



**Mark Your Calendar for On-Farm Learning
and an OAK Social Event!**

Join an OAK Farmer Field Day



Flourishing Herbs Farm

**Scaling Up While Stepping Back -
Lessening the Work Through Farmer
Collaborations and Efficiencies**

September 5, 2023 | Scottsville, KY 1-4pm CENTRAL



We will visit Jackie and Larry Berry's certified organic vegetable, herb, and flower farm at OAK's next Farmer Field Day. The event will highlight their production and farm business efficiencies including farmer-to-farmer collaborations with Maxwell Farrar and Davida Flowers from Majestic

Greens Farm. (Read their Farmer Profiles in [OAK's August Field Notes](#).) Hear from all four of these farmers and connect with OAK's farming community during this afternoon event - followed by a social meetup!

Register TODAY

Join OAK for a Social Meetup on September 5!

Are you curious about OAK? Interested in meeting more of the OAK community? We are an engaging group of farmers, eaters, ag professionals, entrepreneurs, and more!

If you are interested in mingling with folks who are committed to creating a healthier, more nourishing food landscape, then plan to join OAK Staff and community members for an informal social gathering on **September 5, 2023, at the new Red Barn at Big Spring Farm in 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 will be available for purchase.

Already registered for OAK's Farm Field Day (see above) at Flourishing Herbs Farm in Scottsville, KY? Please plan to pop over following the event and join us for a drink, dinner, or just plain fun. The new Red Barn is less than one mile away!

RSVP and Share with Friends TODAY!

Sponsor OAK's Annual Conference TODAY!

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



KY PROUD FALL CSA WEEK

Sept. 18-22, 2023



Celebrate Fall CSAs with OAK!

Learn from Kentucky Farmers on OAK's YouTube

Over the past several months, we have released many of our Conference session recordings from January 2023. These are now available along with 2020-2022 conference recordings, virtual field days, farmer hacks, chef demos, and more on [OAK's YouTube](#).

Don't miss these shared learnings from your OAK community and the farmers, researchers, and allied professionals who help us all further OAK's work to advance organic regenerative agriculture - improving the health of the environment and our communities!

Click [HERE](#) for #OAK2023 sessions and more!

Global Farm Metric - Farm Sustainability Assessment Tool: 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. Learn more about the Spring 2023 Trials on six OAK member farms in [OAK's August Field Notes](#)

If you are interested in using the GFM-FSAT for your farm, send an email to 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](#)

Not-To-Miss Opportunities

Apply for Conservation Technical and Financial Assistance with NRCS

Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) provides farmers, ranchers and forestland owners with the knowledge and tools they need to conserve, maintain and restore the natural resources on their lands and improve the health of their operations for the future. NRCS offers this assistance at no cost to the producers they serve. Their goal is to give customers personalized advice and information, based on the latest science and research, to help them make informed decisions.

If a producer chooses to take the next step towards improving their operations, NRCS can work with them to develop a [conservation plan](#), with suggested conservation practices that can help them reach their production and conservation goals. Producers can also choose to apply for [financial assistance](#) to get help installing the conservation practices outlined in their conservation plan.

[RAFI](#) Reminds Farmers: The federal 2024 fiscal year begins Oct. 1, 2023, and **all farmers should initially assume Oct. 1 as the application deadline for receiving NRCS cost-share assistance in calendar year 2024.**

Learn more from [Loretta Lynn in 1980 here](#), or from [NRCS in 2023 here](#).



Loretta Lynn Speaks up for Soil Conservation

[Learn More About NRCS Conservation Assistance](#)

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 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 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"

[Learn More About NRCS Conservation Assistance](#)

SARE Professional Development Program (PDP) Grants, known as train-the-trainer grants, are available to help further education and outreach strategies for ag professionals and ag educators who work directly with farmers and ranchers.

Provided by Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE), the grant funds training activities that educate ag professionals in up-to-date strategies and technologies to help farmers and ranchers increase profits and lessen environmental impacts. PDP grants support such activities as producing workshops, creating educational manuals and videos, or conducting on-farm tours and demonstrations.

[Learn more and apply here](#) - **Deadline: Aug 31, 2023**

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. [Learn more and apply here](#)

Grow Appalachia is now accepting draft proposals for the 2024 [Garden Grants](#) program cycle!

Draft proposals due by September 1, 2023.

Draft proposals are not required, but submitting a draft proposal gives your program the opportunity to receive feedback from our Garden Grants team before submitting it again as a final proposal. **Final proposals due by October 1st.**

[Grow Appalachia's Garden Grants Program: An Overview](#)

Grow Appalachia seeks to impact food insecurity in central Appalachia by helping as many Appalachian families grow as much of their own food as possible through grantmaking to non-profits throughout the region.

