

Testimony  
to  
United States House Representatives  
Subcommittee on Rural Development, Biotechnology,  
Specialty Crops and Foreign Agriculture

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by

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and  
Agriculture and Rural Development Specialist  
University of Missouri Extension,  
Bloomfield, MO

I am Van H. Ayers, a co-founder and board member of a not for profit organization called Delta Land and Community, and an Agriculture and Rural Development Specialist with the University of Missouri Extension Service. Delta Land and Community is active in rural development projects focusing on the Mississippi River Delta Region, in which Missouri is a part. My office is located in Bloomfield, MO, which is in Stoddard County, MO. I serve the Bootheel region of the state, which is in the extreme southeast corner of Missouri. The prevalent agriculture is Southern, with corn, cotton, soybeans and rice produced in the county. Also, my brother and I are partners in a beef farm located in Bedford County, Tennessee.

Over the past 25 years I have been actively involved in rural development issues in Southeast Missouri. I have worked with farmers and farmer groups and applied and obtained for producers several of the grants administered by USDA-Rural Development. I have experience with the USDA, Value-Added Producers Grants (VAPG), Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) or 9007 grants, Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG) and Community Facilities Grants at the grassroots, working with farmers and farmer groups. I have also worked with other USDA grant and loan opportunities. The nonprofit I helped start has helped farmers receive nearly all the VAPG grants received in Arkansas.

Based on 25 years working with USDA rural development programs, I have seven specific recommendations to improve rural development programs. First, focus more of VAPG on planning grants. The Value-Added Producers Grants, of which I have written five separate proposals, with three funded, is one of the more progressive and effective programs offered by USDA. This program offers to farmers and farmer groups the opportunity to develop an idea, create an enterprise and help the local rural community. Within VAPG there are two types of grants, the planning grant –which is used to plan the enterprise by funding feasibility studies, business plans, attorney fees etc., and working capital grants. I have only worked with planning grants. I am a strong advocate of these type grants. I prefer that the majority of VAPG funds be made available to this effort in lieu of working capital grants. There may be specific legitimate reasons why a VAPG working capital grant makes sense in a given instance, but generally speaking I would lean the program more in the direction of planning grants. It is my opinion that in most cases if an enterprise is viable, funding is obtainable from an assortment of other sources.

Second, allow farmer time to be included as match for VAPG. There is a 50% match requirement for funds with VAPG. Securing match is problematic. We have been able to do so, for the projects in which I have assisted, by utilizing my time, with the University of Missouri as match. At the least, farmers' and participants' time should be allowable to be used as match. The farmer/entrepreneur who develops a new enterprise usually knows more about that industry than

anyone else. His/her time and expertise are crucial to success of each VAPG. However, I would prefer that the match requirement for the planning grant (but not for working capital grants) be altogether eliminated. If it cannot be eliminated altogether, then at the very least there should be liberal provision for counting the time and expertise of the farmer/entrepreneur.

Third, past VAPG grant reports should be assembled in an on-line reference library. Information obtained through the VAPG grants is now proprietary. However, if the information from planning grants is not to be used, especially if the project is not feasible, then at least this information should be placed in the public domain. But I suspect there would be relevant information from other grant programs useful to the public and to academicians that could be in a reference library without compromising any confidential proprietary information.

Fourth, allow REAP to cover 50% of costs and move VAPG energy feasibility proposals to REAP. Within REAP there is a feasibility study grant program. As with all of REAP, the grant will cover 25% of the project costs. An applicant can use the VAPG also for an energy project feasibility study, but VAPG will fund 50% of the project cost. The feasibility study grant program of REAP should be raised to cover 50% of project cost, similar to VAPG, instead of 25%. Energy feasibility grants could then be moved to REAP. This would help rationalize the limited government resources, allowing VAPG to concentrate on food, fiber, and forestry projects with energy projects supported through REAP.

