
Juan Marinez	MSUE and NCR-SARE AC member
Natalie Rector	MSUE
Robin Rosenbaum	MDA
John Simmons	Organic farmer
Robert Sirrine	MSUE
Susan Smalley	MSU C.S. Mott Group
Dennis Stein	MSUE
Erin Taylor	MSU Crop and Soil Science
Steve Tennes	Farmer
Kable Thurlow	MSUE

<b>Purpose of Meeting</b>	<b>Tentative Date</b>
Advisory Group Meeting – Face to Face	Spring 2012
Advisory Group teleconference calls, initiative leader calls, initiative leader face to face meetings	As required throughout the year
Advisory Group Meeting – Face to Face	Winter 2012