



Speaker Information

January 7-9, 2010

Mike Appel & Emily Oakley own and operate Three Springs Farm, a diversified, certified-organic vegetable, fruit, and herb farm in Cherokee County, OK. They cultivate over fifty different crops and more than 150 individual varieties on five acres of land. Their goal is to maintain a two-person operation not dependent on hired labor that demonstrates the economic viability of small-scale farming. Emily and Mike sell their produce directly to their customers through two area farmers' markets and a 100-member Community Supported Agriculture program. 1367 Highway 82A, Oaks, OK 74359. **P:** (918) 868-5450. **E:** farmers@threespringsfarm.com. **W:** <http://www.threespringsfarm.com/>

Frank and Pamela Arnosky began farming in 1990 in the Texas Hill Country. Frank's background includes a BS in Horticulture from Michigan State Univ. after which he went to Texas A&M to pursue graduate work in fruit crop genetics. Pamela has a BS in Geography from Texas A&M University, with graduate studies in Plant Geography at York University in Canada. Frank has experience producing a wide variety of horticultural crops, from greenhouse production of poinsettias and lilies, vegetable and bedding plants, and vegetable and fruit crops, but the Arnoskys specialize in the production of specialty cut flowers. Currently producing on about 40 acres of field beds and in 50,000 sq. ft. of greenhouses and cold frames (hoophouses), the Arnoskys grow year round. Approximately 80% of total production is wholesale cut flowers, sold directly to grocery stores; the other 20% includes cut flowers, potted and bedding plants, fruits, and vegetables grown and sold at their weekly on-farm market. The Arnoskys are never shy about sharing their story of how they got here from there. Texas Specialty Cut Flowers, 12550 FM 2325, Wimberley, TX 78676. **P:** (830) 883-5428. **W:** <http://www.texascolor.com>.

Tim Baker joined University of Missouri Extension in 1992 as a Horticulture Specialist located in Southeast Missouri. He received an undergraduate degree in horticulture in 1986 and Master's degree in horticulture in 1988, both from the University of Arkansas. Post graduate experience included working for the University of Idaho in their potato variety development program, before coming to University of Missouri Extension. In 2006, he transferred to Northwest Missouri, where he continues his work with University of Missouri Extension as a Horticulture Specialist. **P:** (660) 663-3232. **E:** bakert@missouri.edu.

Sue Baird was raised on a small dairy farm in Northwest Arkansas on a farm that her great grandfather settled in 1852. Her grandmother was Cherokee Indian, and as a child she was raised to honor the land and maintain it such that it would be handed down to the next generation in better shape that it was left. In late 2000 she developed and implemented the MO State Organic Program. In 2002 the program was USDA accredited to become a certifying agent. After the elimination of the Missouri State Organic Program in 2004, she has worked for two third-party organic certification organizations. Sue has extensive experience in developing and teaching organic certification educational workshops for producers, NRCS employees, certifying agents, and processors in collaboration with university extension, AATRA, and IOIA in 17 states and 3 foreign countries. In addition to her organic training background, Ms. Baird served on the Organic Materials Review Institute Board of Directors, the Independent Organic Inspector's Association Board of Directors, and on the NASOP Board of Directors. She currently is President of the Missouri Organic Association. Sue remains passionate about assisting the small organic and sustainable family farms in remaining viable operations in today's economic times. Sue Baird Organics, LLC, 20547 Creek Road, Bunceton, MO 65237. **E:** gbaird@iland.net, **W:** www.suebairdorganics.com.

