

Session Summaries

Sunday, January 12, 2020

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Yoga for Farmers

Mary Cush, The People's Yoga

Gentle flow yoga with tips on how to incorporate yoga while you work.

Session A 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Using minimum tillage and cover cropping to help organic producers build an ecologically based weed management program

Cerruti RR Hooks, University of Maryland

Weed management is a major constraint to the organic vegetable industry, and comparisons of weed communities between conventional and organic farming systems consistently demonstrate higher weed levels in organic systems. For years, organic growers have identified weed management as a vital production limitation and have relied heavily on tillage and cultivation, which can be detrimental to soil health. Further, relying on a single management tactic can cause shifts to weeds that are more difficult to control. Hand weeding is impractical, if significant human labor hours are needed, and the efficacy and cost of organic herbicides makes their use less feasible. These hindrances are coercing producers and researchers to seek new weed management solutions. Thus, the goal of this presentation is to discuss some integrated weed management tools that can be used in concert with minimum tillage and cover cropping to help manage weeds while protecting soil health.

The Conscious Omnivore

Alexis Russell, Ayrshire Farm

We "know" that in order to be a good environmentalist we need to become vegan or at least vegetarian, but is that the only way? We will spend time examining the claims both for and against meat consumption and challenge the common refrain that if we want to reverse climate change, we have to stop eating meat.

Selecting Vegetable Varieties for Greenhouse Production

Paul Gallione, Johnny's Selected Seeds

An in-depth presentation addressing varietal selection for Greenhouse Vegetable Production. The talk will cover the increased utilization of both heated and unheated greenhouses in vegetable production and how best to be successful in that market.

Community Food Forests: Dos, Don'ts, and Deliverables

John Munsell, Virginia Tech University

This session covers the opportunities, challenges, and aims of community food forest projects in built environments. Presented first are the basics of urban and community agroforestry systems, followed by findings from national research on the structure and function of community food forests. Attendees will leave

with a solid understanding of best practices and strategies gleaned from successes and shortcomings at over 20 sites across the country.

Moving to Greener Pastures: How to Prepare to Transition Your Operation

Maggy Gregory, Adams & Fisk/Gregory Family Farms

This session discusses, from a legal and practical perspective, the issues that farmers need to think about in terms of the transfer of their operation to an outside party, whether the next generation, an arms-length transaction, or the transfer and merging of an operation with another farmer. This session will touch on both planned and unplanned transfers, including unexpected incapacity or death, and the steps that producers can take now to ensure that their operation as a whole is as viable and valuable as possible.

Mushrooms, Mycelia, and Mycorrhizae

Mark Jones, Sharondale Mushroom Farm

Explore alliances with fungi and microbes that provide farmers opportunities to support and grow biodiversity, enhance ecosystem services, provide food and medicine for our communities and the planet, and advance biological farming through on-farm research. Learn how to diversify your farm products with mushrooms and mycelia for food and medicine. Discussion will include an introduction to low-tech outdoor mushroom cultivation, indoor cultivation of medicinal mushrooms and mycelia, and how to amplify native mycorrhizal fungi and indigenous microbes for soil, plant, and animal health. Get growing with this introduction to techniques for mushroom, mycelium, and microbe growing; and learn how to use organisms as solutions to grow a regenerative agriculture.

Session B 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Climate Disruption Got You Spooked? Invest in Your Soil!

Mark Schonbeck, Organic Farming Research Foundation

Floods, drought, and other weather extremes related to climate change are making farming riskier than ever. Building healthy, resilient soils can improve your chances of weathering the storm. Drawing on the latest research, this session will explore innovative, integrated soil, nutrient, crop, and livestock management strategies to curb losses to erratic weather, build soil carbon, and lower greenhouse gas emissions. We will also cover crop insurance options for managing risk in diversified systems.

The Chicken Year: a calendar for poultry growers

Brent & Anna Wills, Bramble Hollow Farm

Raising poultry is a year-round endeavor, even for seasonal meat bird production. Learn about year-round planning, preparation and management for your chickens, whether layers, meat birds or breeding flocks--or all three! We will discuss breeds, housing and best practices for raising poultry all year in a 4-season climate.

The 101 of Edible Landscaping

Michael McConkey, Edible Landscaping Nursery

An overview of the many attributes of cultivating choice fruits for the home. From selecting, growing and using. Michael will share his experience over the years of growing naturally the best easy care fruits.

