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# 23rd Annual Virginia Biological Farming Conference

January 6th-8th, 2023

The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center  
*Roanoke, Virginia*

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# VABF

Virginia Association for Biological Farming



**Virginia Cooperative Extension**  
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University



**College of  
Agriculture**



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## VABF Board of Directors & Staff

**Brent Wills** - President/Program Coord.  
**Adam Taylor** - Vice President  
**Terry Travers** - Secretary / Conference Coord.  
**Gary Scott** - Treasurer  
**Ira Wallace** - Director  
**Michael Carter Jr.** - Director  
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**Tom Brody** - Director  
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**Lindsay Newsome** - Administrator  
**Eryn Alloway** - Social Media Manager  
**Chris Ercolano** - Youth Program Director

## Morning Stretch Session

**Ann Mooney, Lucky Moon Gardens**  
 Sharpen the smartest tool in the drawer!  
 Learn functional anatomy for farmers.  
 Prevent and address injuries.



Photo Credit: Kyra Aulani

## Meals Included with Registration

**Saturday Lunch & Dinner**

**Sunday Lunch**

**Morning Coffee**

Local Farms provided many of the items on our menu.  
 Watch for announcements showcasing these farms and  
 their contributions.

## Meeting Space Available!

Need a space for an intimate, informal, fireside chat? The Blue Ridge Room is available and there is a sign-up sheet posted outside the door to reserve your time.

## Silent Auction

From mushrooms, books, garlic, honey, and preserves to OMRI approved fertilizers, worm castings and soil mixes; there is something for everyone at this year's Silent Auction. Please take some time to view the wonderful selection and place your bids!

## Silent Auction opens Saturday at 8:00am and closes Sunday at 2:00pm.

**Instructions:** You'll find your personal bid number on your conference badge. Use this # to place your bids privately on the bid sheet that corresponds with your item(s) of choice. Check back throughout the conference to see if you've been outbid. Bidding ends at 2:00 pm on Sunday.

**Pickup:** High bidders are responsible for payment for item(s). Check in at the Auction to see if you've won, starting at 3:00 pm on Sunday. Cash, checks, & credit cards accepted.

## Remember to Vote!

Board of Directors election ends Saturday, January 7 at midnight! Board members will be announced during lunch on Sunday, January 8.

**Survey:** We need your feedback to improve the VABF Conference! Please complete our survey so that we can continue to grow and improve the Conference. Go to [vabf.org](http://vabf.org) and the survey link is on the home page slider. Thanks for your input!

## 2023 Conference Special Features

**Silent Auction:** Roanoke Ballroom AB

**Trade show:** Roanoke Ballroom AB

**Special Seed Films and Panel Discussion** led by Chris Smith of The Utopian See Project:  
Friday 7pm, Shenandoah A

**Taste of Virginia Expo & Market:** Crystal Ballroom  
Saturday 2-9pm

**Social with DJ:** Crystal Ballroom, Saturday 7:30-9:30pm

**Youth Program:** Tinker Mountain Room

**Fireside Chats:** Blue Ridge Room

**Book Signings & Sales:** Stone Soup Books, North Foyer

**Morning stretch session:** Roanoke Ballroom D

**Keynote speakers:** Dr. Elaine Ingram, Saturday Lunch,  
Leah Penniman, Saturday Dinner

**Annual VABF Member Meeting:** Sunday Lunch



Photo Credit: Kyra Aulani

# Thank You

to all our 2023 Conference Sponsors!