Grow Appalachia partners with non-profit organizations throughout central Appalachia to administer a Grow Appalachia gardening program at the local level—delivering organic production resources and technical assistance through a hired partner site coordinator so that families truly have all they need to grow their own food.

Since 2010, Grow Appalachia has partnered with more than 60 non-profits in central Appalachia who have worked with over 6,000 families to grow 4 million pounds of organic food for themselves and their families. [Learn more by visiting their website](#)

Kentucky Selling Farmer Tax Credit Keeps Farm Land Farming!

The Kentucky Selling Farmer Tax Credit program grants tax credits to selling farmers who agree to sell agricultural land and assets to beginning farmers.

Farmers wanting to sell agricultural land and assets may be eligible for a Kentucky income tax credit up to 5% of the purchase price of qualifying agricultural assets, subject to a \$25,000 calendar year cap and a \$100,000 lifetime cap.

- A beginning farmer cannot have previously owned any agricultural land for a period exceeding 10 years.

- Selling farmers cannot have more than 50 full-time employees and must be the legal owner of agricultural land and assets sold to a beginning farmer.

- Sales involving immediate family members do not qualify for tax credit consideration.

Prior to completing a sale of agricultural assets, applicants should review the Kentucky Selling Farmer Tax Credit Guidelines for more detailed program information and eligibility requirements. Visit [Join Kentucky State University's monthly sustainable agriculture workshop, featuring NRCS Climate Smart Program and Ag Tech: Drones, LiDAR, and Near-Infrared Imaging this month! Free event; lunch included.](#)

Upcoming Partner Events

Third Thursday Thing: Ag Tech and NRCS Climate Smart Programs -

TOMORROW, August 17, 2023, 10 am ET

Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm, Frankfort KY

or streamed online at youtube.com/kysuag/live

ced.ky.gov/kstc for complete details.

Homesteaders Farm Tour Series - Black Soil KY Day Hamlet Hop

August 25, 2023, 1-5pm

Three dynamic farmer-led tours in Lexington:

- JoJuana, Vincent and James Greene, GreeneLanding KY, Cadentown
- Jim Coleman, Coleman Crest Farm, Uttingertown
- Kenya Abraham, SlakMarket Farm, Athens

[Learn more and register here](#)

KY Herbalism Alliance presents Goldenrod Gathering

August 26, 3-7 pm ET

Sylvatica Forest Farm, Mt Vernon KY

An afternoon of plant workshops and community, including fermentation workshop, plant organoleptic workshops, farm tour and more. Donation-based event; bring your own tea mug but not your pet. [Learn more here](#)

The Food Connection at UK Presents the 2023 Bill Best Award to Sharon Stone First Friday

September 1, 2023, 7:30 am ET

Sharon Stone is a retired teacher and one of the founding volunteers of the Woodhill Community Market in Lexington. Sharon is passionate about serving her community by facilitating a sliding-scale, biweekly CSA-style farm share of fresh local produce throughout the peak growing season, sourced from a diverse group of local farmers and gardeners. Sharon is a force for the Lexington community and our broader local food system.

Please make plans to attend the September *First Friday* where we will honor Sharon and hear from her first hand about how one individual can fuel change from the ground up.

First Friday is a dynamic local food systems networking opportunity featuring a delicious locally sourced breakfast and a short presentation from a standout food system professional(s). We welcome on and off campus local food practitioners, advocates, and community members.

Attendance and breakfast are free but we do ask that folks pre-register. Please click [here](#) to register.

People's Summit on Food Systems and Urban Agriculture

September 8 - 9, 2023

Louisville

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. We are committed to building a much more equitable and sustainable local-regional food system, supported by urban agriculture and thriving farms in Louisville and in surrounding counties. The Summit is hosted by Food in Neighborhoods and Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension. [Get your ticket today!](#)

Upcoming Virtual Events

Webinar: Science Behind Current Climate Changes and Future Projections

Aug 23, 2023 12:00 pm ET

Join Dr. Kate Marvel, senior climate scientist at Project Drawdown, as she draws on her own experiences as a scientist and vocal advocate for climate solutions to explore the science behind current climate changes and future projections. We'll discuss the science of attributing extreme weather events to our warming climate, the different ways humans affect climate, and the things science doesn't yet understand.

