



Hello ##[Name | First]##,

OAK IS HIRING. The OAK Team is expanding! Applications are now open for four new positions. This is a dynamic time to consider working for the Organic Association of Kentucky.

Team OAK looks forward to the winter months. They offer our annual, seasonal opportunity to gather and learn together. Registration for **#OAK2024**, OAK's annual conference, is **NOW OPEN**. Early bird pricing will end on December 15th, don't delay, [register today](#).

In case you missed it - OAK has added [new membership levels](#)! Read on for details about OAK's Equity Individual Grower and Equity Farm Memberships. These new membership levels offer access to OAK's member benefits, including discounted registrations to OAK's conference, and to participatory opportunities for members to mold OAK's future work.

The Organic Farmer Mentorship Program is Now Open. The OAK Team is delighted to announce applications are being accepted to the new Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) Mentorship Program. OAK can't wait to support these mentor/mentee partnerships across the state. The time is now to apply as mentorship pairing begins this winter. Read below for more details and links to apply.

It might be chilly outside, but weekly trips to the Farmers Market are still in order. Kentucky Farmers grow diverse foods year-round. Support your local farmers and businesses throughout the winter. Stay cozy and know that you are nourishing yourself, the local food system and regional economies with each purchase. This is a great time to use OAK's online searchable [Find-a-Farm Directory](#) to source that special item. Keep your purchases local and impactful this season of giving.

Warmly,
Robin Verson
Membership and Communications Coordinator

OAK IS HIRING

The Organic Association of Kentucky seeks candidates to serve in four new positions. Three of these positions are full-time and will be working on OAK's new Climate-Smart Project. One position is part-time and will expand OAK's outreach around USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs. Anyone who is interested in learning more about

these roles is encouraged to visit the [OAK Careers](#) web page and **apply by December 15, 2023 for full consideration - positions will remain open until filled.**

Current Job Openings at OAK:

- **Climate and Conservation Project Manager** - provides leadership and strategic management for the implementation of OAK's five-year Climate-Smart Project to increase the adoption of conservation practices on Kentucky farms, collect farm-level data on greenhouse gas emission reductions and soil carbon, develop markets for climate-verified products and collaborate with partners and enrolled farmers.
- **Soil Health and Conservation Specialist** - delivers on-farm technical assistance to farmers enrolled in OAK's Climate-Smart Project and develops management plans based on NRCS practice standards to improve soil health.
- **Soil Health and Conservation Specialist** - delivers on-farm technical assistance to farmers enrolled in OAK's Climate-Smart Project and develops management plans based on NRCS practice standards to improve soil health. Yes, OAK is hiring for two of these positions.
- **Conservation Outreach Coordinator** - develops educational and outreach programming and communications to engage farmers in conservation practices and NRCS programs, with a particular focus on small and urban farming operations.

[View Job Openings and Apply Here](#)



ORGANIC ASSOCIATION OF KENTUCKY

HIRING

OPEN POSITIONS

Climate and Conservation Project Manager
Soil Health and Conservation Specialist
Soil Health and Conservation Specialist
Conservation Outreach Coordinator

APPLY NOW

Learn more at oak-ky.org/careers

The graphic is a dark blue rectangular poster with white and light blue text. It features a stylized white megaphone icon in the bottom left corner. The background has some light blue wavy shapes on the left side.

**Register by December 15 for Early Bird Pricing to
OAK Conference 2024**

Join us for OAK's 13th Annual Farming Conference: *Advancing Organics in Kentucky: Adopting Practices, Increasing Resilience and Strengthening Systems!* This January 2024 gathering offers three days of learning, connecting and exploring with the expanding OAK community.

This event is open to everyone. Take advantage of early bird pricing - register by December 15 and plan to join us on January 25-27, 2024, at [KSU's Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm](#), in Frankfort. Learn more about pre-conference workshops and scholarships below. This event sold out last year, reserve your spot now.

Register today and grab early bird pricing

Pre-Conference Workshops Offer Deeper Learning on January 25

Don't miss the opportunity to immerse yourself in a half-day pre-conference workshop with experienced farmers and content experts, on January 25, 2024.

MORNING WORKSHOPS

Introduction to Seed Growing in the Southeast - Chris Smith

Five Steps to Your Regenerative Resilience Plan: A Workshop for Farmers - Laura Lengnick

No-Till Cover Cropping Strategies on Small to Medium Scale - Jesse Frost and Susana Lein, with Joel Dufour, Shawn Lucas

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

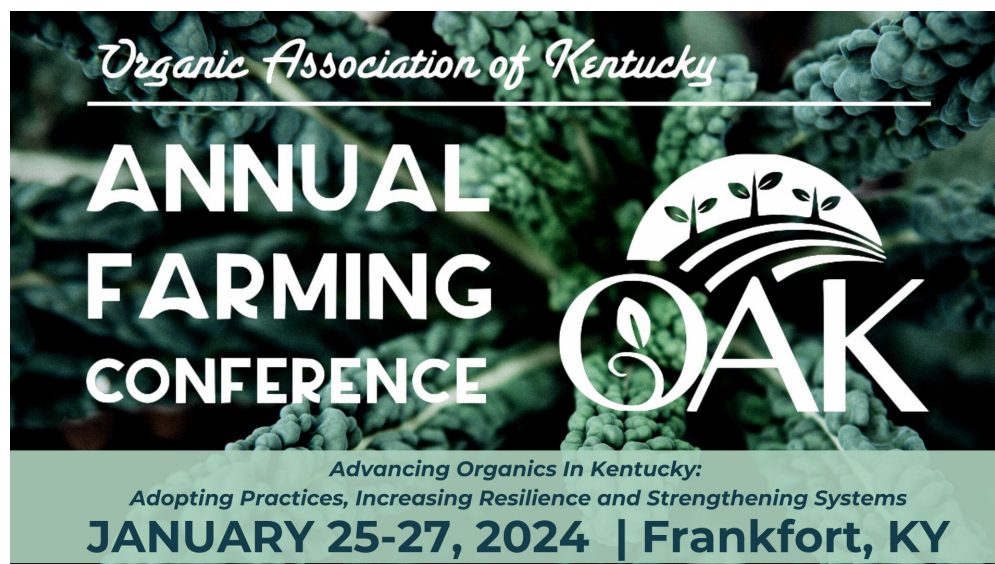
Regenerative Grazing Ecosystem Function and the Tool of Livestock - J. Dylan Kennedy, with Adam Jones, Mike Wilson, Annie Woods

The Science and Practice of Off-Season Organic Production - Tony Silvernail, Joel Dufour, Krista Jacobsen, Nathan Lind, Shawn Lucas

Want to Grow Fruit? Small Fruits for Kentucky - Blake Cothron

Raising Goats in Kentucky - Von Barnes, Emily Clement, Fatima Jackson, Holly Robinson, McKinley Stonewall

View the Agenda here



OAK Offers Conference Scholarships Thanks to Partner Support

Scholarship requests for OAK's 2024 Conference will be reviewed and awarded on the business day nearest to the 1st and 15th of each month, up until the event and as funds allow. Scholarship awardees will receive a discount code via email to use in the conference registration form. Scholarships are applied to the regular conference session days, January 26 and 27. Pre-conference workshops are not included in scholarships at this time. We share gratitude with our partners that make it possible to offer scholarships: Charlie's Compost, Grow Appalachia, Kentucky Horticulture Council and Kentucky State University.

[Apply Now for a Scholarship](#)

2024 Conference Sponsors, Partners & Funders



National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



#NOREGRETS
Initiative



Sharing a huge THANK YOU with these early and generous OAK Conference Sponsors, Funders, Scholarship and Program Partners! The sessions, tours, workshops, amazing speakers, delicious food and abundant farmer scholarships OAK is able to offer over the three days of the conference are all possible with the thoughtful support and collaboration from these businesses and organizations.