Fifth, carve out a part of Community Facilities Grants for farmers markets. I suggest that funds be allocated in the Community Facilities Grant specifically for farmers markets. Farmers markets are popping up around the United States; they are a local economic activity with low capital investment but with both positive health and economic effect. The Community Facilities grants applications are filed at the local USDA-RD field office. I am here this week in Washington to review Farmers Market Promotion Program grants. There were over 500 applicants from all corners of the United States. Clearly, this is a popular program. As I began to review these proposals, it became clear that there is a great need for this program throughout the US; however, those proposals were written from urban areas, with the better grant writers, had a greater chance of being funded. There were proposals that expressed a great need, but will not be funded because they did not hit all the evaluation components in the writing. This seems unfair and reflects the basic problem of the lack of adequate personnel resources in rural areas. This raises the issue of fund distribution inequity for all USDA grant programs.

Sixth, a less complex grant application process is needed for both VAPG and REAP. A three page proposal for REAP and VAPG grants less than \$25,000 would be ideal. For a VAPG grant, it typically takes a full week of work to complete an application.

My final and most important recommendation is to establish a national program to train enterprise facilitators to help farmers in underserved areas develop proposals for these programs. This program could do the greatest to help rural America. There is also an inequity of grant funds distribution with both the VAPG and REAP programs. Missouri did well with VAPG until this year, when the evaluation criteria were changed. Nebraska does very well with the REAP grants. Tennessee does not receive many of either of the grants. Local Rural Development offices are not necessarily versed in these and other grants offered through their agency. The contact for these grants is usually at state office. As part of my Extension duties I have promoted these and other USDA-RD programs, and facilitated grant applications. Neither the Ag Innovation Centers nor the Rural Cooperative Development Centers have had a major influence on my activities. The need for good enterprise facilitators is greater than either of these programs can deliver. To develop a good grant application, someone must write it, the ability and desire is oftentimes lacking. USDA should do what it can now to develop a nationally coordinated initiative for enterprise facilitators, and if the Department finds new authority or dedicated funding is required, Congress should take this up in the next farm bill.

In conclusion, the development of rural enterprise, by utilizing the commodities and resources at hand in a rural community, is a direct and sure fire way to improve the local economy. As we move into a green economy, one needs to remember that green grows in rural America, and not in urban centers or suburbia. Wealth generated by these efforts should stay local. To develop value in rural America, and ensure equity of distribution of USDA grant and loan funds into the poorer rural areas of the United States, there is a need for enterprise facilitators to facilitate locally owned value added agriculture enterprises. Within Extension, there are some of us doing this. I suggest there be a national effort to fully fund enterprise facilitators, and place these people in rural America charged with working with the local populace to develop enterprises. These facilitators would write and assist in writing VAPG, REAP and other grants. This is what I do, and I believe it will work and reduce the inequity of grant distribution, while increasing the economic viability of rural America.

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## **WORK EXPERIENCE:**

**Presently employed as *Agriculture and Rural Development Specialist*, University of Missouri Extension, Bloomfield, MO. Worked as *Natural Resource Engineering Specialist* with University Outreach and Extension, University of Missouri in Moberly, MO (1983-1986), Portageville, MO (1986-1992), New Madrid, MO (1992-1997) and Bloomfield, MO (1997-present).**

**Responsibilities:** Include development of leadership and educational efforts in: (a) rural development (b) value added agriculture (c) energy (d) irrigation and water quality (e) sustainable agriculture and (f) agriculture tourism.

## **Accomplishments**

**Value Added Agriculture and Rural Business Development Efforts:** I have worked with several agencies including the Bootheel RC&D, University of Illinois Extension, University of Kentucky Extension, University of Tennessee Extension, Lincoln University, Missouri Department of Agriculture and USDA-RD to develop value added agriculture efforts in the Southeast Missouri and the Lower Mississippi River Delta Region. These efforts include:

- **Agriculture Tourism Conferences** - The Southeast Missouri Agriculture Tourism Conference was held in October, 2003 at Puxico Missouri, a second conference was held in 2004 in Bloomfield, MO and the third conference in Feb. 2006 at Sikeston. The fourth conference is planned for Bloomfield in 2007. I organized and formed the planning group, planned and implemented the conference. The conferences involved numerous group including Mingo Wildlife Refuge, Mingo Job Corps, Stoddard County IDA, Sikeston-Miner visitors bureau, Bootheel RC&D and Missouri Department of Agriculture.
- **Stoddard County Oilseed Crushing** – A \$60,000. USDA-VAPG was received by Stoddard County Oilseed LLC in 2008 to study the feasibility of a farmer owned oilseed crushing facility. I wrote the proposal and presently facilitating the project.
- **Bootheel Agriculture Tourism Map** – A \$13,300 grant has been received to develop a tourism map of the Bootheel counties of Southeast Missouri. Over 20 volunteers are participating in this project, collecting and recording coordinates of agriculture businesses and rural tourism sites. There were over 500 sites throughout Southeast Missouri collected. An online map is being developed University of Missouri faculty.
- **Organic Agriculture** – I assisted a group of farmers in West Tennessee and Southeast Missouri in developing both production systems and markets for organic commodities. I met, along with local farmers, with multinational corporations to discuss markets for