Growing Medicinal & Culinary Herbs - Leaf Production

Katherine Herman, Gathered Threads

Learn the in's and outs of herb farming for leaf production. We'll discuss herb plants in demand for production & growing conditions, harvesting rotations, post-harvest handling, drying equipment, product lines for herbs/herbal products, packaging equipment, & regulations.

Boost Your Farm Income with Vermicomposting

Rhonda Sherman, North Carolina State University

Use earthworms to turn food scraps, livestock manure, crop residues, coffee grounds, etc. into vermicompost that increases soil health and crop yields, and suppresses plant diseases and pests. Learn earthworm husbandry, feedstocks, pre-composting, vermicomposting systems, harvesting techniques, and vermicompost applications.

Opportunities and Challenges with Industrial Hemp

Jabari Byrd, Virginia Tech University

With the legalization of hemp, farmers have a unique opportunity for economic development through CBD hemp production. A provision in the 2018 Farm Bill makes hemp, marijuana's cousin, no longer a federally illegal substance. It allows farmers and other cultivators to grow the leafy, lanky plant and sell its harvest to processors so they can make hemp-based products ranging from foods, beverages and cosmetics to paper, clothing and building materials. It is a particularly rich opportunity for urban farmers, because a relatively small acreage can produce lucrative returns on investment.

Session C 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Soil Doesn't Follow Trends, But it Does Dig Best Management Practices

Monica Pape, The Accidental Agronomist

In this presentation, whether new to farming or in knee-deep, participants will gain an understanding of the essential fundamentals vital to a successful soil fertility program. We'll discuss topics such as irrigation, pH management, amending vs. fertilizing, soil management, and cultural practices that can take your farming operation to an elevated level of growth, achieving higher yields and more nutrient-dense crops efficiently and effectively with less labor and inputs. Also, we'll plow through some of the current trends, such as soil inoculants, different farming techniques, and soil fertility programs associated with the soil health industry focusing on the financial costs or gains and their practicality in different farming situations.

Raising Rabbits for Profit

Nicki Carangelo, Letterbox Farm Collective

This session intends to guide beginning and seasoned farmers through the start-up phase of their own pasture-based rabbitry by giving a glass walls look into our system at Letterbox Farm. Attendees can expect a full enterprise budget along with housing plans, sample breeding schedules, feed guidelines and other rabbit husbandry basics. By the end of this session, folks should have a keen sense on whether a rabbitry is right for their business.

Beyond Zinnias: The Next Level of Flowers to Add to your Farm

Gwynn Hamilton, Stonecrop Farm

You love having fresh flowers and bouquets at your market stand, but you're ready for more diversity. Learn about the next great additions to your rotation. We'll discuss everything from germination to successions of

harvest for show-stoppers like delphinium, lisianthus, and stock. We'll touch on the greenery that makes your bouquet complete and some perennials that keep giving year after year.

Managing Climate Change with Permaculture Design

Patrick Johnson, Diversity Permaculture

Permaculture is an ecological design system developed from careful observations of nature. This session will explore options available growers using permaculture design to help mitigate some of the negative impacts of climate change.

Creating local Agrarian Commons - supporting community centered land ownership for benefit of next generation farmers and ranchers

Ian McSweeney, Agrarian Trust

In the next two decades alone, it's estimated that across the US, over 400 million acres of farmland will change ownership. The Agrarian Trust is a nonprofit organization that works tirelessly to ensure that tomorrow's farmers and ranchers have access to this land, and that the opportunities to farm remain economically viable. Agrarian Trust is creating multiple local Agrarian Commons 501(c)(2) land holding entities across the US to hold equity and authority in community, create shared ecological stewardship, and support land access for diversified, regenerative agriculture. We see this model as a necessary and innovative approach to address the realities of farmland owner demographics, wealth disparity, farm viability, and all who are excluded and marginalized from equity in land, food, and community.

They are not so Micro: Adding value to your farming operation through microgreen and shoot production.

Holly Hammond, Whisper Hill Farm

Ever wonder what the craze is about microgreens and shoots? Come see and learn how you can start adding profit to your farming operation. Holly will be providing a hands-on demonstration of the entire process: mixing and pressing soil, soaking and seeding, germinating and ideal growing conditions, harvesting and post-harvesting, and marketing. This workshop will be a great way to get all the information you need to know to start adding value to your farming operation through microgreen and shoot production, including the breakdown of costs and sales for Whisper Hill's production from 2019.