Become a Sponsor

The Organic Farmer Mentorship Program is Open - Apply Today

OAK is launching a new organic farmer mentorship program in collaboration with the Midwest Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP). The program actively seeks **mentors** who are experienced and knowledgeable certified organic producers, passionate about organic production and helping others succeed in organics. The program is open for excited **mentees** who are interested in pursuing organic transition and certification for their operation. OAK will connect and work with 10 to 20 farmer mentorship pairs during the next year. Join us!

Get connected. Share your knowledge. Get the support you need.

**Attention all owners, managers, employees or retired producers
of certified organic operations: **mentors are needed!****

**Calling all farmers interested in organic transition and certification:
mentees can apply now!**

Tell Me More About Becoming a Mentor or Mentee!

Mentorship is a year-long paid opportunity for mentor farmers (\$3,000), including payment for training, mentorship time and travel time. Mentees will receive an education and travel stipend (up to \$1,000).

Mentorship pairing starts this winter, with programming kicking off in 2024. Learn more and apply at the button above, or contact Kenya Abraham, OAK's Organic Transition Program Manager, for more information. kenya@oak-ky.org.



United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program
Transition to Organic Partnership Program



Questions about Preparing for Organic Certification?

Over the past seven years OAK has supported over 200 farmers in learning about the National Organic Program (NOP) regulations and working to complete the required paperwork, develop farm maps and create recordkeeping systems to pursue organic certification. OAK is here to support your certification journey and to prepare you for success. If you have a few questions, give us a call or send us [an email](#). If you are ready for a farm visit and want to dive into the paperwork, fill out the short application below and we'll follow up with you to schedule a meeting.

[Apply for Organic Certification Technical Assistance Here](#)

OAK Launches a New Organic Production Assistance Program

OAK now offers dedicated organic technical assistance program for Kentucky farmers who are currently using or interested in using organic practices. OAK's Organic Production Specialist, Sarah Geurkink, is available to respond to production-related inquiries and meets with farmers one-on-one via phone, virtual meetings and on-farm consultations. This service is for commercial farms and market gardens that are currently or are planning to sell their products. It is accessible to experienced or beginning farmers across certified organic and conventional crop and livestock operations and OAK Membership is not required to receive assistance.

Organic production support can include: crop and cover crop planning; managing weeds, pests and diseases; soil testing assistance and interpretation; nutrient budgeting; recommendation on inputs, equipment, infrastructure and tools; high tunnel management; integrated crop livestock systems; livestock and grazing management and more.

[Request an Organic Production Consultation](#)

The Organic Production Assistance Program aims to:

- Reduce barriers to adoption of organic farming practices
- Improve farm efficiencies, production capacity, product quality and farm resilience
- Improve profitability by helping farmers start earning organic premiums with greater efficiency
- Support farmer needs and the success of the growing organic industry in Kentucky

To request an Organic Production Consultation, fill [out this form](#).

Just have a quick question? Send an email to Sarah Geurkink at sarah@oak-ky.org



This program is supported by the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund (KADF)

Support OAK and Kentucky Farmers this Week!



OAK is taking part in the Good Giving Challenge organized by Blue Grass Community Foundation happening November 28 - December 1! Join us in growing a more sustainable food and agriculture network by supporting OAK's programs this week. There are several matching opportunities to make your gift go farther. Help us raise \$5,000 during the week. Consider a donation on Friday December 1 at 6am or 12pm. These match pools will add an additional 50 cents for every dollar.

