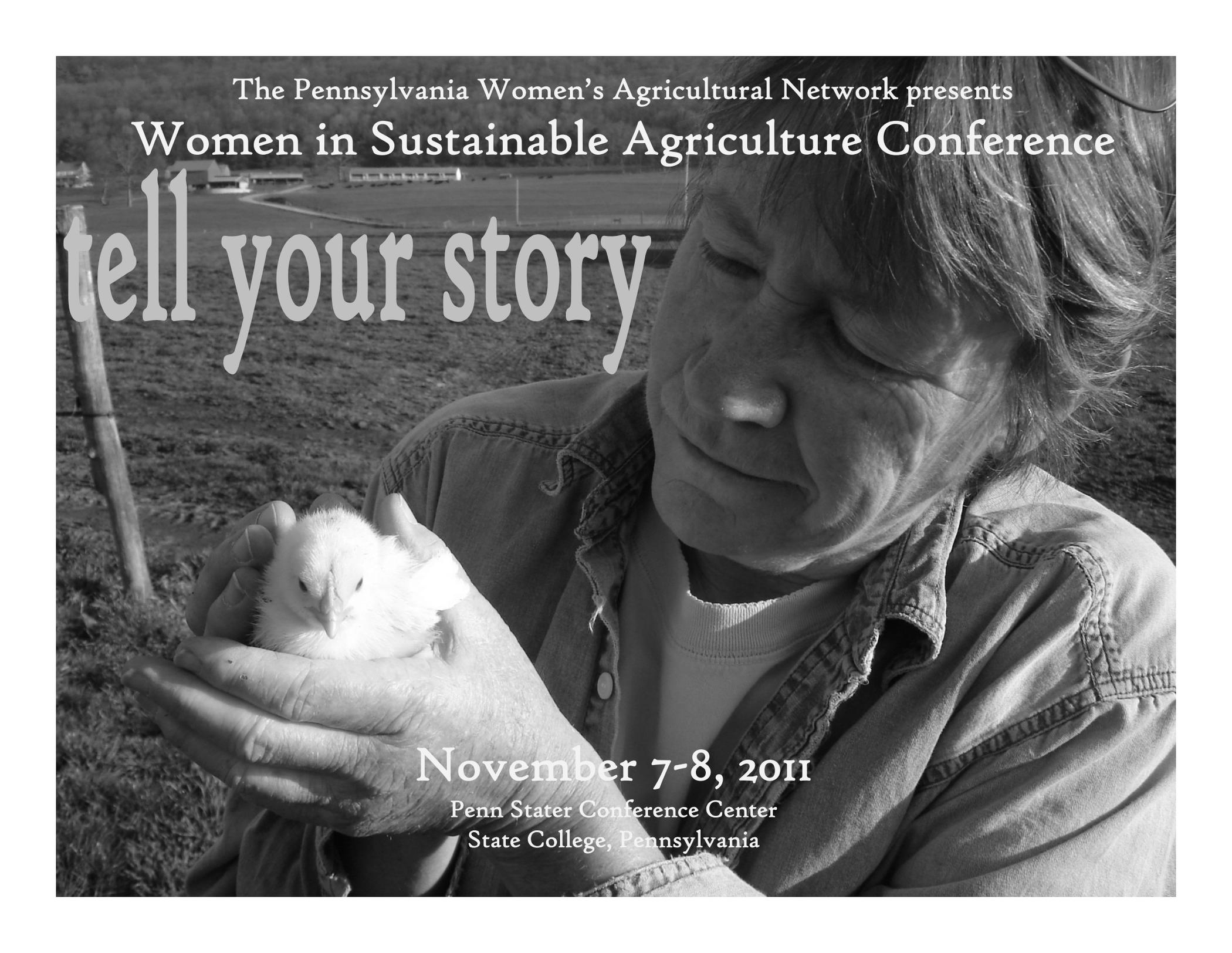
A photograph of a lush agricultural field. The foreground and middle ground are filled with tall, green corn plants. Interspersed among the corn are numerous bright yellow rapeseed flowers in various stages of bloom. The background is a dense field of similar yellow flowers, creating a vibrant, textured scene. Two horizontal green bars with white text are overlaid on the image.