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**CENTER FOR ORGANIZATIONAL AND  
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# Thank You

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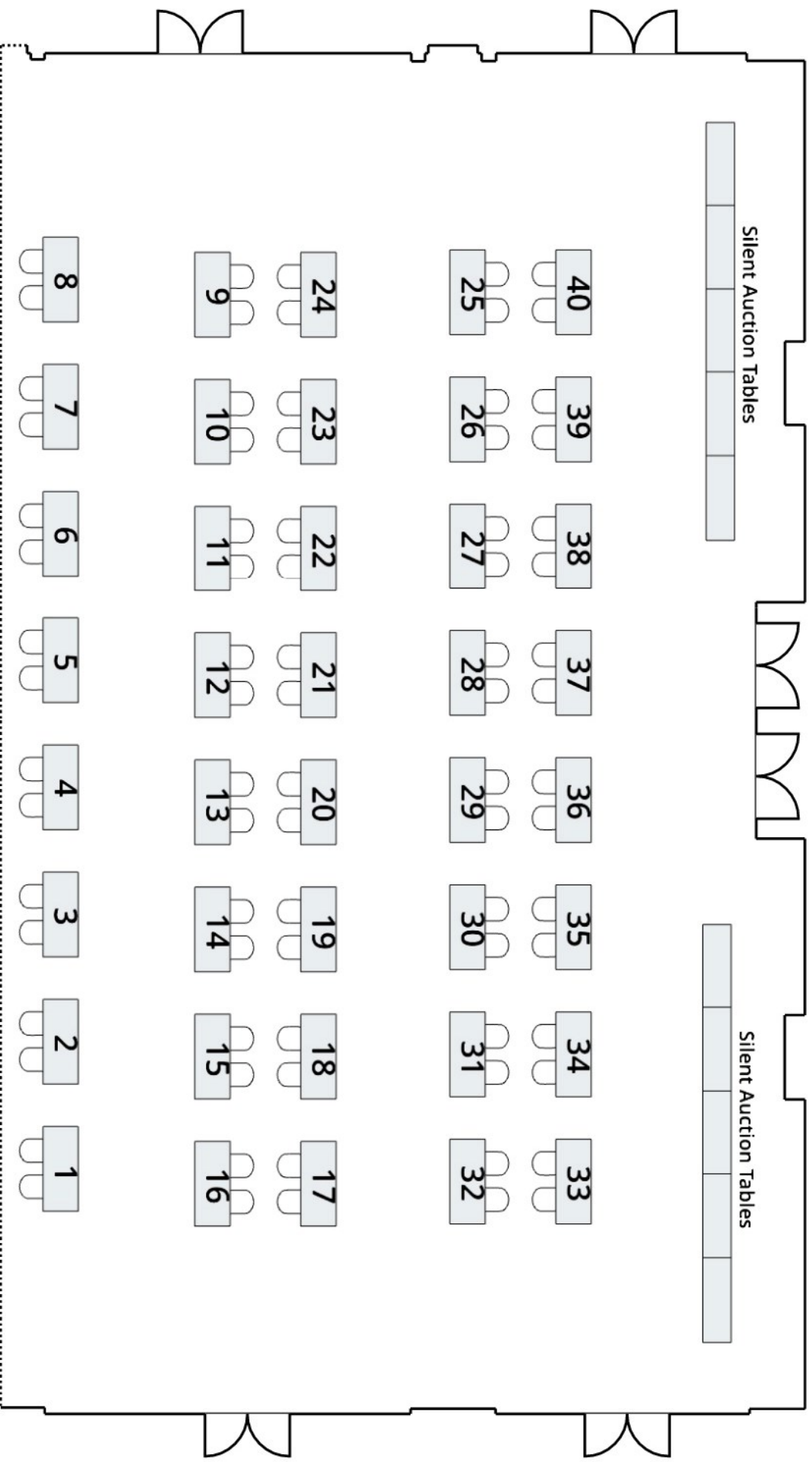
## Seedling Sponsors



