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Leodrey Williams

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Morehouse Black Farmers' Field Day Huge Success

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Morehouse Black Farmers and Landowners Association, Incorporated, in collaboration with Southern University and LSU Ag Centers, held the 12th Annual Field Day, July 19, 2013. The event included presentations and tours of row crop farms. Participants visited the farms of Harper Armstrong and others. Mr. Armstrong is the President of the Morehouse Farmers Black and Associa-Landowners tion and 2013 Louisiana Farmer of the Year.

The event began in the 80s when a team of extension agents brought a group of SU professors to tour the fields of some of the African American row crop farmers in Morehouse Parish. It has grown into an annual event which occurs on the 4th Friday in July, starting at Mr. Armstrong's shop, and ending with lunch prepared by Mrs. Armstrong and others.

Farmers presently come from all parts of the South to attend the Field Day.

In attendance were farmers, landowners, organizing entities, personnel from USDA State Offices, and administrators from the SU and LSU Ag Centers.

This year, Representative Katrina R. Jackson, District 16, Monroe, member of the Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture and Rural Development Committee, was in attendance to show support.

The Morehouse Black Farmers have made a big impact on the local African American farmers by strengthening their relationships with USDA. agricultural companies such as FMC Corporation, Dupont, Terral Seed, Pioneer, and Syngenta and, Monsanto. Most importantly, through this event, farmers have built relationships with other African American farmers across the South.

Louisiana row crop farmers have challenges with marketing, droughts, floods, weeds, and labor. A major concern of the Morehouse Black Farmers is the continuation of row crop farmers in the next generation.



Top: Chancellor Williams addresses attendees.

Below: Tent sessions, field tours and demonstrations.

To watch a video titled "All in the Family," a Louisiana Farm Bureau event coverage, visit http://www.lfbf.org/

For further details, call the SU/LSU Ag Center at (318) 281-5741 for Odis Hill, Extension Assistant Area Agent.

Agricultural Leadership Institute Holds Productive Boot Camp

Cession 5 of the Louisiana Small Farmer Agricultural Leadership Institute Boot Camp was held on Saturday, July 27th in Pride, LA. The theme for this session was: "Building a Sustainable Business: The Real Farm Experience." All the participants had the opportunity to visit two working farms in the area. The first farm was SnS Farm in Pride, LA. The SnS farm is unique in that it uses very little machinery and almost everything is done by hand. The owners, Shannon Simpson and his wife Rintha, (a member of the leadership boot camp), were very excited to share their knowledge with the group and offered a tour of the farm in spite of the bad weather. This farm sits on 15 acres and is home to goats, Zebu cows and chicks for egg production. The farm is truly an experiment in progress. The Simpsons use a quasi-intensive grazing system for their animals and plan to transition the cows to be used as oxen, and goats to be used as pack animals. They even bale their hav by hand, a practice that most of the other farmers were very interested in.

The second farm was the Robert Wallace, Jr. Family Farm, in the community of Chaneyville, on Port Hudson Pride Road, just outside of Zachary. This farm is a small cow / calf operation, which uses quality registered bulls to insure quality calves. Mr. Wallace has participated in various NRCS programs and made many improvements on his farm, which is currently being transitioned into a demonstration farm. Mr. Wallace is also a graduate of Class IV of the Small Farmer Agricultural Leadership Institute. Mr. Sam Willis, District Conservationist, USDA/NRCS, explained the conservation practices that are in place on the Wallace Farm and what other producers can do to enroll in the conservation programs.

Despite the inclement weather, the farmers in attendance were eager to learn all they could about this small family operated farm.

"I am shocked by the level of commitment and interest that all of the farmers have shown at this and all of the other sessions. They are really eager to see what other small farmers are doing and willing to share what works with their operations," said Dawn Mellion-Patin, PhD, Agricultural Specialist/project director.



The Simpsons baling hay by hand



Rintha Simpson explains operation

E-Learning Center Participates in Educational Ag Day

St. Helena Ag Field Day was held on June 10, 2013 in St. Helena Parish Park, Greensburg, LA. The event was organized by LSU and SU Ag Centers, Save Rural America and the USDA Office in Amite, LA. More than 100 youth and adults were in attendance and toured various farms on buses.

