

Chronology of the Wallace Foundation for Rural Research and Development, Armstrong Research Farm, and Neely-Kinyon Research Farm

RFR-A1501

Introduction

The following is a timeline of major events related to the formation and subsequent actions of Wallace Foundation for Rural Research and Development (WFRRD) from 1987–2015 in southwest Iowa.

1987: Meetings started with farmers, agribusiness, and others interested in establishing a research farm in southwest Iowa.

1988: Ad hoc regional meeting was held for interested people from a 19-county area concerning ag research activity and other possible activities to stimulate the agricultural industry in southwest Iowa. Iowa State University administration also attended. The consensus of the group was to move ahead. Varel Bailey, Anita, Iowa, was elected chairman of the steering committee.

1989: The steering committee submitted reports. A decision was made to incorporate as a non-profit corporation. Organizational meeting was held and an interim board and officers were elected. Dennis Hilger, Creston, Iowa, drafted Articles of Incorporation.

1990: Name of the organization was the Wallace Foundation for Rural Research and Development with written permission from the heirs of Henry A. Wallace to use the family name. New president was Garry Pellett, Atlantic, Iowa. Articles of Incorporation and bylaws were prepared and approved. A committee was appointed to travel to Quincy, Illinois, to explore the idea of establishing an educational center in conjunction with the proposed research farm.

1990: A report from the committee on the visit to the Orr Center near Quincy, Illinois, was received favorably. Plans were approved for the establishment of a research and educational center in southwest Iowa with cooperation of the Wallace Foundation, Ag Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service of Iowa State University, and the four area community colleges serving southwest Iowa.

1991: An informational meeting was held with representatives from Western Iowa Tech, Iowa Western Community College, Southwestern Community College, Des Moines Area Community College, and Iowa State University with the objectives of developing a common understanding of the educational model of the agricultural center.

1991: Bylaws were formally adopted. Membership dues were designated. Volunteers began to organize on a county basis for fundraising and membership campaign. Public informational meetings were held in 14 of the 19 counties. Meetings were held to inform legislators of proposed plans. An agreement was reached with ISU Ag Foundation to act as recipient of all contributions in the short run. Regional orientation meetings were held in Red Oak, Corning, Greenfield, and Carroll to distribute promotional materials and train county volunteers.

1991: The treasurer reported \$13,000 seed money borrowed to date from the ISU Ag Foundation. Total receipts of membership and fundraising campaign deposited with Ag Foundation of about \$17,000. Active campaigns were underway in five counties only, due to late harvest activities necessitated by inclement weather during November.

1992: Favorable 501(c)3 ruling received from IRS. \$60,000 (including \$43,000 in dues and contributions received from ISU Ag Foundation) now on deposit. Possible availability of a farm owned by Page County as a research farm site was discussed. Board reiterated earlier position that fundraising efforts continue for the express purpose of buying site. If the as-yet-unnamed Site Selection Committee approved a site that would not necessitate purchase, all monies collected to that time would be re-directed to site improvements.

1992: Guests consisting of designated representatives from Iowa Western, Southwestern, Des Moines Area and Western Iowa Tech Community Colleges, and ISU presented statements of cooperation in the formulation and implementation of the educational program. The Education Steering Committee consisting of Wallace Foundation's four regional vice-presidents and one representative from each of the educational institutions was appointed.

1992: First annual meeting. Dr. Gerald Miller, ISU soil specialist, and Loren Kruse, editor of *Successful Farming*, were keynote speakers. Net savings account balance was \$105,050. Membership now exceeds 800. A needs survey from existing data and a report on research projects presently ongoing in the 19-county area was compiled. A criterion for a site was approved. Selection Committee begins work. Campaign to solicit contributions and grants from non-local corporations and businesses began.

1993: Wallace Foundation hosts first Rural Issues Conference and second annual meeting. Over 100 members attended. The Wallace Foundation announces purchase of a 400-acre farm on U.S. Highway 6 near Lewis and the Pottawattamie/Cass County line.

1993: Dedication and field day for the Armstrong Research Farm (ARF). More than 150 people gathered, despite drenching rains. Over 1,200 individuals and groups are members. Bernie Havlovic was named superintendent of both farms and moves to the ARF.

1993: The Wallace Foundation accepts the donation of a 160-acre satellite farm in Adair County from Wayne and Margaret Neely.

1994: Wallace Foundation hosts second Rural Issues Conference and third annual meeting. Over 125 people attended. ISU President Martin Jischke and Road Scholars visited the ARF.

