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Francis, C.A., Poincelot, R.P., Bird, G.W. (ed.): **Developing and Extending Sustainable Agriculture. A New Social Contract.** - Haworth Food & Agricultural Products Press, An Imprint of The Haworth Press, New York - London - Oxford. 2006. 367 pp. USD 49.95. ISBN 13: 978-1-56022-331-3.

This book starts with a brief information about the editors. A list of all the 21 contributors follows. All the editors and authors of the individual chapters are engaged in the US development of sustainable agriculture as scientists, scholars, managers, extension officers, farmers, *etc.* The authors summarized their experience, expertise and expectation concerning the extension of sustainable agriculture focused on the conditions in the USA. Actually, the book contributions could also be used as valuable source of general information about several aspects of the US agriculture development during the last decades. Such a local limitation need not be considered as a drawback for potential readers outside the USA. In fact, there is much to learn from various attempts to transform conventional agricultural into partly or ultimate sustainable management at both the lowest level of some local farms up to the whole region or state. Similarly, the examples described in the individual chapters point out, that such a transition, its rate and success, depends not only on the elaborated technologies. Experience clearly indicates the need to establish the appropriate study protocols, extension systems, general social climate and economic instruments. From these points of view, the chapters of this book offer an immense amount of information and suggestion. Nevertheless, the reader should not expect a comprehensive discourse on sustainable agriculture or protocols simply applicable for any location and country.

Each of the 16 chapters represents a freestanding contribution surveying and analysing particular topics. Chapter 1 offers an overview involving education and extension as well as information sources available including journals, bulletins, sheets, detailed list of books available, *etc.* Pest and soil management are treated in

chapters 2 and 3. Managed grazing, whole-farm planning and economic analysis are dealt with in the chapters 4, 5 and 6. Chapters 7, 10 and 12 contain a factual description of the experience from the sustainable agriculture in Iowa. The need to develop regional training workshops as well as regional research and education is set forward in the chapters 8 and 9. Developing sustainable agriculture will modify the relationships between rural and urban communities (chapter 11). Interesting data on sustainable agriculture funding during the last 15 years are summarized in the chapter 13. Sustainable agriculture refers by far not only to farmers. The role of social scientists and motivation theories has been made clear in the chapter 14. A brief survey of organic farming and detailed characteristics of challenges facing agriculture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century could be found in the Chapter 15. The last chapter (16) offers suggestion concerning the future development of rural communities and the whole landscape. Each chapter contains its list of references. The book terminates with a detailed index.

The book represents a useful tool of detailed information. It could be of interest to any reader who has been engaged in the development of sustainable forms of agriculture and forestry and needs to compare his or her experience with the expertise of the authors. Let me evidence such a conclusion of mine by quoting from the Preface: "(this book)...*is not a formula or road map toward the future, but rather a conceptual and practical collection of chapters on the current state of farming and ranching and how it may be improved*". There is no doubt that mankind on this planet is in need to develop and extend sustainable agriculture. And this book represents a valuable contribution to this urgent goal.

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