

F a r m e r / R a n c h e r G r a n t s



The farmer/rancher research grant program makes producers and producer groups residing in the Western U.S. eligible to compete for grants to identify, evaluate and test sustainable agriculture practices and challenges. These challenges may be in production, marketing, building community support for agriculture, or other topics of interest to local producers. The effort gives farmers and ranchers direct access to research and education funds authorized by the U.S. Congress to further the adoption of sustainable agriculture.

Grant proposals are reviewed and evaluated by a diverse group of producers, researchers, educators and administrators who are familiar with sustainable agriculture. Final selections are made by an appointed panel, at least half of which are producers. All funding is awarded competitively.

Grant reviewers look for potential projects that clearly define local sustainable agriculture problems or issues and propose innovative solutions. All research proposals must be led by one or more producers, include a professional agricultural technical advisor (an extension agent or university researcher, for example) and provide a plan for sharing gained information with others in the community.

Following is a list of farmer/rancher grants awarded in 2000, organized by state or territory. Note: the grants listed below with "MW..." project numbers were funded by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service after review by Western SARE technical panels. The balance of projects were funded solely by Western SARE.

For summaries of all projects funded in this category since 1995, go to www.sare.org, click on "Funded Projects" and use the search directions provided.

Producer grants are awarded annually. To get on the mailing list for a call for proposals, contact the Western SARE office at (435) 797-2257 or wsare@mendel.usu.edu. Past and current calls for proposals and other information is on the Western SARE Web site at <http://wsare.usu.edu/>.

ALASKA

Propagation of Alaskan Native Plants for Restoration and Landscape Use (FW00-050)

Producer: Mike Emers

Technical Advisor, contact: Michele Hebert

Phone: (907) 474-2423 / **E-mail:** ffmah@uaf.edu

Location: Ester, Alaska

Grant Award: \$5,000

Summary: Restoration of natural habitats and natural landscaping are important parts of nearly all natural resource development plans, road building projects, mine reclamation, or oil field restorations, creating a high demand for native plants materials capable of surviving in an Alaskan climate. For long-term productivity and sustainability, it is critical to include nitrogen-fixing legumes, which are very effective in colonizing barren areas with little site preparation and good success in survivability. Providing locally raised seed would reduce costs to restorers.

AMERICAN SAMOA**Expanding the Marketing Outlets of Local Traditional Vegetable and Fruit Crops in American Samoa (MW00-005)****Producer:** Malo Paleso'o**Technical Advisor, contact:** Larry S. Hirata**Phone:** (684) 699-1575 / **E-mail:** lhirata@rocketmail.com**Location:** Pago Pago, American Samoa**Grant Award:** \$4,935

Summary: Many local farmers could sell their farm produce not used at home for better prices if they sold directly to stores instead of selling directly at farmers' markets. They would save time by not doing their own selling and be paid by weight, not by random, non-weighed bundles or piles. Stores would benefit by having a steady supply of fresh, local produce. This proposal seeks to provide a link between producers and storeowners and to publish a marketing directory of participating retail stores, a local produce directory with names and addresses of farmers, and a market price publication for all participants.

ARIZONA**Development of a Fresh Produce Market at Gila River Indian Reservation (MW00-058)****Producer:** Mary Thomas, contact:**Phone:** (520) 836-2671 / **Fax:** (520) 315-3775**Location:** Sacaton, Arizona**Grant Award:** \$3,750

Summary: Gila River Farms, a Native American owned and operated collective, grows citrus, olives, melons, miscellaneous vegetables and alfalfa and would like to develop better direct marketing of these crops. A steel-framed building, matching existing structures at the nearby Gila Arts and Crafts Center, would house the Fresh Produce Market with bins of produce and gift-packaged fruit baskets. Produce from school gardens would also be sold.

Sustainable Shrimp Farm Tours & Direct Sales Project (MW00-138)**Producer:** Gary Wood**Technical Advisor, contact:** Trent Teegerstorm**Phone:** (520) 621-6245 / **E-mail:** tteegers@ag.arizona.edu**Location:** Gila Bend, Arizona**Grant Award:** \$5,800

Summary: Shrimp cultivation may be a potential alternative crop for Southwest Arizona. The project leader will improve the facilities of his shrimp farm so that public tours can be held on the farm without risk to the crop, and then develop a strong direct marketing system for shrimp that would capture more of the retail dollar for the producer. The project leader envisions creating a production and marketing operation that could be a model for other producers in the area. The project will demonstrate resource conservation and minimal chemical fertilizer use by using irrigation water to raise the shrimp, and then reusing the water coming from the shrimp ponds, which is rich in natural fertilizer, on other crops.

