MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIR

On Gardening & Philanthropy

I'm not a great gardener, but I am a passionate gardener. Even in December, I'm writing down ideas for next year's garden. Recently I've been scheming ways to get seaweed to enrich the soil. Seaweed brings many nutrients from the ocean, breaks down quickly in your soil, and doesn't carry any weed seeds.

I spend more time on philanthropy than gardening, but there are some key parallels:

1) Keep your soil fertile with frequent additions (networking and conferences)
2) Don’t go it alone – learn from your fellow gardeners (meet your peers at the Forum; create opportunities to share with others)
3) The right tools can help a lot (our listserv, www.safsf.org, and many educational calls)
4) Choose your seeds carefully, have a plan (our professional network can increase your impact)

The SAFSF network is growing like a pole bean (not a weed!), and as it does we have more and more to offer. Our annual Forum was the biggest ever, with nearly twice as many funders attending as last year. In 2010 we welcomed 15 new members who bring ideas and experience to the network.

As our network expands, we are bringing you new ways to connect with each other and maximize the benefit of the network. As an example, check out the impressive compilation of funder interest areas by going to www.safsf.org/who - then clicking on "Funder Interest Area".

I hope SAFSF is like seaweed for your garden, enriching your work, supporting the seeds you are planting, and increasing your yields.

Wishing you a good growing season in 2011, and hoping we can help.

Greg Horner, Cedar Tree Foundation

MESSAGE FROM SAFSF'S COORDINATOR, VIRGINIA CLARKE

One word: WOW!

For those of us who remember back to the early days of this network, we can recall feeling thrilled that there were a dozen funders engaged in these issues and congratulating ourselves on our expansion. As the saying goes: ‘we’ve come a long way baby!’

Now, 8 years later, we are nearing 60 members. Long-time funders and newbies alike, each of you brings a vital energy, enthusiasm, deep curiosity, passion, resources, and an admirable willingness to push yourself beyond comfort zones.

I encourage us all to take a moment to reflect and to celebrate all that we have accomplished. And, to take a deep breath and ‘stand in possibility’ of all that lays before us. I sense we are going to need that extra breath moving forward! I cherish our community and look forward to the coming year, to learning from and with you, and most importantly, to sharing time together.

Warmly,
Virginia

SAFSF is a project of Community Partners
www.communitypartners.org
COMING IN 2011

“This is a remarkable group of smart and engaged people who are doing the work without pretense and who warmly welcome newcomers to join in the effort. Without question the best conference I attend all year!!”

-2010 Forum Attendee

SAFSF’S 9TH ANNUAL FORUM
CREATIVITY AT THE RIVER’S EDGE
Funding change in food & farming systems
Minneapolis, MN
June 21-24, 2011

The Planning Committee is putting together an exciting and challenging program. Registration and the preliminary program will be available in March 2011.

Find out more at: www.safsf.org

MISSED THE 2010 FORUM? WATCH THE PLENARY SESSIONS ONLINE

SAFSF took another step into the digital media world this year by recording the 2010 Forum plenary sessions and posting them online for all to see. We also invited bloggers to participate in select portions of the Forum. You will find the videos, blog stories, pictures, and additional resources online at: www.safsf.org/resources/forum_resources.asp

FOR VERMONT FUNDERS

SAFSF is hosting a funder networking reception on January 13th in conjunction with our annual Steering Committee meeting in Burlington. For details contact Virginia at vclarke@safsf.org

MARCH 22, 2011 EAT HERE!
IN DETROIT

SAFSF and The Funders’ Network on Smart Growth are teaming up for our 9th Eat Here! local food dinner. TFN’s conference program is expanding with several ag/food offerings! Check out the details at: www.fundersnetwork.org/events/annual-conference-details

UPCOMING FUNDER CALLS

We will have a bounty of offerings for you in the coming year. Monthly Study Group calls, a series related to the upcoming Farm Bill, more opportunities to learn about finance and investment strategies, joint calls with Grantmakers In Health. Watch for dates and details in the listserv and on our website www.safsf.org.

SAFSF BY THE NUMBERS....SAFSF BY THE NUMBERS....SAFSF BY THE NUMBERS....SAFSF BY THE NUMBERS....

104K
BUDGET INCREASE FY09-FY11

158
2010 FORUM PARTICIPANTS

57
SAFSF MEMBERS
EVALUATING OUR IMPACT
SAFSF has hired Learning For Action (LFA Group)—a San Francisco based consulting firm who has worked with a number of other affinity groups—to lead us through the development of an evaluation plan. Recently, with support from the David and Lucile Packard and Ford Foundations, we worked with LFA Group to develop a Logic Model that will feed into the evaluation plan. The final plan will be completed in March 2011. We look forward to learning as SAFSF continues to grow as an organization.