Pennsylvania Women's Agricultural Network

2012 Year In Review



The Pennsylvania Women's Agricultural Network presents
Women in Sustainable Agriculture Conference

tell your story

November 7-8, 2011
Penn Stater Conference Center
State College, Pennsylvania

PASA Pre-Conference: Equipment Safety, Maintenance & Operation

Penn State Ag Arena

February 2, 2012

Facilitated by Doug Shauffler & Aaron Yoder of
Penn State's Department of Agricultural
Engineering



2012 Steering Committee Retreat

Nature's Inn at Bald Eagle

March 13 & 14, 2012

Development of PA-WAgN's Mentoring Program

The Power & Art of Persuasion presented by Elizabeth Johnson & Catherine Gray of The White House Project





*Making the Transition to Organic Vegetable
Production Workshop*

Village Acres Farm

March 13, 2012

*In collaboration with
Community Partnerships RC&D and NRCS*



Rec Park Farmers' Market

Lewistown, PA

June-October 2012

PA-WAgN received a USDA Farmers' Market Promotion Program grant to establish a farmers' market in a food desert.

PA-WAgN worked with local agencies to promote Tri-Valley Farmers' Market and establish a sister market, Rec Park Farmers' Market as a pilot program for establishing markets in low income communities.

PA-WAgN established the use of SNAP program benefits to increase sales of fresh local products to low-income families.

PA-WAgN developed "CookShop" – Weekly cooking demonstrations and nutritional education workshops to promote the use of fresh local products.

Average of 200
customers weekly





Expand Your Customer Base Through SNAP, WIC & EBT Programs

Lewistown, PA

April 11

Cheryl Burns, Outreach Specialist for Capital RC&D, explained how farmers' markets can accept SNAP payments through the EBT card swipe system.

Melissa Bishop, Nutrition Education Coordinator for Family Health Council of Central PA, Inc. and Shana Meiser, Manager of the WIC Program in Lewistown, discussed the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, which was established to allow WIC participants greater access to fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers.

Megan Epler, PASA, introduced the BuyFresh BuyLocal program and explained how it can benefit local Farmers Markets by promoting their products to people who are searching for locally grown produce.

Troubleshooting Problems in the Organic Greenhouse

M & M Robertson
Farm

April 12, 2012

Hosted by PA-WAgN
Regional Representative Maggie Robertson

Participants learned to prevent and solve pest, disease and fertility issues in the greenhouse.

In collaboration with Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture.



Annual Tour of Rodale Institute

Rodale Institute

June 6, 2012

The Honeybee Conservancy at Rodale Institute promotes natural and sustainable beekeeping practices through education and outreach. Coach Mark Smallwood, Executive Director, Rodale Institute, and Mary Ann Frazier, Honeybee Specialist, Penn State University, presented the benefits and challenges of setting up a bee conservancy on a farm using your own hives or hosting hives for others.



Growing Your Own Farm Market

Fisher Farmstead

July 18, 2012

We learned how one couple utilized their local resources to make a marketing dream come true. Paula & Jake Fisher started raising pumpkins 11 years ago and this year opened a beautiful roadside farm market to sell their own produce & meats. The Fishers described their journey from the end of the lane customer pick-up to how they purchased, renovated and opened their farm stand along Rte 522 in Mifflin County.





Building Farmer to Chef Relationships

Churchview Farm

August 14, 2012

Tara Rockacy of Churchview Farm and Kate Romane of E2 Pittsburgh described both sides of the business relationship between farmer and chef.

Kate described the importance of using local produce at her restaurant and how she sources it and works with local farmers.

Tara Rockacy explained how she markets to local restaurants and the benefits and challenges that go along with that. She also described how her partnership with Kate has also allowed her to offer on-farm dinners and other events to promote the farm.

Safe Equipment Operation & Maintenance

Blackberry Meadows
Farm

September 6, 2012

Instructors Dennis Murphy and Sam Steel, Agricultural Safety & Health Program, Penn State University, addressed tractor safety, maintenance, and operations during this hands-on workshop.

Participants learned what to look for when purchasing used equipment, how to hitch safely to drawbars and with 3-pt mounted attachments.

Pre-operation inspections of equipment were demonstrated and practiced.

Participants had the opportunity to operate small and mid-size tractors and attach equipment.