Navajo Corn Pollen, Young Ears of Corn for Kneel-Down-Bread, and Neeshjizhi Marketing (MW00-125)**Producer:** Teresa M. Showa**Technical Advisor, contact:** Gerald Moore**Phone:** (520) 871-7686 / **E-mail:** gmoore@ag.arizona.edu**Location:** Window Rock, Arizona**Grant Award:** \$9,615

Summary: With the aim of rejuvenating agriculture in this area, the producer will pursue building marketing niches for crops of Navajo small farmers, in particular: corn pollen, young ears of corn for kneel-down-bread and neeshjizhi (a form of dried steamed corn kernel). The project leader

hopes to increase farming activity among the Navajo people in a way that is also synch with their culture and history.

CALIFORNIA

Production of Strawberry Plants Using Sterile Soil Amendments (FW00-005)

Producer: Allen Albaugh

Technical Advisor, contact: Daniel B. Marcum

Phone: (530) 336-5784 / **E-mail:** dbmarcum@ucdavis.edu

Location: McArthur, California

Grant Award: \$5,000

Summary: Methyl bromide will probably be phased out as a soil fumigant for strawberry nursery production in 2005. Using a sterile growth medium, such as cogeneration ash or mint residue, byproducts of weed burning and peppermint distillation, respectively, is a possible alternative. This project will test these growth media on a 20-acre commercial strawberry operation in Fall River, comparing the presence or absence of *Phytophthora* after inoculation in mini-plots treated with various combinations of soil treated with methyl bromide, mint residue, cogen ash residue, and unfumigated soil.

Tracking Costs and Returns in a Transition to Grass-based Dairying (FW00-008)

Producer: Dean Martin

Technical Advisor, contact: Barbara Reed

Phone: (530) 865-1107 / **E-mail:** Bareed@ucdavis.edu

Location: Willows, California

Grant Award: \$1,139.40

Summary: An existing dairy will change its operation from one feeding silage/hay mixed ration with supplemental grazing to one with an intensive grazing management plan with minimal feeding of hay. Currently, only one-fourth of the pasture is used. Fifty acres will be divided into three pastures of 9, 15 and 30 acres each for the 100-head herd. Fencing, lanes, and water troughs will be added. The project hopes to demonstrate the sustainability of an intensively grazed dairy herd in a market of fluctuating milk prices and high off-farm feed costs to help ensure the success of this small family farm.

Soil Solarization for Weed and Disease Control in Specialty Crops (FW00-010)

Producers: Mike and Sandy Smith

Technical Advisor, contact: Richard Molinar

Phone: (559) 456-7555 / **E-mail:** rhmolinar@ucdavis.edu

Location: Fresno, California

Grant Award: \$4,975

Summary: This project aims to evaluate the use of solarization in both single and multiple beds compared to use of conventional herbicides for weed control for parsley, cilantro, and Swiss chard. This could provide an organic method of control, especially useful in crops like chard for which there is no legal registered herbicide. Bedded soil is solarized by covering it with tarps for four weeks in summer, or for multiple solarization, several such periods. Tarps are then removed, beds planted, and results of various treatments compared.

Water Use of Wine Grapes in Granitic Soils of the Fair Play Wine Region in the Sierra Foothills (FW00-021)

Producer: Brian Fitzpatrick

Technical Advisor (one of a technical advising team), contact: Jim Brockmeyer

Phone: (800) 228-9896

Location: Fair Play, California

Grant Award: \$10,000

Summary: This project seeks to gather field data to increase the efficiency of irrigating wine grapes in an area of limited water resources but deep granitic soils. Although grapes can be dry farmed

some years, in others it is not feasible. High costs of limited, pumped water mean careful water management is essential. Three vineyards will be evaluated to discover true water needs of young and older vines, the importance of slope, effect of cover crops, effectiveness of drip irrigation, and depth of moisture at different times. Probes will accumulate data for analysis.

Moving from Selling through Intermediaries to Direct Marketing Using Cause-related Marketing Strategy (FW00-080)

Producer: Maria Ines Catalan

Technical Advisor, contact: Luis Sierra

Phone: (831) 758-1469 / **E-mail:** rocfarm@mindspring.com

Location: Soledad, California

Grant Award: \$4,447

Summary: A group of Mexican immigrant organic farmers has not found selling through a large cooperative an effective selling mechanism as the organic industry grows and provides more competition. Instead they would like to find markets that allow them to sell directly to organic wholesale and retail markets, using brochures, labels, posters, and a Web page. They will appeal to the socially conscious consumer with the message that buying their vegetables, particularly alternative or noncommercial crops such as jicama, cactus, tomatillos, and Mexican corn, supports the efforts of small, organic farmers to achieve their dreams of becoming independent.