these commodities. I assisted producers in obtaining Missouri sustainable agriculture grants, and applied for numerous USDA-SARE grants to support these efforts. Presently, one producer is growing over 700 acres of organic rice.

- **Puerto Rico Rice Project**- Throughout 2004-06, considerable time has been expended assisting in developing niche rice markets in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. A rice taste panel was conducted in the Commonwealth. A Federal State Market Improvement Program (FSMIP) was obtained for the marketing study. Interaction between a rice mill and local Missouri producers was facilitated. A USDA-VAPG grant was acquired. A feasibility study and business plan for a locally owned rice mill was developed.
- **Renewable Energy Grants**- Assistance was given to development of a USDA, Alternative Energy grant for a locally owned biodiesel facility. This grant was awarded in December 2006, with a value of \$500,000. In 2008, I facilitated a grant for a local poultry farmer. This grant was valued at \$186,000.
- **WIRED** - (Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development). The Workforce Investment Board of Southeast Missouri received a \$5 million grant from the United States Department of Labor. I am serving on the administrative council for this initiative and am chair of the renewable energy committee. WIRED sponsored a Renewable Energy Conference at Portageville, MO in 2008 and 2009. I organized the conference.
- **Entrepreneurial Agriculture Conferences** – 2002 was the sixth year for the conference, and third held in Sikeston, MO. I formed and organized planning committee, obtained speakers and acquired funding for the conference. Worked with multiple agencies including USDA-RD, Missouri Department of Agriculture and Southeast Missouri State University.
- **Value Added Agriculture Grants for Feasibility Studies, Business Plans and Business Development** – Facilitated groups including the Missouri Rice Producers, SEMO Ethanol, Missouri Branded Rice Association and others in facilitating, writing and obtaining funding for development of both large and small scale enterprises in Missouri. Acquired approximately \$500,000 in these efforts and worked with over ten separate groups.
- **Agriculture Business Efforts for Minority and Small Farmers** –Worked with the Bootheel RC&D and the Missouri Department of Agriculture in facilitating, acquiring funding and developing a project to assist a minority owned farmer cooperative in Southeast Missouri. Worked with the Missouri Department of Agriculture to offer NxLevel training – a 10-week training class to assist farmers in developing a business plan – for minority and low-income farmers.
- **Multiple State Value Added Agriculture Efforts** – Worked with Delta Land and Community, state universities and state departments of agriculture in the Mississippi River Delta Region on value added agriculture efforts. Included are the Agents as Organizers of Community Enterprise Project, a Kellogg Foundation funded project to organize Extension field faculty in a multiple state effort with interests in value added agriculture. Additional efforts include assistance in the formation of the Marketplace of Ideas Conference organized by the University of Tennessee at Martin, held January 2002 in Martin, Tennessee. Presently, I am working with the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition to develop agriculture policy for value added agriculture.
- **Other Efforts of Interest** – Presently own and operate in partnership with my brother a beef farm in Bedford County, Tennessee. Involved with placing the family farm and

other farms in the community in a Rural Historic District, which would be on the National Register of Historic Places. In Missouri, I am facilitating a high tower anemometer study in Stoddard County, to determine the feasibility of commercial wind power.

**Efforts in Natural Resources, Water Quality and Irrigation** – I have been actively involved in developing programs and orchestrating efforts in natural resources, water quality and irrigation. Included in my efforts are:

- **Irrigation Demonstration Area** -Acquired over \$35,000 of funding and developed an irrigation demonstration area at Portageville, Missouri to demonstrate irrigation scheduling, chemigation, surge irrigation and furrow irrigation management.
- **Irrigation Scheduling Demonstration** - Acquired funding and managed a 100+ farmer irrigation scheduling demonstration project in Southeast Missouri. Managed six technicians in these efforts. This effort included a daily radio program on six Southeast Missouri radio stations to assist farmers in their irrigation scheduling.
- **Weather Station Network** – Developed a weather station network in Southeast Missouri for use in irrigation scheduling and crop computer modeling. Oversaw one graduate student in this effort.
- **Reduced Tillage Demonstration**- Managed a 20+-farm site minimum tillage demonstration over a 10 county area in Southeast Missouri. Hired and managed two employees on the projects. Organized five separate field tours of the minimum tillage sites. Tim Roberts, presently with the University of Tennessee Agriculture Extension Service worked on this project.
- **Secondary Containment**- Worked with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to hold three separate secondary containment workshops in Southeast Missouri to address secondary containment in fertilizer and pesticide facilities.
- **Animal Waste** – Designed animal waste structures for beef, swine and poultry. Familiar with state and federal rules and regulations for animal waste.

**Farm Safety and Rural Issues**- I have been active in both farm safety issues in Missouri and rural issues such as efforts during the 1980's farm crisis.

- **Farm Safety Field Day** – Cooperated with Area Health Education Center (AHEC) and Progressive Farmer to hold an annual farm safety field day for vocational agriculture students in Southeast Missouri. (1996-2000). Attendance approached approximately 400 students annually.
- **Fire and Rescue Personnel Training Center** – Assisted in organizing local fire departments and rural rescue and ambulance services to develop a fire and rescue training center at the University of Missouri Delta Center in Portageville, MO.
- **Farm Crisis** – Served on regional farm crisis team in Northeast Missouri. Organized efforts to assist farmers and farm families' work through the farm situation inherent during the 1980's.

**Program Planning and Reporting** – Extensive experience in program planning and reporting. Efforts included: Assistance in writing the Bootheel RC&D Strategic Plan; Stoddard County

Extension Strategic Plan; Extension Program Plan and Individual Development Plan, and numerous final reports for grants.

**Public Speaking Efforts** – Given over 200+ talks and presentations. Skilled in PowerPoint, multimedia and meeting room setup. Skilled in group organization and facilitation.

### **Other Employment**

**Gold Kist Inc.** **Dates Employed: 6/1983 – 12/1983**  
**Waynesboro, GA**  
Manager Trainee for grain elevator management

**University of Tennessee** **Dates Employed: 01/1981– 06/1983**  
**Agriculture Engineering Dept.**  
**Knoxville, TN**  
Graduate Research Assistant

**DeTer Inc.** **Dates Employed: 12/1978 –08/1980**  
**East Hanover, NJ**  
Service Representative. DeTer was the manufacturer of dust control equipment. Duties include sales and service of equipment.

### **EDUCATION:**

**Doctorate of Education (Ed.D), December 2002**  
University of Missouri (MU) – Columbia and Southeast Missouri State Univ. Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 **Major: Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis**

**Diploma –1992, University of Missouri – Columbia, Columbia, MO 65211**  
**Major: Community Development**

**Master of Science (M.S.), June 1983, University of Tennessee – Knoxville, Knoxville, TN**  
**Major: Agriculture Mechanization**

**Bachelor of Science (B.S.), December 1979, University of Tennessee at Martin, Martin, TN**  
**Major: Plant Science**

**Associate of Science (A.S.), June 1976, Motlow State Community College, Tullahoma, TN 37388**  
**Major: University Parallel**

### **JOB RELATED TRAINING:**

#### **Training Received 1998-2009**

**Title**

**Year**

Agriculture Engineering Update	2008
Dairy Grazing Systems	2007
Biofuels	2007
Energy Alternatives for Agriculture Buildings	2006
Economic Issues for Missouri	2005
Legal Issues Facing Missouri Farmers	2005
Local Economic Analysis	2005
Developing Agri Tourism in Your Area	2005
Using ITV to Deliver Extension Programs	2005
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans	2003
Market Feasibility Studies: Developing Facilitator Skills	2001
Design for Learning	2001
NxLevel Training	2001
Using Internet to Market Programs	2000
Managing Missouri's Aquatic Resources- Water, Plants, Fish	2000
New Strategies, New Skills, New Agriculture	2000
Progressive Farmer Farm Safety Training	2000
Community Toolbox: Analyzing Local, Demographic and Fiscal Trends	1999
Using Digital Images to Enhance Extension Presentations and Program Delivery	1999
Tackling Business and Risk Management in Agribusiness	1999
Community Information Networks – Ingredients for Success	1999
Social Networks of Community Leaders	1999
Social Capital in Rural Community Development	1999
Community Based Food Systems and Welfare to Work	1999
Pricing for Business Success	1999
Organic Agriculture	1999
Precision Agriculture	1998
Implementing Issues Forums in Missouri Communities	1998
Issues and Challenges in Developing Community Leadership	1998
Introduction to Value-Added Agriculture	1998
Adding Value to Specialty Markets	1998