Session D 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Tapping Biochar's Potential for Your Farm and Our Climate

Harry Groot, SunriseValley Farm/Dovetail Partners

Explore how biochar can be made on your farm, from waste feedstocks, and learn how it can improve productivity and provide long-term carbon sequestration. We'll look at samples made from different feedstocks and processes, discuss how best to use them, and consider options for producing your own. We'll also discuss the potential for marketing your char and for capturing the excess heat for processes or generation.

Farming the Future: Our Holistic Approach to Healing Ground and Feeding Families with Livestock and Specialty Grains

CJ Isbell, Keenbell Farm

Offering perspective and experiences on the integration of heirloom grains, cover crops, annual forages, and perennial pastures in a whole farm approach with a livestock operation. Options for specialty grains, crop

rotations, no-till applications, challenges in bringing products from field to plate, availability of collaboration and pooling of resources are some key topics that will be covered. Utilizing increasing diversity, maximizing land and resources with land stacking enterprises allow for expanded product offerings, acting as a hedge against variables outside of farmers control, accelerate the building of organic matter, and increasing soil health/biology.

Eat From Your Garden Year Round

Barbara Pleasant, Author, lecturer, columnist

Wouldn't it be great to eat from your garden every day of the year? Learn proven strategies for stocking your own homegrown pantry, from the ground up. Start by choosing easy-to-grow crops that store themselves, and then learn simple ways to preserve vegetables and fruits so they are welcome in the winter kitchen. Award-winning garden writer Barbara Pleasant, author of Homegrown Pantry, will share dozens of tips and ideas to help you eat from your garden in every season.

Forest Farming: Black Cohosh Case Study

Katie Commender and Michelle Pridgen, Appalachian Sustainable Development (ASD)

Forest farming, the cultivation or management of non-timber products in the forest understory, presents a promising economic and conservation opportunity for forest landowners. This session will highlight the opportunities and challenges for forest farming native, medicinal plants, using black cohosh (*Actaea racemosa*) as a case study example. Topics will include best forest farming practices, lessons learned from farming, processing, and marketing, break-even analysis for wild stewarding, and more. Available resources for beginning forest farmers will also be highlighted. Perspectives will be shared by both a black cohosh forest farmer, Michelle Pridgen, and the Appalachian Harvest Herb Hub, a shared-use commercial herb processing facility that helps forest farmers process and market medicinal herbs.

Finding and Keeping Your Place in the Market

Ellen Polishuk, Plant to Profit

Let's consider the aspects of each market channel and how that fits with your talents and temperament. What are the challenges and opportunities in the wholesale sector versus retail? Where does customer service fit in?

The Whole Okra: A Seed to Stem Celebration

Chris Smith, The Utopian Seed Project

This seed-to-stem celebration of okra explores the diverse traditional and creative uses of the whole plant. Learn about growing and eating the plant's pods, leaves, flowers, and seeds, as well as using the fiber. Workshop highlights include okra flower gin, okra seed oil, okra microgreens, and a multitude of pod preparations that could forever change the way you look at okra (okra marshmallows, anyone?).

Monday, January 13, 2020

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

Yoga for Farmers, Mary Cush

Gentle flow yoga with tips on how to incorporate yoga while you work.

Networking Meetings 7:30 AM – 8:15 AM

Mountains Region-facilitated by Brent Wills, Adam Taylor, & Daniel Key

Piedmont Region-facilitated by Mark Jones & Kevin Fletcher

Coastal Region-facilitated by Resi Connell

Farmers of Color-facilitated by Michael Carter, Jr.

Beginning Farmers-facilitated by Kim Niewolny

Session E 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Cultivating Climate Resilience on Your Farm

Laura Lengnick, Cultivating Resilience

Resilience is about much more than simply bouncing back from damaging disturbances or shocks. You can use resilience thinking to avoid or reduce damage, to recover quickly and at low cost when damage is unavoidable, and to take advantage of new opportunities created by changing climate conditions. Attend this session if you would like to learn more about how award-winning sustainable farmers and ranchers growing fruits and vegetables, grains and livestock across the U.S. are using all of their assets under management - natural, human, social, financial, built/technological - to reduce the risks and capture new benefits associated with rising temperatures, more variable weather and extremes, and new pest and weed management challenges.

