



## Organic Association of Kentucky

Advancing Organic Agriculture in Kentucky

## Farmers, Register Today for OAK's April Webinar on On-Farm Conservation Assistance

### Conservation, Connection and Capital: Bringing EQIP Support to Your Farm

April 24, 2024, 10:00 - 11:00 am ET, on Zoom

- Interested in adding conservation to your farm operation?
- Ready to incorporate technical and financial assistance that fits your farm goals?
- Curious what the acronyms NRCS, EQIP and OAK are - and how they can help?

Tune in on Wednesday, April 24, for this [free webinar](#) to guide farmers through all they need to know to apply for and receive Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) support and funding. This one-hour webinar will provide participants with sure-footed next steps and connections with people who can help, from identifying conservation concerns to completing a successful contract. Learn from OAK staff members, a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) specialist and experienced farmers Cortney Moses and Paul Dengel. Cortney and Paul will share their farm story of the EQIP application and funding process and its on-farm benefits for GoodThymes Organic Farm in Williamsburg, KY.

*This event is supported by a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).*

Register Today

## OAK Highlights: Climate-Smart Project, Organic Production Consultations and Soil Health and Conservation Specialist Job

### Farms - Apply to Participate in OAK's Climate-Smart Project

Farmers with commercial operations interested in soil health, climate solutions and building on farm resilience, now is the time to apply to participate in OAK's new [Climate-Smart Project](#). Along with our partners, OAK is accepting farm applications to enroll acres in this new incentive program. Farms will be invited to stay with the project for multiple years, and the first cohort will start this spring. Farmers enrolled in the project will complete a whole farm self-assessment and then work one-on-one with a Soil Health Specialist to add or expand climate-smart practices to their farm. Farms will receive incentive payments for implementing practices such as cover crops, conservation cover, pollinator habitat, nutrient management, grazing, agroforestry and more! [Apply now.](#)

### Farms - Schedule a Production Consultation with OAK's Organic Production Specialist

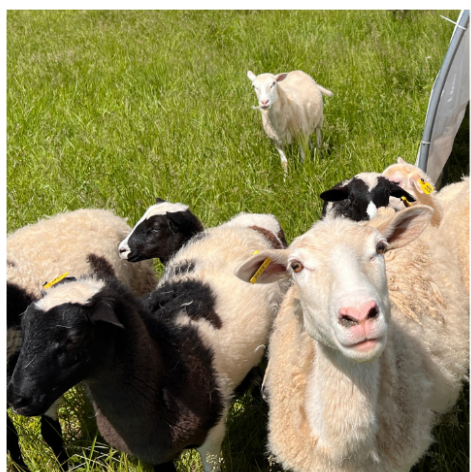
Kentucky farmers, start your 2024 production season with [organic technical assistance](#), intended for farmers currently using or interested in using organic practices. OAK's Organic Production Specialist, Sarah Geurkink, is available to respond to production-related inquiries and consult with farmers one-on-one by phone, virtually and on the farm. This service is for commercial farms and market gardens that are currently selling or planning to sell their products. Organic technical assistance 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. [Learn more and schedule a consultation](#).

### Open Position - OAK is Hiring a Soil Health and Conservation Specialist

OAK is seeking applications for a full-time Soil Health and Conservation Specialist who work one-on-one with farmers to deliver on-farm technical assistance to farmers enrolled in OAK's Climate-Smart Project. Anyone who is interested in learning more about this role is encouraged to visit the [OAK Careers web page](#) and apply today. The position will remain open until filled.



# OAK IS HIRING



**Soil and  
Conservation  
Specialist**  
*Forage and Agroforestry*

**APPLY NOW**

## Upcoming Partner Opportunities

**American Farmland Trust - Women for the Land Learning Circle  
Utilizing Marketing Strategies to Mitigate Risks For Your Farm Operations**

April 18, 2024, 9:30 am - 3:30 pm ET

Action Jackson Farms, Salvisa, KY (address will be provided after registration)

Participants will learn about marketing their farm products through avenues like Kentucky Proud and hear considerations for successful marketing campaigns from marketing experts. The learning circle will also include a farm tour led by Fatima Jackson and a hands-on learning experience. [Register here](#).

---

## Cumberland Seed Commons Spring Convening

**April 20-23, 2024**

**Berea College, Berea, KY**

The Cumberland Seed Commons (CSC) is holding its [2024 Spring Convening](#) designed for farmers, seed savers, members, partners, researchers and supporters during four grand days, April 20-23, 2024, in Madison County, Kentucky. Everyone is welcome to attend regardless of county, state or country of residence. [Learn more and register here](#).