### **Recent Conference Attendance**

Memphis Bioworks Foundation, Memphis, TN	2008
Ozark New Energy Conference, Springfield, MO	2008
National Renewable Energy Lab Conference, Denver, CO	2007
National Small Farm Trade Show, Columbia, MO	2007
Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Alton, IL	2007
National Association of County Agriculture Agents, Grand Rapids, MI	2007
Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Madison, WI	2006
National Value Added Agriculture Conference, Nashville, TN	2006
Mississippi Delta Caucus, Washington, DC	2006
National Association of County Agriculture Agents, Cincinnati, Ohio	2006
Mississippi Delta Caucus, Washington, DC	2005

National Association of County Agriculture Agents, Buffalo, NY	2005
National Value Added Agriculture Conference, Indianapolis, IN	2005
Uniting Farms and Communities Conference, Pettigene Mtn., AR	2004
National Value Added Agriculture Conference, Peoria, IL	2004
National Association of County Agriculture Agents, Orlando, FL	2004
National Association of County Agriculture Agents, Green Bay, WI	2003
National Association of County Agriculture Agents, Savannah, GA	2002
National Association of County Agriculture Agents, Albuquerque, NM	2001
Mid West Value Added Agriculture Conference, Excelsior Springs, MO	2001
Beltwide Cotton Conference, San Antonio, TX	2000
Lower Mississippi Delta, Washington, DC	2000

### **Other Pertinent Training**

Graduate, Graduate Institute of Cooperative Leadership, University of Missouri, 2001

### **Higher Education**

**Doctoral Dissertation:** *Perceptions of University Outreach and Extension Agriculture Business Counselors as a Learning Organization*

**Masters Thesis:** *Injecting Urea for Preserving High-Moisture Hay in Large Round Bales*

**Teaching Experience:** Agriculture Policy, Southeast Missouri State University, Winter 2003

### **JOB RELATED SKILLS:**

Computer Software: Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, SPSS (statistical package), e-mail usage, Internet usage.

### **JOB RELATED CERTIFICATES AND LICENSES:**

Current Missouri Drivers Licenses  
Private Pilot License

### **JOB RELATED HONORS, AWARDS, MEMBERSHIPS, ETC.:**

Certificate of Merit, USDA-NRCS, 2006  
Community Developer Award, Missouri Farmers Union, 2005  
Certificate of Merit, USDA-NRCS, 2002  
University of Missouri 2001 Faculty Shares Award: value - \$10,000  
Member of National Association of County Agriculture Agents  
Member of Epsilon Sigma Phi  
Member of National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals

Member of University of Missouri Extension Association  
 Past President of University of Missouri Extension Association  
 Served as Secretary, Randolph County, MO and Pemiscot County, MO, SWCD

Other – Soil Judging Team, University of Tennessee at Martin 1976-1978; Dairy Judging Team, University of Tennessee at Martin, 1977-1978. FFA Chapter Farmer, Shelbyville, Tennessee, 1974; 4-H All Stars; 4-H State of Tennessee Agriculture Project Winner, 1974; Showed dairy cattle, 4-H.