Integrating sheep into perennial cropping systems such as vineyards

Joseph Brinkley, Bonterra Organic Vineyards

Ruminants are uniquely suited to enhance soil creation with grasses and forbs through millennia of co-evolution. By integrating livestock into perennial cropping systems, we can develop resilience and improve soil health by promoting biodiversity, reducing compaction, adding organic matter, and enhancing fertility through the metabolic process. Simultaneously, grazing sheep can bolster sustainable farming practices by reducing tractor passes for leafing, mowing, undervine weed control, and fire mitigation. With planned grazing, we can create functionality as well as beauty on a farm scale with multiple layers of benefit for the balanced farm.

Growing Great Vegetables in Virginia

Ira Wallace, Southern Exposure Seed Exchange

Learn tips and Techniques for growing garden fresh salads, vine ripened tomatoes, crisp green peppers and dozens of other delicious edible year-round in your Virginia garden. Ira will cover soil building, planting dates, succession sowing, mulch, managing water, selecting the best varieties and more for abundant harvests across the state.

So, you want to grow food and medicine in your woodlot; let's talk

James Chamberlain, USDA Forest Service

People have been foraging food and medicine from forests for many generations. In the early 1800s, forest landowners in Appalachia started growing American ginseng under the forest canopy. In 1976, Douglas and Hart, suggested that 'forest farming' was a solution to problems of world hunger and conservation. Today, forest farming is becoming a popular land use for people not wanting to cut timber but wanting to produce alternative products for sustenance and income. However, getting started, figuring out how to go about it, and actually undertaking forest farming is a mystery to many. This presentation tries to remove the enigma of how

to farm forests for food and medicine. From site selection and preparation to species selection, planting and maintenance, and markets the speaker will discuss the many aspects of forest farming to encourage landowners interested alternatives uses for their forests.

Farm Bill Programs: Where things stand nationally and in Virginia.

Jill Auburn (moderator), Michael Happ, NSAC & Eric Capps, NRCS., VABF policy team

The most recent farm bill passed about a year before this conference, affecting everything from on-farm conservation practices to local food systems to support for minority, veteran, and beginning farmers. The first half of this session will provide a comprehensive overview of where implementation of that bill stands today, by a speaker from the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, the leading national advocate for sustainable agriculture. The second half of the session will be a practical how-to on tapping the farm bill stewardship programs in Virginia, by a speaker from the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Unusual Uses for Common Crops

Chris Smith, The Utopian Seed Project

Harvest as many (edible) parts of a plant as possible to maximize your returns by applying a seed-to-stem philosophy. Think tail-to-tip but for vegetables! Roasted broccoli stem, okra leaf curry, chayote tendrils, cowpea leaves, nasturtium flowers, and winter squash seed oil. This class will explore the hows, whys, and a plethora of exciting crop candidates for seed-to-stem farming with market-farmer examples of seed-to-stem selling. This class is applicable for chefs, foodies, and farmers!

Session F 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

There's Nothing Sexy About Soil Fertility...It Just Leads To Bigger Yields

Monica Pape, The Accidental Agronomist

In this presentation, participants will gain an understanding of the essential fundamentals vital to a successful soil fertility program. We'll discuss topics such as irrigation, pH management, amending vs. fertilizing, and cultural practices that can take your farming operation to an elevated level of growth achieving higher yields and more nutrient-dense crops efficiently and effectively with less labor and inputs.

What is the role of a beekeeper? —Hands on vs. hands off approaches to biodynamic beekeeping

Alex Tuchman, Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary

This basic beekeeping workshop will delve into the daily dilemmas that face the beekeeper: what needs to be done, when do I act, and when do I let the bees alone and trust that they will be okay?

Making a Garden Map

Cindy Conner, Homeplace Earth

A good garden map can be a valuable tool for your success if you plan carefully when you make it. It can show you what is planted in each space for the entire year and, if your rotation schedule is the same, what was in that space last year and what will be there next year. You can also make a map to show amendments added and a map to show what actually happened that year, which may differ from the actual plan. Learn to make a garden map that plans for rotations and for cover crops, keeping your garden full all year long.

www.HomeplaceEarth.com.

Environmental Nutrition - Symbiotic relationship between the Environment and Nutrition

Amanda Terillo, Amanda Terillo Nutrition Counseling

Nutrition has become very disconnected from nature and the environment. Eating and food consumption has become such a superficial experience that does not provide joy, understanding of where our food has come from or provide nutrition. As a nation we have become so fixated on calories, body weight and protocols of eating that will 'cure' us. This view of nutrition and way of eating is contributing to the demise of our food system and ultimately our health and environment. While we are not going to fix our food system by our food choices alone, but moving away from a style of eating that is based on trends, convenience and fear-based diets puts a negative strain on the environment and takes us further away from the real healing ability attributes of food.

