



Hello ##[Name | First]##,

August, you sure snuck up on us. Temperatures are rising and there are tomatoes everywhere you look. The school year begins again and fall plantings are on farmers' minds. August has arrived.

**OAK IS HIRING**. The OAK Team is expanding! Applications are now open for 4 full-time positions. From an **Organic Production Specialist** to a **Farmer Education Coordinator** and more, this is an incredible time to consider working for the Organic Association of Kentucky in one of these positions. Please help OAK spread the word far and wide. We are so excited.

**#OAK2023** recordings are now publicly available. This is the moment you have been waiting for. If you were unable to attend Conference, missed some content or just want to revisit some of the shared learning, the recorded sessions are now being released monthly from OAK's 12th Annual OAK Conference held last January. We hope you can take advantage of the content these recordings provide.

Planning is already underway for OAK's 13th Annual Conference in January 2024.

**Sponsorship Opportunities** for the 13th Annual Conference are now available. Team OAK is also looking for content input, please read below and plan to suggest content for **#OAK2024**.

As you read about all of these opportunities, don't forget to check out the resources at the end of this newsletter where you can find new funding programs and an array of both virtual and in-person events.

The dog days of summer are here. Apparently this phrase harkens back to the the times when folks would track time by looking to the skies. Sirius, also known as the "dog star" appears in the sky just before the sun beginning in the end of July. Romans referred to this time as the "days of the dog star" and the phrase sticks to this day. Our current relation to both the dog and the heat of summer can conjure different images. Whether this expression has you pondering the dawn sky OR your panting pet, stay cool, keep hydrated and enjoy the cool tastes of watermelon hauled from your local farmers market.

Warmly,  
Robin Verson  
Membership and Communications Coordinator

## OAK IS HIRING, deadline to submit your application is this FRIDAY, APPLY NOW

The Organic Association of Kentucky is excited to hire 4 full-time positions this summer. We encourage anyone interested to learn more about these roles on the [OAK Careers](#) web page and apply with a **complete application by August 4, 2023** for full consideration.

Current Openings at OAK:

- **Organic Transition Program Manager** - focused on technical assistance related to organic certification and partnering with USDA Midwest Region Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) to implement Kentucky programming.
- **Farmer Education Coordinator** - dedicated to organizing and supporting OAK's annual conference and developing and delivering farmer education in Kentucky.
- **Marketing and Outreach Coordinator** - designed to increase sales through a variety of market channels like Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares.
- **Organic Production Specialist** - focused on organic production and working with farmers to develop technical production plans.

Please share these job opportunities with your network and contact [jobs@oak-ky.org](mailto:jobs@oak-ky.org) with any questions.

[View Job Openings](#)

A graphic with a dark blue background and light green wavy shapes on the left. It features the text 'ORGANIC ASSOCIATION OF KENTUCKY' in white, followed by 'HIRING' in large white letters and 'OPEN POSITIONS' in bold white letters. Below this, the four job titles are listed in white: 'Organic Transition Program Manager', 'Organic Production Specialist', 'Farmer Education Coordinator', and 'Marketing and Outreach Coordinator'. In the bottom left corner is a white megaphone icon with sound waves. In the bottom right corner is a blue button with the text 'APPLY NOW' in white. At the very bottom, in white text, is 'Learn more at oak-ky.org/careers'.

ORGANIC ASSOCIATION OF KENTUCKY

# HIRING

## OPEN POSITIONS

Organic Transition Program Manager  
Organic Production Specialist  
Farmer Education Coordinator  
Marketing and Outreach Coordinator

[APPLY NOW](#)

Learn more at [oak-ky.org/careers](https://oak-ky.org/careers)



# #OAK2024 Sponsorship Opportunities Now Available

The Organic Association of Kentucky's annual farming conference, now in its 13th year, includes hundreds of Kentuckians and neighbors active in our community food systems: farmers, researchers, nonprofit professionals, federal and state agency partners, allied service providers and community members working collectively to build a local, resilient and healthy food system. OAK is pleased to announce Sponsorship opportunities are now available for this not-to-be-missed event in Frankfort, KY on January 25-27, 2024.

## SUPPORT THE MOVEMENT

Sponsorship powers farmer-to-farmer education! Revenues generated by conference sponsors are foundational to supporting the success of the event overall.

## SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS

Sponsors can count on high visibility in print and digital event promotional materials before, during and after the conference. Audience reach is estimated to be 450 attendees at the event and over 20,000 through event promotions.

Become a Sponsor

## Call for Proposals #OAK2024

OAK's 13th Annual Conference will return to the KSU Demonstration and Research Farm in Frankfort, KY, from January 25-27, 2024. We want you to be a part of it!

