

## **PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**

### **FINAL REPORT**

**Grantee:** Passing On the Farm Center; Minnesota West Community and Technical College

**Address:** 1593 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Granite Falls, MN 56241

**Contact:** David Roe  
Ag Internship Coordinator  
320-564-4511; ext. 111

**Report Due Date:** January 2, 2001

#### **1) Describe the main accomplishments of your project?**

The main accomplishments of the Production Agriculture Apprenticeship Program (PAAP) were the development of a comprehensive Work Process and the Related Technical Instruction for corn and soybean farming in Minnesota. The focus of the grant application, as it was originally written, involved strictly alfalfa production. At the time it was written, it was anticipated that a United States Department of Energy Biomass Electrical Energy Production demonstration project involving locally grown alfalfa being transformed into a raw material for electricity generation and valuable by-products would be the impetus for the development of a whole new industry for farmers. But the collapse of that project left insufficient resources for an alfalfa-focused apprenticeship program to take place.

We chose to concentrate on the corn-soybean production system instead. We received verbal approval from the Work-based Learning Specialist for the focus shift before proceeding. We believe the PAAP still provided the student participants exposure to the varied career options that exist in the corn and soybean production arena. We also believed it was designed to provide the students exposure to experiential learning to supplement their classroom work.

We fell short on the scope of the original grant intention, ending up with only one high school and one apprentice involved in the program. We found however, that the experiential and classroom-based curriculums are very challenging and involve a sustained commitment that a high school junior or senior may have difficulty following.

**2) How did your project contribute to system change?**

The Passing On the Farm Center's PAAP has contributed to system change by providing a structured, well-thought-out Schedule of Work Process that motivated young people and committed mentors can use as a benchmark to guide them on the experiential learning process. By following this process, the properly mentored young person will have increased their chances of ending up in a production agriculture occupation.

The original grant proposal, with its specific alfalfa focus, promised a new, unique curriculum based on that alfalfa focus. New curriculum wasn't necessary with the switch in emphasis to the corn-soybean program. We ensured Minnesota Graduation Standards were complied with by using our secondary agricultural education instructor in a consultant capacity on school-based curriculum issues.

**3) How did your project utilize and align funding resources?**

Funding from this grant was aligned with two other funding sources. This alignment gave POFC an adequate budget for salary, supplies, travel and consulting services.

While POFC doesn't consider secondary students to be its primary clientele, this grant provided us the resources to educate the production agriculture community on the benefits of the experiential learning process.

**4) How have you disseminated the project results?**

The results of this pilot project have not been disseminated yet. Upon approval, the process will be made available to secondary agricultural education instructors throughout Minnesota.

Pertinent portions of the program will be extensively used by mentors and mentees in POFC's Farm Connection program.

Members of Passing On the Farm Center's board of directors will receive the project results also. These individuals represent a diverse constituency of agricultural interests. Areas represented include: state legislators, state general farm organizations, state commodity-specific farm organizations, farm advocacy groups, Farm Business Management, private consultants, agricultural lenders and finally, producers themselves.

**5) Youth Apprenticeship Agreement**

A Youth Apprenticeship Agreement developed as a result of this grant is completed, attached and ready for approval by CFL. (See enclosed documents.)

**6) What assessment/evaluation did you do of your project? What were the results?**

**Who:** The verbal interviews were conducted by David Roe, Internship Coordinator for Passing On the Farm Center.

Jason Dehne, Yellow Medicine East High School Agricultural Education Instructor, and Keith D.Beito, local farmer/mentor participated in the interviews.

**Evaluation:** Summary is as follows:

The consensus was that the work process content was comprehensive enough to give the apprentice a good exposure to the various areas of expertise needed for production agriculture employment. The individual high school curriculum will vary from school to school. High school agricultural education departments fortunate enough to have multiple staff members will be better able to provide the broadest possible classroom learning experience for the apprentice. Single staff departments don't have the time or resources for the multiple class offerings of the bigger schools. The apprentices can still have their needs met however, if the suggested resource people involved in the related technical training are properly utilized.

Mentor training is critical to the success of the program. The program partnership must make sure that this mentor training is a priority of the apprenticeship coordinator. It is important to understand that unlike an industrial or manufacturing setting, in this program the employer and the mentor are one and the same individual. The farmer-mentor's workload is highly seasonal. The planting and harvest periods of the cropping season are very intense. Special accommodations must be made for the apprentice to receive mentoring during this period. The wage rebate is also critical for the participation of the successful, entrepreneurial farmer who agrees to serve as a mentor. The apprentice, by definition, doesn't start out as a productive employee. The mentor should be compensated for that as well as the reduction in their own productivity by allocating part of their time to the mentoring task.

It is important not to underestimate the difficulty of finding students with the maturity and commitment necessary to follow through on this multi-year effort. Success should not be measured by the numbers pushed through the program, but by the quality of the program graduate.