# 2023 Tradeshow Exhibitors

Business, Organization or Institution	Booth Location
Advancing Eco Agriculture	34
Allegheny Mountain Institute	20
Appalachian Sustainable Development	1
Carilion Clinic	25
Certified Naturally Grown	15
Colonial and Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation Districts	4
Common Wealth Seed Growers	33
Dirtcraft Living Soils	14
Diversity Permaculture	6
Dug In Farms	10
Floyd Eco Village	27
Foodshed Capital	31
Friendly City Food Co-op	26
Gnomestead Hollow Farm and Forage	3
HERD Ventures	41
High Mowing Organic Seeds	35
Izaak Walton League of America	9
Johnny's Selected Seeds	2
Josephine Porter Institute for Applied Biodynamics	23
Local Food Hub	24
National Center for Appropriate Technology	28
New Country Organics	29
Reynolds Community College	11
Rimol Greenhouse Systems	30
Seven Springs Farm Supply	39, 40
Shenandoah permaculture institute	8
Southern Exposure Seed Exchange	16,17
Southern SARE	12
The Fertrell Co	7
The Utopian Seed Project	18
Virginia Agribility	42
Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition	5
Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services	21
Virginia Soil Health Coalition	13
Virginia State University	32
Virginia SARE	36
Virginia Tech and Edwards Mother Earth Foundation	37
Woodpecker Microsystems	38
Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge	North Foyer
Stone Soup Books	North Foyer







# *The 23rd Annual* **VIRGINIA BIOLOGICAL FARMING CONFERENCE**

## **Thank you for joining us!**

Thank you, from the top of our soils, for your support of the Virginia Biological Farming Association and the Virginia Biological Farming Conference. This Conference is the highlight of our year: seeing each one of you here, learning new things from our wonderful speakers, learning from each other, and connecting with the wider web of biological farmers and supporters is truly the reason we do what we do and it's why you are here.

The Virginia Biological Farming Conference is Virginia's premier organic and sustainable agricultural conference. The Conference brings together farmers, gardeners, eaters, educators, industry professionals, and advocates of biological, sustainable, regenerative, and organic agriculture - like you.

The three day Conference includes: Pre-Conference intensive workshops, 60 concurrent sessions of workshops, presentations, and panel discussions, 42 tradeshow exhibitors, locally sourced farm meals, and book sales with author signings. The Conference highlights include a Youth Program, a Silent Auction and networking opportunities including regional meetings and fireside chats, morning exercises for farmers and the Taste of Virginia Expo & Market.

Enjoy!



# Virginia Biological Farming Conference Youth & Teen Programs

Saturday, January 7, 2023 8:30 am - 5:30 pm | Sunday, January 8, 2023 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

## Youth Program

Our youth program includes independent activity time plus knowledge and story sharing from conference speakers and educators.

ages  
5-12

## Teen Program

ages  
13-17

We have a special program in mind for our teens that involves learning from the best in social sharing, a teen hangout, and inspiring the older generations.



Photo Credit: Terry Connell



*Carter  
Brothers*

africulture



Photo Credit: Kyra Aulani

# Pre-Conference Workshop Schedule

## Friday, January 6, 2023

7:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Registration & Info	North Entry Foyer
8:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Trade Show Set-up	Roanoke Ballroom A-B
8:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Silent Auction Drop off and Set-up	Roanoke Ballroom A-B
8:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Beginner Farmer Crash Course	Buck Mountain
8:00 AM to Noon	Beginning Grafting	Shenandoah B
8:00 AM to Noon	Heirloom Varieties for Commercial Vegetable Production	Mill Mountain
8:00 AM to Noon	Introductory Biodynamics: Holistic Basis of a Self Sufficient Farm	Shenandoah A
8:00 AM to Noon	Year Round Hoop House Vegetables	Appalachia
Noon to 1:00 PM	LUNCH	Roanoke Ballroom CH
1:00 to 5:00 PM	Advanced Grafting	Shenandoah B
1:00 to 5:00 PM	Growing Gourmet and Medicinal Mushrooms	Mill Mountain
1:00 to 5:00 PM	Create Your Path to Homesteading Success	Shenandoah A
1:00 to 5:00 PM	Southeast Seed Growing Workshop	Appalachian
6:00 to 8:00 PM	Special Beginning Farmer event with dinner	Roanoke Ballroom DGH
7:00 to 8:30 PM	Seed Films & Panel - Chris Smith	Shenandoah A