Marlin Bates is a regional horticulture specialist for University of Missouri Extension in the West-Central region of the state. Marlin works regularly with specialty crop producers in the Kansas City region. His programmatic efforts include production planning, pest management, marketing, and the development of new local-food producers through one-on-one consultations, workshops, and field days. He also serves on the organizing committee for the Great Plains Vegetable Growers Conference. University of Missouri Extension, Platte County 11724 NW Plaza Circle, Suite 300 Kansas City, MO 64153. **P:** (816) 270-2141. **E:** batesma@missouri.edu

Rosanna Bauman is one of the founders of the Garnett Farmers Market which opened in 2008. In its short life, the Garnett market has become an important part of the community hosting numerous annual events and offering EBT and debit access. The Bauman family is best known for its pastured chicken and eggs, but Cedar Valley Farms is a diverse family farm that also produces beef, lamb, turkey, duck, milk, and traditional row crops. Although the Baumans began farming just eight years ago, Rosanna grew up in the family retail business explaining CVF's emphasis on relationship marketing. When the Baumans moved to their small 180-acre farm in 2001, they realized the best recipe for small farm success was to become a sustainable, direct marketing business. Today, the Baumans are the only producers in Kansas who raise and process their poultry on farm in a USDA-inspected facility.

Sam Beattie. Assistant Professor/Food Safety Extension at Iowa State University. He has special interest in food and agricultural mycology with an emphasis on mycotoxigenic molds. Sam carries out a variety of educational and extension activities related to food safety and security issues for food processors and consumers. 2312 Food Science Building, ISU campus, Ames, IA 50011 **P:** (515) 294-3357 **E:** beatties@iastate.edu.

Lisa Bralts is the director of Market at the Square in Urbana, IL, home to the University of Illinois. Market at the Square is one of the largest and best-attended Saturday markets in Illinois, offering a wide variety of fresh produce, meats, eggs and cheese, baked goods, prepared food items, and arts and crafts throughout its 28-week season. The Market, which celebrated its 30th anniversary during the 2009 season, is operated by the City of Urbana's Economic Development Division. While the Market has had a dedicated patron base for decades, the recent introduction of the use of social media tools – especially Facebook and Twitter – has really helped it connect regularly with residents, especially students and young families. Lisa's related experience includes member outreach and board work for Common Ground Food Co-op in Urbana, marketing and development work for the Eastern Illinois Foodbank in Urbana, and work with several local foods groups in the Urbana-Champaign area. She lives in Urbana with her husband and two children. **P:** (217) 384-2319 **E:** ljbralts@city.urbana.il.us , **W:** www.city.urbana.il.us/market , **W:** www.market-at-the-square.blogspot.com

Lynn Byzcynski is the editor and publisher of *Growing for Market*, the monthly newsletter for direct-market farmers. She and her husband, Dan Nagengast, have been market gardening since 1988 and over the years have sold at farmers markets, natural food stores, to chefs, and florists. PO Box 3747, Lawrence, KS 66046. **P:** (785) 748-0605. **E:** growing4market@earthlink.net

Patrick Byers recently became the Horticulture Specialist for the University of Missouri Extension Southwest Region. Prior to this, for about 2 decades, Pat was the Fruit Grower Advisor for Missouri State University based at the Mountain Grove Fruit Experiment Station. Greene County Extension Center 833 Boonville Avenue Springfield MO 65802. **P:** (417) 862-9284. **E:** byerspl@missouri.edu

Ted Carey is the Extension Specialist for Food Crops, Kansas State University, at the Olathe Research & Extension Center. He conducts applied research on vegetable production in eastern and south-central Kansas with emphasis on season extension. 35125 W. 135th St., Olathe, KS 66061. **P:** (913) 645-0007. **E:** tcarey@ksu.edu

Raymond A. Cloyd. Associate Professor and Extension Specialist in Ornamental Entomology/Integrated Pest Management Extension (70%) and research (30%) appointment at Kansas State University. Research and extension program involves pest management in greenhouses, nurseries, landscapes, turfgrass, conservatories, interiorscapes, and vegetables and fruits. Extension specialist in horticultural/ornamental entomology for the state of Kansas. Major clientele includes homeowners, master gardeners, and professional and commercial operators. 123 Waters Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506-4004. **P:** (785) 532-4750. **E:** rcloyd@ksu.edu

Karen "Mimo" Davis is an Extension educator with Lincoln University in St. Louis, and formerly a cut flower farmer in Missouri. She was renowned for growing unusual, high-dollar cut flowers. She will talk about varieties that are particularly well-suited to the Midwest. 9041 Riverview Dr., St. Louis MO 63137. **P:** (314) 867-4915. **E:** davisk@lincolnu.edu