---

## Grow Appalachia's Beginning Farmer Series

Join this excellent FREE beginning farmer training series! Are you a beginning farmer with 0-9 years of experience? Would you like to hone your skills as a farmer and business owner? Join Grow Appalachia for a [FREE six-month training series](#) tailored to farming in eastern Kentucky.

[Learn more about the application for the 2025 cohort](#).

---

## Upcoming In-Person Events

**Third Thursday Thing: Cattle and Poultry**

**April 18, 2024, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm ET**

**Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm, Frankfort KY**

Join Kentucky State University's monthly sustainable agriculture workshop. Free event; lunch included. If you're unable to join the event in-person, it will be available at [youtube.com/kysuag/live](https://youtube.com/kysuag/live).

**2024 Kentucky Fencing Schools**

**April 23, 2024 in Morehead, KY**

**April 25, 2024 in Mayfield, KY**

This program is designed for producers and agricultural professionals to learn the newest fencing methods and sound fencing construction through a combination of classroom and hands-on learning. For more information contact Caroline Roper at 270-704-2254 or [Caroline.Roper@uky.edu](mailto:Caroline.Roper@uky.edu).

[Register here for the Morehead event](#) and [register here for the Mayfield event](#).

**Small Farms Conference: Eastern Kentucky**

**April 26-27, 2024, Whitley County Extension Office**

Funded by a grant to bring a sustainable agriculture conference to Eastern Kentucky, this two-day event will include practical information from experts on agricultural topics such as honey bees, building a business plan, disaster preparedness, pawpaw trees and more.

Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities will be provided free of charge upon request. Language access services for limited English proficient individuals, will be provided free of charge upon request please contact Laura Rogers at [Laura.rogers@kysu.edu](mailto:Laura.rogers@kysu.edu). [Register here FREE](#)

**Register for the 2024 National Farm Viability Conference**

**April 29-May 2, 2024, Charleston, West Virginia**

Secure your savings by [registering now](#). For questions or support regarding registrations, or to inquire about special accommodations, please contact [info@farmviabilityconference.com](mailto:info@farmviabilityconference.com).

### **Develop Hands-On SKILLS at Salamander Springs Workshop with Susana Lein Monthly Workshops, June - September, 2024 - Berea, KY**

These on-farm workshops are for anyone wanting to get firsthand experience with permaculture principles and methods on the ground, will include hands-on practicums and intensive education in principles, methods and materials, timing, hard lessons learned...not to be missed! [Learn more and register here](#).

### **High Tunnel Field Day**

**May 7, 2024, 10:00 am, Breathitt County Extension Office**

Meet at the Breathitt County Extension Office at 9:30 for transportation to Howard Farms, where Dr. Rachel Rudolph will present. Must watch the videos at [this link](#) prior to the field day. Call 606-666-8812 to register.



## **Upcoming Virtual Events**

### **Webinar: Crop Insurance for Organic Farmers: What's Working, What's Not, and How We Can Make it Work for Us**

**April 16, 2024, 2:00 pm ET**

This webinar from the Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF), the Organic Farmers Association (OFA) and National Organic Coalition (NOC) will be an interactive forum for farmers have open conversations about crop insurance and to share their challenges, successes and questions. This event is part of the Seeds of Success series of virtual farmer-to-farmer networking sessions. [Learn more and register here](#).

### **Virtual Farm Bill Film Screening: Creating an Equitable Food & Farm Bill**

**April 19, 2024, 2:30 pm ET**

Join a virtual film screening event entitled Power of Narrative: Creating An Equitable Food & Farm Bill, the highlight of a collective farm bill campaign.

This event, co-hosted by Black Farmers United NYS, Equity Advocates, Food for the Spirit, Northeast Farmers of Color Land Trust, and Race Forward, features a film uplifting BIPOC voices in food and farming, followed by insights from guest speakers. [Learn more](#)

### **USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Veterans Webinar Series**

**April 23, 2024, 1:00 - 3:00 pm ET:** USDA Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison overview, Boots to Business, and Veteran Business Outreach Center

**April 30, 2024 1:00 - 3:00 pm ET:** Veterans Administration loans, Rural Development loans  
Register for a free webinar series for military veterans, transitioning service members, and military spouses on how to work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to prepare for a career in agriculture. This webinar series is designed to provide information about USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher programs and resources for the military community.

