



Sustainable Agriculture

Course Schedule

Last updated on: 3/3/03

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| | Date | Topic | Readings | |
|-----|----------|--|---|--|
| L/D | F 3 Jan | Introductions, course preface | | |
| L | M 6 Jan | Course Models, brief history of agriculture in Midwest and demographics, farming is a "system", growing a crop | Wendell Berry. 'The unsettling of America,' Chapter 1 <i>in</i> The Art of the Common Place. John Hart. 'The seedbed,' 'The second seedbed,' 'The heart of the heartland,' and 'Twice a day for the rest of your life.' Chapters 1, 6, 8, and 9 <i>in</i> The Land That Feeds Us. | |
| D | W 8 Jan | Philosophy of Sustainable Agriculture | Wendell Berry. 'The ecological crisis as a crisis of character,' 'The ecological crisis as a crisis of agriculture,' and 'The agricultural crisis as a crisis of culture.' Chapters 2-4 <i>in</i> The Unsettling of America. Jan Wojcik. 'The nature of agriculture' and 'The principles of agriculture.' Chapters 1-2 <i>in</i> The Arguments of Agriculture. | |
| S | F 10 Jan | Speaker – Steve Schwen | Wendell Berry. "The whole horse," <i>in</i> Fatal Harvest. Gene Logsdon. 'The importance of traditional farming practices.' Chapter 1 <i>in</i> Meeting the Expectations of the Land, edited by Jackson, Berry, and Coleman. Donald Worster. 'Good farming and the public good.' Chapter 3 <i>in</i> Meeting the Expectations of the Land. Gary Snyder. 'Good, wild, sacred.' Chapter 16 <i>in</i> Meeting the Expectations of the Land. | |
| L | M 13 Jan | Basics of Techniques - agroecosystems, plant and crop biology, breeding and domestication of crops | Gliessman, S. Chapters 1-3 <i>in</i> Agroecology: Ecological Processes in Sustainable Agriculture. Jackson, Wes. "Farming in nature's image," <i>in</i> Fatal Harvest. | |
| L | W 15 | Basics of Techniques - soil | Leopold, Aldo. 'Odyssey' <i>in</i> A Sand County Almanac. Jenny, Hans. 'The making and unmaking of fertile soil.' Chapter 4 <i>in</i> Meeting the Expectations of the Land, edited by Jackson, Berry, and Coleman. Nyle C. Brady and Ray R. Weil. Chapters 1 and 12 <i>in</i> The Nature and Properties of Soils. | |
| S | F 17 Jan | Speaker – Keith Schrader | Magdoff, Fred and Harold van Es. Chapters 8-11 (pages 63-108) <i>in</i> Building Soils for Better Crops, 2 nd ed. | |
| L | M 20Jan | Basics of Techniques - soil fertility, crop rotation | McKenney, Jason. "Artificial fertility: the environmental costs of industrialized fertilizers," <i>in</i> Fatal Harvest. Magdoff, Fred and Harold van Es. Chapters 16-18 (pages 147-175) <i>in</i> Building Soils for Better Crops, 2 nd ed. | |
| L | W 22 | Basics of Techniques - weeds and pests | Kroese, Ron. "Industrial agriculture's war against nature," <i>in</i> Fatal Harvest. Moore, Monica. "Hidden dimensions of damage: pesticides and health," <i>in</i> Fatal Harvest. | |
| L | F 24 Jan | Basics of Techniques - weeds and pests continued | George Bird, Tom Edens, Frank Drummond, and Eleanor Groden. 'Design of pest management systems for sustainable agriculture.' Chapter 3 <i>in</i> Sustainable Agriculture in Temperate Zones, edited by Francis, Flora, and King. | |