Kathleen Delate, is an Associate Professor and Extension Organic Specialist in the Agronomy/Horticulture Department at Iowa State University. . Kathleen does extensive work with the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture with special interests in organic soybean, herbs, and vegetable production. 106 Hort Bldg, ISU, Ames, IA 50011. **P:** (515)-294- 7069. **E:** kdelate@iastate.edu

Dan Dermitzel is Associate Director and Farmer with KCCUA (Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture) and is former co-owner of Trailside Farm in Calhoun, MO, a certified-organic vegetable farm. Dan's interests lie in the interwoven processes of globalization, urbanization and social integration especially as they relate to small-scale urban agriculture around the country and the world. As a farmer, Daniel is primarily concerned with finding ways to increase farm productivity through the introduction of new, appropriate technology. KCCUA P.O. Box 6043 Kansas City, KS 66106. **P:** (913) 831-2444. **E:** daniel@kccua.org. **W:** www.kccua.org/

Pam Edwards is the Assistant Director of University Dining Services/University Housing at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and is also a Registered Dietitian. She received her BS in Food and Nutrition from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and her Master's in Food Systems Management from the University of Missouri-Columbia – both of those degrees quite some time ago! In 2002 she received her MBA with an emphasis in Agribusiness from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her interest in Local Foods began shortly after arriving at the University Dining Services. There were many other people interested in the Local Food's area – but the time was not right for Local Foods to grow in university dining services. But in 2005, the time was right and The GFL (Good. Fresh. Local.) University of Nebraska-Lincoln Sustainable Food Project was started at Cather-Pound-Neihardt Residence Hall Dining Service. The GFL project continues today with great success and it is an example of how patience and persistence working in the Local Foods arena pays off for many people.

Diana Endicott is the founder and Coordinator of Good Natured Family Farms, a brand name for selling a range of products produced on small family farms around Kansas City. She has been heavily involved in helping family farmers to produce and market a range of products including produce, particularly through Balls Foods, a Kansas City grocery company. Recently Diana has worked with several farmers to successfully become Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) certified. **P:** (620) 939-4933. **E:** allnatural@ckt.net

Kamyar Enshayan has directed the local food program for University of Northern Iowa since 1997. He is an agricultural engineer by training and is the Director of the Center for Energy & Environmental Education at UNI. He teaches classes in environmental studies, and is the recipient of 2008 Sustainable Agriculture Achievement Award by Practical Farmers of Iowa. Kamyar lives in Cedar Falls, Iowa where he serves on the City Council. **E:** kamyar.enshayan@uni.edu

Rebecca Graff & Tom Ruggieri established Fair Share Farm in 2003 after apprenticing on CSA farms in the northeast and Midwest. Situated on Graff family land, the farm grows a wide variety of vegetable, herbs, flowers and small fruit for its CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) members. 18613 Downing Rd., Kearney, MO 64060. **P:** (816) 320-3763 **E:** tom@fairsharefarm.com

Tracey Graham manages the Emporia Farmers' Market. The EFM is entering its 28th year of providing the Emporia area with high quality fresh produce, baked goods, honey, eggs, meats, live plants cut flowers and handcrafted items. Steady growth over the first 20 years with rapid acceleration in the past decade has seen the market expand from a handful of vendors with \$3K in sales in 1982 to 63 vendors with >\$87K in sales in 2009. A dedicated board of directors, volunteer corps, and one half-time employee oversee market operations and activities. Tracey Graham is currently that employee, and looks forward to the day when she can turn that job over to another so she can be a vendor again. 702 Commercial St, B-3 Emporia, KS 66801. **P:** (620)343-6555. **E:** tlcfh@yahoo.com

