



## OAK Field Notes - July 2025



## OAK Conference 2026: Share a Proposal by July 23

Kentucky farmers and interested speakers – the call for proposals for the 2026 OAK Conference, *Cultivating Connections: Growing Organic Together for 15 Years*, is open for four more weeks! OAK invites session proposals that highlight insights, practices, research and knowledge with practical takeaways for Kentucky farmers and relevant to the organic and conservation agriculture community. Session topics including a Kentucky farmer speaker on agroforestry, business management, scaling up vegetable production, pest management, small- to medium-scale livestock, risk management, specialty crops and soil health are strongly encouraged.

[Share a Proposal by July 23](#)



## Meet The Farmer: LeTicia Marshall

As a child in Southcentral Kentucky, LeTicia Marshall did chores on her grandparents' tobacco farm, hunted for wild mushrooms and watched her grandfather use catalpa worms for fishing bait at their pay lake. Now a mother and land steward of four acres in South Louisville, LeTicia is building on those early outdoor experiences for her work as an urban farmer, garden educator and food systems organizer.

Out of the turbulence and solidarity of 2020, LeTicia created [BearFruit & Grow, LLC](#), cultivating an abundant 15-raised-bed backyard garden and youth education program and contributing to food justice efforts throughout Louisville. LeTicia's passion for urban gardening and empowering her community to reconnect with the land led her and her family to their current farm acreage in Southwest Louisville, along the banks of Pond Creek.

OAK is delighted to partner with LeTicia and conservation partners for a July 29, 2025 Field Day: *Conservation on an Urban Farm* - learn more below!

[Get to Know LeTicia](#)

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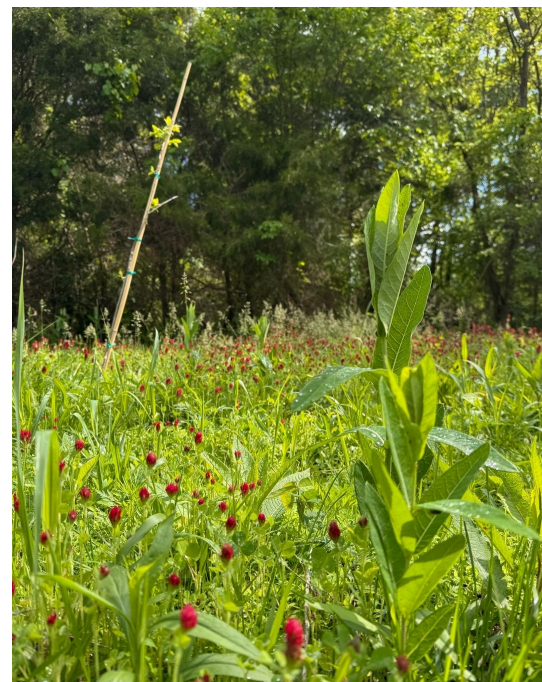
## July 29th Field Day at BearFruit & Grow



Join us for the *Conservation on an Urban Farm* Field Day, 9am-12pm ET in Jefferson County, to learn about:

- Pollinator plantings to support beneficial insects and manage pests,
- Creekside plantings for water protection and soil stabilization,
- Biodiversity of plants and animals that supports self-sufficiency and market offerings,
- Cover crop plantings, solarization and soil testing for healthy garden soils.

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



Learn More and Register Today

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## Reflections from DreamTime Market Gardens Field Day



Zach Selby has experienced a crash course in market farming during his first five years creating [DreamTime Market Gardens](#), learning from successes and failures, prioritizing long-term soil health and customer relationships, investing in farm growth each year and gradually allowing himself to work a five-day week on the farm.

At this June OAK Field Day, Zach shared about his journey, highlighting experiences with certified organic growing practices and on-farm infrastructure with dozens of Field Day participants. As a former full-time chef, Zach also offered great tips for farmers interested in marketing to restaurants and establishing restaurant accounts.

[Learn more here!](#)

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## UK releases new resources for organic production.

Fungicides and bactericides can mitigate crop damage and yield loss caused by plant pathogens, but data-driven recommendations on products for organic farms are hard to find.

Good news! UK's Plant Pathology Extension team has created a series of resources to help organic producers develop cultural practices and commercial spray schedules to manage common diseases.

