Sponsorship Opportunity

Growing the Farmer-to-Farmer Network

Featuring Michael Ableman

The Sustainable Farming Association’s 22nd Annual Conference

The Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota has more than 22 years of experience in creating solutions to contemporary farming challenges, exploring agricultural innovations, and providing a forum for people committed to sustainable agriculture. This summit offers an unprecedented opportunity for Minnesota’s rural and urban farmers – and other proponents of sustainable farming principles and practices – to come together to explore ways to farm profitably, build a sustainability community, and advance mutual goals of land stewardship.

Author-Farmer-Activist Michael Ableman will give the keynote and help lead the initiative to launch the new Twin Cities Urban Ag Alliance. Other presenters will include:

- Dr. Mark Seeley, University of Minnesota professor, climatologist, meteorologist
- Dr. Marla Spivak, McKnight Distinguished Professor, Dept. of Entomology, University of Minnesota
- Atina Diffley, Minnesota farmer, consultant, author of Turn Here, Sweet Corn
- Mary Jane Miller, Minnesota chef, author, educator, gardener
- Seed Savers Exchange (Decorah, Iowa)
- Farm to Consumer Foundation (Cincinnati, Ohio)

The Symposium will feature:

- Culinary workshops
- Local wine, beer, and cheese tastings
- Leadership breakfast
- Urban land update
- Urban soil mitigation
- Economically successful case studies
- Food justice discussions
- Graziers workshop
- Public policy workshop
- Social media and marketing
- Micro-processing and value-added product development
- High-tunnel best practices and case studies
- Specialty crops
- Seed-Saving Swap
- Cucurbit Squash Session
- Growing Wine Grapes
ABOUT MICHAEL ABLEMAN

MICHAEL ABLEMAN is the founder and executive director emeritus of the Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens, a non-profit organization based on one of the oldest and most diverse organic farms in southern California, where he farmed from 1981 to 2001. At its peak the farm served as an important community and education center and a national model for small scale and urban agriculture, hosting as many as 5,000 people per year for tours, classes, festivals, and apprenticeships. Under Ableman's leadership the farm was saved from development and preserved under one of the earliest and most unique active agricultural conservation easements of its type in the country.

Ableman has started food gardens at the Santa Barbara AIDS Hospice, an 11-acre farm at the Midland School, and a market garden at the Jordan Downs housing project in Watts. His work as an educator and consultant has helped to inspire dozens of projects and initiatives throughout North America and the Caribbean.

In 1984 Ableman traveled to mainland China where he observed the remnants of a traditional system of agriculture that had sustained people and the land for thousands of years. This experience inspired him to travel around the world documenting other cultures culminating in the internationally acclaimed publication, From the Good Earth: A Celebration of Growing Food Around the World (Abrams, 1993). Called "hopeful and inspiring" by the LA Times and "a compelling photographic essay" by the NY Times, From The Good Earth was one of the first books to visually document the dramatic changes taking place in food and agriculture worldwide. The book has become a timeless classic that challenges everyone to participate: in the marketplace, in our kitchens, and in our own backyards.

Ableman's second book, On Good Land: The Autobiography of an Urban Farm (Chronicle Books, 1998), is the emblematic story of his fight to preserve a piece of what was once some of the richest farmland in the world, and a paean to the sweet obsession of growing food. The Philadelphia Inquirer stated, "If Henry David Thoreau had been a farmer, he would have written a book very much like Michael Ableman's On Good Land." The book, graced with Ableman's lush photographs, argues articulately for farmland preservation and provides a blueprint for a farm that thrives in cooperation with its surrounding community.

Ableman's photographs also have appeared in publications throughout the world and in solo exhibitions at the Oakland Museum, the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, and the Field Museum in Chicago. Ableman has lectured extensively throughout the U.S. and in Europe. His work has been covered in National Geographic, on National Public Radio's All Things Considered, in the Utne Reader, Gourmet Magazine, and the L.A. Times. An award-winning film about Ableman's work, Beyond Organic, narrated by Meryl Streep, aired nationally on PBS in 2001.

Ableman has received numerous awards including the 2001 "Sustie" Award for his work in sustainable agriculture, Eating Well magazine’s 1995 Food Hero Award, and the 1997 Environmental Leadership Award from the governor of the state of California. His third book "Fields of Plenty: A farmer's journey in search of real food and the people who grow it," was released in the fall of 2005. Ableman is currently farming on an island in British Columbia with his wife and two sons.
Symposium Goal
To facilitate communication and discussion among participants – in particular rural and urban farmers – to advance mutual goals of land stewardship through sustainable and profitable practices.

Who Will Attend
- Farmers and landowners
- Chefs
- Graziers
- CSA farmers and customers
- Meat farmers and customers
- Sustainable farming
- Others interested in developing a strong, dynamic farmer-to-farmer network

Conference Method/Strategy
- Keynote address by author-farmer-activist Michael Ableman, setting the stage for a discussion on ways to improve sustainable farming practices while maintaining financially sustainable farming enterprises
- Personal stories, anecdotes, and case studies indicating that sustainable farming is a viable proposition
- Best practices and advice from experts
- Discussion, feedback, networking

Arboretum Public Policy Symposia
This symposium, following in the footsteps of two successful conferences in the fall of 2012, is the first to address the topic of sustainable farming and agriculture; like its predecessors, it is a partnership between the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum’s Education Department and local and regional institutions. The Education Department hosts annual nature-related conferences that address the need for all citizens to gather and share ideas to make collective progress toward improving the health of humans and the health of the planet.
Sponsorship Opportunities – 2012-2013

Platinum Sponsor $15,000
- Exclusive sponsorship of symposium; no other sponsor will be invited to participate at this level
- Five (5) two-day event passes
- Invitation to meet/greet keynote speakers
- Top placement of logo will appear on all electronic and mailed invitations totaling thousands to industry groups and public officials
- Top placement of logo on conference program reaching 225-400 attendees
- Top placement of logo on Arboretum conference website (with a link to your website)
- Top placement of logo on signage at event, including podium
- Table/display opportunity for entire conference: premier location and two tables
- Mention in media release
- Mention in Arboretum annual report

Gold Sponsor $10,000
- Three (3) two-day event passes
- Invitation to meet/greet keynote speakers
- Placement of logo will appear on all electronic and mailed invitations totaling thousands to industry groups and public officials
- Placement of logo on conference program reaching between 225-400 attendees
- Placement of logo on Arboretum conference website (with a link to your website)
- Placement of logo on signage at event
- Table/display opportunity for entire conference: premier location and two tables
- Mention in media release
- Mention in Arboretum annual report

Silver Sponsor $5,000
- Two (2) two-day event passes
- Logo will appear on all electronic and mailed invitations totaling thousands to industry groups and public officials
- Logo on conference program
- Logo on Arboretum conference website (with a link to your website)
- Logo on signage at event
- Table/display opportunity for entire conference
- Mention in Arboretum annual report

Bronze Sponsor $1,500
- One (1) two-day event pass
- Mention as a donor on invitation and on conference program
- Mention as a donor on Arboretum conference website (with a link to your website)
- Mention in Arboretum annual report
- One 6-foot table for display in Summit Exhibit Hall

Exhibit Hall Vendor $300
- One (1) two-day event pass and boxed lunch for Friday and Saturday
- One 6-foot table for display in Summit Exhibit Hall

For more information please contact:
BEVERLY ANGLUM, 952-443-1407, anglum001@umn.edu