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| D | M 27 Jan | Case study on cucurbits: weed and pest control | | |
| L | W 29 | Basics of Techniques - Draught, tillage, erosion Essay #1 due by 4:00 p.m. in my mailbox | Nyle C. Brady and Ray R. Weil. Chapter 17 in <i>The Nature and Properties of Soils</i> . | |
| | | | Karl Schwenke. 'Farm practices' and 'Analysis of corn as a cash crop' (pp. 53-56) in <i>Successful Small-Scale Farming: an Organic Approach</i> . (Note that field or dent corn is usually considered to be a feed crop, whereas sweet corn is considered a vegetable.) | |
| | | | Warshall, Peter. "Tilth and technology: the industrial redesign of our nation's soils," in <i>Fatal Harvest</i> . | |
| S | F 31 Jan | Speaker – Farmer/soil conservationist Paul Kalass of the Goodhue County Soil and Water Conservation District | Charles Little. 'Tillage revolution', 'A different kind of farmer', 'The saga of the moldboard plow', 'A handful of earth.' Chapters 1, 2, 3, and Appendix I in <i>Green Fields Forever: The Conservation Tillage Revolution in America</i> . | F |
| D | M 3 Feb | Agricultural Ethics | Patricia Allen, and Carolyn Sachs. 'Sustainable agriculture in the United States: engagements, silences, and possibilities for transformation.' Pages 139-168 in <i>Food for the Future: Conditions and Contradictions of Sustainability</i> , edited by Patricia Allen. | F |
| | | | Joe Paddock, Nancy Paddock, and Carol Bly. 'Grounding: A feminist view of agriculture.' Chapter 11 in <i>Soil and Survival</i> . | F |
| | | | Jack Kloppenburg, John Hendrickson, and G. W. Stevenson. 1996 'Coming in to the foodshed.' <i>Agriculture and Human Values</i> 13:33-42 | F |
| | | | Berry, Wendell. "Christianity and the survival of creation," in <i>The Art of the Common Place</i> . | |
| L | W 5 Feb | Agroecosystems and natural ecosystems: ecosystem health and biodiversity | Badgley, Catherine. "Can agriculture and biodiversity coexist," in <i>Fatal Harvest</i> . | |
| | | | Imhoff, Daniel. "Farming with the wild: a conservation approach to agriculture," in <i>Fatal Harvest</i> . | |
| | | | Ingram, Mrill, Stephen Buchmann, and Gary Nabhan. "Our forgotten pollinators: protecting the birds and the bees," in <i>Fatal Harvest</i> . | |
| | | | Tucker, Kelley. "Wildlife health," in <i>Fatal Harvest</i> . | |
| S | F 7 Feb | Speaker – Farmer Diane Milan Mid-term exam due today by 4:00 p.m. in my mailbox | | |
| | M 10 | No class – Mid-term Break | | |
| L | W 12 | Science of Biotechnology (recombinant DNA technology) | Mendelson, Joseph. "Untested, unlabeled, and you're eating it: the health and environmental hazards of genetically engineered food," in <i>Fatal Harvest</i> . | |
| D | F 14 Feb | Ethics of Biotechnology (case study or class debate) Project proposal due | Crouch, M. L. 1995. Biotechnology is not compatible with sustainable agriculture. <i>Journal of agricultural & environmental ethics</i> . 8:98-111. | F |
| | | | Mannion, A. M. 1998. Can biotechnology contribute to sustainable agriculture? <i>Journal of Sustainable Agriculture</i> 11:51-75 | F |
| | | | Trewavas, A. 2001. Much food, many problems. <i>Nature</i> 402:231-232. | F |