Doug Grimm. Doug & his wife, Jeryl, own Grimm's Gardens and have been farming in northeast Kansas for 30 years. They started the greenhouse operation in 1993 with hydroponic tomatoes, blueberries, and a few flowers. Doug is a certified arborist and spends his time working with the fruit trees, blueberries, arboretum, greenhouses, and nursery stock. Doug feels his blueberry operation has been blessed with success and has given them a very unique opportunity to offer some crops that other people do not have to offer anywhere close to us. People drive more than 8 hours one way to come pick berries at Grimm's! 2991 Goldfinch Rd., Hiawatha, KS 66434, **P:** 785-459-2586 **E:** grimmgardens@juno.com

Patrice Gros is a full-time organic farmer and co-founder of two successful farmers' markets (Berryville and Eureka Springs, AR). He owns and manages Foundation Farm and its associated farming school. Eureka Springs, AR 72632. (479) 253-7461. **E:** mamakapa@yahoo.com. **W:** <http://www.foundationfarm.com>

Sanjun Gu is the Extension Vegetable Specialist in Missouri. He received a B.S. in Vegetable Production and a M.S. in Vegetable Breeding and Tissue Culture from China; and a Ph.D. in Viticulture from University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Dr. Gu joined Lincoln University of Missouri in 2008 with state-wide responsibility for commercial vegetable production. His research interests include vegetable grafting and vegetable production in high-tunnels and other solar plastic greenhouses. (573) 681-5524. **E:** Sanjun.gu@lincolnu.edu.

David Heidebrink and his wife, Jamie, started The Heide-Way Farm on 15 acres in N.E. Kansas, in 2007. They produce a variety of organically-grown fruits and vegetables, herbs, cut-flowers, and a few value-added products. They also enhance the farm's biodiversity with small-scale beef, pork, and chicken production. Their products are direct-marketed to farmers' markets, food co-ops, and through a small, winter CSA. They've also recently added the use of high tunnels to extend their marketing season. David serves as an elected officer of the Board of Directors for the Downtown Farmers' Market of Manhattan, 1263 1st Road, Wakefield, KS 67487. **P:** (785) 388-2104. **E:** David.Heidebrink@us.army.mil.
W: <http://www.localharvest.org/farms/M26127>

Rob Hemwall- Pierpont Farms is a 34 acre family farm founded in 2004 by Rob and Angela Hemwall, with the multiple goals of promoting sustainable agriculture, healthy eating habits, community involvement and to provide a more traditional way of sustaining our family. The farm produces a diversity of vegetables, herbs, flowers and some fruits using organic methods. We utilize irrigation, row cover and season extending structures to provide a buffer from Mother Nature's vagaries. Due to unpredictable weather pattern we've invested in a 30'x96' high tunnel and a half-acre Haygrove Tunnel. Columbia, MO. **W:** <http://www.pierpontfarms.com/>

Mary Hendrickson. Mary's research and extension program focuses on understanding the changes taking place in the global food system and helps farmers, eaters, and communities create profitable alternatives. Hendrickson has authored numerous publications, including two MU Extension Guides focused on selling and marketing of vegetables. She conducts numerous trainings and workshops. Hendrickson holds a Bachelor's in agribusiness from the University of Nebraska, and a Master's and Ph.D. in rural sociology from the University of Missouri. Department of Rural Sociology Columbia, MO **P:** (573) 882-7463. **E:** HendricksonM@missouri.edu

Pov Huns operates Huns Garden in Kansas City, Kansas. He grows specialty vegetables and herbs in urban Kansas City, Kansas. He grows specialty vegetables that have medicinal value, as well as other Asian greens and other tropical greens that are hard to find. Pov moved to Kansas City from Fresno, California, where he has had extensive experience in growing specialty vegetables and herbs since 1984. In Kansas City, he has found a large demand for specialty vegetables, but the weather are uncooperative; so he turns to high tunnel production. Pov grows Asian green in high tunnel in early spring and switch to tropical plant (Bitter Melon and Ginger) in early May through November. Today, Pov's farm grows 40 different vegetables, most of which have unique health benefits: Epazote, or "Mexican basil," for irritable bowel syndrome; bitter melon, to lower cholesterol; bitter eggplant to ease the pain of menstrual cramps. Although Pov grows herbs for today's common ailments, his farming methods are anything but ordinary. Most of what I did is the opposite of what everyone is told to do. Most notably of Pov's unorthodox farming is the abundance of weeds littering his land, some of which grow shoulder-high. The practice, he is told by friends and visitors would make some ancestors turn in their graves, but to Pov, weeds are just "natural nitrogen." Pov operates his farm with Mother Nature, rather than against her – using weeds as fertilizer and ignoring common-held truths of American farming. With unorthodox farming and unique produce, it's always an adventure out at Huns Garden. **P:** (913) 961-1561 **E:** hunsgarden@hotmail.com