## Seed Films & Panel

### 30 minutes: Video Set 1

How to Save Seeds from 6 Crops, Utopian Seed Project; The Seed Keeper, Kristen Leach; Heirloom Collards, The Heirloom Collard Project

### 30 minutes: Video Set 2

Why Saving Seed Still Matters, Utopian Seed Project  
Seed Mother, Coming Home, Rowen White  
The Seeds We Keep, Gabrielle Carter

### 30 minutes Panel Discussion, moderated by Chris Smith

Panelists: Ira Wallace, Michael Carter, Bonnetta Adeeb, Michelle Hochkeppel  
Short Introductions



Special thanks to Salem Printing for helping with signs, table tents, programs, & more!



# Conference Overview Schedule

## Saturday, January 7, 2023

7:00 AM to 6:00 PM	Registration & Info	North Entry Foyer
7:00 AM to 8:00 AM	Morning Stretch Session	Roanoke D
8:00 AM to 6:00 PM	Tradeshow and Silent Auction	Roanoke Ballroom AB
8:30 AM to 5:30 PM	Youth Program	Tinker Mountain & Brush Mountain
8:30 AM to 10:00 AM	Session A	
Break	Visit Tradeshow & Silent Auction	Roanoke Ballroom AB
10:30 AM to 12:00 PM	Session B	
12:15 to 1:45 PM LUNCH	Opening Remarks by Dr. Janine Parker Woods, Virginia State University & KEYNOTE ADDRESS by Dr. Elaine Ingham	Roanoke Ballroom CH
2:00 PM to 9:00 PM	Taste of Virginia Market & Expo	Crystal Ballroom
2:00 PM to 3:30 PM	Session C	
Break	Visit Tradeshow & Silent Auction	Roanoke Ballroom AB
4:00 PM to 5:30 PM	Session D	
Break	Visit Tradeshow & Silent Auction	Roanoke Ballroom AB
5:45 PM DINNER	KEYNOTE ADDRESS by Leah Penniman	Roanoke Ballroom CH
7:30 PM to 9:30 PM	Taste of Virginia Social with DJ	Crystal Ballroom

## Sunday, January 8, 2023

7:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Registration & Info	North Entry Foyer
7:00 AM to 8:00 AM	Morning Stretch Session	Roanoke D
7:30 AM to 8:15 AM	Regional Networking Meetings	
8:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Tradeshow and Silent Auction	Roanoke Ballroom AB
8:30 AM to 5:00 PM	Youth Program	Tinker Mountain/Brush Mountain
8:30 AM to 10:00 AM	Session E	
Break	Visit Tradeshow & Silent Auction	Roanoke Ballroom AB
10:30 AM to 12:00PM	Session F	
12:00 PM to 1:15 PM	LUNCH & Annual VABF Member Meeting	Roanoke Ballroom CH
1:30 PM to 3:00 PM	Session G	
2:00 PM	Silent Auction Bidding Ends	Roanoke Ballroom AB
Break	Visit Tradeshow	Roanoke Ballroom AB
3:00 PM to 5:00 PM	Silent Auction Pick-Up & Payment	Roanoke Ballroom AB
3:30 PM to 5:00 PM	Session H	

# Saturday, January 7, 2023

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM

Morning Stretch Session

Ann Mooney

Roanoke  
Ballroom D

## Session A: 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Track	Title	Presenters	Location
BUSINESS & SYSTEMS	Building resilient, kind and caring food systems to increase the local economy.	April Jones	Monroe
CROP PRODUCTION	Overwintering: Overview, Crop selection, Techniques and Practical Tips	Dan Gagnon	Mill Mount
EQUITY IN FARMING	Markets for Socially Disadvantaged farmers 2023	Michael Carter, Jr.	Appalachian
PERMACULTURE/ AGROFORESTRY	The Healing Power of Cultivating Your Own Apothecary	Ed Skopal	Shenandoah A
SEEDS	Seed Stories: A deeper dive into the process of seeds	Michelle Hochkeppel	Buck Mount
SOIL HEALTH, REGENERATIVE GRAZING	Silvopasture Design, Implementation and Maintenance	Emilie Tweardy	Shenandoah B

**Building resilient, kind and caring food systems to increase the local economy.**

**April Jones, Pinehurst Farmers Market**

How can we enhance current efforts toward community-wide access to healthy, local food year-round? Movement building resiliency from the ground up. In this workshop, Pinehurst Farmers Market hosts a dialog exploring how we can better prepare ourselves for future instabilities, such as labor and produce shortages, and transportation issues.

**Overwintering: Overview, Crop selection, Techniques and Practical Tips**

**Dan Gagnon, Broadfork Farm**

Overwintering is great tool to have in the Virginia grower's toolbox. Many growers have experience overwintering at least a few crops like garlic and spinach. But in the Mid-Atlantic there are lots of opportunities for fall plantings that can put food on your market table when harvest are traditionally scant. During this session we will look at a few crops in depth for overwintering success such as onions, leeks, strawberries, cabbage, carrots, spinach and flowers.

**Markets for Socially Disadvantaged farmers 2023**

**Michael Carter, Jr.**

2023 Markets – We will explore the plethora of potential markets and pricing for socially disadvantaged farmers in the region. Options include farmers markets in VA, Washington DC, Maryland and North Carolina, wholesale institutional sales, religious institution sales, food banks as well as others. Learn about what markets will be the best for your operation in 2023.

**The Healing Power of Cultivating Your Own Apothecary**

**Ed & Maya Skopal, I-Tal Acres**

Ed & Maya with I-Tal Acres will be discussing the relatively simple and hugely empowering act of starting your own medicinal plant garden and home apothecary. They will discuss some ideal medicinal plants to start with (based on ease of cultivation, ease of harvest, and powerful remedies), and how to cultivate, harvest, use, and prepare them. They will also mention some of the herbs you can 'wildcraft' in your lawns, meadows, and creek sides and their folk uses. You will learn the basics of making infusions, decoctions, tinctures, and oils.



**Seed Stories: A deeper dive into the process of seeds**  
**Michelle Hochkeppel, High Mowing Organic Seeds**

We will share a handful of specific organic seed stories; challenges and triumphs of the multi-faceted process. We'll offer a glimpse into the importance of developing relationships with breeders, farmers and vendors in order to develop the organic varieties that you love. We hope this narrative will facilitate a deeper conversation of what it takes to build regional resilience in seed systems.

**Silvopasture Design, Implementation and Maintenance**  
**Emilie Tweardy, Appalachian Sustainable Development**

A discussion of main considerations in the design of a silvopasture system. Context is Queen! So we'll discuss how project goals, site characteristics and management plans intersect to inform design choices that are resilient. We'll go over Implementation strategies, design layout, spacing and species selection, maintenance and long-term care, equipment and labor considerations, all through the lens of context, to help build successful projects with fewer unpleasant surprises down the road.



**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES**



## Register your farm with the VDACS Produce Safety Program

All farms within Virginia that grow, harvest, pack or hold produce intended for human consumption and for sale will need to register their business with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) Produce Safety Program.

**Register Here**  
**[ProduceSafety.VDACS.Virginia.gov](https://ProduceSafety.VDACS.Virginia.gov)**

- Create a free, secure account and register your farm.
- Update data elements currently on file with VDACS by annually verifying your farm.
- Print out a registration certificate to use to help market your products locally.
- Get enrolled automatically in the new VA Grown marketing program.
- Apply for an exemption if eligible.
- Receive up-to-date information about the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Produce Safety Rule, new water requirements, educational and training resources, periodic newsletters and guidance.

Learn more about the FDA Produce Safety Rule  
**[www.VAProduceSafety.com](https://www.VAProduceSafety.com)**



This project, publication, program and website is supported by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award U2FFD007427 totaling \$638,042 with 100 percent funding by FDA/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by FDA/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

**102 Governor St., Richmond, VA 23219 | [VDACS.Virginia.gov](https://VDACS.Virginia.gov)**

## Session B: 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Track	Title	Presenters	Location
BUSINESS & SYSTEMS	AgriSolar: Simultaneously Using land for Agriculture and Solar Production	Chris Lent	Monroe
CROP PRODUCTION	Planning for Cover Crops in Your Garden Rotation	Cindy Conner	Mill Mount
CROP SPECIFIC	A world gone completely Nuts	Bill Whipple	Wilson
EQUITY IN FARMING	Socially Disadvantaged farmer strategy session 2023	Michael Carter, Jr.	Appalachian
HOMESTEADING/BEGINNING FARMER	Regenerative Practices for the Home Gardener	Leah M. Webb, MPH	Shenandoah A
MICROBIAL, BUGS, & COMPOST	Fruit of the Rot: Diversify Your Farm with Mushrooms	Mark Jones	Pocahantas
PERMACULTURE/ AGROFORESTRY	From Open Field to Food Forest	Ed Skopal	Buck Mount
SOIL HEALTH, REGENERATIVE GRAZING	Biodynamics and the Soil Food Web	Jeff Poppen	Shenandoah B
12:15 to 1:45 PM LUNCH	Opening Remarks by Dr. Janine Parker Woods, Virginia State University & KEYNOTE ADDRESS by Dr. Elaine Ingham		Roanoke Ballroom CH

### AgriSolar: Simultaneously Using land for Agriculture and Solar Production Chris Lent, National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT)

In some areas farmland faces heavy development pressure. Increasing solar development over the next decades will only increase that pressure. What if solar and agriculture could co-exist. NCAT's AgriSolar Clearinghouse project is about bringing people together who can make this dual use of agricultural lands a reality. If designed properly, livestock grazing, pollinator habitat, apiaries, and crop production can all happen in and around installed solar panels. This session will introduce the AgriSolar project and its partners and show examples of Agrisolar production that currently exist. It will also cover the latest research in this new field of study and the issues that farmers face when considering solar on their land.

### Planning for Cover Crops in Your Garden Rotation Cindy Conner, Homeplace Earth

Cover crops help to feed the soil, attract beneficial insects, and can provide mulch and compost material for your garden. Learn how to plan these great crops into your garden rotation so your beds are full all year. Advice is given to manage these crops with hand tools. No tiller required. Each participant will receive a copy of Cover Crops and Compost Crops IN Your Garden DVD. [www.HomeplaceEarth.com](http://www.HomeplaceEarth.com)

### A world gone completely Nuts Bill Whipple

Small scale regional nut processing is nut'n to laugh at! With the increased accessibility of user friendly robotics we have a bright horizon for reducing the hand labor involved in processing native nuts. We may now be competitive with large scale producers who are shackled to ever increasing transportation costs tied to their top heavy, centralized systems. When we crack open the pinch points of small scale processing making them more economical, we can then create demand for native nuts which will, in turn, incentivize farmers to start growing a second tier economy of orchards in their fields helping them economically, delivering to their communities high quality food, and buffering the environment with more trees.

### Socially Disadvantaged farmer strategy session 2023 Michael Carter, Jr.

Socially disadvantaged farmer 2023 strategy session – An open and engaging discussion about the needs, wants, successes and challenges for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as we prepare for 2023. We will discuss solutions and strategies to have a prosperous 2023.



## **Regenerative Practices for the Home Gardener**

**Leah M. Webb, MPH**

Regenerative practices pull carbon and other greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and draw them into the soil where they can be stored for hundreds and even thousands of years. Increasing carbon in your soil improves nutrient and water retention, improves drainage, reduces reliance on agricultural inputs, and ensures that home gardeners are growing some of the most nutritiously dense foods available. Regenerative techniques are often discussed when referencing large farms, but these same techniques (and more!) can be easily applied in backyard gardens. Come learn about the factors affecting soil health, why carbon storage is so important, and how to use naturally occurring soil processes to enhance soil nutrition.

