



Southern University and A&M College System  
**AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER**  
Ashford O. Williams Hall • Post Office Box 10010 • Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70813  
(225) 771-2262 • (225) 771-4464 Fax • [www.suagcenter.com](http://www.suagcenter.com)

## **Research Impact**

Benefits from State & Federal Partnership

### **SUSTAINABLE PLANT AND ANIMAL PRODUCTION SYSTEMS**

#### **TOPIC**

*Sustainable Agricultural Training for Agricultural Professionals and Farmers*

#### **ISSUE**

Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center gives leadership to the State Sustainable Agricultural Program funded by the USDA Sustainable Agricultural Research and Education (SARE) program. The program is geared towards providing agricultural professionals, producers, and others with training that promotes agricultural systems that are economically profitable, environmentally viable, and socially just. Southern University and Louisiana State University personnel serve as state coordinators for this program. Many agricultural professionals in the state lacked a working knowledge of various aspects of sustainable production systems, particularly those that involve organic production. At the same time, consumer demand for agricultural products raised with minimum or no synthetic chemical inputs is increasing. Thus, there is a niche for small-scale growers to supply this demand.

#### **WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?**

Sustainable agricultural workshops are conducted each year. The theme for the major workshop held in 2001 was "Agricultural relationships between urban and rural communities." Topics covered included farmers markets, agricultural training for teachers, urban agricultural programs in public schools, and issues and concerns regarding genetic engineering. The theme for the main program held in 2002 at Southern University was "Organic Production in Louisiana: Opportunities and Challenges." A historical and philosophical background on organic production in the state and nation was provided. A panel of organic growers discussed production and marketing strategies. Information was also provided on organic certification requirements. A workshop on alternative animal enterprises is planned for 2004.

#### **IMPACT**

The major workshops in 2001 and 2002 were both broadcast to distance education sites around the state. Thus, a greater number of agricultural professionals, teachers, and producers were able to participate. Additionally, training manuals were provided to all participants. The organic production manual gives Extension personnel a wealth of information on organic production, including sources of information and agricultural products that can be used in organic production. They are now better equipped to coordinate technology transfer in the areas of sustainable and organic production.

#### **WHO TO CONTACT?**

**Owusu Bandele, Ph.D., Professor**  
PLANT AND SOIL SCIENCES  
Southern University and A&M College  
Baton Rouge, LA 70813  
PHONE: (225) 771-2262 ext. 206  
FAX: (225) 771-4464  
Email: [owusu\\_bandele@suagcenter.com](mailto:owusu_bandele@suagcenter.com)