Upcoming Field Days

Managing & Mentoring Farm Apprentices

New Morning Farm

October 16, 2012

CSA from Greenhouse to Field to Plate

Village Acres Farm

October 17, 2012

The Whole Farm CSA

Yeehaw Farm

November 7, 2012

A vibrant field of yellow flowers, likely rapeseed, with lush green foliage. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, creating a dense and colorful scene. The background is a soft-focus field of similar flowers, while the foreground shows more detail of the leaves and stems.

One-Day Networking Symposium

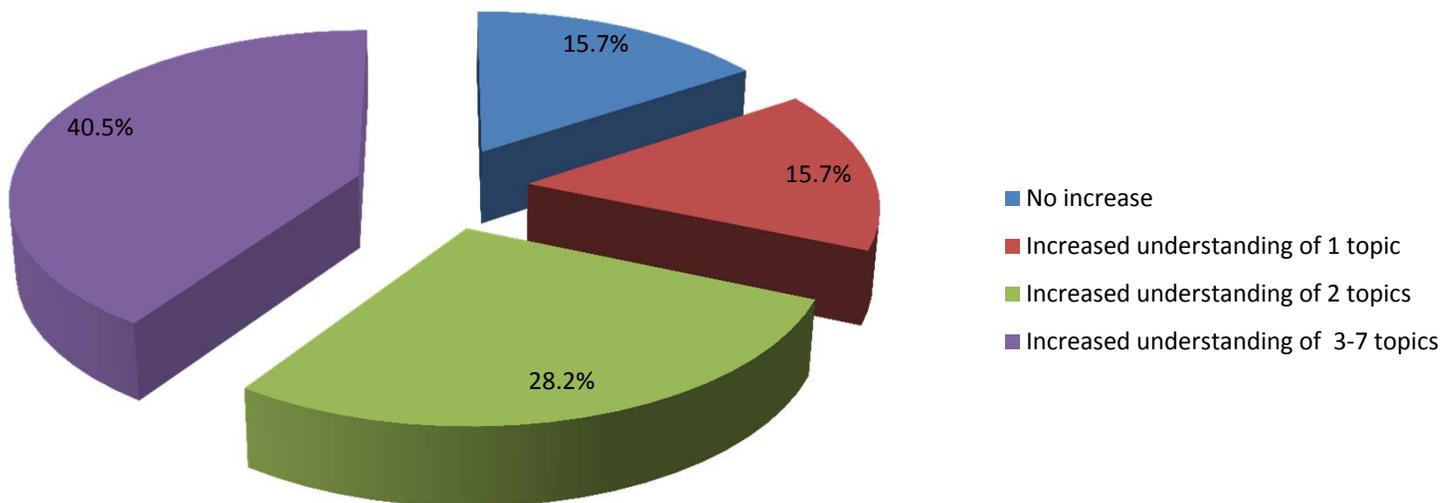
Woman to Woman: Pay It Forward

*Penn Stater
Conference Center*

December 7, 2012

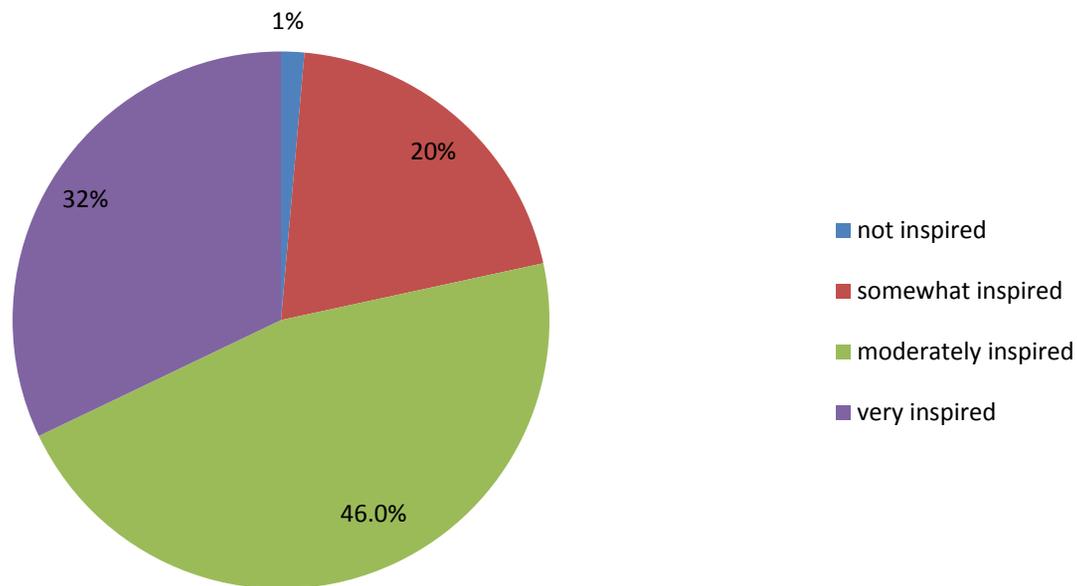
Evaluation Results

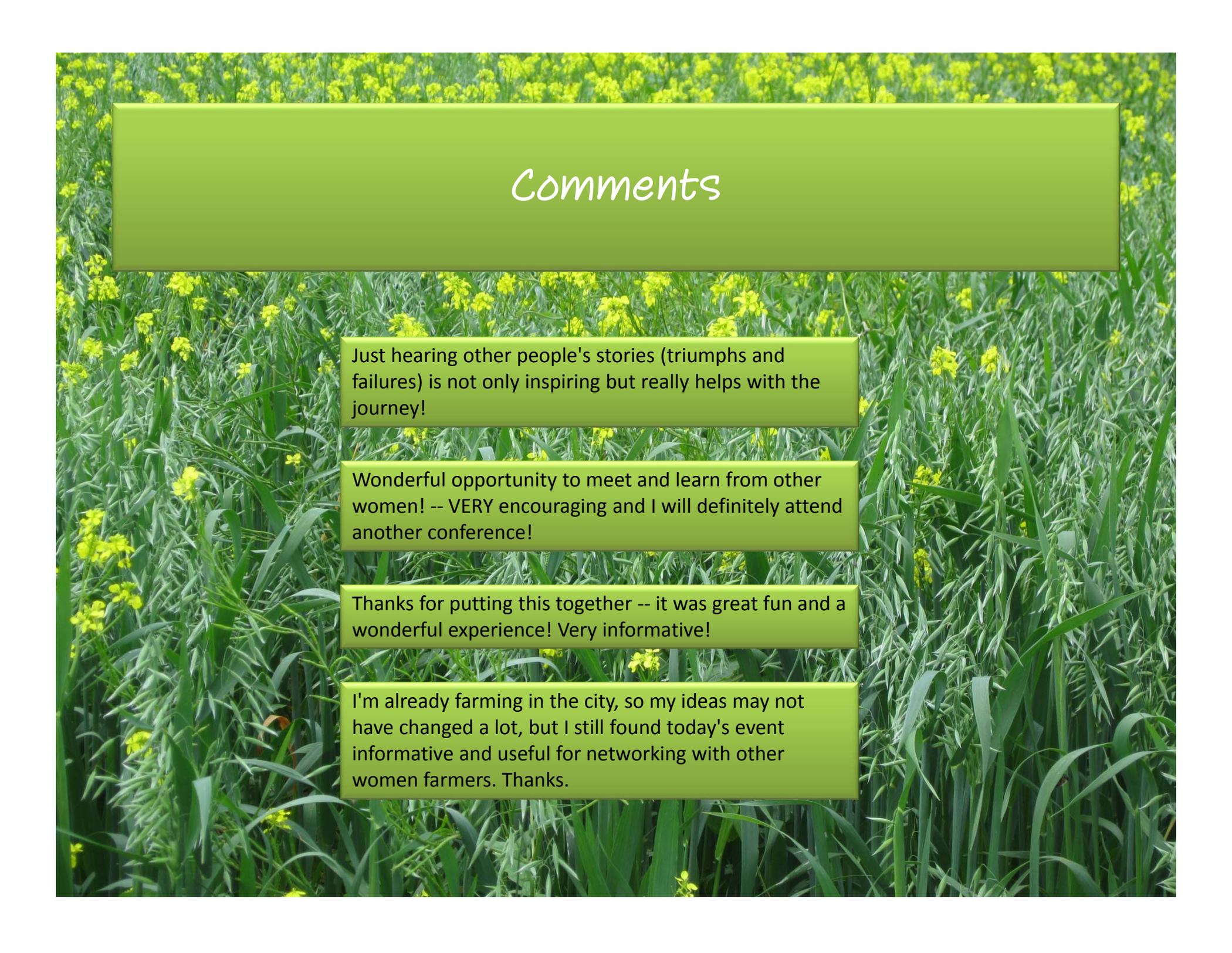
Participants' increase in understanding of
Field Day topics
n=351



Evaluation Results

**Extent that participants who have farms were inspired
by Field Day experience to modify farm operation
n=218**





Comments

Just hearing other people's stories (triumphs and failures) is not only inspiring but really helps with the journey!

Wonderful opportunity to meet and learn from other women! -- VERY encouraging and I will definitely attend another conference!

Thanks for putting this together -- it was great fun and a wonderful experience! Very informative!

I'm already farming in the city, so my ideas may not have changed a lot, but I still found today's event informative and useful for networking with other women farmers. Thanks.



Resources

Farmer to Farmer Field Guide

<http://agsci.psu.edu/wagn/topics>

Sit down at our virtual kitchen table to learn, get ideas, and share experiences!

PA-WAgN's Farmer-to-Farmer Field Guide is here to help us learn from each other, find mentors and network with other women farmers.

Curious about the farm you're going to visit? Missed a field day? Have a question or comment on one you recently attended? You can catch up, see pictures, videos and our notes from past and future field days in this section.

Research

Use of Conservation Practices by Women Farmers in the Northeastern United States

We conducted a survey of women farmers in the Northeast U.S. to better understand their use of conservation practices, and how their use is affected by demographic and farm characteristics, and membership in agricultural organizations and networks.

Over 85% of the 815 respondents belonged to at least one organization. The most common organizations reported were sustainable/organic agriculture organizations (53.5%) and general farm organizations (50.8%). About one-third of respondents belonged to commodity-based organizations.

Our results indicate that organizational membership and participation provide critical networks that support and reinforce the use of conservation practices. Compost production/application, crop rotation, manure incorporation, and organic crop and livestock production are more likely among members of sustainable/organic agriculture organizations, but less likely among member of general farm organizations.

Because women tend to have diversified operations with multiple markets, educational and regulatory programs that attempt to reach women farmers may need to consider the specific types of farms they operate to best match practices to their situations and goals.

Research

Women Farmers: Pulling Up Their Own Educational Boot Straps with Extension

We discovered that the reasons women have for coming to agricultural events have implications for how Extension may want to design and market events. The reason women want to attend educational events, just as men do, is for the subject matter, but women also look for other benefits: to meet women farmers in their area; hear from other women farmers as part of the learning process; become a better educator, and network.

The data confirm the isolation that women experience.

The data reveal that although men heard about WAgN events through Extension, women did not, suggesting on yet another measure, Extension's lack of engagement with women in agriculture and the potential for that engagement in future.

In summary, the research reported here examined how a network of women farmers, Extension educators and researchers designed educational events and evaluated them over four years for educational impact, expansion and enhancement of a network, and future marketing strategies.

Research

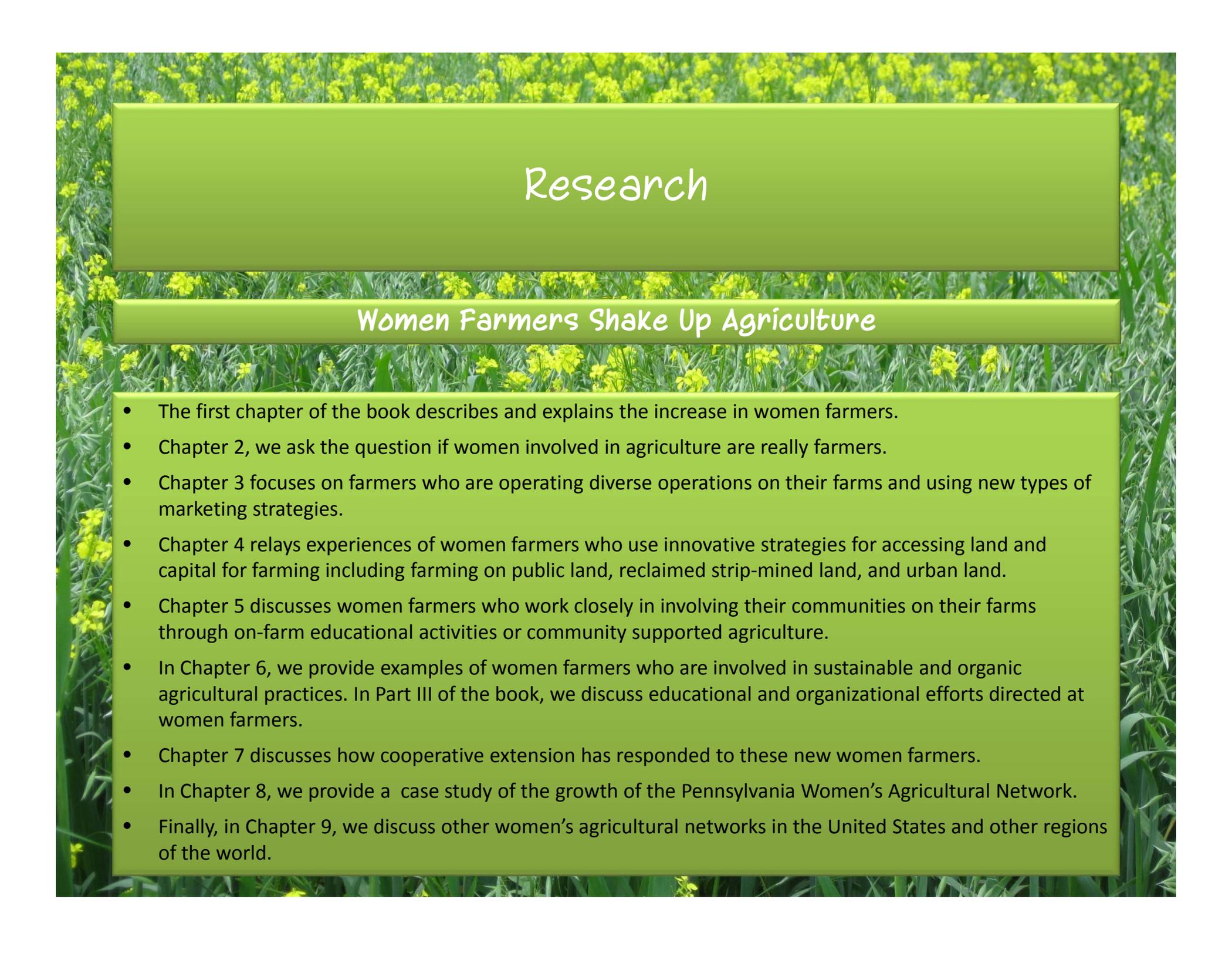
Multiple and Shifting Identities of Farm Women in the Northeastern United States

Recent Census of Agriculture data indicate a 30% growth in the number of women farmers in the US. Previous research on farm women's identities has found that many women who are extensively involved in farming do not consider themselves to be "farmers."

Recent research on farming women in Europe has explored farm women's shifting identities, but in the U.S., the continued reluctance for many women to identify themselves as farmers and the seemingly intractable connection of the identity of "farmer" to the male body remains deeply entrenched.

The survey was designed to assess multiple dimensions of farm women's identities, including farm operator, entrepreneur, partner, farm worker, bookkeeper, wife/domestic partner, and off-farm worker/professional.

These dimensions highlight both how they define themselves and how important these identities are to their lived experiences. In this paper, we first describe farm women's identities and multiple subjectivities.



Research

Women Farmers Shake Up Agriculture

- The first chapter of the book describes and explains the increase in women farmers.
- Chapter 2, we ask the question if women involved in agriculture are really farmers.
- Chapter 3 focuses on farmers who are operating diverse operations on their farms and using new types of marketing strategies.
- Chapter 4 relays experiences of women farmers who use innovative strategies for accessing land and capital for farming including farming on public land, reclaimed strip-mined land, and urban land.
- Chapter 5 discusses women farmers who work closely in involving their communities on their farms through on-farm educational activities or community supported agriculture.
- In Chapter 6, we provide examples of women farmers who are involved in sustainable and organic agricultural practices. In Part III of the book, we discuss educational and organizational efforts directed at women farmers.
- Chapter 7 discusses how cooperative extension has responded to these new women farmers.
- In Chapter 8, we provide a case study of the growth of the Pennsylvania Women's Agricultural Network.
- Finally, in Chapter 9, we discuss other women's agricultural networks in the United States and other regions of the world.