[Make a Gift](#)

KYFSC Endorsed Farm Application is Open

Kentucky Farm Share Coalition (KYFSC) is a program coordinated by OAK to strengthen community supported agriculture (CSA) across the state. We are now accepting applications from Kentucky-based produce CSA farms interested in participating in employer CSA voucher programs during the 2024 season. KYFSC Endorsed Farms must offer a minimum of 20 weeks of produce CSA, have 3+ years of CSA experience and locally-source 100% of share items. Learn more about KYFSC endorsed farm membership benefits and requirements on our website and apply by December 15, 2023. KYFSC will also have two other membership



options rolling out soon! If you are interested or have questions, please reach out to discuss these opportunities by contacting OAK's CSA program manager Katie Harvey at katie@oak-ky.org.

[Learn More & Apply](#)

OAK Offers New Equity Membership Opportunities



In case you missed it - OAK has added new membership levels!

In celebration of Kentucky's rich agricultural community, OAK invites you to join in these **free**, three-year memberships: the ***equity individual grower membership*** and ***equity farm membership***. These new membership levels offer access to OAK's member benefits, including discounted registrations to OAK's conference, and to participatory opportunities for members to mold OAK's future work.

In a step towards equity and abundant inclusion, within an industry that has and continues to disenfranchise underserved, marginalized groups, OAK now offers these free membership levels to **farmers, market gardeners, beginning farmers and aspiring growers who self-identify with one or more of the below:**

- is a member of a historically marginalized group – Black, Indigenous or people of color (BIPOC); persons with a disability; etc.
- is experiencing food or housing insecurity
- has immigration-related expenses
- has medical expenses not covered by insurance

And never forget, **all OAK Members receive discounted registration to the annual conference!**

[Join OAK via Free Equity Membership](#)

If you would like to make a contribution, however large or small, to support OAK's Equity Membership Initiative, [please do so here](#). If you have any questions or want to learn more about OAK's membership levels, please contact robin@oak-ky.org.

Become an OAK Board Member

Interested in serving as a Board Member for the Organic Association of Kentucky? OAK is currently looking for future board members and is requesting your nominations! As a part of our community, you or someone you know may be the right person to bring their time and talent to serve in this important role.

The Board of Directors actively supports OAK and promotes its mission, vision, programs and fundraising efforts. We are looking for individuals who are interested in helping OAK grow the sustainable and organic farming movement in Kentucky. We especially need Board Members who have experience in the areas of fundraising, finance, law and organic farming.

Help OAK flourish! Learn more and nominate yourself or someone else.

Share your interest here

Not a OAK Member? You Really Should Be! Join OAK Today!

Do you participate in OAK's programs? Are you looking for a way to support organic and regenerative agriculture in Kentucky? Join the OAK community! OAK is an engaging group of farmers, eaters, ag professionals, entrepreneurs and more. OAK's farmer network includes farmers who are interested in or using regenerative practices to those whose farms have been certified organic for decades. Together, we are folks committed to creating a healthier, more nourishing food landscape in Kentucky.

If you have let your membership lapse or have never taken the plunge to join OAK, now is the time! Members will receive discounted pricing for OAK's January conference!

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

Opportunities, the Latest News & Calls to Action

2023 Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections Open Until December 4

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is taking ballots for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) [county and urban county committee elections](#) from all eligible agricultural producers and private landowners across the country. Elections are occurring in certain Local Administrative Areas for these **committee members who make important decisions about how Federal**

farm programs are administered locally. Producers and landowners must return ballots to [their local FSA county office](#) or have their ballots postmarked **by Dec. 4, 2023**, for those ballots to be counted. [Learn more here](#)
<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Kentucky/index>

Market Opportunities for Culturally Meaningful Seed and Food

The [Ujamaa Cooperative Farming Alliance](#) (Ujamaa) is a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color)-led collective seeking to increase grower and crop varietal diversity in the United States. In partnership with the University of Vermont, we are conducting a research study to examine how food and agriculture can better enhance access to culturally meaningful seeds and food. This information will support farmers and other participants in the seed value chain to expand regionally adapted, sustainably grown and less commercially available varieties of seed (and the crops that come from these seeds).