You only need to register once for five webinars including May 7, 14, 21). It's highly recommended to attend all five webinars. [Register here.](#)

### **CSA Coffee Chat: Recruiting & Retaining Members from Workplace CSA Programs**

**April 24, 2024, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm CDT**

This event, live on Zoom, will be focused on sharing the new [University to CSA toolkit](#) and strategies on workplace CSA member retention. [Learn more and RSVP here.](#)

### **Applying Wood-Based Biochar to Reduce Nutrient Leaching and Results from Biochar Application at a Connecticut Vegetable Farm**

**April 25, 2024, 1:00 pm ET**

Join this webinar during which the presenters will discuss the effects of different soil carbon amendments types (compost and biochar) and rates on nutrient retention, soil water content, and different soil chemical properties such as cation exchange capacity and pH, as well as its effects on crop yields. [Learn more and register here.](#)

### **Emerging Findings on the Effects of Cover Crops on Grassland Birds**

**April 25, 2024, 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm ET**

In this free, one-hour webinar supported by USDA's Conservation Effects Assessment Project, Dr. Adam Janke of Iowa State University and Dr. David Buehler of the University of Tennessee will share new findings on the effects of cover crops on grassland birds. [Register here](#)

### **National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) Meeting**

**April 29-May 1**

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) will meet in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to discuss substances petitioned for addition to or deletion from the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances, substances due to sunset from the National List in 2026, and recommendations on organic policies. The meeting will be held in person and broadcast live via Zoom. [Learn More here](#)

### **Webinar: Overcoming Common Barriers to Organic Certification (Rodale Institute)**

**May 1, 2024, 2:00 - 3:00 pm ET**

Learn strategies to manage the transition period, understand certification costs, simplify paperwork, navigate market competition, and leverage educational resources. Gain the knowledge to successfully achieve organic certification. Don't miss this opportunity to learn from experts and elevate your organic farming journey. [Register here.](#)

### **Urban Hives: Nurturing Bees for Biodiversity and Nutrition**

**May 1, 2024, 11:00 am ET**

From Kansas State University's Gaining Ground webinar series, this webinar will "discuss the integration of bees in urban agriculture as a means of income generation, pollinator enhancement, biodiversity improvement and a rich source of nutritious honey." [Register here.](#)

## Educational and Farming Support

### Sky High Farm 2024 Micro-Grants

#### Application Deadline April 22

From Sky High Farm: "The program is committed to building equity in our extended agricultural circle by supporting a range of projects helmed by farmers and food justice advocates whose work is rooted in their communities and our shared values. Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, migrant, refugee and other groups excluded from traditional funding opportunities experience profound barriers in access to land, acquiring essential farming tools and equipment, experiential and formal education around sustainable farming practices, and wages from farming that support stable housing and basic human needs." [Learn more and register here.](#)

### NOP Publishes Handbook Updates and Responses to SOE Frequently Asked Questions

Today, the USDA published an [updated version of the National Organic Program \(NOP\) Handbook](#).

This public resource provides USDA-accredited certifiers and certified operations with guidance, instructions, and other policy documents that can help them comply with the USDA organic regulations.

Several handbook documents have been updated or archived because they have been replaced by new regulations, such as the [Strengthening Organic Enforcement](#) (SOE) rule. In addition, USDA relocated general education resources from the handbook to more relevant locations on NOP's website and in the Organic Integrity Learning Center.

The 2024 NOP Program Handbook Update linked below includes a list of updated and archived documents, citations to the regulations that supersede them, and relocated documents with their new locations. These references can also be found on the [NOP Handbook](#) web page.

[View the updated NOP Handbook here.](#)

### Commercial Berry Grower Surveys

Do you grow blueberries, brambles, or strawberries commercially? If so, the University of Kentucky Extension Specialists need your help! In order to determine future priorities and grower needs for disease, insect, and weed management, more information about the current challenges that growers face is needed. Information can be submitted through a survey for blueberry, brambles, and strawberry, independently. Each survey is quick and takes approximately 5-7 minutes to complete. All submissions are anonymous. Responses to these surveys will assist in the development of new resources and trainings for growers.

Blueberry Growers Survey - [https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_739YOWEjiqB8QYK](https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_739YOWEjiqB8QYK)

Bramble Growers Survey - [https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6fgkeBHHSiHHZhl](https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6fgkeBHHSiHHZhl)

Strawberry Growers Survey - [https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eb5nmo54tjLxCBw](https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eb5nmo54tjLxCBw)

Postharvest Survey - [https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_2tXeWzkAdOHHy4e](https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2tXeWzkAdOHHy4e)

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.

Donate

Become an OAK Member

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:

