

Rural Enterprise Center Awarded NCR-SARE Grant for Training Latino Farmers

The Rural Enterprise Center's Agripreneur Training Program was one of twelve projects selected to receive funding through the [USDA's North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education \(NCR-SARE\) Program](#). The two-year grant begins this fall and will make it possible to:

- Engage more aspiring Latino farmers in southeastern Minnesota in classroom and field sustainable agriculture training.
- Work with partner organizations like the [Land Stewardship Project](#) to create a network of regional farmer mentors.
- Offer stipends to farmer mentors, and to agripreneur trainees to help offset family income lost during training.
- Refine and test our training curriculum and begin to track the agripreneurs' progress and family situations across all phases of the training - to ensure they're getting the program support they need for long-term success.

"This is a significant step for the agripreneur training program," explained Reginaldo (Regi) Haslett-Marroquin, director of the Rural Enterprise Center. "The additional resources will support the families working hard to be successful within a new agricultural system."

Rural Enterprise Center
We see possibilities.



The New Ecology of Food

The Northfield News invited Regi to write a regular column describing the Rural Enterprise Center's vision for a new system of sustainable agriculture. His first feature ["Sustainability: The new ecology of food"](#) appeared May 14 and gives a good overview of why we need to change the status quo, and how our approach will move us towards that goal. (Hint: it's about more than raising chickens.)



The [Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation \(SMIF\)](#), one of our earliest supporters, published a profile of Jose Javier Peralta Rosas in one of their recent newsletters. Jose has been learning and working with the evolving agripreneur training program for nearly two years, primarily with raising free-range poultry. Now he's also helping new farmers in training, documenting production protocols that will become part of the larger training manual.

Here's what Jose Javier would like others to know about the program and the families that participate:

"That we are a Latino group - that we are working for a better future for our communities and for our children - that everyone that has a desire to know what we are doing and wants to join our program is welcome - as long as they have a strong desire to learn and do things well and work hard."

[Read more about Jose Javier and his family here. \(PDF\)](#)

Photo: Jose Javier, Maria Garcia and two of their three children

SAVE THE DATE: Mid-Summer Farm Tour and Fundraiser set for July 11

Plan to head to our southeastern Minnesota farm training locations to see for yourself what a new system of sustainable agriculture could look like. Locally grown food, music, and more are on the agenda from 3 - 7 p.m. that day. Plus you'll get a chance to meet and hear from some of the families and farmer mentors involved with the training program, and hear what you can do to help support the program. More details coming soon.

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