We're now accepting proposals for farm hacks, sessions, and workshops at #OAK2024. Learn more via the link below, and start planning YOUR contribution to our next OAK Conference! **Don't delay - the deadline to submit is THIS FRIDAY August 4, 2023!**

Submit a Proposal

Don't want to submit a proposal but have ideas for a session? We still want to hear from you! Let us know who you'd like to see and/or what content you want to learn about at #OAK2024: submit your suggestions for content [here](#).

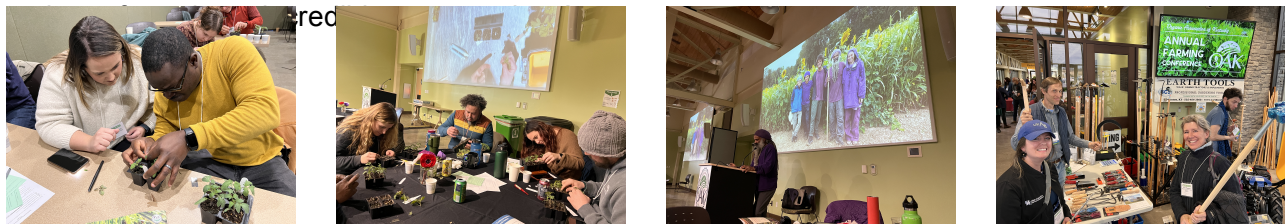
## #OAK2023 Conference Recordings

OAK is thrilled to offer public access to these recordings of the inspiring and informative sessions from the 2023 Annual Conference. In addition to the collection of recordings released in June, the following recordings are now available to the public starting on August 1, 2023:

**Beyond Compost: Nutrient Budgeting for Small Organic Farms - workshop**  
**Introduction to Forest Farming: Almost Everything you Wanted to Know But Were Afraid to Ask - workshop**

Strategies and Practices for Building Soil Health on the Modern Organic Farm  
Small-Scale Grain and Dry Bean Production  
Helping Grow Local Markets  
Inside Peek at Two Kentucky Farmer Sales Funnels  
Sankofa: Rethinking Growing Food in the South

OAK will continue to release new content monthly through October. We hope you enjoy and



[Watch #OAK2023 Session Recordings](#)

Farmer Profile: Jackie and Larry Berry



Since 2011, Jacqueline Berry has provided her farmers market customers with a wide choice of vegetables, culinary and medicinal herbs, dried teas and various value-added products. Yet

in the last 5 years, her business has truly *flourished*, thanks to a full-time farm partner, a seasoned employee, and collaboration with other local farmers. Today, [Flourishing Herbs Farm](#) produces nearly 100 different certified organic vegetable, herbs, and flower crops and serves three local farmers markets, 30 Farm Share members, and an on-farm stand.

Although originally from Virginia, Jackie and Larry Berry relocated from El Paso, TX to Kentucky farm country in 2007 and quickly found themselves drawn to the local food movement and the farmers markets that bring high quality produce to their local communities. They knew they wanted to be a part of it, so Jackie started growing, learning, and building the farm's infrastructure. From the [Market Gardener Masterclass](#) for production and business skills, to the [Kentucky State University Small-Scale Farm Grants](#) for funding on-farm improvements and [OAK's Transition Trainer](#) technical assistance for organic certification. Jackie did her homework and took advantage of the resources available for growing Flourishing Herbs' no-till biointensive farm business.

Combined with Jackie's natural love of gardening and herbalism, she used her art and teaching background to build an expanding market garden business that included creating textile arts and herbal products and teaching local classes on growing, preserving, and using fresh herbs and vegetables. Larry assisted Jackie at the markets and around the farm, yet worked 60+ hours for his full-time automotive factory job. In 2019, the couple took a leap of faith in growing the business they had created; Larry left his job and shifted the emphasis of his knowledge of system efficiencies and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to the crop production and market systems of Flourishing Herbs.

Having two full-time farmers in the work allowed them to further improve and expand with the investments and resources they had built for their 2 acres of crop production, including multiple high tunnels, a wash/pack-shed, greenhouse, and drying shed. They honed in on their tools and practices and, in 2022 were finally able to hire a part-time employee to help them grow (and have time to rest!). Throughout the week in the growing season, the Flourishing Herbs pair can be found at farmers markets in Allen and Barren Counties.

Through the years, the couple built relationships with peer farmers around the region and collaborated to bring new and diverse offerings to their customers. Primary among these relationships was the collaborative CSA they have operated for 5 years with Davida Flowers and Maxwell Farrar at Majestic Greens Farm. The [Growing Together Farm Share](#) has allowed each farm to focus on what they're good at growing, provide their customers with greater product choice, and scale up their production and profitability. Larry and Jackie have also worked cooperatively with [River Cottage Farm](#) online store, Long Hungry Creek Farm for additional storage vegetable selection, Cherry Farm Meats for protein sources, and Hogue Farms for homemade baked goods.