**7) Describe the proposed timeline for implementation.**

Passing On the Farm Center will not be implementing the PAAP with secondary students. The results of this process will be handed off to others for implementation at the secondary level. POFC will use parts of the program for use in the mentoring of beginning farmers participating in its Farm Connection program.

Had the proposed biomass energy production project proceeded, POFC undoubtedly would have moved forward with implementing the apprenticeship program as a way to expose young people to the advantages of alfalfa production in a crop production system. With an alfalfa focus, the apprenticeship program would have been unique enough to interest others in replicating it.



September 27, 2000

Ms. Lori Voss, Fiscal Agent  
Minnesota West Community and Technical College  
Passing on the Farm Center  
1593 – 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Granite Falls, MN 56241

**RE: Supplement No. 1 to Grant Contract No. E37-29187 (Youth Apprenticeship)**

Dear Ms. Voss:

Enclosed is a copy of your executed grant amendment for the above-referenced project. This supplement extends the grant contract end date to December 31, 2000.

Payments will be made in accordance with the original grant contract. The final payment will be made upon receipt and approval of your final program report and budget summary that is due within 30 days of the project end date.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (651) 582-8305.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pamela J. Schneider".

Pamela J. Schneider, Grants Coordinator  
Division of Lifework Development  
[pam.schneider@state.mn.us](mailto:pam.schneider@state.mn.us)

enc.

✓ Cc: Wendy Schalek

# **Youth Apprenticeship Grant**

## **Final Report**

### **Budget Narrative**

Budget Summary line number:

- 1) Minnesota West Community and Technical College administered the grant for Passing On the Farm Center (POFC). The College received the \$1000.
- 2) Mr. Jason Dehne, the agricultural education instructor at Yellow Medicine East High School was our licensed classroom teacher who advised POFC on curriculum and graduation standards. Mr. Dehne was paid the full amount allotted by the grant proposal for object code 140.
- 5) David Roe of the POFC staff, coordinated the non-instructional support. Possessing a B.S. degree in agronomy and agricultural economics and having completed 25 years of self-employed corn and soybean farming, Mr. Roe was selected to be POFC's internship coordinator for the apprenticeship program. When the emphasis of the program was switched from alfalfa to corn and soybeans, the need for spending the budgeted amount on outside consultants was greatly reduced. POFC requested and was granted permission to modify the budget to move funds from object code 305 to 170-185 and 200-297. (See Budget Summary lines 5, 6 and 7.)  
Mr. Keith Beito, a Granite Falls area farmer, consulted with us on the mentoring aspect of the apprenticeship program and was paid \$1,000 for his services.
- 12) No field trips were taken during the program development.
- 13) Many excellent curriculum and demonstration materials were purchased with the funds from object codes 401-433. These will be available to any high school that chooses to replicate the program.
- 18) A total of \$17,268 were spent to develop the Production Agriculture Apprenticeship Program. \$10,000 was received earlier from CFL to get the process started. Hopefully, with the completion of this Final Report, POFC will be able to receive the remaining \$7,268 that was expended.

# Budget Summary

FORM 3

Minnesota Department of Children, Families & Learning  
 Division of Lifework Development Funding Initiatives

contract # _____
modification # _____

LINE	UFARS/ Obj Code	MAPS/ Other Code	Budget Cost Categories & Description	Local/Regional*** STW Partnership	Minn. STW Requested Program Funds	In-Kind Funds	Other/ Fed./ State/Local/ Private Funds	Totals Proposed Grant	Requested Revision	Total Distribution YTD
1	110, 170	1510	Administrative*		1,000	1,000		2,000		1,000
2	140	1580	Licensed Classroom Teacher		1,700			1,700		1,700
3	141		Non-licensed Teacher							
4	145		Substitute Salaries							
5	170-185	0120	Non-Instructional Support		7,500	1,500	2,000	11,000	8,500	8,600
6	200-297	0274	Fringe Benefits		1,800	500		2,300	2,800	2,800
7	305	1560	Consultant Services		4,000	3,000	2,500	9,500	2,000	1,000
8	320's	2090	Communication Services/Postage				500	500		
9	366	2110	Professional Travel In-State		1,000	1,000		2,000		319
10			Professional Travel Out-State							
11	368		Professional Travel Out-State Federal Reimbursed							
12	390-394	2120	Student Transportation		1,000	500	500	2,000		0
13	401-433	3000	Supplies and Materials		2,000	500	2,500	5,000		1,949
14	460	1460	Textbooks and Workbooks				2,000	2,000		
15	899		Other, specific _____ _____							
16			Stipends**							
17	530	4000	Equipment**			2,000		2,000		
18			PROJECT TOTAL	\$	\$20,000	10,000	\$10,000	\$40,000		\$17,268

\*School-To-Work funding restricts administrative costs to 5% unless described in program criteria differently.

Provide this form for each budget revision request and with every final report for final program payment, or provide a BCL-025 or BCL-022.

\*\* Program specific grants only.

\*\*\* Column labeled 'Local/regional Partnership Funds' is used for federal STW funds only.

Note: Formal amendments are required when a change in the line items exceeds 10%.