Wendy Johnson, a PhD candidate in the department of Entomology at Kansas State University. Her dissertation research involves assessment of the efficacy of organic insecticides and plant chemistry affecting insect herbivores. She has a MS in plant pathology and a BS in Horticulture Science from Montana State University. Wendy is originally from Kansas.
E: wendyann@ksu.edu

Megan Kennelly is Assistant Professor at Kansas State University in the Department of Plant Pathology. Her areas of emphasis are Commercial Horticulture and Turf Grass Pathology. She also has programming on urban plant pathology problems. 4603 Throckmorton PSC Kansas State University Manhattan, KS. **P:** (785) 532-1387. **E:** kennelly@ksu.edu

Zaid and Haifa Kurdieh partners in Norwich Meadows Farm, LLC have been organically farming since 1998. NMF currently serves over 1300 CSA members and eight farmers markets primarily in New York City— including the famous Union Square Farmers Market. NMF currently has over 45 acres in vegetable and fruit production of which 4 acres are under high tunnels. NMF also produces chicken, eggs, turkey, lamb, and goat. The farm grows over 500 varieties from Asparagus to Zucchini. The strategy for NMF is to produce high quality (taste and appearance) products to be marketed to CSA members, farmers market customers, and chefs. Our current area of expansion is door to door deliveries of CSA shares and restaurant orders. NMF has many famed restaurant clients such as Blue Hill, Gramercy Tavern, and Il Buco. 105 Old Stone Rd Norwich, NY 13815. **E:** Norwichmeadowsfarm@yahoo.com. **W:** www.norwichmeadowsfarm.com.

Rusty Lee is a conventional vegetable grower who uses sustainable methods on his farm east of St. Louis near Truxton, MO. He wholesales a diversity of produce to supermarkets and restaurants in eastern Missouri.

Charles Marr, Professor Emeritus and retired Extension Vegetable Specialist, Kansas State University, 2021 Throckmorton Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506. (785) 532-6173. **E:** cmarr@ksu.edu

David Markwardt is a Federal Program Manager with the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. He graduated with a degree in biology from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point in 1973. His career with the USDA Fruit and Vegetable (F&V) Inspection Service started in 1977 in central Wisconsin as an inspector of potatoes and cranberries. He also worked in Chicago, inspecting produce on the South Water Market. From there he moved on to supervise the Fruit and Vegetable inspection program in Wisconsin. He was able to visit farming and packing operations throughout the United States in his ten years of work there and continues to operate nationally with the USDA. David studied auditing procedures in the late 1990s and was landed the position of USDA Program Manager over thirteen Midwest states in 1998. He has been very active in the development of the USDA's Good Agricultural Practices and Good Handling Practices audit program. The current duties of Federal Program Manager include auditing F&V inspection programs and produce farms/handling operations. He also teaches reviews and evaluates auditors. David also works on inspection F & V procedures and protocols for the Fresh Product Branch. USDA, AMS, Fresh Products Branch. **P:** (816) 453-4926. **E:** David.Markwardt@ams.usda.gov.

