



# Oklahoma SARE



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## What Did Educators Say about Sustainable Agriculture?

(Summarized from survey conducted in 2007 by Southern SARE)

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An e-mail survey questionnaire was sent out to Extension Educators as part of the Southern SARE sustainable agriculture survey to collect educators' view of sustainable agriculture. Although several questions were included in the survey questionnaire, I would like to discuss responses to selected basic sustainable agriculture related statements pertinent to the status of sustainable agriculture in Oklahoma.

Of those asked if sustainable agriculture is widely adopted in their respective area of mandate, only 37% answered favorably. Due to this low level of adoption, about 67% clearly indicated the need for strengthening sustainable agriculture outreach and education in the state. About three quarters of the Extension Educators well understood the significance of attaining an overall sustainable agriculture that addresses the three components (environmental soundness, economic profitability and social acceptance).

According to this survey one-fourth of the Extension Educators believe that farmers and ranchers have high regard for those farmers and ranchers who focus in sustainable agriculture practices. This simply tells us the need for more outreach and education to bring up to speed those who do not consider sustainability in their agricultural practices.

Continued on next page.

### SARE promotes

- Economic viability for our agricultural initiatives
- Responsible stewardship of our natural resources
- Community acceptance and support for continued agricultural success

*The Oklahoma SARE program would like to acknowledge the members of our Advisory Committee. They are.....*

*Kim Barker, Claude Bess, Michelle Bigfoot, Lynn Brandenberger, Bryan Buchwald, Tom Denker, Damona Doye, Claud D. Evans, Jimmy Ford, Chad Godsey, Sue Gray, Sherman Grubb III, Dwight Guy, Doug Hamilton, Harlan Hentges, JJ Jones, Mick Jones, Vicky Karhu, Chris Kirby, Glen Ledbetter, Ross Love, George Luker, Kenneth Matlock, Kelsey McCollum, Paul Muegge, Demelda Newsom, Rupert Nowlin, Scott Price, Ray Ridlen, Warren Roberts, Tom Royer, Vernon Scogin, Casey Sharber, Jim Shrefler, Samantha Snyder, Job Springer, Eric Stafne, Brad Tipton, Curtis Torrance, Ron Vick, Rod Wanger, Alan Ware, and Ben Yahola.*

**Statements given to Extension Educators to respond in favor or against by Southern SARE sustainable agriculture survey in 2007**

Statement	Favorable response(s)
Sustainable agriculture is widely practiced in Oklahoma (my area)	37
Emphasis on suitable agriculture education needed in your area	67
You have a good understanding of the interconnectedness of three components of sustainable agriculture i.e., environmental soundness, economic profitability and social acceptance	74
You have adequate knowledge and access to information for conducting education programs for farmers and ranchers about sustainable agriculture	47
You believe that farmers and/or ranchers in your area have high regard for others who focus on sustainable agriculture practices	25

Source: Southern SARE Sustainable Agriculture survey, unpublished data

**What Do the Numbers Tell Us?**

Our educators understand well the significance of promoting sustainable agriculture in their respective mandate area. However, the lack of information concerning principle and practices of sustainable agriculture is what is limiting their success so far. State Extension Specialists and others promoting sustainable agriculture in Oklahoma are required to fill this information and knowledge gap. In response, to this there are several sustainable agriculture research, extension and outreach initiatives underway. For example, no-till outreach and education efforts resulted in higher adoption of the practice in the state. Alternative crops such as canola broke the tradition of wheat monoculture adding to sustainability of agricultural systems. Similarly, organic farming is being adopted by producers due to aggressive extension and outreach efforts. Information delivery for enhancing the adoption of sustainable agriculture will continue until that point where Oklahoma farmers and ranchers consider sustainable agriculture as part of their 'agricultural tradition'.

--Kefy Desta



*Organic sweet corn harvested at Lane.*

***Southern SARE Released Calls for Proposal and Pre-proposals***

The Southern Region SARE currently has two open calls for Pre-proposals: the Research and Education Program and the Professional Development Program. The deadline for the Research and Education Program is June 1, 2009 while the Professional Development Program pre-proposal is due on June 5, 2009. Additionally, Southern SARE has released request for proposal for 2009 Graduate Student Grant in Sustainable Agriculture. The proposal deadline is June 1, 2009. The calls for pre-proposals and proposal and full instructions can be accessed at <http://www.southernsare.uga.edu/callpage.htm>. Please contact the [Kerr Center](#) or Oklahoma state Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education ([OKSARE](#)) if you need additional information on these grant opportunities. OKSARE offers assistance in preparing proposals.

