

# Women in Agriculture News

## Looking Back...2008 Regional Women in Ag Conference

Grain Marketing, Greenhouses and Hydroponics, Organic Production, Viticulture, Succession Planning, and Stress Management were just a few of the workshops that were attended during January's 2008 regional Women in Ag Conference in Dover, Delaware.

Over 150 participants attended the two-day event where Carolyn Cooksie, Deputy Administrator for Farm Loan Programs, Farm Service Agency, was the Keynote Speaker. In her remarks, Ms. Cooksie spoke about the importance of developing a professional relationship with an ag lender. Her presentation, entitled "What an Ag Lender Expects" outlined several key points on how to develop and maintain such a relationship, and thus, develop good ag business skills, too.

The first day ended with a candid talk from Linda MacDonald, an accomplished harness racing driver, trainer, and breeder. Ms. MacDonald described the

harness racing industry, her experience in the business, then opened the floor to questions. After the 30-minute session, conference participants enjoyed networking in the Diamond Room of Dover Downs, where they also watched harness racing. This proved to be an opportunity for the ag women to learn more about the actual sport, as Ms. MacDonald continued to answer questions and explain the details of harness racing.

The second day of the Conference was a half day. Several additional workshop sessions were offered. Dr. Sharon Yoder, of Make It Happen Keynotes and Workshops, presented an interactive general session to close the Conference. The upbeat session, "Why You Are As Great As You Are", encouraged the audience to reflect on what they are doing right in the midst of their busy lives. As quoted by one participant, "Ms. Yoder's presentation was an inspirational way to end the Conference!"

## Women in Ag Network Visits Pine Hill Farms for Chainsaw Workshop

Carolyn Palo and her mother, Viola Palo, of Pine Hill Farms in Newark, DE, hosted the Women in Ag Network last fall. They opened their farm to offer a "Safe Chainsaw Use" workshop. The workshop was taught by Margit Pruet, of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Participants learned the proper techniques for using a chainsaw to cut down trees, and to cut branches and fallen trees. In addition, Margit taught the safety procedures that should be used when handling a chainsaw. Participants were given several

opportunities to put the lessons to work. Despite the drenching rain that day, the Palos had a dry, well-ventilated shed where the workshop took place.

The Palos are Delaware's only shitake mushroom producers, and they grow hay and vegetables. They also raise Emus and offer a variety of Emu-based products for purchase. For more information about Pine Hill Farms, contact Carolyn Palo at [PineHillFarms@aol.com](mailto:PineHillFarms@aol.com).



Margit Pruet, of MD-DNR, instructing workshop participants.



Margit Pruet and Carolyn Palo.

## Sara Busker - National Women In Ag Conference Participant!

Oklahoma City, OK, April 1, 2008

Sara Busker, of Harrington, DE, recently participated in a four-woman Producer Panel at the National Women in Agriculture Educators Conference. The 2-day Conference attracted nearly 200 participants from across the U.S., Puerto Rico and Canada. The Producer Panel consisted of four ag women, one from each region of the country, with each panelist representing a specific role in her agribusiness. Sara is a college student at the University of Delaware who also has major responsibilities on her dairy farm. The panelists each responded to four questions. The questions centered around their education needs, for their farms and families, and how they could best be helped to mitigate risk. The audience, primarily Extension educators, found this particular session of the conference one of the best. They were open to hearing how they, as educators, could better meet the needs of women in agriculture, and they reported finding it enlightening and most helpful.



Producer Panelists, Sara Busker and Sue Broyles (Western region) during the 2008 National Women in Agriculture Educator's Conference.

## Destination Chile!

Thompson seedless grapes, nectarines, plums, cherries, etc. spell fresh fruit for the U.S. in the wintertime, imported in large part from Chile and delivered to the Port of Wilmington. With this in mind, a delegation of LEAD Delaware participants agreed to travel to Chile for an agricultural study tour. LEAD Delaware is a group of men and women involved in agriculture in Delaware, who are in potential leadership roles, and who have an interest in helping to keep agriculture viable in Delaware and the region. The LEAD Delaware class engages in educational activities which foster leadership development. The first LEAD Delaware class includes representatives from Farm Credit, Cooperative Extension, FSA, Dept. of Ag, and ag industry, as well as farmers. Three ag women - Colleen Kitzmiller, Robin Talley, and I (Laurie Wolinski) were among the group of thirteen.

The week-long tour in Chile was quite interesting and included learning about the many aspects of the Chilean export economy. We toured a peach canning facility, fresh fruit packing facilities, vineyards and orchards, and Chilean/USDA inspection facilities. Our day trips were all within a 2-hour drive of Santiago, the capital of Chile. We traveled during February, which was close to the end of their summer months - a bit like August here, but without the humidity!

**Continued on page 5.**

## WIA Network - Future Workshops

The Women In Ag (WIA) Network's second season of events is being planned. The WIA Network is in place to provide regional educational tours and workshops, in addition to the annual regional Women in Agriculture Conference. While participating in educational workshops, "ag women" have networking opportunities where they learn from each other. These events take place in various locations - in outdoor on-farm settings, as well as in traditional classroom and meeting settings. There is no membership fee. In order to be involved, simply attend a conference, workshop, tour or meeting. We welcome your participation.

The next WIA Network event scheduled is a **Lavender Farm Tour and Workshop. Lavender Fields**, in Milton, DE, will open their farm to the Women in Ag Network on June 25th from 1-3 pm. More information and a registration form is available on page 3. Directions to Lavender Fields are on page 4.

### Farm Bill Discussions

Plans are currently being made to hold educational meetings and forums in Delaware to discuss some of the changes, provisions, and implications of the Farm Bill. Dates and topics will be announced soon.