Steve Moring is an educator and farmer who has training and experience as a botanist, herbalist, plant biochemist, natural products chemist and serves the community as a permaculture design and land management consultant. He has worked for decades in the industry and has extensive experience in project management, professional training and academic teaching. He is a self-taught herbalist and having studied medicinal herbs and pharmacognosy for over 30 years. He has many years of experience cultivating medicinal plants on a garden scale and has worked as a consultant for quality assurance for numerous herb manufactures and organizations. Steve is currently works as an instructor at local community college, and as a farmstead business owner. On the farm and in the community, he is engaged as a regional land consultant, specializing in the cultivation of alternative crop systems, medicinal herbs, permaculture system design, prairie and woodland restoration. Steve has studied engineering, aquatic biology, ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Maryland (BS), and plant systematics ecology, biochemistry and natural products chemistry at the University of Kansas (MA). He is certified in permaculture design. He serves on the board of directors of the Sustainability Action Network, Inc., and is the founder and director or the Kaw Permaculture Collaborative. **E:** smoring@grasshoppernet.com.

Billene Nemec is the Coordinator for Buy Fresh Buy Local, Nebraska Chapter. Her long time passion for great local food and for those who produce it has helped her to understand the need for a program that markets the producers' food and supports those who buy directly from the local producers. For the past 20 years Billene has been a market gardener, farmers' market vendor, and she has managed three diverse farmers' markets in Lincoln. She has the privilege and the obligation, as coordinator of Buy Fresh Buy Local Nebraska, to ensure that ag and rural entrepreneurs have a strong promotional and outreach program for their local products and consumers have a consistent message that helps them to identify the products of family farmers. A program that helps local businesses highlight their support for local foods, and provide entire communities with information about the many benefits of a strong local food system. A native Nebraskan graduated from the University of Nebraska with a degree in BFA in Art Ed. After 11 years of working outside of Nebraska she returned home to work with children and adults in raising food for fun and nutrition. Tween Creek Farm, Prague, NE. **P:** (402) 613-0088

Eileen Nichols is a volunteer manager of the Webb City Farmers Market which she organized in 2000. Raised on a cattle farm in Texas, she graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia with a degree in journalism. In addition to her market work, she has renovated and manages two historic commercial buildings. She is secretary/treasurer of the Missouri Farmers Market Association. The Webb City Farmers Market is a producer-only market averaging about 30 vendors. The market is held under a 190-foot long pavilion and is open three days a week during the regular season and two days a month during winter market. The market was the first in the Missouri to accept EBT, debit and credit. Other innovative programs include an extensive grower training program, an at-market English as a Second Language class, and a Kids Community Garden. The market was named Missouri's Market of the Year in 2003 and 2009. It is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. PO Box 1 Webb City, Missouri 64870 **P:** (417) 673-5866.

W: <http://webbcityfarmersmarket.blogspot.com/> or <http://www.localharvest.org/farmers-markets/M3615>

Dori Porter is a graduate student at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln pursuing a Master's degree in Entomology under the supervision of Drs. Marion Ellis and Robert Wright. Her research focus is on wild bee diversity in Nebraska, the beneficial insects associated with native Nebraska flora, and the species distribution of Megachilidae bees in Nebraska.

P: (402) 472-2123. **E:** dporter2@hotmail.com.

James Quinn has been the Horticulture Specialist for University of Missouri Extension's Central Region for 3 years. He was a wholesale greenhouse salad green and herb grower for 9 years in Michigan. Since moving to Missouri he has been involved in a wide range of agriculture projects, including greenhouses, vegetables, alternative agronomic crops, IPM, high tunnels, and medicinal herbs. Cole County Extension Center, 2436 Tanner Bridge Road, Jefferson City, MO 65101.

P: (573) 634-2824. **E:** QuinnJa@Missouri.edu

Wayne Simpson. Simpson's farm is a family owned and operated fruit and vegetable farm located at Mountain Grove, Missouri. The Simpson family started in commercial grape production in the early 1970s. Today, the Simpson Farm offers a wide variety of fresh fruits, vine ripened tomatoes, as well as Fall Farm Tours. The Simpson Farm was one of the first commercial strawberry operations, in Missouri, to convert from the matted row method of strawberry production to the plasticulture method. All of the strawberries grown at Simpson's are now grown on plastic. Education and entertainment are also a large part of the overall farm operation. Simpson's farm has been a tour stop for several educational programs conducted by the Missouri State University Fruit Experiment Station. Simpons Family Farm, 8748 Simpson Road, Mountain Grove, Missouri 65711. **P:** (417) 926 5308. **E:** manager@simpsonsfamilyfarm.com.

