

# Women in Agriculture News

## Looking back at the 2007 Women in Agriculture Conference

Over 100 women were in attendance at the 2007 Regional Women in Agriculture Conference in Dover, Delaware. Thank you for taking the time to complete the conference and workshop surveys. Overall, the evaluations indicated the conference was excellent.

Our featured speakers emphasized heritage and legacy. Mark Manno, of the U of DE Cooperative Extension, demonstrated ways to easily research ancestry during his keynote address, and after lunch Sara Busker, an Ag Education major at the U of DE, emphasized the value of women in her life who have paved the way for her and for others, so that she can

look forward to a fulfilling career, and to the future of agriculture.

Our hope is that you are applying the information you took home from the conference to the operation of your agribusiness this year. For example, you could be utilizing new grain marketing strategies in your marketing plan, trying new ways to market your farm fresh products, making plans to construct a high tunnel or plant fruit trees. Or perhaps you're considering planting grape vines. Have you made strides in creating balance in your life, or in attending to your personal health?

*(conference photos on page 5)*

## Featured Farm

### Lavender Fields

When one day you find out your favorite lavender farm has been sold, and then another day, you find the same farm is for sale again, and everything falls into place to buy it, what do you call it? Luck? Timing? That is what happened for three long-time friends - Sharon Harris, Marie Mayor, and Mary Ann Etu - hence the creation of Lavender Fields.

Mary Ann Etu and Marie Mayor are both retired Cooperative Extension Home Economists, (although Marie continues to work part-time off the farm) and Sharon Harris is a retired attorney. Retirement, however, is far from reality now for all three "women in ag". Their five acre Milton farm, including about two acres of lavender, keeps them plenty busy. About five years ago, when they bought the farm, they saw something very different from what visitors will see now; their creative vision transformed their farm into its present beauty. They improved a less than manicured plot of land into luscious lavender and everlasting gardens that are vibrant and fragrant today. Among the separate English and French Lavender gardens are about 1500 plants of 37 varieties in several colors, including white, lavender, purple, mauve, and blue.

At Lavender Fields customers are welcome to cut bouquets of the sweet smelling herb, walk a lavender encircled labyrinth, or attend demonstrations to learn about the many uses of lavender as an edible herb or in soaps, oils and potpourri (just to name a few).

Demonstrations are scheduled regularly and are typically given in the restored 19<sup>th</sup> century barn. At Lavender Fields you will also find a lovely cottage store that features products made from the farm-grown lavender, as well as products from many local artisans whose crafts feature lavender.

Lavender Fields offers a beautiful setting for luncheons and teas. Although they do not prepare the meals themselves, the owners work closely with local caterers who use the farm's lavender to create themed events. For example, on Mother's Day, they offered a Literary Tea.

*continued on page 5...*



## Women in Ag Network

Thank you for the positive response to a Women in Ag Network! It is time to kick-off the WIA Network events!

The WIA Network will provide an avenue for regional educational tours and workshops in addition to the annual regional Women in Agriculture Conference. Through participating, “ag women” will have networking opportunities to learn from each other. These events will take place in various locations - in outdoor on-farm settings, as well as in traditional classroom settings.

## The first Women in Ag Network event:

### *Vineyard and Winery Tour*

**Tuesday July 10th, 11:00 a.m.**

*Please see registration information on page 3.*

## Tentative upcoming outdoor WIA Network events:

Safe Chainsaw Use & Maintenance

Pasture Walk

Greenhouse and/or High Tunnel Tour

## Farm Succession

Many Delaware farmers are faced with the pressure of considering estate planning and/or how to transfer their farm to the next generation. Farm families who have a “next generation” to take over the family farm, often find estate planning or the intergenerational transfer of the farm process to be a daunting task. Issues they may face include: selling to development vs. preserving/farming the land; division of labor and decision-making responsibilities among generations; division of the estate; or parent’s retirement security; and ultimately, communicating about these issues.