Learn more about Jackie and Larry's path at Flourishing Herbs Farm and hear from collaborative farmers Maxwell and Davida at Flourishing Herbs Field Day on Tuesday, September 5. Register today at <https://www.oak-ky.org/field-days>

**Don't forget to join the OAK September Social Meetup** immediately following the Field Day at Flourishing Herbs Farm. We will gather at Big Springs Farm less than one mile away from the Field Day! It will be a perfect time to meet old friends and make new connections. check out this [Facebook event](#).

Register Now for this Farmer Field Day September 5th at Flourishing Herbs Farm

## Farmer Profile: Maxwell Farrar and Davida Flowers

*“If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together”* - the sentiment of this quote emerges as a common theme in the farming path of Davida Flowers and Maxwell Farrar. Farming together since 2016 on Maxwell’s family land in Oakland, KY, the duo has built a 50-member Farm Share community and a regular presence at the Community Farmers Market in Bowling Green. Operating Majestic Greens and Davida’s Flowers with no-till systems, organic practices, and a minimal footprint has been rewarding for Maxwell and Davida and their small family - but the work can also be isolating. Building relationships, finding mentors, and growing community has been integral to the farming success and the overall wellbeing of the couple and their work.

Davida and Maxwell relocated to the Warren County family land with a plan to grow food for their family that they knew would be healthier and easier on the environment than produce shipped to grocery stores from distant farms. From the beginning, they sought to work and learn alongside others with a shared love of food and connection to community and the land. Maxwell quickly found Nathan and Michelle Howell of Scottsville’s [Need More Acres Farm](#) to be like-minded and experienced mentors, sharing the ins and outs of full-on commercial vegetable production. Paul Wiediger of Au Naturel Farm and [ANF Small Farm Solutions](#) also offered gracious time and invaluable guidance, providing skills training and passing on equipment to the beginning farmers. As a near-peer mentor a few years ahead on the beginning farmer path, Jackson Rollet of [No-Till Growers](#) and Stonehouse Market Farm has been a close friend and collaborator on the couple’s journey.

As the vegetable business grew, Davida added more and more flowers, herbs, and value-added products to their markets, launching Davida’s Flowers in 2020. In 2021, [Black Soil KY](#) brought Majestic Greens/ Davida’s Flowers into their weekly Farm Share program, sourcing from Black farmers across Kentucky and providing a boost to the couple’s production and business skills that has allowed them to continue scaling up and building their local Farm Share.

Majestic Green’s [Growing Together Farm Share](#) (GTFS) has grown in part as a partnership with Jackie and Larry Berry of [Flourishing Herbs Farm](#), who offered early training and support for Maxwell and Davida’s growing farm and provided their shared customers with an expanded array of diverse and unique products. “Jackie and Larry have taught us so much, including the value of going far together. GTFS has been our foundation and we are honored to be collaborating with several other farmers in our region to seed a more cooperative and resilient local food system.”

Learn more about Davida and Maxwell and their farm community at OAK’s September 5 Field Day at Flourishing Herbs Farm. Register today at <https://www.oak-ky.org/field-days>





Register Now for this Farmer Field Day on September 5 at Flourishing Herbs Farm

## What a Great Day at Coleman Crest Farm!

“Farming is about building relationships” - to the family legacy on the land, the farm’s ecosystems and how to work within them, the mentors and resource providers, and the customers and markets: this thought was the thread throughout Jim Coleman’s message to field day participants at [Coleman Crest Farm](#) in late July.

The Coleman family history with the Fayette County land runs deep. In March 1888, Jim’s great grandfather James Coleman purchased the land that he and his parents had tilled as slaves. For those who missed Jim’s rich storytelling of his family history at this field day, [Lisa A Brown’s article](#) shares more details of the Colemans’ family legacy. Read more about Jim’s story, Coleman Crest Farm, and the July 25th farmer field day, and the resources Jenny shared at <https://www.oak-ky.org/field-days>.

## Remembering the Fun at Hallow Springs Farm!

Steep hills, rocky soils, and obvious grit and determination from co-farmers Holly and James Robinson were the highlighted aspects of this field day visit to Hallow Springs Farm in Rockcastle County. Developing their family farm while raising five kids, restoring a century-old house, and reclaiming the land from the effects of 40 years of aggressive farming practices



would cause some folks to shy away from the task. Holly and James shared how their organic practices and “gentle touch” of working with the land, instead of against it, are helping them to build a successful diversified farm business.

OAK is grateful to Holly and James of [Hallow Springs Farm](#) for this opportunity to tour and learn about their family farm at our early July Farmer Field Day. We're also very appreciative of various state and federal partners who offered resources and information to our community of farmers and allies - with special thanks to [Grow Appalachia](#) for the partnership! Learn more about the event and the resources shared at <https://www.oak-ky.org/field-days>

## Register Now for the September OAK Farmer Field Days

Check out this year's final opportunities for monthly on-farm and farmer-focused field day events. OAK has two stellar on farm Field Days in September. Join us!