## **Fruit of the Rot: Diversify Your Farm with Mushrooms**

**Mark Jones, Sharondale Mushroom Farm**

Explore the different skills and infrastructure needed for developing a viable mushroom growing business. Discussions will include: evaluating your site, obtaining valuable mushroom strains, evaluating spawn, obtaining substrates, grow-room design, cultivation, harvesting, post-harvest handling, and marketing. With minimal equipment and knowledge of mushrooms, you can amplify and utilize other fungi and microbes to advance soil, plant, and animal health.

## **From Open Field to Food Forest**

**Ed & Maya Skopal, I-Tal Acres**

A no-till, plant-guild, polyculture approach to increasing soil health, biodiversity, and abundance. It seems like a simple concept, but the way we plant effects the environment around us. Our planting, our cultivating should be building the soil, not depleting it; it should be conserving water, not over-using it; it should be beneficial to pollinators not detrimental to them; our cultivating should be sustainable and mindful. Using the examples of I-TAL Acres food forest and the Floyd Eco Village Learning Garden, we'll discuss the food forest designs based on the concept of upper canopy, shrub layer, and herbaceous layer.



## **Biodynamics and the Soil Food Web**

**Jeff Poppen, Barefoot Farmer, Long Hungry Creek Farm**

As a biodynamic market gardener and cattle farmer in the 1980's and 1990's, I had lots of questions – how and why did what I do work? Studying with Dr. Ingham and looking through her microscopes enlightened me to the invisible world that I was fostering through composting. This session is about our shift from focusing on vegetable and pasture production to soil microbiology, the consequent improvement of the quality and yields of our crops, and how Elaine's work reinforced my love of biodynamics.



Photo Credit: Kyra Aulani

## Session C: 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Track	Title	Presenters	Location
BUSINESS & SYSTEMS	Selling the Farm, Plan Before You Need a Plan	Carolyn Quinn	Monroe
CROP PRODUCTION	Vegetable Disease Identification	Steve Rideout	Mill Mount
CROP SPECIFIC	4 season Carrot Growing	Dan Gagnon	Wilson
EQUITY IN FARMING	Seeds of Ancestors	Michael Carter, Jr.	Appalachian
HOMESTEADING/BEGINNING FARMER	Garden Variety Harvests: The Story of an Urban Farm Start-Up	Cam Terry	Shenandoah A
PERMACULTURE/AGROFORESTRY	Perennializing Food Security Through Urban Native Plant Cultivation.	Jason Aldrich	Buck Mount
SEEDS	Seed Selection and Crop Diversity for A Changing Climate	Chris Smith	Pocahontas
SOIL HEALTH, REGENERATIVE GRAZING	Increasing Diversity and Resiliency through Multispecies Grazing	Lee Rinehart	Shenandoah B

### **Selling the Farm, Plan Before You Need a Plan**

**Carolyn Quinn, Dug In Farms**

The presentation will include practical advice on the considerations to take as you grow your farm operation that will create a more attractive purchase to the next buyer. The considerations include capitalizing overlooked investments and assets; how much and when to pay yourself; marketing your products to the right audience; effectively using resources to attract the right buyer.

### **Vegetable Disease Identification**

**Steve Rideout, Virginia Tech**

Audience will be introduced to most common vegetable diseases in Virginia as well as diseases that are emerging. Cultural and organic management practices will be discussed where practical.

### **4 season Carrot Growing**

**Dan Gagnon, Broadfork Farm**

Carrots can be a challenging crop for many growers. Customers love them but getting consistent results can be difficult. In this session we will take a deep dive into the many aspects of growing carrots throughout the year. Dan will share in depth information regarding germination techniques, seeding densities and plant spacings, variety selection, weed control, pest and disease control, season extension, harvesting, post harvest handling, and sales.