The planet is now more than 1.1°C warmer than before the Industrial Revolution—and it shows. This summer, we've experienced punishing heat waves, devastating floods, and toxic levels of wildfire smoke filling our skies. As temperatures climb, the risk of extreme weather rises, too. And we're facing an even hotter, more dangerous future. Humans are conducting an unprecedented experiment on the entire planet, and no one is sure exactly how bad it will turn out. But there is hope. Most of the solutions we need to stop climate change and avoid the worst-case scenarios are already here. [Learn more and register here](#)

Webinar: Using Cash Flow Projections when Considering Infrastructure Purchases

August 23, 2023, 6-7 pm ET

From [MOFGA](#): Creating, understanding and utilizing Cash Flow Projections can be daunting, but the results can be empowering, even life changing. In this session, we'll take an informal walk through how a good, simple practice of cash flow projecting can give you the knowledge and confidence you'll want to have when you plan for significant equipment or farm infrastructure purchases. [Register here](#)

Organic Honey Bee Colony Management is Best for Bees and Beekeepers

August 24, 2023 2 pm ET

Organic honey bee management practices are based on implementing approved chemical and cultural methods for pest and pathogen control. However, experimental data is scarce about the benefits that implementing such practices has on colony health and productivity. In this webinar, you will learn how to effectively implement organic management practices into a beekeeping operation, and the advantages that such practices have on colony survival and honey production. While implementing organic management does not imply the possibility of organic certification of honey bee products, our studies demonstrate that this management system supports healthy and productive honey bee colonies. [Register here](#)

Reversing Degradation: Agriculture Opportunity, Global Imperative

August 24, 2023, 8pm ET

Degradation. It's the word that most aptly describes what's happening today to the soil and water resources on our farms and ranches. In this webinar, "Reversing Degradation: Agriculture Opportunity, Global Imperative," Understanding Ag's Blain Hjertaas will provide key insights into this critical problem and what we can do to help solve it. Blain will demonstrate how growing plants and grazing ruminants are key practices in regenerating our soil and water resources - and how those practices positively impact water vapor, the most powerful greenhouse gas controlling 95 percent of the heating and cooling on the planet. [Register here](#)

Webinar: Understanding Your Chart of Accounts for Meaningful P&L Statements

August 30, 2023, 6-7:30 pm ET

From [MOFGA](#): Creating and understanding the structure of the Chart of Accounts for your farm, whether in a spreadsheet or in QuickBooks or on paper, can be confusing, and the significance and impacts of how it's set up are often overlooked. In this session, we'll take an informal walk through how the Chart of Accounts can lead to a better understanding of your farm's financial statements and can give you knowledge to more confidently make informed decisions while you navigate financial challenges and foresee opportunities to sustain the health of your farm. [Register here](#)

Adapting to Water Scarcity Part 1: For Farmers & Ranchers

August 31, 2023, 7pm ET

Learn practical ideas from Dale Strickler, author of *The Drought Resilient Farm*. Hear success stories. Network with others who are planning for abundance in a water-scarce future. | As a follow-up to Soil for Water's 2022 Drought Resilience webinar series, renowned agronomist Dale Strickler returns to share updates on low-risk ways to drought-proof your farm or ranch. Five farmers adapting successfully to drought or water restrictions will share what they've learned, and then it's open mic for networking about what producers can do to create abundance in a water-scarce future. [Learn more and register](#)

Educational and Farming Support

Farmers, Join the 2023-24 Red Clover Cover Crop Trial

Just like any other crop, the efficiency of cover crops can be further enhanced by developing better varieties. For instance, through selective breeding, we can focus on improving traits such as biomass production, ground cover, frost resistance, sensitivity to environmental conditions, and stronger allelopathic properties.

[SeedLinked](#) is thrilled to announce a partnership with Dr. Heathcliff Riday's expert USDAARS team. Together, they aim to leverage the power of crowdsourcing insights from individuals like you to help breed even better cover crop varieties. Their first pilot project will focus on red clover, a versatile cover crop known for its fast establishment and adaptability to various soil types. Often used between rows of vegetable crops when regularly mowed for easy management, red clover can fix up to an impressive 150 lb. of nitrogen per acre. Furthermore, its long taproots contribute to soil loosening and nutrient absorption from deeper layers, promoting a healthier and more productive farming environment.

[Help to Develop Improved Cover Crop Varieties!](#)

This trial is focused on testing the vigor, biomass, and winter hardiness of 12 varieties of red clover. You will receive a sub set of 4 varieties. Seed will be shipped in early September, and participants are asked to plant a minimum of 6 linear feet per variety. You will be asked to collect data into spring 2024, so keep that in mind when choosing a location for this trial. Limited to 70 growers. USA Growers only due to international seed shipping regulations. [Learn More and Apply Here](#)

Federal Support for Urban Farming Is At Risk!