### Scaling Up While Lessening the Work: Farmer Collaborations and Efficiencies

Flourishing Herbs Farm -- Scottsville -- September 5, 2023, 1-4pm CT

**Don't forget to join the OAK September Social Meetup** immediately following the Field Day at Flourishing Herbs Farm. We will gather at Big Springs Farm less than one mile away from the Field Day! It will be a perfect time to meet old friends and make new connections. check out this [Facebook event](#).

### CSA Production, Packing and Planning



Learn More and Register for OAK Farmer Field Days

## Global Farm Metric - Farm Sustainability Assessment Tool Insights from Spring Trials and Opportunities to Participate this Fall

The Organic Association of Kentucky (OAK) is the first international partner of a United Kingdom-based nonprofit, the Sustainable Food Trust (SFT), to trial a unique tool that measures sustainability across a farm's operation. The tool is based on SFT's [Global Farm Metric framework](#), which can be used to understand, measure and monitor the state of farming systems anywhere in the world! Kentucky's agricultural landscapes and highly diversified farms create an excellent setting to test this tool and provide farmers with a powerful story about their farm's sustainability from a holistic point of view.

With that in mind, OAK staff have undertaken an effort to adapt the Global Farm Metric specifically for use on Kentucky farms. The resulting first draft of the Global Farm Metric Farm Sustainability Assessment Tool (GFM-FSAT) is based on guidance from SFT, farmer input, expert advice, peer-reviewed literature, published agricultural benchmarks and best practice

standards. Agricultural terms and measurement units have also been adapted to those most commonly used in Kentucky.

During the spring of 2023, six OAK member farms participated in a pilot project to trial the first version of the GFM-FSAT on their farms. Participating farms varied in size, enterprises and geographic locations across the state. Participants used the tool to compare data collected on their farms to benchmark data in 12 categories.



After filling out the tool, the six farms participating in the trial met as a focus group to discuss how the tool helped shape their perceptions of their farm’s sustainability. Each of the six farms performed above average overall on the sustainability scoring scale built into the tool. As all of these farms have adopted organic practices, this outcome was to be expected. However, participating farmers indicated that the tool helped them to identify specific ways to improve sustainability on their farms.

For example, one participant commented, *“I’d like to reduce our farm’s dependence on fossil fuels for electricity usage and reduce dependence on off-farm fertility.”* Another farmer said, *“I’d look at renewable energy and energy efficiency, reducing erosion potential, improvement of soil organic matter, and more sustainable materials/inputs.”* Yet another responded, *“I have a million new ideas after completing the tool! I want to work on inputs and renewables, I want to learn more about the biodiversity on my farm, and I need to diversify my income stream.”*

The participating farms indicated that the largest barriers to implementing new practices to improve sustainability included: technical expertise, money, time and capacity. With this feedback, OAK will be able to support it's community through improved, informed programming along with an **improved version of the GFM-FSAT ready for trial on up to 25 farms this fall!** For the farms that have already participated, the benefits of filling out the GFM-FSAT are clear.

One participant said, *"It did a great job of highlighting our vulnerabilities and served as a kick in the butt!"* Another pointed out, *"I think knowing a measure of sustainability lets you know where you can improve and gives you motivation to improve."* Yet another indicated that, *"Using the tool is grounding...I think it could keep me on track for my farming journey."*

**If you are interested in using the GFM-FSAT for your farm, send an email to [brooke@oak-ky.org](mailto:brooke@oak-ky.org). OAK is seeking farms that produce specialty crops for Fall 2023.** Farms do not need to be certified organic to take part. Participating farmers will receive an honorarium for completing the GFM-FSAT thanks to funding from the Owsley Brown II Family Foundation and a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant administered through the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

To stay up to date on future opportunities to participate in 2024 and beyond, sign up for the OAK Climate Smart newsletter.

[Update Newsletter Preference](#)

---

## Check Out OAK's New Classified Page

Hot off the press: OAK has just unrolled another Member Only Benefit, [a classified page!](#) Do you need to advertise that piece of farm equipment that no longer serves you? Are you looking for employees for the season? OAK Members can place any number of appropriate listings on the Classified Page - for free. Anyone can view listings! Use this submission form and let OAK help you spread the word.

[OAK Members Submit a Classified Ad](#)

## OAK Supporter-Level Members: Join the Directory!

Team OAK is busily making updates to [OAK's Find-a-Farm Directory](#). In a new round of promotion, OAK will direct folks not only to the Farmer's Profiles, but the [Supplier's profiles](#) as well. If you are an OAK Supporting Business, please reach out to [Robin@oak-ky.org](mailto:Robin@oak-ky.org) to be listed on the supplier and farmer resource webpage. Let us create a supplier profile for your business and spread word of your work and products far and wide!