Test Marketing Pasture-produced Artisan Cheeses (MW00-010)

Producer: Tim Pedrozo

Technical Advisor, contact: Barbara Reed

Phone: (530) 865-1107 / **E-mail:** bareed@ucdavis.edu

Location: Orland, California

Grant Award: \$7,910

Summary: This is a feasibility study to examine the niche-market potential for handmade or artisan cheeses produced on pasture-based farms. Surveys would be made of wholesale cheese distributors, retail cheese buyers, and consumer focus groups, as well as initial produce development and testing and test marketing. It is hoped consumers will pay more for possibly healthier products made from milk of dairy animals grazed on open pastures, not confined, providing a more stable market than today's volatile milk pricing.

Good Humus Produce Farm to School Project (MW00-099)

Producer: Annie Main

Technical Advisor, contact: Desmond Jolly

Phone: (530) 752-8136 / **E-mail:** dajolly@ucdavis.edu

Location: Capay, California

Grant Award: \$5,300

Summary: The project will increase and diversify sources of farm revenue by creating a children's educational program with schools in Berkeley Unified School District in California. Educational farm visit programs for city children will be integrated into school curriculum to provide students and teachers with comprehensive and real-life knowledge of food systems, nutrition and sustainable agriculture. At the same time, it will offer a community-supported agriculture program to the school communities. The effort can build direct market business for a farm and also expand understanding of sustainable agriculture, creating a model for other farm to school links in the state and elsewhere.

COLORADO**Organic Soil Amendment Release Rates for Fertility in Apples (FW00-032)****Producer:** Steve Ela**Technical Advisor, contact:** Jessica Davis**Phone:** (970) 491-1913 / **E-mail:** jgdavis@lamar.colostate.edu**Location:** Hotchkiss, Colorado**Grant Award:** \$6,750

Summary: This project will compare chicken manure and composted chicken manure in their effectiveness as organic fertilizer sources for apple trees. Adequate fertilization could meet a critical need for the growth of the organic fruit industry in Western Colorado, yet over-fertilization could result in contamination of water with manure nutrients. This study is designed to indicate when nutrients become available and for how long. Three organic growers will participate, each with 100 acres of fruit trees, including mature Gala apple trees.

Residue Management in Furrow-Irrigated, Reduced-Tillage Systems (FW00-012)**Producer:** Randy L. Hines**Technical Advisor, contact:** Wayne Cooley**Phone:** (970) 249-3935**Location:** Delta, Colorado**Grant Award:** \$4,650

Summary: To reduce the amount of tillage while maintaining a cost-efficient practice, a tillage tool will be developed that will disc-bed corn stalks into a five-foot bed and simultaneously rip so every other 30-inch row can be irrigated. Three types of hybrid corn will be planted. Ideally this should result in less soil erosion from irrigation and wind than results when using a moldboard plow. Soil compaction, root development, and harvest results will be evaluated.

Building a Community-based, Direct Marketing Model for Diverse Ranch Enterprises (FW00-028)**Producer:** Jeremy Gingerich**Technical Advisor, contact:** Scott Cotton**Phone:** (719) 583-6566 / **E-mail:** scotton@coop.ext.colostate.edu**Location:** Colorado Springs, Colorado**Grant Award:** \$5,000

Summary: Studies will determine potential interest in a community marketing and conservation network in which city dwellers would be encouraged to help work on conservation projects, such as riparian restoration, and daily ranch activities as well as purchase ranch products. The current cattle ranching operation is on Chico Basin Ranch, an 87,000-acre property owned by the Colorado State Land Board, located 35 minutes from Colorado Springs and Pueblo and 1.5 hours from Denver. Future agricultural plans include raising organic produce and possibly alternative livestock such as goats and bison. Recreational activities would include camping, riding, drives, hunting, and fishing. Other local ranchers would be urged to copy this model, which would provide an education center for children, adults and other land managers.