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:**

**Grant Funding**

***Active and Pending Projects***

<b>Project</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Stoddard County Oilseed Crushing	USDA-VAPG	\$60,000
Stoddard County Oilseed Crushing, Missouri Dept. of Ag. – In process of writing proposal.		
Beginning Farmer Grant, USDA – In process of writing proposal		

***Missouri Sustainable Agriculture Projects- finished***

Crawfish Demonstration (Pobst)	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	\$3,000
Crawfish Production (Hunter)	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	3,000
Fresh Water Shrimp	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	3,000
Flood Irrigated Corn Grazing	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	3,000
Biomass Burning for Greenhouse	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	3,000
Pivot Irrigated Corn Grazing	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	4,500
Extended Vegetable Crop	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	4,500
Anhydrous Ammonia Placement	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	4,500
Bee Mites Control	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	3,000
Flame Cultivation	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	3,000
Gin Trash Composting	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	3,000 Chicken
Litter Composting	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	3,000
Fall Flowers Irrigation	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	3,000

**USDA-SARE Sustainable Agriculture**

Crawfish Demonstration (Hunter)	USDA-SARE, Producer grant	\$ 6,000
Freshwater Shrimp Demonstration	USDA-SARE, Producer grant	6,000
Vegetable Trickle Irrigation	USDA-SARE, Producer grant	4,000

***Finished Projects***

Bootheel Ag. Tourism Map	Missouri Department Ag.	\$13,200
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Demraco Farms (9006)	USDA-RD	186,000
Puerto Rico Rice Study	USDA, FSMIP	33,000
Global Fuels Biodiesel (9006)	USDA-RD	500,000
Agriculture Tourism Project	Univ. Missouri	1,200
Alternative Crop	Univ. Missouri	1,200
Aquaculture Conference	Univ. Missouri	1,300
Missouri Branded Rice	USDA, VAPG	100,000
Sunflower Meetings	Southeast Missouri State Univ.	1,300
Missouri Rice Conference	Southeast Missouri State Univ.	1,500
Wolfhole Farms (9006)	USDA-RD	24,995
Vegetable Business Support Center	Missouri Dept. of Ag./USDA	33,000
NxLevel Training	Missouri Dept. of Ag./USDA	14,400
Niche Market Beef	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	138,000
Rice Drying and Storage	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	31,900
2001 Entrepreneurial Ag. Conf.	Missouri Dept. of Ag./USDA	4,000
SEMO Ethanol Feasibility	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	33,000
SEMO Ethanol Business Plan	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	44,000
Rice Drying and Storage Feasibility	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	50,000
Heartland Compost	Missouri Dept. of Ag.	33,000
Multi State Value Added Conf.	USDA-CSREES	5,000
Sust. Ag. Marketing Policy*	SARE	40,900
ASA Symposium*	Farm Foundation	5,000
Ent. Ag. Conference*	Farm Foundation	5,000
Rural Enterprise Driving Policy*	Jesse Smith Noyes Foundation	20,000
Building Agents Enterprise*	SARE	19,990
Motivating Teams for Enterprise*	SARE	96,000
Multi-State Team Building*	SARE	20,000
Facilitating Sust. Delta Systems*	McKnight Foundation	26,000
Design for Delta Sust. Develop.*	USDA/ARS	28,000
Biomass Burner	Missouri Dept. Energy	95,000
Ridge Till Project	Missouri Dept. Energy	90,000
Weather Station	Missouri Dept. Energy	38,000
SEMO Irrigation	Missouri Dept. Energy	58,934

\* Denotes a Delta Land and Community Project. Presently serving as Secretary-Treasurer of Delta Land and Community.

### **Professional Papers and Presentations**

**The Extension Service as a Learning Organization.** National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals. Las Vegas, NV, February 2005.

**Weed Control Methods of Organic Cotton Producers.** Beltwide Cotton Conference, San Antonio, TX. January, 2000.

**Facilitating Sustainable Enterprises.** SARE Tenth Anniversary Conference. Austin, TX. 1998.

**Process and Skills in Systems Facilitation.** North American Farming Systems Research and Extension Conference. Mt. Hood, Oregon. 1997.

**Farmer Composting of Cotton Gin Trash.** Beltwide Cotton Conference. New Orleans, LA. 1997.

**Evaluation of an Agriculture Biomass System.** Mid West Energy Conference. Des Moines, IA. 1993.

**Cotton Ridge Tillage and Minimum Tillage Systems in Southeast Missouri.** Beltwide Cotton Conference. New Orleans, LA. 1993.

**Weather Station Networking for Irrigation Scheduling.** Beltwide Cotton Conference. Las Vegas, NV. 1990.

**Multiple Use Weather Stations for Irrigation Scheduling.** National Irrigation Symposium. Phoenix, AZ. 1989.