## Oklahoma State University Sustainable Agriculture Extension Program (OSAEP) and OK-SARE PDP upcoming events in 2009

- **2009 Sustainable Agriculture Professional Development Tour Workshop**
  - To familiarize new Extension Educators with some of the ongoing programs in sustainable agriculture
  - July 13-14, 2009
  - Tour will visit the Kerr Center and the Lane Agriculture Facility
  - Newly hired Extension educators
  - Space will be limited to about 12 extension educators
  - For information please contact: Janelle Malone ([janelle.malone@okstate.edu](mailto:janelle.malone@okstate.edu); (405) 744-3669 )or Kefy Desta ([kefyalew.desta@okstate.edu](mailto:kefyalew.desta@okstate.edu); (405)744-4667).
  - The tour will be covered by OKSARE PDP
  - The tour participants will be expected to submit a report of what they gained from the tour and how they anticipate it will enhance their ability to promote sustainable agriculture in Oklahoma as a group.
  
- **Small Stock Composting Training and Organic Workshop**
  - Objectives
    - To promote sustainable agriculture and natural resource use by increasing the number of small-scale goat, sheep, and poultry producers and home owners recycling a portion of farm or home waste through carcass and backyard composting.
    - To present science-based information that covers basic production concepts and techniques as well as information on acts, certification rules, and marketing of organic products in Oklahoma.
  - October 20th and 21st, 2009
  - Composting will be held at Langston University and organic workshop will take place in Stillwater (specifics to follow)
  - Cooperative Extension professionals and others who are involved in educating and assisting producers and ranchers in advancing sustainable agriculture in Oklahoma.
  - Whom to contact: Janelle Malone ([Janelle.malone@okstate.edu](mailto:Janelle.malone@okstate.edu); (405)744-3669) or Kefy Desta ([kefyalew.desta@okstate.edu](mailto:kefyalew.desta@okstate.edu); (405)744-4667).
  - Extension educator's mileage and registration will be covered. All other participants are responsible for all expenses (more information to follow).
  - Programs will consist of experts in the areas of backyard and carcass composting as well as organic production. More details on both workshops will be posted in our Summer newsletter...Stay tuned!

## Oklahoma SARE Limited Support Application Form Now Available

Oklahoma SARE supports travel and/or the conference registration expenses of extension educators and other professionals to attend professional development (PD) conferences, trainings or workshops organized in Oklahoma and neighboring states on sustainable agriculture. It also offers partial support for professionals and advanced producers and ranchers who would like to organize small group trainings or workshops. Maximum amount for individual assistance is \$400 and only limited numbers of offers are available annually. Applying for support does not automatically qualify a person or a group for funding. OKSARE reserves the right to make decisions on any request for funding/support. Applicants need to apply for support at least 3 months before the event. Regardless of the type of request, OKSARE processes payments and no funding will be transferred to the applicant directly. If support is offered to an individual or group, the beneficiary must submit a narrative that includes how the support helped him/her/them to promote sustainable agriculture and the potential impacts that the support brings for advancing sustainable agriculture in Oklahoma. Oklahoma SARE (OKSARE) now has an application and information form for use when requesting funds for travel and/or registration expenses for Extension Educators and other agriculture professionals wishing to attend professional development conferences, trainings, or workshops organized in Oklahoma and neighboring states on sustainable agriculture. It is our hope that this will facilitate an equitable distribution of these funds and streamline the process of obtaining approval. An electronic copy of this form accompanies this newsletter. Please be sure to save it on your desktop for convenience. The form will also be available soon on our website (see address below). To request funds for travel assistance, simply download, complete, and e-mail, mail, or fax the form to Janelle Malone ([janelle.malone@okstate.edu](mailto:janelle.malone@okstate.edu)) or Kefyalew Desta ([kefyalew.desta@okstate.edu](mailto:kefyalew.desta@okstate.edu)), Oklahoma State University, 368 Agriculture Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078. Our fax number is (405) 744-0354. The requests will be reviewed and we will respond as soon as possible.

OKSARE has limited funding and funding will be given on a first come first served basis.

--Kefy Desta

For information on the various programs administered by your Oklahoma SARE program, please visit our website at:

<http://dasnr8.dasnr.okstate.edu:8080/oksusag>

*To submit news and information for future issues of this quarterly newsletter, please contact me at:  
[janelle.malone@okstate.edu](mailto:janelle.malone@okstate.edu) or (405) 744-3669*

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