Native Plants Nursery for Wetlands Restoration, Mitigation, and Endangered Species Habitat Restoration Projects (FW00-038)**Producer:** John Squire**Technical Advisor, contact:** Dan Lynn**Phone:** (970) 259-9277 / **E-mail:** dlynn@nracs.usda.gov**Location:** Durango, Colorado**Grant Award:** \$5,000

Summary: Cottonwood and willow trees will be propagated to establish a high-density native plants nursery. The seedlings will be available for restoration of wetlands, wildlife enhancement, stream bank stabilization and other riparian needs. High-density techniques combined with drip irrigation and use of solar-powered pumps will make this a more portable project to emulate.

Colorado Quality Lamb: Enhancing the Economic Viability of Local Producers through Direct Marketing to Food Service Establishments (FW00-074)**Producer:** David Myers**Technical Advisor, contact:** Ann Franklin**Phone:** (970) 824-9169 / **E-mail:** franklin@coop.ext.colostate.edu**Location:** Craig, Colorado**Grant Award:** \$5,000

Summary: This project aims to establish a direct market between a lamb producer and local restaurants to enhance the seller's income and provide a high-quality product for the restaurants. Current low lamb prices and lack of good markets require sheep ranchers to seek better markets. Restaurants would be able to request lambs of a certain weight, for example, smaller than usual for Greek restaurants, and could be assured of top quality meat. Structuring the local partnership may provide a useful model for producers across the country.

Custer County Ag Products Internet Marketing Project (MW00-077)**Producer:** Sara Hebbert**Technical Advisor, contact:** Dean Oatman**Phone:** (719) 783-2514 / **E-mail:** custer@coop.ext.colostate.edu**Location:** Westcliffe, Colorado**Grant Award:** \$2,160

Summary: An internet marketing project aims to counter combined pressures of a low cattle market, high commodity prices, and high real estate prices by facilitating sales of local livestock and hay. Instead of depending on local and satellite auctions, a Web site devoted to Custer County livestock and hay will promote visibility and help producers be positioned to develop new markets.

Carbondale Community Garden Cooperative (MW00-040)**Producer:** Wendy Anderson**Technical Advisor, contact:** Lulu Volkhausen**Phone:** (970) 963-6427 / **E-mail:** lulu@sopris.net**Location:** Carbondale, Colorado**Grant Award:** \$8,311

Summary: Several part-time vegetable gardeners aim to create a community garden enterprise in the Roaring Fork Valley, where rising land prices are squeezing out traditional agriculture. Local citizens could grow vegetables, develop a cooperative market to sell and trade their produce among themselves and to the community of Carbondale. Niche marketing would be encouraged to reduce competition. It will also provide educational benefits to participants, who would be given information on more sustainable agricultural approaches.

Paradox Valley Heirloom Foods and Native Seed Grow-out (MW00-129)**Producer:** Martha Ames Burgess**Technical Advisor, contact:** Suzanne Nelson (Arizona-based)**Phone:** (520) 881-4804 / **E-mail:** nss@azstarnet.com**Location:** Montrose County, Colorado (and Pima County, Arizona)**Grant Award:** \$9,997

Summary: This project will raise awareness of heirloom foods and crops grown traditionally (and organically) by Native people of the arid Southwest, and build a market for the products in both rural and urban areas. Crops include fresh market melons and vegetables as well as value added products such as salsa. The effort can help preserve traditional practices and genetic diversity of heirloom crops. It also promises to demonstrate the benefits of land stewardship through small-scale agriculture, both economic and environmental.

Uniting Small Producers to Serve a Unique Consumer Group (MW00-102)**Producer:** Paul Mailander**Technical Advisor, contact:** Don Nitchie**Phone:** (970) 345-2287**Location:** Holyoke, Colorado**Grant Award:** \$3,400

Summary: Farmers and ranchers from Northeast Colorado will work together on this project to initiate a community-supported, subscription-based agricultural business. The alternative marketing approach will be built on an existing urban-rural spiritual and social relationship, linking livestock and crop producers with a church congregation in urban Denver. The effort will build agricultural bonds between urban and rural citizens as well as increase access to farm fresh goods for city residents. It will also be a model for others in the region on how to expand markets through alternative production and business approaches.

GUAM**Adopting Health Programs and Improving Weaning Facilities in Management of Piglet Diarrhea (FW00-064)****Producer:** Ricardo Cruz**Technical Advisor, contact:** Manuel Duguies**Phone:** (761) 735-2088 / **E-mail:** mduguies@uog9.uog.edu**Location:** Barrigada, Guam**Grant Award:** \$7,085

Summary: Reducing uncontrolled diarrhea in piglets under a month of age can be achieved by first identifying the infectious agents causing the diarrhea and then by providing producers better information on methods of managing the infection as well as improving facilities. Knowing the correct medication and vaccines required for the specific pathogens involved should greatly improve veterinary care of the piglets and thus economic success of the pig farms.

