

AGROECOLOGY

NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2008 VOL.3 NO.8

MASTER'S OF SCIENCE (UMB)

WHAT IS AGROECOLOGY

The academic field that bridges agriculture, nature and society.

Agroecology links theory and practice using social and natural sciences to describe, analyze and manage complex agroecosystems. The program focuses on integrating ecology, organic and conventional agriculture, socio-economics and culture with the ultimate goal of sustaining production, food security, community and environmental health.

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WELCOME TO THE NEW STUDENTS OF AGROECOLOGY

August marks the beginning of the Agroecology MSc program. This newsletter is dedicated to the new class of future agroecologists who have come to Norway to take these courses. We warmly welcome you all to UMB this autumn.

As in previous years, the students of Agroecology are a diverse group of people from nine different countries. They include European participants from France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Norway as well as students from as far away as Sri Lanka, China, Ethiopia and the United States.

This year is also the first time that a double degree option is available for guest students participating from the FESIA schools in France. Eight French students will be the first to receive an Agroecology Master's degree in addition to the degree they receive from their own institutions.

All together, this year's class has a robust total of 23 students with a diversity of backgrounds.

- Aster Assefa (Ethiopia), biology
- Miriam Bacchin (Italy), agronomy
- Bertille Baillet (France), agronomy, biology
- Torleif Bakke (Norway), agronomy
- Marion Benoît (France), agronomy
- Bénédicte Blin (France), agronomy
- Renee Ciulla (USA), environmental studies
- Julia Clause (France), agronomy
- Manuel Cornolti (Italy), agronomy
- Mathieu Crabos (France), agronomy
- Laetitia Durlin (France), agronomy
- Haichao Fan (China), horticulture, agronomy
- Marine-Sophie Gimaret (France), agronomy
- Joy Hought (USA), journalism, anthropology
- Mandy Häger (Germany), environmental science
- Chamalie Jayalath (Sri Lanka), agronomy
- Årolilja Jørgensrud, (Norway), biology
- Drew Katz (USA), social science
- Lauren Krizansky (USA), agricultural journalism
- Kirsten Lenferink (Holland), organic agriculture
- Jean-Christophe Michaud (France), agronomy
- Ignazio Romeo (Italy), agronomy
- Serena Viviani (Italy), agronomy

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AGROECOLOGY GRADUATES: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

CHUCK FRANCIS AND KAREN ADLER

What do agroecology graduates do when they finish the MSc degree at UMB? The answers are various, and perhaps are less obvious than what happens to graduates in soils or agricultural economics. Our prior students are now in a wide range of activities in the non-profit, educational, government, and private sectors. Here are several short profiles of where people are and what they are doing, and even some quotes on the relevance of their academic and practical experiences in agroecology.

Frøydis Linden (Norway) currently works as an inspector who certifies organic farmers in the southwest part of the country. She is employed by DEBIO, the national cooperative certification organization.

Kjartan Åsebo (Norway) is education director of the agricultural high school in Arendal in southern Norway. He teaches in the environmental education and agricultural mechanics courses, and organizes faculty assignments. He previously completed a thesis on the new farmers' markets program when it started in Norway [see AE Newsletter, May 2006]

Gloria Rótolo (Argentina) is a researcher and extension specialist with INTA, the national agricultural research organization in Argentina. She is currently refining a PhD program plan that will support her research in energy analysis of alternative farming systems in the Pampas region.

Steffen Adler (Norway) has worked for the Norwegian research organization BIOFORSK in Bodø in the north of Norway, and is now in a PhD program at the organic research center in Tingvoll, Norway investigating integrated farming systems.

Corinne Kolm (U.S.A.) worked as coordinator of the *Buy Fresh, Buy Local* campaign in Nebraska while working on her thesis on local economics of the crane migration event each year, and how farmers might benefit. She is now an inspector and deals with information requests to OneCert, a private organic certification company in Lincoln, NE.

Ali English (Canada) currently co-owns and manages a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) business with two partners in Ontario, Canada. They have about 150 subscribers in this local food system. Ali worked to establish the organic agriculture major and internship at University of Guelph in Ontario.

Bastian Hoffmann (Germany/Norway) has been working as an agricultural specialist in the Mid-Helgeland research association, and is now the Executive Director of the Hordeland agricultural office in Bergen. He says that the education and orientation in the Food Systems Course (PAE 303) was highly valuable to him in promoting the growth of organic food and farming in his region in western Norway.

Michaela Vasström (Denmark) lives in southern Norway and is pursuing a PhD program in learning at the regional scale. Following the methods developed in her MSc thesis project, she is using highly participatory methods and stakeholder networks to inform the research direction.

Petra Bakewell-Stone (U.K.) lives in Tanzania and works as a private consultant with NGOs in Tanzania and elsewhere in East Africa. Her research on organic agriculture in Tanzania and the results of a national planning workshop continue to guide future development of this emerging sector of the food system.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER?

We would like to welcome anyone from the Agroecology community to submit to this newsletter. It is our intention to showcase issues, people, events and stories related to agroecology from anyone interested in contributing to our monthly publication. In fact, it is this richness of perspectives that makes the newsletter more interesting and relevant. For graduates who read the newsletter, we would like to feature your careers as a way of highlighting the kinds of work available for agroecology graduates. Please send us a profile of what you are currently doing, and we will share this information with all the readers. We are also interested in displaying the theses of present students, as well as publishing stories of importance for the field of agroecology. In this way, we hope promote the continued cohesion of the agroecology learning community, and to span the years from when the first graduates finished the MSc degree to the present student group at UMB. We look forward to hearing from you and welcome your creative contributions!