First stop on the tour route was LSU Research Station in Franklinton, La. The Southeast Research Station has been devoted to serving the people of Louisiana for more than 50 years. It is committed to the advancement of dairy farming and forage production, while promoting good land stewardship throughout Louisiana. A team of specialists generates research and extension information in a range of disciplines; particularly forage quality, dairy nutrition, wastewater treatment and nutrient management.

The tour continued to Mr. Warner Hall's garden where watermelons, green onions, red beans and many other healthy produce bloom. The next stop was Mr. Quincy Walker's Farm in Tangipahoa Parish. Youth and adults were permitted to harvest potatoes and squash to bring home. The group also visited Johnson Roping Pen in Amite, where Mr. Richard Johnson gave youth horseback rides and tour of the ranch.

The event consisted of nutrition information, tours of the LSU AgCenter Southeast Research Station in Franklinton, La., two home gardens, and horse ranch.

The SU Ag Center's E-Learning Center, a mobile unit in the Center for Rural and Small Business Development (CRSBD) made a presentation to event participants. Eual Hall, business development specialist, and LaKeeshia Giddens, e-Learning Director, discussed the procedures of how to start a small business. Individuals who visited the E-Learning Center received one-on-one counseling from the presenters. Package distributed included CRSBD and E-Learning Center brochures; the SBA Business Resource Magazine: information on the USDA's Rural Housing Loan and Grant Program; USDA Elderly Home Repair Program; registration forms and applications needed to legally operate a business; information on borrowing and lending; marketing information; and business cards for Hall and Giddens.



Cow with port in stomach



Tour of Warner Hall's garden

Pictured above: The cow has a port (hole) in its stomach. Researchers at the Southeast Research Station in Franklinton use the fluid from her stomach to conduct experiments.

SU & LSU Ag Centers Collaborate With Madison on C.H.E.F. Camp

he Southern University and Louisiana State University Ag Centers alongside Madison Parish School District sponsored a CHEF Camp held at Tallulah High School for 24 young girls. C.H.E.F. is an abbreviation for Creating Healthy & Enjoyable Food. The two-week camp was led by Sarah Sims, Extension Aide in the parish, who divided the girls into age appropriate groups for ease of teaching. The camp provided basic cooking principles and nutrition education to youth as stipulated by the USDA's food guide - MyPlate. Sims reported that she stressed the principle of going from the field to the table, healthy food preparation, and food safety to camp participants. Besides creating a meal daily, the girls devel-

oped a brunch menu for invited guests during the camp period. They had an opportunity to experience shopping for fresh ingredients in the grocery store as well as picking from the Godfrey Garden for their menu. The goal of the CHEF Camp was to teach youth healthy lifestyles through basic nutrition, food safety, and food selection and preparation skills which they can take back and share with family members. "The camp teaches other skills such as critical thinking, planning, time management, and team-building, in addition to cooking," Sims said. "Many thanks go to Lisa Wilmore, Madison Schools Superintendent, and her staff for allowing us to use the lab at the High School."

The event was covered by *First Publication* on July 4, 2013. For further details, contact Sarah Sims at 318-574-2465.



Chefs in action

BOLD Program Holds Class Completion Ceremony

The Southern University Ag Center launched a series of classes for Faith-Based Leaders in New Roads, Pointe Coupee Parish, through its Building Opportunities Leadership Development (BOLD) program. Classes were held every Saturday for six weeks, with the goal of enhancing and strengthening faithbased leaders to better equip them in serving their institutions and communities.

On June 29, the BOLD for Faith-Based leaders held its completion ceremony in New Roads, for seven participants who successfully completed the class curriculum.

The classes were taught by Dana D. Isaac, Grant Assistant.



L-r: J. Davis, M. Celestine, I. Nelson, A. Nelson, S. Nelson, and D. Isaac

BOLD is a statewide grassroots leadership development project under the direction of Dr. Kenyetta Nelson-Smith, assistant specialist for community and economic development. BOLD for Faith-Based Leaders is an extension of the BOLD project, focused solely on faith-based institutions, ultimately benefitting individuals and families in the faith communities that participants lead.

For more information on how to have this class offered in your community, please contact Ms. Dana Isaac at:

dana_isaac@suagcenter.com or 225-771-3902.