HAWAII**Rejuvenation of a 60-year-old Lychee Orchard by Pruning and Fertilizing to Maximize Production (FW00-077)****Producer:** Elisabeth Ladoux**Technical Advisor, contact:** Mike Nagao**Phone:** (808) 974-4105 / **E-mail:** mnagao@hawaii.edu**Location:** Haiku, Maui, Hawaii**Grant Award:** \$4,000

Summary: Hawaii's mild climate allows lychee trees to grow very fast, but harvesting the tall trees is difficult and dangerous. The trees, even with pruning, quickly become overgrown and limbs break from the weight of the fruit, yet farmers are reluctant to prune heavily because they think the crop will be limited. Recent findings at the University of Hawaii indicate that the time of pruning and amount of nitrogen fertilizer applied to lychee trees during the vegetative and fruiting stages can greatly influence flowering and fruit production. This project hopes to demonstrate that very tall, old trees can be severely pruned and properly fertilized to produce a good crop the following season. This information should enhance lychee production locally and in Florida.

An On-farm Educational Approach to Directly Marketing "The Other White Meat" (MW00-135)**Producer:** Daphne McKeehan**Technical Advisor, contact:** Michael DuPonte**Phone:** (808) 959-9155**Location:** Honokaa, Hawaii**Grant Award:** \$9,900

Summary: Hog farmers in Hawaii are having a difficult time competing with the cost of pork

shipped to the Islands from large-scale, mainland pork producers. The project leader believes that if consumers are offered a choice to purchase top quality, fresh, locally-grown pork that is also raised with environmental considerations, they will do so. The farmer will implement a direct marketing effort to sell locally-raised, chilled pork cuts that are processed and packaged at a USDA-approved plant. Direct marketing methods for the local commodity will include specialized labeling that emphasizes the fresh and local features of the product, farm tours, educational outreach to the community and 4-H youth development, among other tactics. The results of the effort will be monitored and shared with pork raisers and local industry groups. The project could not only build profits for the farm but also encourage strong, local agricultural/economic activity in Hawaii.

IDAHO

Low Stress Stockmanship School for Lemhi County (FW00-052)

Producer: John Amonson

Technical Advisor, contact: Tim Westfall

Phone: (541) 770-2309 / **E-mail:** Tim_Westfall@or.blm.gov

Location: Lemhi, Idaho

Grant Award: \$5,450

Summary: A three-day seminar will be offered to teach livestock producers low stress livestock handling techniques applicable to grazing practices for cattle on foot and on horseback. A training video to be produced can be used alone or as a refresher for those attending the school. Ranchers will learn ways to meet water quality guidelines for riparian and upland grazing standards. Healthier uplands and more sustainable grazing systems will result, as well as healthier animals with better weight gains, high conception rates, and lower costs of operation. Relations between livestock producers using federal allotments and agency personal administering these allotments should also improve.

The Farm to Fork Exchange (MW00-059)

Producer: Nate Jones

Technical Advisor, contact: Jeff Rast

Phone: (208) 764-2332 / **E-mail:** jeffrast@micron.net

Location: King Hill, Idaho

Grant Award: \$4,625

Summary: The Farm to Fork Exchange is a promotional project for locally produced products. A Web site will feature local producers and their products, tailored to each farmer's marketing needs and informing consumers of farmers' markets, the local Community Supported Agriculture project and educational pages on sustainable farming methods. Ideally this, and a promotional brochure, will help maintain off-season contact between producers and consumers as root crops, grains, dried beans, preserves, and meat are added to the seasonal fruits and vegetables.

MONTANA

Establishing a Sustainable Program for Recycling and Propagation of Quality Flower Bulbs in a Wholesale Flower Production Operation (FW00-017)

Producers: Laura Smith and Robert Dunn

Technical Advisor, contact: Andrew Lenssen

Phone: (406) 994-7267 / **E-mail:** alenssen@montana.edu

Location: Bozeman, Montana

Grant Award: \$2,197

Summary: A small bulb grower seeks to reduce its dependence on foreign flower bulb suppliers by recycling these bulbs into an on-site, sustainable propagation rotation system. Besides greatly reducing costs of acquiring the bulbs, producing their own bulb stocks would provide increased control of inventory, better long term planning, more consistent supply, and increased quality control. Although demand for Dutch bulbs is high, supplies of many varieties fluctuate widely.