To do this, we need your help! As an essential participant in the seed value chain, you are being invited to participate in a survey entitled Market opportunities for culturally meaningful seed and food. Completing the [survey](#) will take about 20 minutes.

Participating in the survey is completely voluntary, and your responses will be kept confidential. If you do participate, you can opt into a raffle for one of 50 \$100 gift certificates.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the Principal Investigator (PI) of this research study, Daniel Tobin, at uvmseeds@uvm.edu, or you can reach out to Ujamaa directly at ujamaacfa.researchsurvey@gmail.com

Support CFA's Mattie Mack Farmer Fund* (*Previously the Kentucky Black Farmer Fund)

The Mattie Mack Farmer Fund, organized by Community Farm Alliance (CFA) supports BIPOC farmers across Kentucky. If you would like to donate to assist with this fund, please [click here](#)! Applications for interested farmers open in Fall 2023. Those eligible to apply must satisfy all of the following:

- BIPOC-operated, family farms in Kentucky with fewer than ten employees;
- Farms who are actively part of the local food system, including produce, livestock, edible herbs, honey, maple syrup;
- Currently farming; and
- Selling products through local markets (i.e. farmers market, roadside market, Community Supported Agriculture, farm share, local restaurants, etc.)

Please contact CFA staff members Tiffany Bellfield El-Amin at tiffany@cfaky.org and Laurie White at laurie@cfaky.org for assistance.

Educational & Farming Support

In-person Events Throughout the Region

Building a Regional Seed Commons - TN Local Food Summit

November 30-December 3, 2023

Lebanon, TN

As part of the annual Tennessee Local Foods Summit, join this evening kickoff and daylong track of sessions hosted by the Cumberland Seed Commons, with a focus on the ongoing work of building a regional seed commons. Sessions include Seeds for Community Resilience; Seed Saving, Storing, and Cleaning; Building A Seed Commons from an Indigenous People's Lens and more. Everyone is welcome to join. Learn more at tnlocalfood.org/

ACRES USA Eco-Ag Conference & Trade Show

Dec 4-7, 2023

Covington, Kentucky

<https://www.acresusa.com/eco-ag>

Navigating Kentucky's Heirs Property

December 8, 8:30am - 4pm ET, Breathitt County

Kentucky State University's Community Resource Development team presents a series of Train the Trainer events on Navigating Kentucky's Heirs Property.

For more information, contact Irma Johnson at (502) 545-3423 or (502) 597-5845 or by email at irma.johnson@kysu.edu. [Register here](#)

Growing your Farm and Food Business Workshops hosted by KCARD

Topics include essentials of business planning, qualities of a good grant proposal, and key grant programs across the state. Representatives from USDA, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Kentucky State University, and the Kentucky Office of Agricultural Policy will discuss their programs. Registration for the in-person workshops is \$20 and includes lunch.

Register in the links below!

Virtual on December 5th and 7th at 5:30pm - 8pm Central/6:30pm - 9pm Eastern on both nights: <https://tinyurl.com/virtualgyffb>

Be sure to check out KCARD's [website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#) as they share answers to frequently asked questions, upcoming events, grant deadlines, and more!

On-Farm Composting Workshop

December 6-8

Join us to learn best practices for composting and commercial composting certifications.

Farmers, ranchers, and others interested will learn about marketing, compost quality, and more! Primary speakers will be Jean Bonhotal of Cornell Waste Management Institute and Dr. Shawn Lucas, Assistant Professor of Organic Agriculture, Kentucky State University.

Day 1 will be held at the Kentucky State University Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm and Days 2 & 3 will be at the Cooperative Extension Building at Kentucky State University Main Campus. \$10 registration fee. Reserve your spot now <https://tinyurl.com/compost-workshop>

Farmers Town Hall

December 11, 1:00 PM 3:00 PM Central

Christian County Cooperative Extension Service, Hopkinsville KY

This event provides an excellent opportunity for producers to connect with multiple representatives from Kentucky agencies and gain insights into a wealth of FREE resources available to farmers.

