

X ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL AGROECOLOGY SHORTCOURSE

Special Focus:

Participatory Action Research in Agroecology to Support Sustainable Foods Systems

Organized and Coordinated by:

V. Ernesto Méndez & Stephen R. Gliessman

The University of Vermont's (UVM) College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) Plant & Soil Science Dept., Environmental Program, Center for Sustainable Agriculture, CUPS office, Continuing Education • University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) • Program in Community and Agroecology (PICA) • Community Agroecology Network (CAN) • Heifer International

Place: The University of Vermont, Burlington, VT, U.S.A.

Date: 5-18 July, 2009

Description

This year's course has a special focus on conceptualizing and applying participatory action research (PAR) approaches in agroecology to develop more sustainable food systems. In addition to providing a solid introduction to the field of agroecology, the course presents a critical overview of participatory approaches and methods, illustrated with long-term, ongoing PAR processes in the U.S., Latin America and Spain. This year's setting in beautiful Vermont will allow participants to learn about one of the strongest locally-based food systems in the United States.

Academic Activities

The course will consist of lectures, demonstrations, and field applications of agroecology. Discussions of course concepts will be complemented with on-farm and in-garden experiences in research and production alternatives. Activities will include presentations on specific topics given by invited specialists, group discussions on assigned readings, hands-on field activities, individual and group presentations, and field trips to local farms and training programs. Participants will receive key texts, bibliographies, and publications in the field of agroecology, and will access the University of California library system and other on-line resources to search the contemporary knowledge-base on agroecology and sustainable food systems. Given this year's special focus, the course content has been expanded to include a range of action-education and training systems and examples.

Instructors

This year the course is organized through a partnership between Dr. Ernesto Méndez' Agroecology and Rural Livelihoods research group at the University of Vermont (<http://www.uvm.edu/~emendez/>) and Dr. Steve Gliessman's Agroecology Research Group at the University of California, Santa Cruz (<http://www.agroecology.org/people.htm>). These two groups will provide core instruction for the course, and will be joined by instructors and specialists from the course partners, such as the Community Agroecology Network (<http://www.communityagroecology.net/>), UVM's Center for Sustainable Agriculture (<http://www.uvm.edu/~susagctr/>), College of Agriculture <http://www.uvm.edu/cals/>, Plant and Soil Science Department (<http://www.uvm.edu/~pss/>) and Heifer International (www.heifer.org). Additional instructors will come from an extensive network of educators, trainers, practitioners, and activists in agroecology and food system work.

Eligibility

We encourage applications from research centers, governmental and non-governmental organizations, colleges and universities, private institutions, community development groups,

farmers, teachers, and agricultural professionals interested in teaching and training in agroecology and the promotion of sustainable agriculture. Enrollment is limited to 25 non-credit, and 10 for credit participants, for a total of 35. The course will be in English, so a working knowledge of English is required for participation.

Requirements for Admission

Interested candidates should send a short resume and cover letter (**preferably by email**) explaining their background, current work, and reasons for taking the course. **We will receive applications until the course is filled (25 participants)**. Participants will be notified of their acceptance within 2 weeks of their application submission, at which time they will need to pay their fees, within the established deadlines below. Upon completion of the full program of the course, participants will be granted a Certificate of Participation. Please address applications to Dr. Ernesto Méndez, Course Coordinator, and email them to: vtagroecology@gmail.com.

Fees/Accommodation Options

The course fee is comprehensive, including all tuition, course & lecture materials, accommodations, three meals per day, field trips and administrative fees. Nights covered start on Sunday July 5 and end Friday July 17. **Fees do not include airfare or stays for the period before and/or after the course**. We are offering two payment options depending on the timing of registration.

Regrettably, although we are seeking funding for scholarships, at this time we are unable to provide any type of financial support for course participants.

Registration Package and Fees:*

Application received by April 1, 2009

Developed country residents (North America & Europe): \$1980.00 for single occupancy; \$1900 for double occupancy.

Developing country residents: \$1880.00 for single occupancy; \$1800 for double occupancy

* We will accept these packages until the enrollment reaches 25 participants.

Fees received by June 10, 2009

Developed country residents (North America & Europe): \$2080.00 for single occupancy; \$2000 for double occupancy.

Developing country residents: \$1980.00 for single occupancy; \$1900 for double occupancy

* We will accept these packages until the enrollment reaches 25 participants.

Mail:

International Agroecology Shortcourse
c/o Ernesto Mendez
Department of Plant and Soil Science
Hills Agricultural Building
University of Vermont
Burlington, VT 05405
Fax: (802) 656-4656

Electronic submission:

Email resume and letter to: vtagroecology@gmail.com **note:** please use text within the email message or attach a document in MS Word or PDF format.