**Not a OAK Member? Join OAK Today!**

Join the OAK community! OAK is an engaging group of farmers, eaters, ag professionals, entrepreneurs and more. From farmers who are using regenerative practices to those whose farms have been certified organic for decades, we are folks committed to creating a healthier, more nourishing food landscape.

If you have let your Membership lapse or have never taken the plunge to join OAK, now is the time! OAK is growing and working for an exciting future, join us. Be a part of the community working to nourish Kentucky.

[Join or Renew Your OAK Membership](#)

**August Virtual Cooking Demo: Back to School Veg Tips**

# CSA CHEF DEMO

## BACK TO SCHOOL VEG TIPS

August 10th | 12:15-1pm ET | VIRTUAL



The Food Connection

Interested in Going Organic?

We're here to help - for FREE! OAK's Transition Trainers will answer all your questions and work with you to refine techniques, implement best practices, demystify the regulations, develop recordkeeping systems and make a transition plan to help you apply for organic certification. Farmers, are you looking for additional cooking resources to share this great idea with your family? OAK is hosting a virtual cooking demo called **Back to School Veg Tips in The Food Connection** on August 10, 2023 from 12:15-1pm ET. Chef Tanya will share her expertise and help you prepare easy template lunch recipes, like harvest bowls, bento boxes, smoothies and more. Email us to learn more about the process and how we help farmers have a successful certification experience. Attendees will learn more about the "cook once and eat twice" philosophy and other ways to reduce food waste and save prep time during the week. This virtual cooking demonstration is open to all and FREE to attend. Learn more about [OAK's Organic Transition Program and apply to work with an Organic Transition Trainer today!](#) Questions? Contact [brooke@oakky.org](mailto:brooke@oakky.org) or 502-219-7378! Chef Demo



## Opportunities, the Latest News, & Calls to Action

**KY Proud Fall CSA Week September 18-22, 2023**



CSA farmers, if you offer a fall share, or have capacity in your main season CSA, or a year-round CSA for Kentucky consumers consider signing up for KY Proud Fall CSA Week! This virtual promotion takes place on September 18th-23rd, 2023 to raise awareness of what CSA is, what CSA shares are available September through December, and how Kentucky eaters can find a CSA nearby. **Learn more and express interest in becoming a Fall CSA week partner farm by August 4th here** <https://forms.gle/ruAAR8FPFCjW3kQV9>.

---

## **USDA Farm Loan Borrowers Who Have Faced Discrimination: Financial Assistance Application Process Now Open!**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the opening of the financial assistance application process for eligible farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who experienced discrimination in USDA farm lending programs prior to January 2021. Section 22007 of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) directs USDA to provide this assistance.

Farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who experienced discrimination by USDA in its farm loan programs prior to January 1, 2021 and/or are currently debtors with assigned or assumed USDA farm loan debt that was the subject of USDA discrimination that occurred prior to January 1, 2021, are eligible for this program. To apply, borrowers have the option to apply via the e-filing portal at [22007apply.gov](https://22007apply.gov) or submit paper-based forms via mail or in-person delivery to the program's local offices. The application process will be open until October 31, 2023. The DFAP Call Center will assist applicants with general inquiries and answer questions in completing an Application. Reach them by email at [info@22007apply.gov](mailto:info@22007apply.gov) or phone at 1-800-721-0970.

To support producers throughout the application process, USDA is ensuring that organizations with extensive experience conducting outreach to farm organizations are able to support individuals who may be eligible for the program. These groups include [AgrAbility](#), [Farmer Veteran Coalition](#), [Farmers' Legal Action Group](#), [Federation of Southern Cooperatives](#), [Intertribal Agriculture Council](#), [Land Loss Prevention Program](#), [National Young Farmers Coalition](#), and [Rural Coalition](#).

From Black Soil KY: "Black Soil KY has been named the Kentucky local office providing FREE technical assistance for the Discrimination Financial Assistance Program (DFAP). Located at 107 W. Loudon Ave., Suite 101, the office is open Monday-Friday 9:00am-5:00pm EST. In person events may be arranged in your local community upon request. Qualifying and interested farmers may contact Ashley at [ashley@blacksoilky.com](mailto:ashley@blacksoilky.com)"

---

## **USDA National Organic Program Releases New Publication for Understanding "Strengthening Organic Enforcement"**

Consumer confidence in the USDA organic seal has fueled industry growth and market expansion, according to the agency's National Organic Program (NOP), which is tasked with ensuring rules protect the organic market as it grows. The NOP has published the [Strengthening Organic Enforcement \(SOE\)](#) final rule to improve market protections, making it harder to cheat the system, according to the NOP.