Register now for in-person at bit.ly/WKYTownHall

Join on Zoom at bit.ly/WKYTownhallZOOM

Ohio State Organic Grains Conference

January 4-5, 2023

Oregon, Ohio

Attendees will learn, eat, and connect on everything from weed control to technology. Learn more and register here. <https://offer.osu.edu/organic-grains-2024>

KY Forage and Grassland Council Events

2024 - Jan. 7-10 - AFGC National Conference, Mobile, AL - <https://www.afgc.org/annual-conference/>

2024 - Feb. 8 –Alfalfa/Stored Forage Conf, Bowling Green, KY

2024 - Feb. 19-20 - Heart of America Grazing Conf., Cincinnati, OH

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.

First Friday, presented by The Food Connection at UK

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 is free but we do ask that folks pre-register.

<https://www.facebook.com/ukfoodconnect>

February 2nd, 2024— Brandi Button Johnson, Faye Kuosman, & Heather Graham (The Food Connection) – [Kentucky Value Chain Collaborative](#)

March 1st, 2024— Barbara Hurt ([DendriFund](#)), Sarah Halcomb ([Walnut Grove Farm](#)), & Dr. Dave VanSanford ([UK Plant and Soil Sciences](#)) – Ohio Valley Grain Exchange

Virtual Events

Savanna Institute's 2023 Perennial Farm Gathering

December 6-8, 2023

Savanna Institute's signature event of the year, the Perennial Farm Gathering brings together a wide community of farmers, land stewards, and perennial enthusiasts. Over three days, folks gather virtually from across the country and beyond to share work, research, and lessons learned in panels, workshops, deep dives, and nutshell overviews – all to advance perennial agriculture. This year, Savanna Institute is joined by Ross Gay (poet and orchardist) and Robin Wall Kimmerer (author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*) as keynote speaker.

Use the code JOY50 at checkout to get 50% off 3 days of exceptional agroforestry training and information. [Use this link to register for the Perennial Farm Gathering!](#)

Beyond Plans & Planting: The Art & Science of Maintaining Agroforestry Systems

December 7, 2023, 1-2pm ET

This panel discussion of farmers will focus on what happens after trees go in the ground. Topics may include planning and designing for long-term maintenance, weed management, system evolution, on-the-fly, field level decision making, favorite equipment and tools, and tips and tricks to keep your agroforestry systems healthy for the long-haul. Come with questions, conundrums, and your own success stories to share! [Please use this link to register for free.](#)

KY Food Action Network's Advocacy Training Series

The [KY Food Action Network](#) (KFAN) is a collective of individuals and organizations united under the common purpose of creating accessible and resilient food systems that prioritize the health of Kentuckians. At the end of each year, before the General Assembly begins in

Frankfort, KFAN offers a series of Advocacy trainings to get folks prepared to talk about KFAN's policy priorities. These are a great opportunity to learn more about KFAN's upcoming work with legislators and get involved in lobbying with KFAN. One of the most effective ways to change policy is to share your stories; put a human face and lived experience to the bill numbers our Senators and Representatives deal with during session.

Registration is required at the zoom links below.

Dec 7, 3pm ET [#4: Building Power in Advocacy](#)

Dec 14, 3pm ET [#5: Storytelling in Advocacy](#)

Vegetable Farms Becoming the Employer of Choice

Motivating and managing employees is essential to most diversified vegetable farms, and rare is the farmer who comes to farming with those labor management skills. Whether you have worked with employees for many years or are in the early stages of hiring staff, this series will give you practical tools to make your farm an employer of choice. Research-based approaches and real world examples make this series practical and useful for any vegetable farm employer or experienced manager. Farmer trainers center peer-to-peer connection and learning, and attendees also receive a carefully curated set of resources to accompany each session. From example position descriptions and check-in templates to a catalog of interview questions and so much more, these resources will help you leave each session ready to take those next concrete steps.

