VABF

THE 27TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE • JANUARY 8-10, 2027

The Schedule at a Glance



FRIDAY

DAY 1

New!

9:00-4:30 Pre Conference Workshops

5:00-7:00 Welcome Reception

SATURDAY

DAY 2

8:15-5:00 Conference Proramming

5:30-7:30 Buyer Grower Social

5:30-11:00 Brewery Fundraiser

SUNDAY

DAY 3

8:15-3:30 Conference Programming

BE PART OF THE MOVEMENT.

Connect, learn, and grow with a community committed to resilient, regenerative agriculture.

REGISTER TODAY

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Friday's Schedule

PRECONFERENCES

9:00 - 4:30	**Jason Paul - Glade Road Growing** See all Farm Tour (on-site in Blacksburg)
1:00 - 4:30	**Jeff Poppen - Barefootfarmer** Integrating Biodynamic Principles in a Market Garden
	Sally Walker - Glade Road Growing Hiring Staff to Help Build Your Farm Dream
	Chris Smith - Utopian Seed Project On Farm Seed Saving in the Southeast
	Dan Gagnon - Broadfork Farm Beginning Farmer Soil Building Crash Course
5:00 - 7:00	New! **Welcome Reception** Join us! For the first-ever Welcome Reception at the VABF Annual Conference. Come network and mingle with your fellow dirt loving farmers and partners.

REGISTER TODAY

Saturday's Schedule

SESSION SPEAKERS

8:15

Keynote Speaker — **Jesse Frost** — **No-Till Growers**

9:45–11:00

Cassie Vanderhart	Good Agriculture	Farm Bookkeeping 101: Preparing for Tax Season
Meredith Morgan	QCS	Choosing the Best Certification for Your Farm Operation
Dani Baker	Cross Island Farms	Three Agritourism Ventures to Consider for Your Farm
Chris Smith + Bonnetta Adeeb + Ira Wallace	Utopian Seed Project	Community Seed Keeping: Collards
Hailey Sowden	Crooked Porch Farm	Profitable Winter Greens: Is Supplemental Heat Worth It?
Annie Jane Cotten	Appalachian Sustainable Development	Appalachian Harvest Herb Hub: A Deep Dive Learning Journey
Dan Sweet	Blackbird Farms	Feats and Failures in Scaling Pasture Raised Poultry Production
Ashley Jernigan	Virginia Tech	Exploring Soil Biota: Who is in your soil? What are they doing? How can they be managed?

11:15–12:30

Ashley Hoffman	Fox Haven Farm & Learning Center	Farming with Care: When Farming Promotes Physical & Emotional Resilience
Kelly Parker + Bryce Miller	Junction City Farm	From Seed to Sanity? Three Years of Building a Farm
Edmund Frost	Common Wealth Seed Growers	On-Farm Variety Trials and Plant Breeding Research
Immanuel Jarvis	Jireh Family Farm	Multiple Revenue Doors, One Small Footprint: Running a Farm Store, Airbnb, Event Barn, and CSA off Four Acres
Michael McConkey	Edible Landscaping	An Overall View of Less Care Fruiting Plants
Dan Gagnon	Broadfork Farm	Solving the Cucumber Mystery
Emilie Tweardy	ShireFolk Farm	Coppice Agroforestry for Any Farm
Charlotte Hanes	Riverridge Farm	Farming at Scale: Navigating 1,500 acres at RiverRidge Farm

Saturday's Schedule

SESSION SPEAKERS

2:15 - 3:30

Betsy Trice	Rodale Institute	Strengthen your Farm with the Rodale Farm Fund
Sherry Buttrick	Virginia Outdoors Foundation	Protecting Working Lands: Financial Benefits of Conservation Easements
Valerie Jarvis	Jireh Family Farm	Food Is Medicine: What 25 Years as a Nurse Taught Me About Farming
Steve Haring	Virginia Agroecology Services	Spray application techniques for small and regenerative farmers
Pam Dawling	Twin Oaks Community	Success with Tomatoes in the Mid-Atlantic
Alex Tuchman	Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary	Creating a Pollinator Sanctuary
Lee Rinehart	NCAT-ATTRA	How to Raise Certified Organic Livestock