- [Beans, Cole Crops, Cucumber](#)
- [Melons, Peppers, Pumpkin](#)
- [Summer Squash & Zucchini](#)
- [Tomatoes, Winter Squash](#)

(Explore more excellent pathology resources [here](#).)



## Latest News

### 2025 Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections Open Until August 1st

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**. Individuals may nominate themselves or others and qualifying organizations may also nominate candidates. USDA - and OAK - encourage all eligible producers to nominate, vote and hold office. Producers and landowners must return ballots to [their local FSA county office](#) or have their ballots postmarked by August 1, 2025, for those ballots to be counted. [Learn more here](#)

Kentucky State University invites farmer input. Click the links below to learn more and contribute.

- Organic and conventional farmers in Kentucky: Share 15 minutes of valuable perspectives in [this survey](#) on the future of agriculture.
- “Economic viability of agrivoltaics to small-scale farmers in Kentucky: A cost-benefit analysis and barriers to adoption” looks at the possible challenges that may hinder farmers from using agrivoltaics, a farming method that combines solar panels with growing crops or raising animals. [The questionnaire](#) should take about 10-15 minutes to complete.

## Education & Funding Support

### In-Person Events Throughout the Region

#### CFA Farm Days at Loving Farm

July 9, 2025 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM ET

Loving Farm, 134 Florence Ln, Ewing, KY 41039

Join Community Farm Alliance (CFA) at Loving Farm to learn about flowers, herbs and Agritourism!

<https://secure.everyaction.com/2rcgtiUkIOekP7i8TLi3Pg2>

### Twilight Tour!

Tuesday, July 22, 2025, from 6-8 pm ET

University of Kentucky Horticulture Research Farm, Lexington, KY

[https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5iKBt5DL3jZKEvk](https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5iKBt5DL3jZKEvk)

### Kentucky Farm Succession Seminar: Building the Bridge to Your Farm's Future

July 23, 2025 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CDT

Owensboro, KY

With support from the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund, the Kentucky Farm Succession Seminar will bring national, state and local experts to help farm families prepare for the future and handle challenges in sustaining the farm business and protecting valuable farmland.

<https://news.ca.uky.edu/article/university-kentucky-hosts-farm-succession-seminar-july-23>

### KY Mechanical Weed Control Field Day

Tuesday, September 24, 2025, 8am - 4pm ET

University of Kentucky Horticulture Research Farm, Lexington, KY

<https://ccd.uky.edu/mwcfcd>

## Virtual Events

### NCAT Organic Inspection Webinar

July 9, 1 pm ET

This webinar will explore what it looks like to be an organic inspector. Learn what it takes to become an inspector and how you can serve organic farmers.

[https://events.timely.fun/rx05hu0x/event/78034108/20250709130000?](https://events.timely.fun/rx05hu0x/event/78034108/20250709130000?r=https://www.ncat.org/events/#event=78034108;instance=20250709130000&popup=1)

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### Labor for Small Farms: Overview & Tips

July 14, 6:30-8 pm ET

Join UK's Center for Crop Diversification to learn from Labor Experts [Michael Bayer](#) and [Dr. Kimberly Morgan](#) from the University of Florida IFAS .

This presentation will be most useful for those who are considering adding or expanding outside hired labor on their farm, including immigrant guest workers or domestic sources.

Register here: <https://ccd.uky.edu/events/labor-small-farms-overview-tips>

### "Edible Ecosystems: The Science & Soil of Food Forests."

Wednesday, July 16, at 4:00 p.m. ET

Learn how they have created the USC Upstate Food Forest, a two-acre agroforestry system that mimics a natural ecosystem to sustainably grow a diverse range of edible plants while promoting biodiversity, soil health, and community engagement.

Register and learn more [here](#).

### Virtual Training: Suicide Prevention Training for Farmers and Farm Families

July 21, 12-1:30 pm ET

For more information about this QPR training, please email Olivia Bury at [obury@agrisafe.org](mailto:obury@agrisafe.org).

To register for this free training, you must have a free account in the AgriSafe Learning Lab. If you do not have an account, please create one [here](#).

<https://learning.agrisafe.org/products/qpr-for-farmers-and-farm-families-live-7212025>

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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

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