“SOE protects the integrity of the organic supply chain and builds consumer and industry trust in the USDA organic label by strengthening organic control systems, improving farm to market traceability, and providing robust enforcement of the USDA organic regulations,” according to a USDA news release. To help organic certifiers and operations comply with the rule, NOP has published a new [SOE reference resource](#) online.

---

## Educational & Farming Support

### In-person Events Throughout the Region

#### **MarketReady Buyer Tour in Lexington, KY**

August 3, 2023 9 am-3 pm

**Tour Information:** During the tour, we will visit 3 or 4 buyers in the Lexington area to see what happens behind the back doors! The buyers are to-be-determined; however, they will include a restaurant, a grocery/retail market, and a farm-to-school buyer. [Register here.](#)

#### **MarketReady Buyer Tour in Louisville, KY**

August 10, 2023 9 am-3 pm

**Tour Information:** During the tour, we will visit 3 or 4 buyers in the Lexington area to see what happens behind the back doors! The buyers are to-be-determined; however, they will include a restaurant, a grocery/retail market, and a farm-to-school buyer. [Register here.](#)

#### **Chestnut Production and Packing Farm Tour**

Saturday, August 12—1-3 p.m. ET

Route 9 Cooperative, 4300 Germano Rd. SE (Route 9), Carrollton, OH 44615

In 1957, Greg Miller’s father started planting chestnut trees as a hobby. From there, it turned into a family business with his daughter, Amy. A nearby coal company planted chestnut trees, sold it, and the three new landowners, along with Greg, formed a cooperative now encompassing five orchards. During this tour, guests will see a mature chestnut orchard with and without deer fence, younger plantings of chestnuts, and the harvested nuts’ packing facility.

<https://news.oeffa.org/farm-tours-2023>

#### **Homesteaders Farm Tour Series- Black Soil KY Day Hamlet Hop**

Friday August 25 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

<https://www.blacksoilky.com/product/farm-credit-mid-america-homesteaders-farm-tour-series-black-soil-ky-day-hamlet-hop-friday-august-25/426>

#### **OAK September Social Meetup**

September 5, 2023, Adolphus, Kentucky

It will be a perfect time to meet old friends and make new connections. Save the date and plan to meet us for an evening of fun and friendship. ALL ARE WELCOME. There is no charge to attend, and food or drink is available for purchase. Already registered for OAK’s “FARM FIELD DAY: Scaling Up While Lessening the Work: Farmer Collaborations and Efficiencies” at Flourishing Herbs Farm in Scottsville, KY? Please plan to pop over following the Field Day and join us for a drink or dinner or just plain fun. The new Red Barn is less than a mile away!

#### **People’s Summit on Food Systems and Urban Agriculture**

Sept. 8 - Sept. 9, 2023

**Early Bird Registration (\$25) deadline is August 1, 2023**

Weaving the Food Web: The People's Summit on Food Systems and Urban Agriculture is the first conference of its kind in Kentucky! The People's Summit is an initiative of the Partnership for a Greater Louisville Food Council and Food Vision 2030, a coalition of organizations and individuals which Food in Neighborhoods coordinates alongside Food Literacy Project, Change Today Change Tomorrow, Community Food Louisville, Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Community Farm Alliance. The Summit is hosted by Food in Neighborhoods and Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension. [Get your ticket today!](#)

### **Heartland Homesteading Conference**

Save the Date Friday, Sep 29- Sunday, Oct 1, 2023

Campbellsville, KY

<https://brushfire.com/homeplaceongreenriver/conference/546211>

### **Big Spring Pasture Walk**

Save the Date October 19, 2023

Adolphus, KY

### **Third Thursday**

Don't forget, the monthly Third Thursday workshops can be viewed in-person at the [Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm](#) or streamed live at [www.youtube.com/kysuag/live](http://www.youtube.com/kysuag/live).

## **Virtual Events**

### **Webinar: How to Build Soil Organic Matter in Organic Grain Systems**

**August 2, 2023, 2-3pm ET**

Join Rodale's Organic Consultants Catherine Peebles, Léa Vereecke, and Nic Podoll, to learn about building soil organic matter in organic grain systems. Soil organic matter is a key indicator of soil health and is associated with water holding capacity, aggregate stability, nutrient availability, and inherent soil fertility. Thus, maintaining good levels of organic matter will help grow healthy crops. Our consultants will discuss how it is derived, the balance between gains and losses, and different management practices' influence on soil organic matter. [Register here](#)

### **Virtual discussion on supporting mental health in the thick of the season**

August 3 from 6:30pm CT/7:30pm ET to 8:00pm CT/9:00pm ET.