Meat 101: How to sell what you raise

Tanya Cauthen, Belmont Butchery

This session is based on 13 years of farmers coming to me for advice on how to sell their - beef, veal, pork, lamb, chicken - frequently before they have every produced a morsel! I will discuss the 2 basic business models - 1. wholesale to restaurants or butchers 2. direct to consumers. I will highlight the different pricing structures of each practice. And if there is time, we will discuss filling out the cut sheet at the processor.

Africulture: Growing African ethnic vegetables

Michael Carter Jr., Carter Farms

Africulture is the inspired study of African and African American contributions to global, national and local agriculture. This course in Africulture will focus on growing and marketing ethnic vegetables (tropical produce) in the Commonwealth.

Session G 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

Take a Stand for the Land!

Ben Coleman, Mountain Run Farm

I will journey through the 25 year timeline of managing a large scale beef cattle ranch in the heart of Virginia. As a first generation, fulltime farmer, I turned to many resources for advice, some good, some not so good. After 10 years of detrimental farming practices and by financial force, a radical move toward biological, Holistic management has resurrected the ranch, bringing new health to man, land and animals, plus space for the next generation. The exciting part is, the cure is FREE! The cure is Nature! Our ultra-low input mentality had us sell all forage equipment, boycott the salesman, park the tractors, and DRIVE the animals. After 25 years of bold, experimental changes, Mountain Run Farm now serves the local community by hosting on-farm meat and produce sales and events ranging from Makers Markets and music festivals to guided bird walks and school tours. The ever-increasing diversity of plants and wildlife brings FREE opportunity to future generations to carve out a living on the land. We eat well, too! My session will focus on Grass-only, birth to finish beef production, as our key tool for repairing our mistakes, regenerating the land and financially supporting the survival of Mountain Run Farm. This session will build on last year's presentation, with updated focus on creating a ranch that is resilient to the ever-changing ways of Nature. We will talk about drought, flooding, cold, heat, wind, natural animal health, forage diversity, soil building, water management, improving bird and pollinator inventory, predator/prey relationships; all in the context of my experience and observations while managing a Natural and Regenerative Ranch, in the heart of Virginia.

BANGUS Meat Goats

Renard Turner, Vanguard Ranch

The birth of the Bangus strain of meat goats - A born in Virginia product! We'll cover the selection process for foundation stock and the reasons behind trying meat goats. Description and production expectations of Bangus meat goats. Bangus meat goat registry process and adding Bangus meat products as a valued added model.

Radical Regenerative Gardening and Farming

Frank Holzman, Recovery Eco Ag Project

This workshop is about how to enhance the forces of nature to create a healthy environment and a balanced ecosystem. It embraces multiple disciplines; Biological, Biodynamic, Permaculture, IPM and Agroecology. It examines how to work with the plants internal mechanisms to create balance both above and below the ground. I will discuss compatible relationships that imitate nature through biomimicry. This involves incorporating polyculture, succession, rotation and nutrient cycling. This also covers how to use diversity that fosters and emulates nature with the use of IPM and the five components of companion planting. The idea is to view the land as a living organism. This is an important part of agroecology that goes to the heart of regenerative growing.

Producing Perennials Profits with Paw Paws and Persimmons

Michael McConkey, Edible Landscaping Nursery

An in depth look into select varieties of impressive species like Paw Paw and Persimmon, that are becoming extremely popular in America. History, tips and tricks from Michael's 40 plus years of growing, evaluating and enjoying these very deserving edible species.

Local Food Sourcing in Roanoke: past, present, and future

Maureen McNamara Best, Local Environmental Agriculture Project (LEAP) (Moderator), Nate Sloan, Bloom, Susanna Thornton, Thornfield Farm, Jerry Conner, Four Oaks Farm, Tenley Weaver, LocaMotive Aggregator, Bruce Phelgar, Roanoke Natural Foods Co-op

Local food systems are important—but it can also be hard to re-create and re-build systems that work for all the players from farm to fork. In this panel session, we will focus on the challenges, successes, and opportunities for local farmers and local businesses to work together. Panelists include diversified small scale farmer, wholesale farmer, aggregator, retail purchaser, and chef—all from the Roanoke area. We will discuss topics such as pricing, relationship-building, agreements, farm planning, marketing, and transportation.