Southwest Montana's climate and soil are ideal for production of these bulbs. Urbanization of the area and consequent rises in land values are squeezing out conventional farming operations, but high cash value, alternative crops like bulbs may be economical.

Test Marketing of In-store Lamb Cooking and Recipe Demonstration (MW00-060)

Producer: Gayle Ott

Technical Advisor, contact: Tom Kaiserski

Phone: (406) 326-2187 / **E-mail:** bearred@wtp.net

Location: Reed Point, Montana

Grant Award: \$9,300

Summary: The Montana Natural Lamb Cooperative plans to carry out an in-store lamb cooking and recipe demonstration project in the Billings area. Up to 42 in-store demonstrations, 14 at each of three grocery stores, over ten months. The cooperative's four lamb producers hope to add value to their lambs through local finishing, processing and building a local customer base, and giving the potential customers a taste, they hope, will increase sales.

Better Board of Trade.com, an Organic Farming Web Site (MW00-082)

Producer: David N. Oien

Technical Advisor, contact: Marty Dues

Phone: (406) 278-5770 / **E-mail:** mdues@montana.edu

Location: Conrad, Montana

Grant Award: \$8,050

Summary: Better Board of Trade.com will be a Web site that allows organic, eco-label, and niche-market crop producers convenient and user-friendly market access. A stock "classified ads" software program will be customized to allow detailed listing of sustainably raised food, feed, and forage crops. This electronic trade board will permit farmers and ranchers to advertise their crops and products globally and help buyers find specific products. Although demand for these products is increasing, their availability needs a boost. Initially the project will focus on Western Region farmers and their products.

Montana Arnica Web Page (MW00-114)

Producer: Rod Daniel

Technical Advisor, contact: Allen Bjergo

Phone: (406) 961-4538

Location: Ravalli County, Montana

Grant Award: \$870

Summary: The project leader will expand his direct marketing of organic, medicinal herbs by creating and maintaining a Web page to increase sales. The methods and results of using e-commerce approaches will be documented, tracked and then shared with members of the Alternative Energy Resources Organization's (AERO) 500 farmer-members. One of the key outcomes of the project is to set up a marketing infrastructure within the community to increase the profits of sustainable agriculture operations in general.

TEAM: Team Effort in Agricultural Marketing for the McAlpine Ranch (MW00-088)

Producer: Clay McAlpine

Technical Advisor (one of a team), contact:

Stephanie Rittman

Phone: (406) 278-4053

E-mail: rittmann@montana.edu

Location: Valier, Montana

Grant Award: \$9,705

Summary: This project will use a business team to create, implement and monitor profitable direct marketing strategies for pasture-raised, grass-fed cattle and hogs. The key goal is to develop a strategy to directly market all of the pork and beef grown on the ranch to net \$30,000 profit for the ranch. The team's activities and outcomes will be shared with other Montana producers and cus-

tomers, and could become a business model for others considering “growing grass and harvesting the grass through animals.”

NEW MEXICO

Comparing Irrigation Methods for Organic Wheat Production in Taos County (FW00-099)

Producer: Lonnie Roybal

Technical Advisor, contact: Rey Torres

Phone: (505) 758-3982

Location: Costilla, New Mexico

Grant Award: \$10,000

Summary: Traditional ditch irrigation will be compared with center pivot irrigation for organic wheat production in the climate, soil, and costs unique to northern New Mexico. Stable and efficient production methods that are cost effective are needed by small farmers in rural villages of Taos County who have formed a cooperative. All have land and access to ditch water, and their farming practices will be recorded for careful comparison to a test plot irrigated by a center pivot system, which might prove to be much less labor and time intensive.

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Aquaculture and Fertigation Project (FW00-104)

Producer: Vincent M. Calvo

Technical Advisor, contact: Jim Currie

Phone: (670) 532-9470 / **E-mail:** wjcurrie@yahoo.com

Location: Rota, Northern Mariana Islands

Grant Award: \$5,000

Summary: This project will evaluate the feasibility of raising tilapia in two ponds for local sale and using the waste water to irrigate and fertilize taro, bananas, coconuts, and water cress. Tilapia, a popular food fish, is currently imported, as are commercial fertilizers, making both expensive. Fingerling tilapia are available for purchase from a government hatchery, and feeds can be purchased locally. Produce from the fertilized crops will be compared with similar local products not fertilized.

Veneta Cooperative Farm Stand (MW00-035)

Producer: Gwendolyn Ellen

Technical Advisor, contact: Garry Stephenson

Phone: (800) 365-0201 / **E-mail:** garry.stephenson@orst.edu

Location: Eugene, Oregon

Grant Award: \$5,063

Summary: This is a proposal to develop a weekly cooperative organic farm stand in Veneta, Oregon, a small, former logging town near Eugene. There is no farmers' market, and local markets and farm stands do not sell organic produce, although there are many small vegetable and fruit organic growers in the area. The one restaurant that serves organic produce will provide the site for the proposed stand to provide a direct marketing outlet which may grow to serving consumers more than once a week and perhaps eventually become a farmer's market.

Agri-tourism: Sustainable Agriculture with Cash and Information Flow (MW00-056)

Producer: Catherine and Tim Grant

Technical Advisor, contact: Garry Stephenson

Phone: (800) 365-0201 / **E-mail:** garry.stephenson@orst.edu

Location: Eddyville, Oregon

Grant Award: \$8,000

Summary: Several local farmers would like to promote agri-tourism to provide both cash and information necessary for sustainable agriculture. Organized locally, by state and region, tourists would be encouraged to visit farms, share ideas with farmers, work on their farms, and learn about farming. A network of available farm stays, tours, and market stands would be developed, maps

designed showing sites of tours in the Oregon coastal range, and a Web site developed along with a brochure and collective booklet for advertising. One goal is to educate urban visitors whose political votes and consumer behaviors greatly affect farmers' ability to continue with sustainable agricultural practices.

UTAH

Medusahead Control and Revegetation in Southern Cache County (FW00-019)

Producer: Guy Ray Pulsipher

Technical Advisor, contact: Steven A. Dewey

Phone: (435) 797-2256 / **E-mail:** steved@ext.usu.edu

Location: Micknell, Utah

Grant Award: \$4,835

Summary: Control of medusahead, an aggressive, introduced, noxious winter annual grass infests pastures and rangelands of the Pacific Northwest, reducing plant diversity and grazing capacity from 50 to 80 percent. Its unpalatable, thick thatch smothers all other vegetation. Rates and application techniques of various herbicides, burning, methods of reseeding various alternative grasses, and management approaches to encouraging the desirable grasses will be studied. Estimates of success will be made by visual comparison.

Southern Utah Forest Products Association Cooperative (SUFPA) Marketing Kit (FW00-054)

Producer: Brian Cottam

Technical Advisor, contact: Nanette Groves Anderson

Phone: (435) 425-3930 / **E-mail:** info@capitolreef.org

Location: Avon, Utah

Grant Award: \$6,414

Summary: Individual members and businesses of the SUFPA seek to market cooperatively their services and wood products of associated logging companies, saw mills, and wood craftsmen in hopes of countering Southern Utah's lack of a sustainable supply of timber and dwindling traditional markets. A kit and brochure to help identify and produce higher-value, locally-produced wood products has been developed, and the group now hopes to consult with co-op members to create product and price lists for publication to prospective buyers.

The Original Cache Junction Families Popped Wheat (MW00-117)

Producer: Wes Roundy

Technical Advisor, contact:

Penny Trinca

Phone: (435) 753-6029, ext. 30

Location: Cache Junction, Utah

Grant Award: \$2,801

Summary: The project leader and his family will conduct a marketing analysis of the potential, price and target customer base for their popped wheat product. If results are favorable, the Roundy's would likely become an early partner in a community certified kitchen to develop their added-value product and be a model for others considering such agricultural activities. The key goal is to help bridge the gap from raw commodity producer to value-added manufacturer (and perhaps direct retailer). If successful, the Roundy's will be a prime example of how farmers in this area can become food entrepreneurs.

WASHINGTON**Rotating Vessel Composter for Small Farms (FW00-022)****Producer:** Jack R. Caldicott**Technical Advisor, contact:** Curtis Beus**Phone:** (360) 417-2279**Location:** Sequim, Washington**Grant Award:** \$3,100

Summary: In-vessel composting using a continuously rotating drum should provide a low-input, rapid method of creating high quality, weed-free compost on the farm. Commercially available drums will be evaluated as well as other materials easily built at low cost. An elevated water supply will provide hydraulic power to rotate the drums, and recycling the water will make it an efficient system with little requirement for energy. The resulting compost will be tested chemically and by use in garden plots.