# Women in Ag Network

## Lavender Fields Farm

### Tour & Workshop

Milton, DE June 25th, 2008 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Tour - Workshop - Refreshments

Enjoy a tour of Lavender Fields, a 5-acre farm with over 2 acres of lavender. Following the tour, a workshop will be offered which will include a culinary experience - participants will make lavender sugar and receive some recipes for using it. As an added benefit, participants will be given a Lavender start plant to take home. There will also be time to browse and purchase products in the farm store.

The tour and workshop fee is \$3.00.

*This event will be limited to 25 participants.*

Lavender Fields was purchased by three friends - Mary Ann Etu, Sharon Harris, and Marie Mayor - about 6 years ago.

They grow several varieties of Lavender, for which they have found many uses. Farm tours are offered, as are demonstrations, luncheons and teas. In addition, Lavender Fields Farm is highly visible at several Farmers Markets in Sussex County. Their website is <http://www.lavenderfieldsde.com/>.



Please detach and return the registration from below.

### WIA Network - Lavender Fields Registration

Return Form to:

Laurie Wolinski

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
101 EDWARD R. WILSON HOUSE  
NEWARK, DE 19716-2131

Or by:

Fax: 302-338-8096  
E-mail: [Lgw@udel.edu](mailto:Lgw@udel.edu)

For more information,  
contact Laurie Wolinski at  
302-831-2538

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone - Home or Cell \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

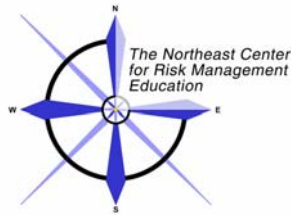
I have enclosed:  Cash \$3.00  Check \$3.00

**Please make checks payable to Lavender Fields.**

I have faxed or e-mailed my registration and will send fee separately.

---

The Women in Ag Network is sponsored by:



For more information contact: Laurie Wolinski at 302-831-2538.

*Laurie Wolinski*, Extension Associate, University of Delaware Cooperative Extension

---

**Directions to the Lavender Fields Tour in Milton, DE**

From the North:

Follow Rt. 1 South to Lewes. Turn right onto Rt. 9, and drive approximately 4 miles. Turn left onto Cool Springs Road, and drive for .8 miles. Turn right into Lavender Fields driveway - 18864 Cool Springs Road.

From the Laurel area:

Rt. 13 to Rt. 9. Take Rt. 9 through Georgetown, for about 8 miles to Cool Springs Road. Turn right onto Cool Springs Road and drive for about .8 miles. Turn right into Lavender Fields driveway - 18864 Cool Springs Road.

Please detach and return the back side of this bottom portion to register for WIA Network workshops.

---

## Chile....continued from page 2

Chile has a unique landscape, a Mediterranean climate, and benefits from being protected by natural borders - the Andes and the Coastal Range mountains on either side, and the Antarctic on its southern border. The country is more than 2,600 miles long (somewhere close to the distance between the east and west coasts of the U.S.).

The food sector is Chile's second source of revenue (mining is its first). Chile has recently been working hard to increase its international relationships to become an even larger food exporter - they seek to do this through innovation and adding value to their export products. Chile currently has trade agreements with over 50 countries.

We had an opportunity to walk through table grape vineyards (which truly looked ready-to-eat), sample local cuisine and fruit, and really get a first-hand look at the Chilean ag economy. Our experience was most positive. They were very happy to host us, and we were delighted to be there.

To bring our Chilean experience full circle, our class toured the Port of Wilmington upon returning. We learned more about the inspection systems in place and import requirements for a shipload of Chilean fruit.

Ed Kee, recently retired UD Vegetable Specialist, was our group leader, and made our tour arrangements through the Chilean Embassy. The Chilean Agriculture Ambassador and an interpreter traveled with us the entire week. We can't thank them enough for the kindness and generosity that we were shown.

If you would like to know more about LEAD Delaware, please contact Tom Ilvento at 302-831-6773, or one of the members of the first class: Robin Talley, Laurie Wolinski, Colleen Kitzmiller, Marty Desmond, Brandon Bonk, Cory Whaley, Dave Marvel, Todd Davis, Denny Wilson, Steve McCarron, Jim McCabe, and Will Carlisle.



LEAD Delaware at Vina la Rosa with the Ossa family and winemakers.

## 2009 Regional Women in Ag Conference

**January 22-23, 2009** - Dover Downs Hotel and Conference Center in Dover, Delaware.

<http://ag.udel.edu/extension/kent/womeninag.htm>

We want to be sure that you are getting the most out of your conference experience, so please, if you have a *suggestion for a new workshop*, send an e-mail message to Laurie Wolinski at [Igw@udel.edu](mailto:Igw@udel.edu).

## Annie's Project

Annie's project is a Women in Ag program designed to empower farm women to manage information systems used in critical decision-making processes and to build local networks throughout the state. The target audience is farm women with a passion for business and involvement in the farm operation.

Project topics cover the five areas of Risk Management – Production, Market, Financial, Legal, and Human Resource risk.

The University of Maryland Cooperative Extension offered this 8-session course last winter and has plans to offer it again next winter. Nineteen women finished and graduated in the first class. Look for more information about this popular course that is being offered throughout the country.

The website is: <http://www.anniesproject.umd.edu/>

For more information, please contact Jenny Rhodes at the University of Maryland - Queen Anne's County Extension office at 410-758-0166 or Shannon Dill at the Talbot County Extension Office at 410-822-1244 or Laurie Wolinski at the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension at 320-831-2538.

**"Kind hearts are the gardens;  
kind thoughts are the roots;  
kind words are the flowers;  
kind deeds are the fruits."**

- English Proverb

DEPARTMENT OF FOOD &  
RESOURCE ECONOMICS  
213 TOWNSEND HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
NEWARK, DE 19716-2130