Please plan to attend online sessions with your camera on and ready to engage in discussions with your farmer peers. Space is limited - [register here](#).

Sessions are on Mondays and Thursdays from 9:00 to 11:00am Central Standard Time.

Dates and Topics:

- 7 December: Developing Intercultural Competence as Farm Employers
- 11 December: Managing Conflict on the Farm

Register [here](#), and visit this [webpage](#) to learn more.

Webinar: NRCS & KCARD - Preparing for 2024 Funding

Thursday, December 14, 2023, 7:00 PM 8:00 PM Eastern

NRCS and Myrisa Christy with KCARD will prepare you for conservation resources and grant funding announcements for 2024. Farmers will know what funding is available through NRCS as they prepare for the spring, including opportunities in 2024, such as grants.gov submissions, preparing a business plan for the Value-Added grant, and what a farmer needs to know when presenting a proposal for the KDA Specialty Crop Block Grant. Click this link to attend:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82700974922?pwd=dFVRU1RrZW1SSG8xeFRxZ2N4cGEzdz09>

North American Food Systems Network (NAFSN)'s new book club features "[Feeding Each Other: Shaping Change in Food Systems through Relationship](#)" by change-making authors Nicole Civita and Michelle Auerbach. Host Lin Diaz Maceo of NAFSN will bring this book club to life in three parts:

December 2, 12p-2pm ET - Come meet authors Nicole and Michelle as they guide us through the ethics of "agrelational" thinking, doing and being as proffered in "Feeding Each Other."

Dec-Jan - Make time to read the book, cuddled up at home this winter.

January 27, 12pm-1:30pm ET - Attend the book club to discuss your reading of "Feeding Each Other" and the powerful ideas within.

[Learn more here](#)

Organic Advisor Call Series

The Organic Agronomy Training Service's (OATS) Organic Advisor Call Series offers monthly Zoom discussions and Q&A for organic advisors with farmers and experts, facilitated by Nate

Powell-Palm.

December 13, 8 am CT - "Biannual Promise: Utilizing clover to minimize tillage, build fertility, and increase crop diversity"

<https://www.organicagronomy.org/organic-advisor-call-series>

FACT has weekly, relevant free webinars.

Check out the [full schedule here](#).

Rodale Institute weekly, relevant free webinars.

Check out the [full schedule here](#).

Resources and Funding for Farmers

Good Idea Mini-Grants

We invite pairs of producers and farm advisors to submit proposals to implement a low-cost edge-of-field conservation practice on the producer's operation and create a video or podcast about what they did and learned to be shared with other producers via [One Good Idea](#). Awards are up to \$8,000. The **application deadline is January 15th, 2024**. Learn more and apply here: <https://www.reach.msstate.edu/grant-application.php>

Expanding Agroforestry Project Incentive Payment Program

Application Deadline: January 1, 2024

The Expanding Agroforestry Project, an effort funded by the USDA's Partnership for Climate-Smart Commodities initiative, is paying out over five years \$36 million to producers in direct incentive payments to transform 30,000 acres spanning 30 states into agroforestry systems, thus building a foundation for expanding agroforestry practices nationally. Farmers and ranchers wishing to establish alley cropping, silvopasture, or windbreak systems are encouraged to apply for the program, which will offer direct financial incentives and technical assistance. For more information, please visit nature.org/ExpandingAgroforestry.

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.

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.

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: <https://www.kysu.edu/academics/college-ac/school-of-ace/co-op/small-scale-farm-grant-program.php>

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

Find out more here: <https://mtassociation.org/energy/funding-farm-energy-projects/>

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

Your tax-deductible gift helps germinate, cultivate and activate a resilient food and farming network.

Join us! The organic farming network in Kentucky is growing. Together we are creating a more regenerative and organic food system.

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