Farming can take a toll on your mental health and wellbeing, and when the season ramps up, it may feel like you don't have the time or the energy to prioritize these needs. Join this grower gathering. Bridget Britton, Behavioral Health Field Specialist with The Ohio State University Extension, will get the conversation started and share resources as we go along. Bring your questions, experiences, and tips while also holding space for others to share. Space is limited so we can keep this discussion more intimate, and it will not be recorded. Farm owners, farmworkers, and farm adjacent professionals are welcome to attend. This event is brought to you by FairShare CSA Coalition and MVEG.

[Register HERE.](#)

### **Talking About Ticks: Lyme Disease**

**Tuesday, August 8, 2023, 11-12 ET**

The deer tick (also known as the black-legged tick) is found mainly in the Eastern and upper Midwestern regions of the U.S. It can cause conditions such as Lyme disease – the most common vector-borne disease in the United States. This webinar will cover the things you need to know to prevent tick bites when working outdoors, how to remove a tick if bitten, as

well as the symptoms that can result from tick bites that may indicate Lyme Disease. [Register here](#)

### **Disease and Insect Integrated Pest Management of Fruit Crops Webinar.**

Aug. 14 -Noon-1 p.m. Eastern time. For details and registration information visit

[https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_dgpxJt54U6XtB6S](https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dgpxJt54U6XtB6S).

---

## **Resources and Funding for Farmers**

### **Livestock Conservancy Microgrants**

Paper applications must be postmarked BEFORE **August 31, 2023**.

The Livestock Conservancy is offering a number of microgrants to breed associations, youth, and individuals and organizations working with livestock breeds. If you work with livestock, poultry, or products from animals listed on their Conservation Priority List, you can apply for a grant ranging from \$500 to \$2,000 to support farm-related operations, meat and egg production and sales, agritourism, marketing, and so much more! No match is required.

<https://livestockconservancy.org/resources/micro-grant-program/>

### **Funding for Urban and Community Forestry investments**

U.S. Forest Service [Urban & Community Forestry National Challenge Cost Share Grant Program](#)

is providing up to \$500,000 for Urban and Community Forestry investments that address the [National Ten Year Urban and Community Forestry Action Plan](#): Goal 5 Improve Urban and Community Forest Management, Maintenance and Stewardship. **Application deadline: August 15, 2023.**

### **Southern SARE Professional Development Grants**

**Deadline: August 31, 2023**

[https://southern.sare.org/grants/apply-for-a-grant/professional-development-program-grants/fbclid=IwAR0E\\_6iMU8uZLJUdGsuV9aljvox2mc1W1jOexgX7t3fNF3O3To37OwQUI28](https://southern.sare.org/grants/apply-for-a-grant/professional-development-program-grants/fbclid=IwAR0E_6iMU8uZLJUdGsuV9aljvox2mc1W1jOexgX7t3fNF3O3To37OwQUI28)

### **USDA Commits Greater Conservation Assistance for Producers Transitioning to Organic Production**

On April 10, 2023, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced details about its \$75 million investment in conservation assistance for producers transitioning to organic production. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is dedicating financial and technical assistance to a new organic management standard and partnering with new organic technical experts to increase staff capacity and expertise. NRCS will dedicate \$70 million to assist producers with a new organic management standard under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This program is for farmers who are beginning or in the process of transitioning to organic certification. OAK is in conversation with NRCS Kentucky and will work to communicate with farmers about the opportunity to apply for this new Organic Management Practice when it is available. Stay tuned for more info in upcoming e-newsletters and a webinar this fall! Click here to access a factsheet on certified organic production created by NRCS-Kentucky <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lomJSqOY20m0YKQWrLXblSef9e7HPcZT/view>

### **\$1 Billion Available to Help Farmers Invest in Renewable Energy**

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that USDA is accepting applications starting on April 1 for \$1 billion in grants to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses invest in renewable energy systems and make energy-efficiency improvements. USDA is making the \$1 billion in grants available under the [Rural Energy for](#)

[America Program \(REAP\)](#), with funding from President Biden's landmark Inflation Reduction Act, the nation's largest-ever investment in combating the climate crisis. For additional information on application deadlines and submission details, see page 19239 of the March 31 [Federal Register](#).

### **USDA Announces Sign-up for Cost-Share Assistance for On-Farm Grain Storage in Areas with Limited Commercial Capacity Due to Severe Storms**

Last week USDA announced that Kentucky producers in counties affected by the December 2021 tornadoes, among other states affected by eligible disaster events, can apply for cost-share assistance through the Emergency Grain Storage Facility Assistance Program (EGSFP). An initial allocation of \$20 million in cost-share assistance is available to agricultural producers in affected counties impacted by the damage to or destruction of large commercial grain elevators as a result of natural disasters from Dec. 1, 2021, to Aug. 1, 2022. The **application period closes Dec. 29, 2023**. For more information visit the [program webpage](#) or the [EGSFP fact sheet](#). USDA also has an existing [Farm Storage Facility Loan Program](#) that can immediately provide low-interest financing for eligible producers who may not be eligible for EGSFP but are in need of on-farm storage capacity.

