



November 2009

FROM THE DIRECTOR: It is with great pleasure that I announce the Dennis Keeney Distinguished Lecture on November 12 by Gene Turner from Louisiana State University. Trained as a wetland ecologist and an oceanographer, Turner is one of the nation's leading experts on the farm-to-Mississippi impact in the Gulf of Mexico called the "dead zone." Please join us for a reception at 7 p.m. followed by the lecture beginning at 8 p.m. in the Sun Room of the ISU Memorial Union in Ames. Hope to see you there! – *Jerry DeWitt*

SPENCER AWARD: Francis and Susan Thicke, owners and operators of Radiance Dairy, are recipients of the 2009 Spencer Award for Sustainable Agriculture. They will receive the award on December 5 during the Iowa Organic Conference. Their commitment to resource conservation, successful grazing management, and economically profitable dairy production led to their selection for one of Iowa's largest awards in sustainable agriculture. View a photo gallery: www.leopold.iastate.edu/gallery/Radiance_Dairy/index.html or read about them: www.leopold.iastate.edu/pubs/nwl/2009/2009-3-leoletter/thicke.html

EVERY FAMILY NEEDS A FARMER: U.S. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Kathleen Merrigan launched what she said will be a nationwide tour of college campuses when she spoke at Iowa State University recently and encouraged students to become farmers. She explained the USDA's new "Know Your Farmer Know Your Food" initiative and USDA funds available for local and regional food system development. Learn more about her visit and listen to a podcast at: www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/newsreleases/2009/102309_Merrigan.html View YouTube videos, blogs, find other resources about the new initiative at: www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer

FARM-TO-ISU RESEARCH: Got an idea for a research project? The Iowa State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is looking for proposals that pair researchers with farmers as part of the ISU-Practical Farmers of Iowa On-Farm Research and Demonstration Grant Program. A total of \$25,000 will be awarded for 2010 projects. Details about the grant process here: www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/newsreleases/2009/103009_onfarm.html

ENERGY GRANTS: Three Iowa farmers are receiving \$5,000 grants from a new Leopold Center-supported effort, the Iowa Farm Energy Working Group. The University of Northern Iowa Center for Energy and Environmental Education facilitates the group that targets energy efficiency and renewable energy on the farm. Find out who is getting the grants at: www.leopold.iastate.edu/news/newsreleases/2009/110209_energy.html

TELLING THE STORY: Registration is now open for a one-day forum to help farmers, educators and others do a better job of telling the story of conservation. "A Culture of Conservation: The Tools We Need to Grow" will be Wednesday, January 13, at the Gateway Conference Center in Ames. The workshop is hosted by the Leopold Center, Iowa Learning Farm and Iowa Water Center. Register at: www.leopold.iastate.edu/registration_form.htm

ORGANIC AG: Leopold Center Distinguished Fellow Fred Kirschenmann has written a chapter in a new book, *Organic Ag: The Ecological System*, published by the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America and Soil Science Society of America. The book combines farmer experience with the latest scientific research to better understand the role of organics in modern agriculture. View the table of contents at: <https://portal.sciencesocieties.org/Downloads/pdf/B40726.pdf>

AG OPPORTUNITY? Leopold Center Distinguished Fellow Fred Kirschenmann sees opportunities for agriculture as energy costs rise. His essay, "Do increased energy costs offer opportunities for a new agriculture?" was featured in the October issue of *Monthly Review*. Read it at: www.monthlyreview.org/091019kirschenmann.php

FALL WEBINAR SERIES: Local foods require local farmers but where will they come from? A grant from the Leopold Center is supporting a series of on-line forums for beginning farmers and transitioning farm families offered by Practical Farmers of Iowa and the Beginning Farmer Center. They are offered on Tuesday evenings during November and December. Details here: www.practicalfarmers.org/news/article-1256735979.html