A survey, which I conducted, was mailed to farm families early this spring, and in many cases, more than one survey was mailed to each family. We wanted to

gain a perspective from several generations. The survey was administered and reported on in a manner that protected the confidentiality of all responses.

The intent of the survey was two-fold; to learn if and how farm families were working through the farm transfer process, and/or to help families initiate the process. The summarized survey results were shared during the March 2007 “Intergenerational Transfer of the Farm Workshops”, offered by Cooperative Extension. Some of the survey results are below. The workshops addressed a variety of topics including family communication, estate planning, goal setting, protecting assets, and insurance.

If you did not receive or complete a survey, and would like to, please let me know and I’ll be happy send one to you. (Lgw@udel.edu)

### Pre-Workshop Survey Results

Which generation completed the survey?	58% of time, parents completed the survey, as opposed to other generations
Do you have a vision for your family’s farm?	84% answered “yes”
Do others share that vision?	56% answered “yes”
What one wish do you have for your family farm?	Most frequent answers: Farmland/Open Space, Pass on to children, Profitability (written-in responses)
What worries you most about your family’s and your farm’s future?	Most frequent answers: Development, Cash flow, Regulation (written-in responses)
Who makes <b>routine</b> decisions?	Parents - 62% of time, Children - 14% of time
Who makes <b>major</b> decisions?	Parents - 76% of time, Children - 15% of time
What communication challenges do you face?	Most frequent responses: Addressing difficult decisions, Discussing finances, Different expectations
Do you have a transition plan?	41% answered “yes”
What is keeping you from beginning a transition plan?	Most frequent responses: Time, Money, Knowledge (written responses)
When will plan be shared with On-farm and Off-farm relatives?	Most frequent responses: On-farm - while plan is being developed; Off-farm - upon owner’s death
Do you have a will?	79% answered “yes”

## Women in Ag Network Vineyard and Winery Tour

Join us, as we tour two winegrape production farms in Sudlersville, Queen Anne’s County, Maryland.

First stop - **Golden Run Vineyard**, the home of Jennie and Hans Schmidt. Four years ago, Schmidt Farms Inc., diversified their farming operation by adding winegrapes. We will tour an 8 acre winegrape vineyard of both new plantings and productive vines. Vines are both vinifera and hybrid. Jennie Schmidt will explain the reasons for choosing these particular varieties, the overall management of their vineyard operation, the challenges they have faced, and their future goals for this component of their operation.

**Tilmon’s Island Winery**, our 2nd stop, is just a couple of miles from the Schmidt farm. We will tour the Tilmon Island Winery, and see how a boutique winery can be an efficient, productive and enjoyable operation. Their small vineyard, planted in 2003, produces a small quantity of the grapes used for Tilmon Island Wine. The winery also makes and bottles a variety of red, white and dessert wine using purchased grapes, grown from within the region. A tasting room is available for sampling wine.

**Registration** is required. Please register by July 3rd. There is a \$5.00 *refundable* registration fee. You will receive the \$5.00 refund at the end of the tour.

**Travel arrangements** to the farms must be made on your own. Consider carpooling! In addition, we are asking each participant to please bring a brown bag lunch and a lawn chair. Soda, water and snacks will be provided.

**Time:** The vineyard tour at the Schmidt farm will begin at 11:00 a.m. We will have a brown bag lunch together, before caravanning to the Tilmon Island Winery.

**Directions** to both Golden Run Vineyard at the Schmidt Farm and Tilmon Island Winery are on page 4.

**For more information**, contact Laurie Wolinski: Lgw@udel.edu or 302-831-2538

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Please detach and return the registration from below.

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### WIA Network Vineyard and Winery Tour

Return Form to:

Laurie Wolinski

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

Or by:

Fax: 302-338-8096  
E-mail: Lgw@udel.edu

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

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

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

\$5.00 Refundable registration fee enclosed.