1994: Dedication and field day for the Neely-Kinyon satellite farm. Second field day for the ARF was held. Over 200 people attended each event. Many improvements to the ARF were completed including a new windbreak, an addition to the metal building for offices, field tile, signage, field entrances, waterways, and new roofs. Long-term phosphorus and potassium fertilizer placement study plots established at the ARF (Note: study still being conducted).

1994: Precision Beef Alliance was founded by southwest Iowa beef producers with support of the WFRRD to enhance the quality and increase the profitability of their beef products through a supply chain-based information and branded marketing program.

1995: Over 120 members and guests attended the annual meeting of the WFRRD. Cornelia Flora, director, North Central Regional Center for Rural Development was keynote speaker on **Sustainable Communities: Developing Social Capital**.

1995: Iowa General Assembly approved and Governor Terry Branstad signed legislation to fund \$725,000 for the WFRRD to construct an Educational, Outreach, and Rural Development Center at the ARF.

1995: Members of the WFRRD Board and ISU and IWCC administrators traveled to Orr Center in Illinois to tour the land grant university/community college joint facilities. A new hoop barn was constructed for swine research at the ARF. Long-term nitrogen and crop rotation study plots established at the Armstrong Research Farm (Note: study still being conducted).

1995: Meeting of the Swine Advisory Committee was held to begin development of curriculum for two-year swine tech degree program. A degree was to be offered by Iowa Western Community College. The WFRRD formally accepts donation of the Walnut Grove Research Farm from Cargill, Inc. The 79-acre farm was located four miles south of Atlantic on Highway 6.

1996: Lauren Christian, director of the Iowa Pork Industry Center and professor of animal science at ISU, meets with the WFRRD Board to discuss development options for the Southwest Iowa Pork Center (former Walnut Grove Farm).

1996: The Wallace Foundation Site Development Committee selected HGM & Associates as the architect for the Learning Center.

1996: Groundbreaking ceremony for the Learning Center at the ARF. Speakers at the ceremony included ISU President Jischke, IWCC President Kinney, State Senator Leonard Boswell, U.S. Representative Jim Lightfoot, and State Representative Jack Drake.

1996: Dedication ceremony for the Southwest Iowa Swine Center. Speakers at the ceremony included ISU President Jischke; IWCC President Kinney; ISU Dean Topel; Lauren Christian, director of the Iowa Pork Center; John Magill, IWCC Swine Tech recruiter; and ISU extension specialists Darrell Busby and Shawn Shouse.

1996: The Southwest Iowa Coalition holds meeting at the ARF. Over 40 coalition members tour the farm.

1997: Economic development groups from 30 communities in southwest Iowa met with the Wallace Foundation to develop joint strategies for rural development activities and work through a strategic planning process, prioritizing projects for southwest Iowa. The WFRRD received USDA Telecommunication grant for a fiber optic system at the Learning Center.

1997: Construction was completed on the Wallace Learning Center. A ceramic mural **Patterns for Life** was created and installed at the Learning Center by Ingrid Lilligren, ISU ceramics professor. ISU extension staff, ISU Experiment Station staff, and the WFRRD staff move into the Learning Center. A cattle feedlot building and hay storage was completed at the ARF. Feeding MGA to mixed-sex pens of beef cattle trial conducted for three years at the ARF. Trial was the idea of local WFRRD beef committee.

1998: Dedication of the Wallace Learning Center. Distinguished guests included Iowa Governor Terry Branstad, former Congressman Jim Ross Lightfoot, Congressman Leonard Boswell, Congressman Greg Ganske, ISU President Martin Jischke, ISU Vice-Provost for Extension Stan Johnson, ISU Dean of Agriculture David Topel, and Dean of Vocational-Technical Education,

IWCC, Otis Elkin. Over 350 members of the WFRRD attended the ceremony.

1998: Students from the ISU Landscape Architecture department and local committee people designed the landscape plan for the Wallace Learning Center. Long-term agro-ecological research plots were established at the Neely-Kinyon Research Farm (Note: study still being conducted).

1998: The Wallace Foundation Swine Farm was renamed the “Lauren Christian Swine Research Farm.” Over 200 people attended the event, including many faculty from ISU and the swine industry. Tours of the new and remodeled gestation systems were conducted by members of the Wallace Foundation Swine Advisory Committee and ISU faculty and staff. The WFRRD received notification from the Vision 2020 program (Kellogg Foundation) that funding for the Wallace Foundation Value-Added Agriculture Center had been approved.

1998: More than 4,700 visitors representing several states and countries attended 42 different field days and tours at the WFRRD-owned research farms during 1998.