3:45 - 5:00

Cam Terry + Chloe Johnson	Garden Variety Harvests	Strategies for Building Capacity from a Community Farm
Stasia Greenewalt	SG Farm Services	Food Safety Recordkeeping that Actually Works
Ale Aguirre-Bustos	Virginia Tech	From Restoration Need to Farm Opportunity: Exploring Native Seed Production in Virginia
Jason Pall	Glade Road Growing	The Root Crop Dream Team: Onions into Carrots
Curtis Childress	VSU	From Seed to Sale: Aligning Crop Planning with Flower Marketing
Kate Watts	Carys Consulting	Beyond THC: Hemp as a Permaculture Plant
Ruth Reyer		A Homesteader's Introduction to Raising Coturnix Quail on Pasture

Sunday's Schedule

SESSION SPEAKERS

8:15

Keynote Speaker **Michael Carter Jr.** **Carter Farms**

9:45 – 11:00

Daniel James	Herd Ventures	Seen & HERD: Storytelling as Infrastructure for Farms and Food Systems
Aaron Grisby + Craig McClung	Deep Roots Milling All Farm Organics	Growing Together: Farmer-Miller Collaboration
Liza Dobson	Yarrow Springs Farm	Everlasting Florals: Adding Dried Flowers to Your Operation for Winter Cash Flow
Karl Hambsch	Loving Cup Vineyard & Winery	Organic Grapes Are Not Impossible in Virginia
Pam Dawling	Twin Oaks Community	The Best Vegetable Cultivars to Grow in the Mid-Atlantic
Stesha Warren	Association for Temperate Agroforestry	Forest Farming the Foothills & Piedmont
Sally Walker	Glade Road Growing	Poultry Processing for 1000+ birds a year
Mark Highland	Organic Mechanics Soil Co.	Biochar Breakthroughs!

11:15 – 12:30

Eric Boatti	FACE	Organizing to Advance Policy Solutions that Support Regenerative Livestock Production
Amy Milliron	Fearless Farmers	Sowing the Seeds of Demand for Nutrient-Dense Foods in Local Food Systems
Don Weber	USDA ARS	Behavioral Control for Cucumber Beetles: How do we Best Deploy our Pheromones?
Joseph Martinez	Rockbridge Cider Vinegar	The Inner Life of an Apple Tree
Andy Borak	Red Fern Farm	Overwintered Snapdragon Production
Nate Miller	Simply Sustainable Landscapes	Creating Native/Edible Landscapes with Curb Appeal
Stewart Lundy	The Josephine Porter Institute for Applied Biodynamics	Introduction to Biodynamics
Tim Service	Wind Ridge Farm	Regenerative Practices for Cattle Farms

Sunday's Schedule

SESSION SPEAKERS

2:15 - 3:30

Heather Salmon	VAFAIRS	Introduction to Grant Writing
Bonnetta Adeeb + Ira Wallace	Ujamaa Seeds and the Ira Wallace Seed School	Seedkeeping, Cooperation and Community Building: Everyday Acts of Resistance in Agriculture
Jeff Poppen	Barefootfarmer	Watering Without Irrigation
William Hale	All-Farm Organics	A Quarter Century of Organic Vegetable and Grain Production, Coupled with Commercial Compost Production: What Does It Get You?
Dan Gagnon	Broadfork Farm	Growing Great Transplants
Tzvi (Kipi) Kipnis	Organic Roots Farm	The Foraging Food Park: A Model to Regenerate Soil, Communities, and Farmers.
Alex Tuchman	Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary	Biodynamic Beekeeping in the Blue Ridge: Who Are the Honeybees? What Do They Need? How Can We Serve Them?