Payment

Participants should pay course fees by the dates indicated by bank check or money order in US dollars payable through a United States bank to: **The University of Vermont** and mailed to the address above. Let us know by email if you would prefer to do it by electronic wire transfers.

Questions regarding the course can be emailed to vtagroecology@gmail.com.

ORGANIZERS/INSTRUCTORS

V. Ernesto Méndez (EM), Assistant Professor of Agroecology, University of Vermont (UVM) & Co-Director, Community Agroecology Network (CAN)

Stephen R. Gliessman (SG), Alfred Heller Professor of Agroecology, University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC)

OTHER INSTRUCTORS

Christopher M. Bacon (CB), PhD, Ciriacy Fellow, University of California, Berkeley

Yolanda Chen (YC), Assistant Professor of Agroecology & Sustainable Pest Management, UVM

Jon Erickson (JE), Associate Professor of Ecological Economics, UVM

Carlos Guadarrama (CG), Professor of Agroecology, University of Chapingo, México

John Hayden (JH), Lecturer in Agroecology, UVM and The Farm Between

Roberta Jaffe (RJ), Co-Director, CAN

Juan Jose Jimenez-Osornio (JJ), Professor, UADY, PROTROPICO, Merida, Yucatan, Mexico.

Sarah Taylor Lovell (SL), Assistant Professor of Ecological Landscape Design, UVM

Fred Magdoff (FM), Professor Emeritus, Soil Agroecologist, UVM

Deb Neher (DN), Associate Professor of Soil Ecology, UVM

Karen Nordstrom (KN), Doctoral Candidate in Sustainability Education, UVM

Francisco Rosado-May (FR), President, Maya Intercultural University of Quintana Roo, Mexico.

Amy Trubeck (AT), Assistant Professor of Food Systems, UVM

Laura Trujillo (LT), Professor, Political Ecology, University of Chapingo, México

Lini Wollenberg, Director, Center for Sustainable Agriculture, UVM

Graduate students and affiliates of the Agroecology and Rural Livelihoods Research Group, UVM

Vermont Farmers and organizations: Digger's Mirth, The Farm Between, The Intervale Center, The Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Many Others !!

**PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)
INTERNATIONAL AGROECOLOGY SHORTCOURSE: JULY 5-17, 2009**

DAY	TIME	INSTRUCTOR
Monday 6		
Module 1: The Basic Principles of Agroecology		
1.1 Introduction, Course Overview & Welcome from CALS, PSS Chair or ENVIS director	8:30-9:30 am	EM & Team
1.2 Introduction to accomodations, logistics, PICA, CAN	9:30-10:30	EM & Team
<i>Break</i>	10:30-10:45	
1.3 Participant and Instructor Introductions & Presentations	10:45-12:00	ALL
<i>Lunch</i>	12:00-1:15 pm	
1.4 Basic Principles of Agroecology	1:30-2:30	SG
1.5 Introduction to the Vermont Landscape and its Food System Tour of UVM and Horticultural Research Center	2:30-4:00	EM & others at UVM
<i>Break</i>	4:00-4:15	
Applying the concepts of agroecology in your own community, setting up our feedback process	4:15-5:30	Facilitators
<i>Dinner</i>	6:30	
Tuesday 7		
Module 2: Sustainable Resource Management		
2.1 Managing Resources Sustainably - introduction	8:30-8:45 am	SG
2.2 Soil Agroecology and Management	8:45-9:45	DN/FM
<i>Break</i>	9:45-10:00	
2.3 Sustainable Water Management	10:00-11:00	SG
2.4 Management of Biotic Resources	11:00-12:00	JJ
<i>Lunch</i>	12:00-1:15 pm	
2.5 Agroecological and Sustainable Pest Management	1:15-2:15	YC
<i>Break</i>	2:15-2:30	
2.6 Tour of the Intervale	2:30-4:30	EM,
Small group discussion of concept applications	4:30-5:30	Facilitators
<i>Dinner</i>	6:30	
Wednesday 8		
Module 3: Managing Diversity in Agroecosystems		
3.1 Managing Diversity in Agroecosystems	8:30-9:30 am	SG
3.2 Cropping System Design & Management	9:30-10:30	SG
<i>Break</i>	10:30-10:45	
3.3 Agroforestry in Home Gardens in the Yucatan, Mexico	10:45-11:45	JJ
<i>Lunch</i>	12:00-1:30 pm	
3.4 Agroecosystem Biodiversity: Hort Farm Field Exercise	1:30-3:30	All
<i>Break</i>	3:30-4:00	
Small group discussion of diversity activities.	4:00-5:00	Facilitators
Summary presentations of findings for small groups	5:00-6:00	All
<i>Dinner</i>	6:30	
Thursday 9		
Module 3: Continued		
3.5. The Role of Animals in Sustainable Agroecosystems	8:30-10:00 am	SG, JH
<i>Break</i>	10:00-10:15	
3.6 The Conversion Process: Diversification and sustainability	10:15-11:15	SG
3.7 The VT Farmer's Perspective: Applying Agroecology on-farm	11:15-12:15	JH
<i>Lunch</i>	12:15-1:30 pm	
3.8 Field Trip to Vermont Farms	1:30-5:30	All
Small group discussion of conversion process	5:30-6:15	Facilitators
<i>Dinner</i>	6:30	