1999: Eighth annual meeting of the Wallace Foundation was postponed because of a blizzard. Approximately 95 people attended the rescheduled meeting. The rural development program **Surviving and Thriving: Agriculture in the 21st Century** program highlighted the meeting. Topics included consolidation in agriculture supply and merchandizing sectors, how farmers “fit” into the new food supply chains, and forming producer alliances. Windbreaks were planted at both farms.

1999: More than 7,800 visitors representing 15 states and 8 countries attended 57 different field days, classes, meetings or tours at the

WFRRD-owned research farms and Wallace Learning Center during 1999. An Ag Career Day was held for the first time and gave over 200 high school students the opportunity to explore careers in agriculture.

2000: Iowa Quality Producers Alliance sponsored by the WFRRD was launched. IQPA became Southwest Iowa Renewable Energy (SIRE) in 2005 that resulted in a dry-mill grain processing ethanol facility near Council Bluffs, Iowa. Southwest Iowa farmers and agribusiness professionals learned how to use the Internet in sessions led by ISU.

2000: Over 350 people attended a field day and mortgage-burning event. Over \$450,000 had been contributed by farm families, agribusinesses, and several foundations to pay for the ARF.

2001: Over 350 high school students from 16 area schools attended first Ag Career Day at the ARF. Demonstration Home Garden featured chickens, chicken tractor, and plants with chicken-related terms in their names. Terraces, drainage tile, and wetlands were installed at the ARF. Extension beef feedlot short course started at the ARF (the short course has been offered five times since).

2002: The WFRRD 11th annual meeting and the John Pesek Colloquium for Sustainable Agriculture with featured guests ISU emeritus professor John Pesek, ISU Dean of Agriculture Catherine Wotecki, Wallace Chair Lorna Butler, and Per Pinstруп-Andersen, 2001 World Food Prize recipient. A research vineyard was planted at the ARF.

2003: The research vineyard was expanded and a new hoop barn for machinery storage was constructed at the ARF.

2003-04: ISU Lauren Christian Swine Research Farm closed due to budget

reversions. Area extension director Bob Ramsey retired. Alan Ladd was named new area extension director.

2004: ISU builds hoop barn for feeding beef cattle at the Armstrong Research Farm. The 60 x 120 ft structure was one of the first to be built for feeding cattle in a confined bedded hoop barn. A greenhouse also was erected.

2005: The WFRRD received a grant to build a high tunnel greenhouse for vegetable production and research. A new grain bin also was constructed at the Armstrong Research Farm. Field drainage tile was installed at the Neely-Kinyon Research Farm. The WFRRD began a relationship with Harrisdale Homestead, Atlantic, Iowa. Comparing beef cattle performance in an open feedlot with shelter versus a bedded hoop barn trial conducted for three years at the Armstrong Research Farm. The trial was the idea of a local WFRRD beef committee.

2008: The WFRRD sold the 71-acre swine farm south of Atlantic to a private entity.

2009: The WFRRD annual meeting was moderated by Ken Root, National Farm Broadcaster of the Year-2009. Panelists included Wendy Wintersteen, ISU Dean of Agriculture and Life Sciences; John Lawrence, ISU Associate Dean for Extension; Maynard Hogberg, ISU Chair of Animal Science; and local farmers. Waterways, terraces, and a buffer strip were installed at the ARF. A hoop barn for hay storage was erected.

2010: ISU Extension reorganizes and discontinues area extension director position. Alan Ladd becomes regional extension

director for six counties in southwest Iowa and continues to be housed at the Wallace Learning Center.

2011: An estimated 125 research projects were completed on the research farms and 49,000 people visited the farms over the last 18 years. A new garage and terraces/tile were installed at the ARF.

2012: Field drainage tile was installed at the Neely-Kinyon Research Farm.

2013: New solar-powered automated weather stations were installed at the Armstrong and Neely-Kinyon Research Farms.

2014: The WFRRD supported and funded the ISU on-farm cooperator trials program across southwest Iowa. The program uses the ARF as its logistical hub.

2015: The WFRRD annual meeting featured ISU professors Matt Helmers and David Swenson. Helmers discussed using prairie strips in crop fields to reduce nutrient runoff. Swenson gave an overview of Iowa's rural and ag economies.

2015: The WFRRD celebrates its 25th anniversary. Bernie Havlovic retires, Dallas Maxwell is named interim superintendent and Daniel Schaben, ISU ag specialist, moved into the house at the ARF.

2015: An estimated 1,129 research projects were completed on the research farms and more than 63,000 people visited the farms at 615 events over the last 23 years. Twenty-three research progress reports will have been issued with approximately 526 articles on 1,280 pages.