On-farm Biodiesel Production from Waste Vegetable Oil (FW00-014)**Producer:** Joseph Gabiou**Technical Advisor, contact:** Ken Rakoz**Phone:** (360) 736-9391, x 316 / **E-mail:** krakoz@centralia.cta.edu**Location:** Rochester, Washington**Grant Award:** \$1,805

Summary: A farm-scale biodiesel production system will be constructed to collect, heat and react waste vegetable oil from a restaurant fryer vat with methanol (synthetic alcohol) to create methyl esters, or biodiesel. The resulting product can be used in unmodified diesel tractors or truck engines. Although the technology is established, the intention of this project is to encourage farmers to use it to produce their own non-petroleum-based fuel, bringing them closer to ecological and economic sustainability. If the small biodiesel reactor vessel is accepted, a larger cooperative facility among neighboring farmers could be even more efficient.

Area-wide Orchard Pest Management Improvement Systems (FW00-023)**Producer:** Ron Andrews**Technical Advisor, contact:** Tonie Fitzgerald**Phone:** (509) 477-2164 / **E-mail:** tjfitz@wsu.edu**Location:** Mead, Washington**Grant Award:** \$5,500

Summary: The group hopes to develop a program to monitor common insect and disease problems, pinpoint susceptible control times, and disseminate that information to area orchardists so that pest management is practiced on an area-wide environmental monitoring basis. Knowing exact timings for pest and disease appearances increases pesticide efficacy and enables growers to use targeted sprays and more bio-rational products while still achieving desired results. Ideally, growers will obtain information needed to implement sustainable agricultural practices, particularly integrated pest management (IPM).

Alternative Crops No-till Field Trials (FW00-040)**Producer:** Ron Jirava**Technical Advisor, contact:** Bill Schillinger**Phone:** (509) 659-0355 / **E-mail:** schillw@wsu.edu**Location:** Ritzville, Washington**Grant Award:** \$5,000

Summary: In a traditionally winter wheat-growing area of eastern Washington, alternative no-till crops might help solve problems of severe wind and water erosion. Spring wheat and barley, while accepted, offer little as far as rotation, disease, and weed control. It is proposed to experiment with safflower, mustard, flax, triticale, and oats in this rather dry climate using no-till methods and evaluate the effects of these crops on root disease, soil moisture dynamics, and subsequent grain yield of winter wheat planted after them. It is hoped some feasible agronomic and economic alternatives to the traditional winter wheat/summer fallow system will emerge.

Demonstration Project to Promote Niche Farming in Heirloom Vegetable Varieties (FW00-041)**Producer:** Michael Seraphinoff**Technical Advisor, contact:** Carol Miles**Phone:** (360) 740-1295 / **E-mail:** milesc@agsyst.wsu.edu**Location:** Greenbank, Washington**Grant Award:** \$4,425

Summary: The project of the sustainable agriculture chapter group, South Whidbey Tilth, proposes to generate renewed interest in the cultivation, sale, consumption, and seed-saving of open-pollinated heirloom and other older traditional crop varieties grown under organic conditions. A sample garden will be planted near the group's farmers' market with interpretive signs to educate consumers. Records will be kept of germination rates, maturation dates, diseases, sizes, and productivity of various such varieties.

WYOMING**Pastured Poultry Production with Research on Sustainability of Grazing Lands (FW00-093)****Producer:** Joleen and Greg Marquardt**Technical Advisor, contact:** Philip A. Rosenlund**Phone:** (307) 633-4383**Location:** Pine Bluffs, Wyoming**Grant Award:** \$1,477

Summary: This family project seeks to establish the viability of raising fresh market chickens in portable pens on pasture. Although this system is used in the Eastern U.S., it has not been done in Wyoming. Optimum length of recuperation time for grazed patches will be evaluated. Supplemental feed will be provided as well. Target annual production is 5,000 chickens, purchasing chicks throughout the year, putting them in the pasturing pens at three weeks of age, and butchering 250 a week at eight weeks of age.

Internet Marketing of Organically Grown Wyoming Gourmet Garlic (MW00-078)**Producer:** Steve Shesler**Technical Advisor, contact:** Joyce Johnston**Phone:** (307) 754-8836 / **E-mail:** joycejohnston@hotmail.com**Location:** Powell, Wyoming**Grant Award:** \$3,930

Summary: An internet site will be developed to market organically grown Wyoming garlic. The Big Horn Basin in northwest Wyoming is remote and sparsely populated, meaning small local markets and high transportation costs to traditional markets. Marketing gourmet garlic on the Internet should expand the market area while encouraging remote, local producers. Even small shipments could increase sales measurably.