SU Ag Center Launches Garden at New Light Missionary Baptist Church

outhern University Ag Center's extension associate for community garden, Stephanie Elwood is responsible for the vegetable garden at the New Light Missionary Baptist Church, which was created May 2013 to provide physical activity and fresh produce for seniors. This area of north Baton Rouge is considered a food desert. The USDA defines food deserts as urban neighborhoods and rural towns without ready access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food. The lack of access contributes to a poor diet and can lead to higher levels of obesity and other diet-related diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease. Gardens help bring relief to food deserts. The SU Ag Center, by creating gardens in the community, is contributing to the improvement of the quality of life of local residents. Elwood worked with the seniors to establish the garden on church grounds in the Scotlandville area. The church is located at 650 Blount Road, Baton Rouge; Rev. Gil H. Wright, Pastor.

Elwood delivered three types of vegetable seeds (tomatoes, cucumbers, and squash) for the church garden and worked diligently with members to establish a raised bed for planting.

"The garden provides the seniors in the church opportunities to exercise and eat healthy, she stated.

The senior citizens meet daily from 9 am-2pm; part of this time is spent nurturing the garden, which is complete with ornamental sunflowers and citrus trees. Ms. Mable Franklin is the director of the Senior Citizen Program at the church, assisted by Riley Underwood.

"We are so excited about the garden; the deacons encourage us, and we have a wonderful time. It's fun, fun, fun," said Franklin. "The folks at Southern are very cooperative and supportive, and we are looking forward to the fall garden with all the greens." The garden is producing cumbers in abundance for making salads, sharing and even selling some to local residents.







FACULTY AND STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Chin Publishes in International Magazine



Kit Chin, professor, horticulture,

has published an article in an international magazine - *International Innovation*. His research article on the health implication of hibiscus is on page 50-52. *International Innovation* is the leading global dissemination resource for the wider scientific, technology and research communities, dedicated to disseminating the latest science, research and technological innovations on a

global level. More information and a complimentary subscription offer to the publication can be found at: http://www.international-innovation-northamerica.com. Congratulations!

Bridget Udoh, project director, Andra Johnson and Oscar Udoh conducted a follow-up meeting with communications project participants in St. Helena Parish on July 2. The meeting convened at 7:00 pm in Greensburg on Hwy 10. Topics of discussion included the review of follow-up surveys, future workshop topics of interest, date/time, and venue. There were 18 producers in attendance. The team also discussed the various resources available at SU Ag Center to assist producers. The retiring extension agent in St. Helena Parish, Rev. John Holiday assisted in organizing the meeting.



St. Landry meeting in session

Also on July 12, the project team met with participants in St. Landry Parish with meeting convening at 6:30 pm in the SCRI building. Topics of discussion included the review of follow-up surveys, upcoming workshop topics of inter-

est, date/time, and venue. Farmers were informed of the redesigned SUAREC website and the Mobile Farmers Market in Baton Rouge for interested individuals to take advantage of the new developments. There was a big push for use of social media which is lacking among producers, except for one young participant. There were ten producers in attendees at the meeting, including one new participant, and project team members Bridget Udoh, Allison Johnson and Oscar Udoh. Aubrev Williams, extension agent in the parish assisted with organizing the meeting.

Patricia Lee, Assistant Area Agent, DeSoto and Caddo Parishes, worked with youth to create a garden at the "We Care Daycare Center" in June, 2013, and by July 31, all plants yielded fruits. The potted vegetable garden blossoms with bell peppers, hot peppers, and patio tomatoes, which are producing abundant fruits. "At present time, the plants are

loaded," Lee said. The youth tend the garden with loving care.

For additional information, call the Caddo Office at (318) 872-0533.

Pictured right are youth nurturing the garden at the Center.





August 17: Louisiana Ranchers & Growers Annual Meeting. For further details, contact Dawn Mellion-Patin at 225-771-3532.

August 24: Louisiana Small Farmer Ag Leadership Institute Closing Ceremony. For further details, contact Dawn Mellion-Patin at 225-771-3532.

September 12, Back-to-School Summit at the Blackham Coliseum, 2330 Johnston Street, Lafayette For further details, please contact Wanda Burke at 225-771-5184 or (337) 943-2410; via email at wan-da_burke@suagcenter.com