W: www.simpsonsfamilyfarm.com

Hank Taber is professor and extension vegetable specialist at Iowa State University and conducts research in earliness techniques, irrigation practices, and vegetable fertility practices. He also teaches an undergraduate vegetable crop production and management course. He also has over 40 years experience in fresh market vegetable production business. 106 Hort Bldg., Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011. **E:** taber@iastate.edu

Mercedes Taylor-Puckett is the Farmers Market and Local Food Coordinator for the Kansas Rural Center. Her current projects include developing manager and board training and the annual Kansas Farmers Market Conference, as well as launching the local food branding label, Our Local Food, for the Kaw River Valley in NE Kansas. Mercedes is also the administrator of ksfarmersmarkets.org. Prior to joining KRC, she was the coordinator of the Downtown Lawrence Farmers' Market. Mercedes enjoys working on issues of local, sustainable agriculture and expanding SNAP access at farmers markets. **P:** 785.840.6202. **E:** mercedes.taylorpuckett@gmail.com. **W:** www.ksfarmersmarkets.org or <http://www.kansasruralcenter.org>.

Stephanie Thomas owns Spring Creek Farm near Baldwin City, KS, and is entering her 5th year of commercial growing using organic and sustainable farming methods. As a "truck-farming" operation, the farm produces about 90 varieties of produce, with the heaviest production in heirloom tomatoes and root crops, including onions and sweet potatoes. Produce is sold weekly in Lawrence, KS to a natural foods grocery, several restaurants, Saturday Farmers Market, and a CSA of 21 families in Baldwin and Gardner. **E:** springcreekcsa@yahoo.com. **P:** 785-633-5292

Steve Tipton bought his wife Becky a hobby beekeeper kit for Christmas in 1988. From there, this hobby has “out of control” as the Tiptons now manage 100 hives of honeybees. The Tiptons are self-taught beekeepers, but spend a lot of time educating others about their experiences and about good practices in beekeeping. Steve has served as the president of the Northeast Kansas Beekeepers Association. Both Steve and Becky teach courses in the Master Beekeeper Course at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, present seminars at Honey Producers conferences, hold local beekeeping workshops and educate school children about their practice, to name a few. 9491 X Road, Meriden, KS 66512. **P:** (785) 484-3710. **E:** bstbees@embarqmail.com

Caroline Todd is beginning her sixth season as market manager for the Columbia Farmers' Market. During this time CFM has grown from forty to eight-five vendors and has reached customer counts over 5,000 in four hours on a Saturday morning. Recently CFM was awarded a USDA Farmers Market Promotion grant to be administered in 2010 and 2011. CFM has won Missouri Farmers' Market Association Market of the Year, 2004; Best Slogan/Motto, 2008; Best Marketing Campaign, 2008. Caroline and her family raise chickens and registered Angus cattle. PO Box 10012, Columbia, MO 65205 **P:** 573-823-6889. www.columbiafarmersmarket.org.

Tim Vala. (*a brief bio by his daughter!*) My Dad, Tim Vala, a man who was raised in the city of Omaha and earned a B.A. Degree from Nebraska Wesleyan University in Education, laughs now as he recalls his first foray into the world of farming. He bought a tractor he didn't know how to drive home, he planted fruits and vegetables he didn't know how to grow, but somewhere along the line he created a revolutionary farming business. Research, self- education, and perseverance were his most useful tools, and specialization became the key to his business success. Today, Vala's Pumpkin Patch has grown into a 152-acre operation, with nearly 55 acres of pumpkins planted every year. 12102 So. 180th St. Gretna, NE 68028. **P:** (402) 332-4200 **E:** timvala@yahoo.com.