

FANREP AWARDS PROGRAM 2009

1. **AWARD NAME:** SARE Educational Scholarship

2. **NOMINEE:** Robert A. Kluson
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3. DESCRIPTION OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM:

Agroforestry is a whole farm management of trees for a variety of goals relevant to natural resources extension. For example, agroforestry techniques can increase natural resource conservation and habitat for biodiversity, as well as sustainable crop production, on the farm level. Agroforestry also provides management strategies for buffer areas that can contribute to ecological restoration projects and natural resource conservation on the landscape level.

To this end, the following conference has been identified that would provide excellent training for strengthening my extension program in agroforestry:

a) Conference: 11th North American Agroforestry Conference
Date: May 31 - June 3, 2009
Location: University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry, Columbia, MO

4. JUSTIFICATION:

My natural resources extension includes education programs to farmers and ranchers about how agroforestry-based management can diversify their agroecosystems for economic and environmental benefits that promote their sustainability. Such programs exemplify my efforts to implement SARE's vision of an enduring American agriculture whose production is profitable, protects the nation's land and water, and sustains their communities and society.

For example, recently I coordinated and participated in a workshop on "Tree-Based Alternative Enterprises" in partnership with the FL DOF Forest Stewardship Program and UF/IFAS Forestry Extension (see first attachment). At this workshop I presented on the production systems of alley cropping and forest farming (see second attachment) which are examples of agroforestry. In addition, this workshop included presentations on silvopastoral agroforestry systems and new programs such as carbon credits and wildlife habitat-based agriculture classification tax reduction. The attendance at this workshop exceeded our expectations and demonstrated the growing interest of regional landowners for ideas that will sustain local agriculture at all scales.

An important project of my extension program is the “Sustainable Agriculture Training Center”. It is a partnership with the Crowley Museum and Nature Center of Sarasota County to provide hands-on technical training in various alternative enterprises in agriculture. Presently a demonstration organic Muscatine vineyard has been initiated in partnership with the FAMU Viticulture Program and the UF/IFAS Small Farms & Alternative Enterprise Program. This project also demonstrates the intercropping of winter vegetables and FL wildflower seed production in between the trellised grape plants. This management strategy is based on agroforestry principles that promote benefits such as enhanced biodiversity for natural crop pest control and greater nutrient cycling, as well as intensive land use, for sustainable crop production. In the future this project will demonstrate the alley cropping of fruit trees for similar benefits. This program exemplifies my efforts in striving to accomplish SARE’s mission to advance innovations that improve profitability, stewardship and quality of life by investing in groundbreaking research and education such as agroforestry.

Finally I would like to describe my extension programming in policy education project about the environmental benefits of sustainable agriculture. For example, since 2005 I have coordinated the Sarasota County Agriculture Policy Council. An important achievement of this project is the adoption by the Sarasota County Board of County Commissioners of new agricultural policies in the county Comprehensive Plan based on sustainable agriculture. Specifically, in the Environment Chapter, policy 4.7.9 promotes wildlife habitat enhancement on agriculture lands to support adjacent county biodiversity conservation efforts (see <http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu/AG/agpolicy.shtml>). Agroforestry offers science-based strategies to producers that are profitable and effective for the adoption and implementation of this policy in order to demonstrate the potential of sustainable agriculture to accomplish these policy goals.

5. INTENDED APPLICATION:

I want to take this opportunity to describe how the SARE Education Scholarship would provide me training and information that I will immediately apply in my existing natural resources extension programs.

For example, due to the success of our workshop on “Tree-Based Alternative Enterprises” there are planned follow-up workshops to the attendees. The information from this conference would allow me to provide more technical training of agroforestry techniques to them. In addition, I spoke on fruit tree alley cropping to the SW FL Small Farmers Network (see <http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu/AG/swfsfn.shtml>) which is also interested in similar follow-up presentations. At my Sustainable Agriculture Training Center project I am interested in applying this information to setup more demonstrations of value-added products in the onsite agroforestry systems in order to document

their increased profitability. Documentation of the economic benefits, as well as the impact of a hands-on demonstration, will increase the adoption rate of agroforestry management and sustainability of my county's rural community. Finally, I will work with the managers of the Sarasota County environmental lands programs and private agriculture producers who adopt agroforestry practices to become partners in biodiversity monitoring in order to document to the county the implementation of policy goals with sustainable agriculture.

6. SUPPORTNG DOCUMENTATON:

The 11th North American Agroforestry Conference offers an agenda of sessions and fieldtrips on numerous topics that are relevant to my training needs in agroforestry (see <http://www.centerforagroforestry.org/events/afta/index.asp>). For example, these topics include agroforestry extension and decision support; quantifying environmental impacts on biodiversity and wildlife; role in organic production systems; policy and adoption; and application on the landscape level. In addition, this conference will provide an excellent setting to me for networking with practitioners and researchers in the discipline of agroforestry.

7. SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF ONLINE SARE NATIONAL CONTINUNING EDUCATION PROGRAM IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICUTURE:

YES – 100% achievement level.