Pesticide Compliance for Organic Crops and Hemp in Virginia

Daniel Sweeney, Seven Springs Farm

This presentation will cover the farmer's responsibilities and the legalities of applying organic (and/or other) pest and disease control materials. Farmer's will learn how to ensure compliance with federal laws as well as certification standards. We will also review the current VDACS guidelines for pesticide use on hemp in Virginia.

Session H 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

The Hidden Logic Inherent in Making Biodynamic Preparations

Gunther Hauk, Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary

People are sometimes scared away when they find out that chamomile blossoms are stuffed into bovine intestines etc. It sounds like voodoo. But given modern chemistry knowledge and the last 70 years of exploring

micro-nutrients, enzymes and trace minerals, we are now better equipped to understand the inner logic behind these unfamiliar ways of making the preparations. Where quality and taste are appreciated, as in the wine-making, biodynamic methods are treasured.

Pastured Poultry on the Diversified Farm

Nicki Carangelo, Letterbox Farm Collective

Back in 2013, our farm began its inaugural poultry operation with one hundred cornish cross broilers and a single, very heavy chicken tractor. Six seasons later, our team raises and sells 3,000 pastured-raised, heritage breed chickens annually. During this session, our livestock manager will walk participants through our operation's evolution and how we've integrated a profitable mid-scale meatbird operation into our diversified farmscape. We'll end with a glass-walls look at our current production system, with an emphasis on the economics of starting and operating a pastured poultry enterprise. We'll also take a look at 4 additional case studies from farms raising 500, 1000, 2000 and 4000 pastured meatbirds and see how today's producers are stacking up to the baselines Joel Salatin set more than 25 years ago.

Understanding organic insecticides

Dr. Thomas P. Kuhar, Virginia Tech University

While organic farming stresses the use of cultural and biological strategies for pest management, organic (OMRI-certified) insecticides are needed in some instances to rescue a crop from a serious insect pest infestation. There are a wide range of naturally-derived insecticides that are organically-certified; these include: azadirachtins, which are derived from the neem tree and have a wide range of insect growth and behavioral effects; pyrethrins, which are derived from chrysanthemum flowers and have neurotoxic effects on many insects; sabadilla alkaloids, which are extracted from the seeds of a South American lily plant, and which have a mode of action similar to pyrethrins; spinosyns, which are derived from the fermentation of the soil microbe *Saccharopolyspora spinosa*, and which are also neurotoxins; potassium salts of fatty acids (also known as insecticidal soap), which affect the insect cuticle; and a relatively new biological insecticide containing heat-killed cells and fermentation solids of the bacteria *Burkholderia* spp. that works to disrupt insect exoskeletons and interfere with molting. This presentation will review my experience evaluating the efficacy of these insecticides at controlling various pests of vegetable crops.

Polyculture Production: Agroforestry and other Diversified Farming and Forestry Strategies

John Munsell, Virginia Tech University

This session covers the principles and practices of agroforestry and other applications that enhance production and ecosystem services provided by farms and forests. Content includes a general survey of applications, along with on-the-ground case examples from around the world.

Virginia State Politics: how to get involved and make positive change happen!

Anne Buteau, Old Orchard Farm

Anne will draw on her 15 years of experience as a "citizen lobbyist" at the General Assembly in Richmond, advocating for bills that supported increased food freedom, the development or establishment of small farm and food-based businesses, the environment, and other issues. Learn how the legislative process works, how to build relationships with legislators and their staff, and work with them to get beneficial bills passed. Learn how you can gather support to oppose bills that would have negative impacts. Learn how to craft a bill, write a one-page brief, follow a bills progress, communicate effectively, and network to find support in crucial areas. If you have a particular cause or issue you feel passionate about, don't feel alone and frustrated! Become a part

of the solution and engage with your Delegate and Senator who represent YOU in the General Assembly in Richmond. If you and a few other constituents propose a reasonable resolution to a problem, they may well listen to you, as they really do want input from those they represent!

Growing A New Generation of Gardeners and Farmers: Designing and Implementing a Children's Teaching Garden

Mark Angelini & Allison Angelini, Mountain Run Permaculture

Tony Martin, Mary Jo Boone, Bedford Family YMCA

Learn about the process of developing a regenerative 2/3rd acre teaching garden and accompanying children's educational program focused on water harvesting, soil fertility, ecology, and growing and preparing food from seed to plate. We'll cover the grant writing process, garden design process, site preparation, establishment, community engagement, management, and more!