STUDY GROUPS
Earlier in 2010, we launched a new model for communication within our community. Think of it as ‘working groups’ meets ‘social networking’; the theory is that the funders represent a huge resource to each other, and that this resource is not easy to access. Issue areas include: urban agriculture; finance and investment; policy; and economic development. Starting in January 2011, these study groups will be launching regular monthly calls for those wanting to dive deeper. Your input and participation will enhance the learning for all. To find out more contact Bridget at bridget@safsf.org.

RESOURCES ON THE SAFSF WEBSITE
Our wonderful program assistant, Bridget Dobrowski has made tremendous progress over the last 18 months to expand available resources on our website, www.safsf.org. Please let us know of other resources so that we may continue to expand our services and respond to your needs.

FUNDING AT THE FOOD-AG-HEALTH NEXUS
Increasingly, a growing number of segments of the philanthropic community are paying attention to the food-system and it’s interconnectedness with other major issues. These connections are playing out particularly within the health funding community. SAFSF is embarking on a new journey in partnership with Grantmakers In Health, and the Convergence Partnership to bring together funders working at the food/ag/health nexus. Our first convening was held in San Francisco in mid-December 2010, with follow up meetings planned for March 2011 and June 2011. We are very excited to be a part of these conversations—and to moving from talking to action—together.

WANT TO BE MORE INVOLVED?
There are many ways for you to become more involved with the network. And we will be better for it! Forum planning committee, conference calls, study groups, resources, and more—all benefit from fresh ideas and leadership. We urge you to join us. Please contact Co-Chairs Greg Horner (greg@cedartreefound.org) or Gerry Wang (gwang@wpennfdn.org) or Virginia Clarke at, vclarke@safsf.org.

SAFSF BY THE NUMBERS....

NEW FUNDER CONTACTS

2010 FUNDER CONVENINGS

FUNDER LISTSERV MEMBERS
SAFSF members range from individual donors to small family funds to key large foundations in the US and are pushing SAFSF to expand our scope and are greatly enhancing our network. You may find a directory of SAFSF members at http://www.safsf.org/who/directory.asp

SAFSF STEERING COMMITTEE
The 9-member Steering Committee provides strong leadership for our network. Staff would like to offer special thanks to our current Co-chairs, Greg Horner (Cedar Tree Foundation) and Gerry Wang (William Penn Foundation) for their additional time and service. Members are:

• William (Bill) Buchanan, USDA - Risk Management Agency
• Becca Golden, Ben & Jerry’s Foundation
• Bruce Hirsch, Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation
• Greg Horner, Cedar Tree Foundation, Co-Chair (July 2009 - June 2011)
• Bruce Karmazin, The Lumpkin Family Foundation
• Cecily Kihn, Agua Fund, Inc.
• Ron Kroese, The McKnight Foundation
• Ricardo Salvador, W. K. Kellogg Foundation
• Geraldine (Gerry) Wang, William Penn Foundation, Co-Chair (Jan 2010 - Dec 2011)

Membership applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. If you are interested in finding out more please contact Virginia Clarke at vclarke@safsf.org.

SAFSF FINANCES
SAFSF has been fortunate to close out each of the last five years in the black, in spite of the challenging economy. However, we know sands can shift so we maintain a reserve fund—currently at $120,000—so that we have a safety net as our work evolves. Staff maintains close financial oversight, together with Steering Committee members and senior staff at our fiscal home, Community Partners. New projects have brought in additional support. For the near-term, we anticipate our revenues to continue to grow based on expressed interest by potential new members.

FY11 Mid-year Financial Snapshot (as of December 15, 2010)
Total Revenues to date: $84,981.10
Total Expenses: $102,992.17
Beginning Balance**: $22,722.58
Excess Revenue Over (under) Expenses ($18,011.07)
Ending Balance: $4,711.51
Reserve Fund: $120,000.00
Total Funds: $124,711.51

* Excess expenses related to costs associated with nearly doubling 2010 Forum attendees.

FY10 (July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010)
Audited Financials
Total Revenues $279,559.51
Total Expenses $294,036.34
Beginning Balance $57,199.41
Excess Revenue Over (under) Expenses* ($14,476.83)
Ending Balance $42,722.58
Reserve Fund $100,000.00
Total Funds: $142,722.58

* Excess expenses related to costs associated with nearly doubling 2010 Forum attendees.

NEW MEMBERS IN 2010
Since January 2010, 15 new members have joined SAFSF. Please help us welcome:

• The 1772 Foundation
• Anonymous
• Community Foundation of South Jersey
• CS Fund/Warsch-Mott Legacy
• Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
• Dietel Partners
• Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
• Grassroots international
• The Kresge Foundation
• New England Grassroots Environment Fund
• Organic Valley/FAFO
• The Pew Charitable Trusts
• The Philadelphia Foundation
• Rachel E. Golden Foundation
• Sacharuna Foundation

Membership applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. If you are interested in finding out more please contact Virginia Clarke at vclarke@safsf.org.