\$5.00 Refundable registration was mailed on \_\_\_\_\_

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## Directions to Golden Run Vineyard & Tilmon Island

To Golden Run Vineyard on Sudlersville Cemetery Road:

**Traveling from Route 301** - Take Route 300 East toward Sudlersville. Go straight through the light in town. As you leave town you will pass a cemetery on your left. Turn left immediately after the cemetery. This is Sudlersville Cemetery Road. The vineyard is at the first farm on your left.

**Traveling From Route 300/Delaware** - Follow 300 across the MD state line. Before you enter the town of Sudlersville, turn right onto Sudlersville Cemetery Road. (If you go past the cemetery and into town, you have gone too far.) The vineyard is the first farm on your left.

If you have any trouble with these directions, please call Jennie's Schmidt's cell phone: 410-739-7782.

Tilmon Island Winery is located at 755 Millington Road. Directions to the winery will be provided at the end of the Golden Run Vineyard tour.

The Women in Ag Network is sponsored by:



We'd like to extend a special thanks to Golden Run Vineyard and to Tilmon Island Winery for hosting our first Women in Ag Network tour.

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Please return the back side of this bottom portion to register for the WIA network tour!

## Planning the 2008 Regional Women in Ag Conference

**It's not too early to mark your calendars!** The 2008 Women in Ag Conference is being planned for **Thursday and Friday, January 24-25, 2008** at Dover Downs Hotel in Dover, Delaware.

## Farmers Market Opportunities

Delaware State University's Small Farm Program is offering space at its First Annual Farmers Market. The market will be located in Dover at the DSU Administration Building Parking Lot. For more information about securing a space to sell your products, please call Nancy Wagner at 302-857-7392

Delaware Department of Agriculture has helped establish several farmers markets throughout the state. Visit the DDA web page (below) to find a market near you and for information on vendor space.

[http://dda.delaware.gov/marketing/DE\\_FRMVENS.shtml](http://dda.delaware.gov/marketing/DE_FRMVENS.shtml)

## "Inch by inch, row by row"

Recently I heard my son humming a song that the students at his school were learning. He was surprised to know that I was familiar with the "Garden Song" as well. Coincidentally, I had just made a music CD for one of my daughters and had included the very same song on her CD. I am familiar with the Pete Seeger and Arlo Guthrie version of the "Garden Song". The words and music were written by David Mallet. I find this song to be quite apropos for this of year, probably much in line with the thoughts of my son's teacher.

The first verse -

"Inch by inch, row by row,  
Gonna make this garden grow.  
Gonna mulch it deep and low,  
Gonna make it fertile ground.  
Inch by inch, row by row,  
Please bless these seeds I sow.  
Please keep them safe below  
'Til the rain comes tumbling down."

If you have ideas for women in agriculture network tours or workshops, please send them to me! E-mail: [Lgw@udel.edu](mailto:Lgw@udel.edu)

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

## Photos taken at the 2007 WIA Conference



Sara Busker, luncheon speaker, proudly wearing her FFA jacket, much like the one her grandfather wore during his school days.



Carol Giesecke, of Delaware State University, holds a bouquet of "Veggie" balloons during her workshop on the topic of using nutrition as a marketing tool. The balloons were purchased from [yummydesigns.com](http://yummydesigns.com).

## Lavender Fields cont.

Other popular events include group luncheons, bridal showers, card parties, and girls' night out gatherings. The cozy, refurbished barn can accommodate groups of about 40 persons. The historic farmhouse is currently being transformed into a beautiful Victorian House, to be used as formal and casual event space.



Lavender Fields is open Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and anytime by appointment (call 302-684-1514). They are located on Cool Spring Road in Milton, DE. To find them on the web, please visit

<http://www.defunonthefarm.org/home/>

Scroll down, and click on "list of agritourism operations". You'll find Lavender Fields listed alphabetically.

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