### **AMS is currently accepting applications for the Organic Market Development Grant (OMDG) Program**

The Organic Market Development Grant (OMDG) program supports the development of new and expanded organic markets to help increase the consumption of domestic organic agricultural commodities. Applications deadline has been extended. Applications must be submitted electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) by 11:59 p.m. ET on August 8, 2023. Grant applications submitted after the due date may not be considered. Information about grant eligibility is available below or contact the OMDG Team at [OMDG@usda.gov](mailto:OMDG@usda.gov).

### **Silvopasture and Forest Farming Support / Funds Available**

The Catalyzing Agroforestry Grant Program is focused on implementing silvopastures and forest farming practices through direct support payments and will assist producers in designing appropriate projects using technical assistance and science-based planning strategies. The ultimate goal of the effort is to increase ecosystem sustainability and diversity by scaling up agroforestry practices. The Appalachian Beginning Forest Farming Coalition (ABFFC) project will provide up to \$1500/acre for silvopasture implementation and up to \$1000/quarter acre for forest farming implementation depending on project scale and scope. To enhance shared learning, producers who receive support will share successes and lessons-learned with their peers and other interested stakeholders. Minority, female, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and/or socially disadvantaged farmers are highly encouraged to apply.

<https://www.appalachianforestfarmers.org/emef>

### **Slow Food Bluegrass Garden Grant**

**Deadline:** ongoing

**Link:** <http://www.slowfoodbluegrass.org/gardens>

Slow Food Bluegrass micro-grants support groups in Kentuckiana who foster education about and access to good, clean, fair food. Special priority is given to limited resource communities and to projects that demonstrate a strong buy-in from participants. Grants range from \$500 - \$1,000 and may be awarded throughout the year. If you have any questions or need assistance, please reach us at [slowfoodbluegrass@gmail.com](mailto:slowfoodbluegrass@gmail.com).

### **KSU Small Scale Farm Grant**

**Deadline:** The 1st day of every other month

**Funding Amount:** Up to \$5,000 for farmers, \$15,000 for groups benefiting multiple farmers



Eligible Entities: Kentucky farmers and Kentucky agriculture groups including farmers markets  
**Link:** <http://kysu.edu/academics/cafsss/research-extension/small-scale-farm-grant-program/>  
Overview: The KSU Small Scale Farm Grant is designed with the small operation farmer in mind. This grant application is relatively simple to complete and the funds can be used to purchase needed equipment related to the proposed project. To qualify, applicants must be producing a value-added product, be an organic farmer, and/or be an aquatic farmer. Farmers markets are often eligible. Previously approved projects have included canning equipment, a walk-in cooler, a water line to a hoop house, a root cellar, a cool-bot for vegetables, and a trailer for keeping meat cool and recently added farmer education assistance with a maximum of \$500.

### **Kentucky Proud Promotional Grant**

**Deadline:** On-going

Funding Amount: Up to 10% annual gross farm income, max at \$8,000 per year; \$1 for \$1 match

Eligible Entities: Kentucky farmers and agribusinesses

**Link:** <http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/grants.html>

Overview: The Kentucky Proud Promotional Grant is a cost share program to help Kentucky farmers and agribusinesses pay for advertising and marketing expenses. The award amount is based on 10% of direct farm impact; for a farmer it would be 10% of their total farm gross sales. The applicant must be a registered member of Kentucky Proud to apply and use the Kentucky Proud logo/brand in marketing efforts paid for with program funds. Examples of fundable items include TV ads, radio ads, web expenses, hats, t-shirts, demos, sampling, labels, packaging, tradeshow, UPC, and bar codes. This is a great program that helps promote our local farms!

### **ON-Farm Energy Efficiency Incentives Program**

**Deadline:** Applications are accepted year round

Funding Amounts: 50% cost share - up to a \$10,000 incentive, plus \$150 for an approved third party energy audit

Eligible Entities: Kentucky farmers with a gross farm income of at least \$25,000

**Link:** <https://agpolicy.ky.gov/energy/Pages/default.aspx>

Overview: The Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund offers an On-Farm Energy Efficiency Program to help Kentucky farmers with energy projects. These cost share funds are available to increase on farm energy efficiency and to support renewable fuel production projects. The applicant is required to have a third party energy audit completed. This program can be combined with the USDA-NRCS Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) to get up to 75% of a total project cost covered.

Many thanks to [KCARD](#) for promoting many of these grant opportunities. Did you know KCARD can also answer questions about funding programs and help you prepare an application?  
resources



Organic Association of Kentucky  
PO Box 22244, Lexington, KY 40522  
e: [info@oak-ky.org](mailto:info@oak-ky.org) | p: 1.502.219.7378

Follow Along:

