



For Immediate Release
August 10, 2009

Intro to Permaculture Class and Design Workshop Agriculture Based on Nature's Interrelationships

Jefferson – Area residents will have the opportunity to learn about permaculture on Friday, September 18, and to apply the principles of permaculture to a specific property on Saturday, September 19. Mark Shepard, certified permaculture designer, consultant and teacher, will lead both events.

Shepard and his family live in Viola, Wisconsin, where they have transformed 100 acres of monoculture into New Forest Farm, one of the country's first and finest farm-scale models of permaculture. The farm features chestnut, hazelnut and fruit trees, a variety of other fruits and vegetables, chickens, pigs and many other species. The Shepards are producers for Organic Valley Cooperative.

Permaculture is an approach to designing human settlements and perennial agricultural systems that mimic the complex interrelationships found in nature. The term "permaculture" was coined by Australians Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in the 1970s, but many of the concepts were practiced by native people and early civilizations, long before the advent of cheap energy.

The advantage of permaculture over monoculture is this: A permaculture (polyculture) is more resilient due to integrated diversity, the same as in nature. Wastes become resources and ecosystems are restored. Once established, little effort is needed to maintain a polycultural system. In contrast, a monoculture (for example, large acreages of corn or soybeans) works against nature, requiring more energy and inputs, producing concentrated and often toxic wastes. Over time, a monoculture depletes resources and yields eventually decline.

Attendance at Friday evening's Introduction to Permaculture class is \$5.00 per vehicle with proceeds benefiting Sustain Jefferson (www.sustainjefferson.org). Bikers and walkers may attend for free. Preregistration for Friday's class is requested, although walk-ins will be welcome as space permits. The class will be held at UW-Extension, Room 8/9, 864 Collins Road, Jefferson, from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Saturday's Permaculture Design Intensive Workshop will be hosted by Wild Abundance Farm, W6635 Kiesling Road, Jefferson, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This hands-on workshop is limited to 25 participants. Registration is \$40 per person including lunch, and preregistration is required. Participants in Saturday's workshop are asked to bring a shovel and gloves if possible, and are advised to dress for the weather, as the event will be held, rain or shine. Camping will be available at the farm for participants (must supply own tent), with a potluck dinner Saturday evening. Childcare may be available – please inquire when registering.

These tandem trainings will provide participants the opportunity to learn first the principles of permaculture, and second, how to apply them to design an integrated system producing food, fuel, fiber, medicines and wildlife habitat. Although attendance at Friday evening's class is not strictly required for participation in Saturday's workshop, it will be very helpful in understanding the principles being implemented.

To register for Friday evening's class and/or Saturday's workshop, or for more information, call 920-674-2237, or email wildabundancefarm@gmail.com.