



Action in Agroforestry

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Michael Gold and
Savannah Kannberg, editors

First-Ever Agroforestry Academy Quite a Success

by michael gold
associate director, center for agroforestry

The inaugural “Agroforestry Academy” attracted an outstanding group of twenty-six diverse and enthusiastic educators (trainees) drawn from a seven state (MO, IA, IL, NE, MN, WI, PA) region. The trainees gathered in Columbia, Mo. for the week of August 5-9, 2013 for an intensive crash course in agroforestry. Post-academy evaluations were quite positive: 71% rated the academy excellent, 29% good.

The long-term goal of the Agroforestry Academy is to help realize widespread adoption of agroforestry in the U.S. The specific objective of the Agroforestry Academy is to create a regional “agroforestry knowledge network”. To create this network, we need to train a core group of individuals who deal with land management issues and/or interact with farmers and landowners. We also need to facilitate collaboration among researchers, extension personnel and practitioners from diverse disciplines, departments and colleges, and with different agencies and organizations.

Trainers from Missouri (MU, Lincoln University, Missouri Valley College, MO NRCS), Nebraska

(UNL and the National Agroforestry Center), Iowa (ISU), Minnesota (UMN), Washington D.C. and Virginia (Va. Tech) provided the detailed agroforestry expertise. Active learning exchanges between trainees and trainers occurred throughout the weeklong training program.

The first two days of the Academy included a wide array of classroom presentations on both the biophysical and socioeconomic aspects of agroforestry practices. In addition, there were presentations to assist landowners in developing financial budgets and marketing specialty crops.

Days three and four consisted of visits to practitioners’ farms with established agroforestry sites (Shepherd Farms, Eridu Farms, Busby Farm at Lincoln University, Horticulture and Agroforestry Research Center at MU) along with a “hands-on case study” farm visit with a landowner whose farm does not currently incorporate agroforestry practices.

The academy concluded on day five with an agroforestry planning and design case study



Photo/Ina Cernusca

Dan Shepherd of Shepherd Farms gives academy trainees a tour of his 200 acre pecan orchard in Clifton Hills, Mo.

exercise which summed up all the knowledge and experience from the week. The exercise (with small group presentations and follow up discussions) facilitated experience in the implementation of agroforestry design and encouraged collaborative learning community efforts. The planning process helped participants envision how agroforestry practices can be successfully integrated on farms.

Throughout the week there were presentations from a number of Missouri-based agroforestry

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practitioners (Pecan: Dan Shepherd of Shepherd Farms; Log-grown shiitake mushrooms: Nicola MacPherson of Ozark Forest Mushrooms; Elderberry: Terry Durham of Eridu Farms). All presentations and discussions from the first two days were recorded and will be made available on the Center for Agroforestry website to reach a wider audience and will also be available for later use.

The inaugural Agroforestry Academy is the result of a NCR-SARE PDP (the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, North Central Region, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, Professional Development Program) grant awarded to the University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry in concert with the Mid-American Agroforestry Working Group (MAAWG) containing primarily Midwestern U.S. agroforestry experts from Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Additional support for the Agroforestry Academy came from numerous north central region state SARE programs and the USDA National Agroforestry Center.

New Publications (available soon on the UMCA website)

Michael Gold, Mihaela Cernusca, and Michelle Hall. 2013. Handbook for Agroforestry Planning & Design. UMCA and USDA NCR-SARE. 80 pp.

Michael Gold, Mihaela Cernusca, and Michelle Hall (eds). Training Manual for Applied Agroforestry Practices – 2013 Edition. UMCA and NCR-SARE. 245 pp.

Goodbye, Ina Cernusca

After 11 years working with UMCA, Mihaela “Ina” Cernusca has moved to Fargo, N.D. where her husband, Dan Cernusca, has taken a job at the University of North Dakota. Ina earned her MBA in marketing from the University of Missouri and while still working on her MBA, she began to work with Larry Godsey and Mike Gold in the area of market research for specialty crops.

Immediately after completion of her MBA Ina was hired to join the Center’s marketing research team. As part of the marketing team she conducted market and consumer research on alternative crops (e.g., log-grown shiitake mushrooms, chestnuts and elderberry) and provided market information and

support to landowners seeking to establish agroforestry practices.

However, in addition to her extensive market and consumer research efforts, Ina was a central figure in the overall functioning of the Center. Ina was involved in all Center outreach activities including annual efforts to market and sell chestnuts and pawpaws in the local Columbia Farmers Market. She was involved in almost every facet of the Center. Ina is irreplaceable, a one of a kind human being, loved by all and will be sorely missed. We take some consolation in the knowledge that Ina will continue to collaborate with her UMCA colleagues in the coming years. Thank goodness for that.

Goodbye, Katie; Hello, Savannah



Savannah Kannberg

After spending a semester as the Communications Intern here at the Center, Katie Moritz is heading to Alaska where she accepted a job as a reporter for the Juneau Empire!

The Center for Agroforestry hired Savannah Kannberg, a junior Journalism major and Art minor at MU, as the new intern starting this month. Savannah likes bagels, cats and newspapers. She can be reached at savannahkannberg@gmail.com or by visiting her at the Center.

Upcoming Events

September 19 — Fall Field Day — Forrest Keeling Nursery, Elsberry, Mo.

October 5 — HARC Field Day — New Franklin, Mo.

October 12 — Great River Road Chestnut Roast — Forrest Keeling Nursery, Elsberry, Mo.