From Civil Eats: Since the last farm bill, the USDA has spent more than \$50 million to support food production in cities and suburbs, but the programs might not last. [Read more here](#)

Spinach Trial Underway to Inform Organic Seed Production

From eOrganic: The Organic Seed Alliance is evaluating 272 spinach accessions from the USDA-ARS Germplasm Resources Information Network (GRIN) seed collection at their research farm in Washington state to assess timing of bolting and seed yield potential as part of a NIFA OREI funded project. This fall, they will share the trial results as well as their knowledge on spinach seed production and seed cleaning techniques through a webinar hosted on eOrganic, but meanwhile, [read more about the project on their blog post here!](#) This seed production trial information is only one aspect intended to aid in developing improved varieties for organic farmers. Research on the role of soil microbes on nutritional content, nitrogen use efficiency, and abiotic stress such as extreme temperatures is also underway by the project lead researcher Vijay Joshi at Texas A&M, and Ainong Shi and Gehendra Bhattarai at University of Arkansas. Together with the results of the seed production trials this project will help inform organic spinach breeders and farmers, and anyone working with seed from the USDA-ARS

Germpasm Resources Information Network (GRIN) seed bank. Results will be posted on the [eOrganic project website](#).

Kentucky Cooperative Extension Launches Community Survey To Better Serve All Kentuckians

The University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service in the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment is launching a comprehensive community assessment survey to identify and prioritize opportunities for targeted efforts to help communities thrive and shape the future of Kentucky's extension services.

Programming areas in Cooperative Extension include agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences and 4-H youth development. In addition, horticulture and fine arts programming are also offered in some counties.

The data will identify and guide state-level priorities and pinpoint specific county-level issues, informing tailored programmatic and outreach initiatives. The survey findings and county profiles will be accessible through dashboards on the UK Extension and UK Engage websites.

To participate in the 10-minute community needs assessment survey, visit <http://go.uky.edu/serveKY>

Blind Cultivation for Early-Season Weed Control in Organic Grains

Check out this [OGRAIN Fact Sheet](#) that Dr Joel Gruver was instrumental in developing, which covers basics and practical advice for blind cultivation in corn or soybean with a tine weeder or rotary hoe.

Farm Bill: The Basics - with Community Farm Alliance

Congress is writing the 2023 Farm Bill right now! Join CFA staff Kimmie Ishmael and Laurie White for an [overview of this enormous and influential piece of legislation](#). Who writes the Farm Bill? How will it affect you? What is in the Farm Bill? What isn't? How can your voice be heard?

Farm Bill: Marker Bill Trackers

From [RAFI](#): A marker bill is a little bill that a legislator is hoping will become part of a bigger, “omnibus” bill, like the Farm Bill. It's the way legislators get their policy ideas and legislative text on record. Marker bills are the building blocks of bigger bills – they are not typically expected to pass on their own. The more support a marker bill gets once it is introduced, the stronger chance it has of being included in the Farm Bill.

There's a lot to keep track of as Congress writes a Farm Bill, and RAFI hopes that sharing [the marker bills they are tracking and supporting](#) will be a helpful tool for us, too.

From [OEFFA](#): [OEFFA's Farm Bill Tracker](#) is a regularly-updated list of marker bills that have the potential to advance soil health and climate resilience, strengthen local and regional food systems, promote organic research, address consolidation, and support beginning and BIPOC farmers. Get to know the marker bills that might be included in the 2023 Farm Bill!

Choosing The Right Cultivation Equipment For Your Organic Grain Farm

Listen to experienced farmers discuss the different cultivation tools used for weed management in their organic grain systems, including tools such as torsion weeders, finger weeders, and modifying your own equipment. Three webinar recordings from the 2023 winter OGRAIN Conference highlight farmer stories and perspectives. [Find them here](#)

Reviving Pollinators: How A University Of Kentucky Professor Offers Hope

A University of Kentucky researcher is dedicating a significant portion of her career safeguarding a crucial component of the Earth's ecosystem. Tiffany Messer, an associate professor in the UK Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Department of Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering, is on a mission to protect pollinators and other wildlife from the hazards of neonicotinoids, an insecticide commonly used to shield crops from pests.

In a previous study published in the Journal of Environmental Quality (JEQ), Messer studied floating treatment wetlands (FTWs), engineered platforms covered in wetland vegetation that float on water bodies and naturally purify water by filtering pollutants and promoting beneficial ecological processes. She found they could help protect endangered bee populations, aquatic ecosystems and human health. [Learn more here](#)



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