<u>Friday 10</u>		
Module 4: Participatory Action Research Approaches Agroecology		
4.1 Introduction	8:30-8:45 am	EM, CB, SG
4.2 The VT CPAR Network	8:45-10:00	CPAR
<i>Break</i>	10:00-10:15	
4.3 Approaches, Methods, Reflections in PAR	10:15-11:15	CPAR
4.4 Building Community Networks in Agroecology: a case study in process on the central California coast.	11:15-12:15	
<i>Lunch</i>	12:15-1:30 pm	
4.5 Long-Term PAR Processes in Shade Coffee of Mesoamerica	1:30-3:00	EM, CB, LT, CG,
<i>Break</i>	3:00-3:15	
4.6 Continued...	3:15-4:00	EM, CB, LT, CG,
Small group discussion of community-based agroecology	4:00-5:00	Facilitators
<i>Dinner</i>	6:30	
<u>Saturday 11</u>		
Module 5: Agri-Food Systems		
5.1 Introduction to Agri-Food Systems	8:30-9:30 am	CB
5.2 Food Chains: alternative markets and food sovereignty	9:30-10:30	LT
<i>Break</i>	10:30-10:45	
5.3 Food Systems: an anthropological perspective	10:45-12:00	AT
5.4 Burlington Farmer's Market and afternoon in Burlington	11:45-	
<u>Sunday 12</u>		
<i>FREE DAY!!!</i>		
<u>Monday 13</u>		
Module 6: Vermont Food Systems – Field Trip/Visits		
6.1 Vermont Food Network	9:30 -11:30 am	
<i>Lunch</i>	12:00-1:00 pm	
6.2 Other: farms, artisanal production, etc.	1:00-4:00	
Small group discussion of creating opportunities	4:30-5:00	Facilitators
Mid-course evaluation discussion	5:00-6:00	All
<i>Dinner</i>	6:30	
<u>Tuesday 14</u>		
Module 7: The Landscape		
6.6 Introduction	8:30-9:30 am	EM, SL
6.7 The Multifunctional Landscape	9:30-10:30	SL
<i>Break</i>	10:30-10:45	
6.8 Ecosystem Services: an Ecological Economics Perspective	10:45-11:45	JE
<i>Lunch</i>	11:45-1:15 pm	
6.9 Urban Agroecology	1:15-2:15	STL
Activities !!!	2:15-4:15	
<i>Break (!)</i>	4:15-4:30	
Small Group discussion on wrap-up of CAN approach	4:30-5:30	Facilitators
<i>Dinner</i>	6:30	
<u>Wednesday 15</u>		
Module 7: Developing Sustainable Food Systems		
7.1 Food Citizenship and a Declaration of Food Independence	8:30-9:30 am	SG
7.2 Choice vs. Access in agro-food systems	9:30-10:30	
<i>Break</i>	10:30-10:45	
7.3 University Food Systems Initiatives	10:45-11:45	
<i>Lunch</i>	12:00-1:30 pm	
7.4 The Role of Higher Education in Understanding and Promoting CPAR and Sustainable Food Systems Sustainability	1:30-2:30	RM
7.5 Field Trip	2:30-5:00	Facilitators
Small Group discussions on Declaring Food Independence	5:30-6:00	Facilitators
<i>Dinner</i>	6:30	

Thursday 16		
Module 8: Designing Sustainable Food Systems		
8.1 The Transition to Sustainability	8:30-9:30 am	SG
8.2 Indicators of Sustainability	9:30-10:30	CG
<i>Break</i>	10:30-10:45	
8.3 Linking Social and Ecological Networks for Sustainability	10:45-12:00	SG, RJ, EM, CB, CG, JJ, RM
<i>Lunch</i>	12:00-1:30 pm	
8.4 Action applications: Sustainability analysis workshops	1:30-4:30	All
Small Group discussions on Sustainability	4:30-5:30	Facilitators
Friday 17		
Module 9: Course Synthesis		
PAR in agroecology to support food system sustainability - Main conclusions - Challenges - The way forward	8:30-10:30 am	SG
<i>Break</i>	10:30-11:00	
9.3 Facilitated Discussion and Course Evaluation	11:00-12:15	CB
<i>Lunch</i>	12:15-1:30	
Going Away Party !!!	Evening	All
Saturday 18: Departure ☹		