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| L | M 17 | Farm Policy | Berry, Wendell. "A big bad idea," <i>in Fatal Harvest</i> . | |
| | | | Cochrane, Willard C. and C. Ford Runge. 1992. "A concise history of the commodity program," "How the commodity programs work," "and "The 'other' programs." Chapters 3-5 <i>in Reforming Farm Policy: Toward a National Agenda</i> . | F |
| | | | Levins, Richard. "Why Don't We Have Sustainable Agriculture Now?" | F Only |
| | | | Rossmiller, George E. "Six Problems that affect Ag Policy" <i>Choices Magazine, First Quarter 1992, pp 14-17</i> . | F |
| S | W 19 | Speaker - Loni Kemp , who specializes in farm policy at the Minnesota Project . Conservation and the Federal Farm Program | The June 2002 issue of "The Whole Farm Planner," a newsletter of the Minnesota project. | F |
| | | | Also useful is the October 2002 issue of the Whole Farm Planner . | F |
| D | F 21 Feb | Policy, Family farms | Wendell Berry. 'A defense of the family farm,' chapter 27 <i>in Is there a Moral Obligation to Save the Family Farm?</i> , edited by Gary Comstock. | F |
| | | | Michael Boehlje. 'Costs and Benefits of Family Farming.' Chapter 28 <i>in Is there a Moral Obligation to Save the Family Farm?</i> | F |
| | | | Gregg Easterbrook. 'Making sense of agriculture: a revisionist look at farm policy.' <i>The Atlantic</i> , July 1985, pp 63-78. (also replies to Easterbrook by several people and a retort by Easterbrook) | F |
| S | M 24 | Speaker – John Ikerd – farm policy, economics | Ikerd, John. 2003. "Rethinking American Farm Policy," a paper presented at the National Farmers Convention, Rochester, MN. January 23, 2003. | F only |
| | | | Also – John's website has many other of his papers available | |
| S | M 24 | Speaker – John Ikerd – Public talk, 7:30 pm, Boliou Auditorium | Ikerd, John. 2002. "Why Farming is Important to America," a paper presented at the North Dakota Farmers' Union State Convention, Bismarck, ND. December 13, 2002. | F only |
| D | W 26 | The "Green revolution", Organic vs Industrial farming:feeding the world | Barker, Debi. "Globalization and industrial agriculture," <i>in Fatal Harvest</i> . | |
| | | | Iltis, Hugh. "The impossible race," <i>in Fatal Harvest</i> . | |
| | | | Rossett, Peter. 2002. "Taking seriously the claim that genetic engineering could end hunger: a critical analysis," <i>in Engineering the Farm</i> , edited by Britt Bailey and Marc Lappé. | |
| | F 28 Feb | No Class | Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference in Wisconsin http://www.mosesorganic.org/umofc/umofc.htm | |
| S | M 3 Mar | Speaker – Farmer Patty Wright Regionalsim vs nat'l/global market, Urban/farm connection Essay #2 due by 4:00 p.m. in my mailbox | Berry, Wendell. "The idea of a local economy," <i>in The Art of the Common Place</i> . | |
| | | | McFadden, Steven S. H. 1990. Part II (pages 43-95) <i>in Farms of Tomorrow: Community Supported Farms, Farm Supported Communities</i> 1990, by Trauger Groh and Steven McFadden. | F |
| | | | Norberg-Hodge, Helena. "Global monoculture: the worldwide destruction of diversity," <i>in Fatal Harvest</i> . | |
| | | | Spector, Rebecca. "Fully integrated food systems: regaining connections between farmers and consumers," <i>in Fatal Harvest</i> . | |
| | | | Fisher, Andrew. "Community food security: a promising alternative to the global food system," <i>in Fatal Harvest</i> . | |

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| S | W 5 Mar | Speaker - Organic Farmer Carmen Fernholz Essay #1 rewrite due by 4:00 pm in my mailbox | Hightower, Jim. "Uncle Ben: goin' organic just like we used to," <i>in</i> Fatal Harvest. | |
| | | | Sligh, Michael. "Organics at the crossroads: the past and future of the organic movement," <i>in</i> Fatal Harvest. | |
| | F 7 Mar | Poster Session | | |
| D | M 10 | Class wrap-up – Case study | Berry, Wendell. "Hope," <i>in</i> Fatal Harvest. | |
| | | | Berry, Wendell. "The pleasures of eating," <i>in</i> The Art of the Common Place. | |
| | | | Waters, Alice. "The ethics of eating: why environmentalism starts at the breakfast table," <i>in</i> Fatal Harvest. | |
| | | No Final Exam | | |

Notes: 'L' = lecture; 'D' = discussion; 'S' = speaker

All assigned readings are available on reserve in the Library. Readings with an 'F' next to them are also available on Fabio.