### **Seeds of Ancestors**

**Michael Carter, Jr.**

Join Ujamaa Seeds and seed stewards from around the region to share in the what seeds are available for 2023 and the stories and marketing potential of those various seeds.

### **Garden Variety Harvests: The Story of an Urban Farm Start-Up**

**Cam Terry, Garden Variety Harvests**

I'll tell the story of what inspired me to start farming and how I learned enough to get started. We'll discuss the Small Plot INTensive backyard model including tools and techniques and crop selection. The technical details will be set in the greater context of why urban agriculture is important, and why land access challenges make a dispersed business model a necessity for young and beginning farmers.

### **Perennializing food security through urban native plant cultivation.**

**Jason Aldrich, Undoing Ruin**

In this time of waning food security— due to inflation, conflict, global warming and environmental collapse— I present an alternative model of food production: urban native plant cultivation. Our modern cities have been erected upon hard-scaped land bereft of connection to the ecosystems all of life depend upon. Perennializing food security would ensure



each successive year that our local native food systems are nurtured, compounding benefits to the greater ecosystem. This class will focus on Virginia native foods and how they can be creatively and successfully grown in an urban environment. This localism buffers the effects of global warming and instills an appreciation of the natural world for generations to come.

#### **Seed Selection and Crop Diversity for a Changing Climate** **Chris Smith/Ira Wallace**

A presentation exploring working with heirlooms of the past while imagining and developing varieties of the future. This workshop will cover growing and saving seeds with a focus on diversity, flavor, regional adaptation and climate resilience. Chris will share his journey with ultracross populations of collard and okra, and encourage you to start your own seed selection journey!

#### **Increasing Diversity and Resiliency through** **Multispecies Grazing**

##### **Lee Rinehart, National Center for Appropriate Technology**

This session will cover the principles and practices of grazing multiple species of livestock including the benefits on productivity and profitability and its positive impacts on pasture diversity and health. We will discuss how diverse animal species use grazing resources, the types and kinds of fencing and working facilities needed by various animals, vegetation management, how to make stocking-rate decisions, and how to deal with predators, mineral supplementation, and parasites.



Photo Credit:  
Kyra Aulani

# SHENANDOAH PERMACULTURE INSTITUTE

Teaching Real World, Hands-On, Practical Permaculture



- Fall & Spring Permaculture Design Course (PDC)
- Consultations and Design Work

We are currently accepting registrations for our Spring PDC course hosted by the University of Richmond.

To find out more, check us out at [shenandoahpermaculture.com](http://shenandoahpermaculture.com)



## Session D: 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Track	Title	Presenters	Location
BUSINESS & SYSTEMS	Farmers as Endurance Athletes: Stretch and Strengthen to Stay In the Game	Janet Aardema	Monroe
CROP PRODUCTION	Heirloom Varieties for the Mid-Atlantic	Dominic Carpin	Mill Mount
CROP SPECIFIC	Organic Production of Winter Greens	Ira Wallace	Wilson
EQUITY IN FARMING	Labor support for socially disadvantaged farmers 2023	Michael Carter, Jr.	Appalachian
HOMESTEADING/BEGINNING	Maximize Your Backyard Harvest	David & Nicole Schaud-	Shenandoah A
MICROBIAL, BUGS, & COM-POST	Make-and-Take your own vermicompost bin (\$10 materials fee)	Karen Fetty	Pocahantas
PERMACULTURE/	Biomimicry at a systems level	Ben Friton	Buck Mount
SOIL HEALTH, REGENERATIVE	Practical Pastured Poultry: Notes and les-	Adam Auccoin	Shenandoah B
5:45 PM DINNER	KEYNOTE ADDRESS by Leah Penniman	Roanoke Ballroom CH	
7:30 to 9:30 PM	Taste of Virginia Social with DJ	Crystal Ballroom	

### Farmers as Endurance Athletes: Stretch and Strengthen to Stay In the Game

**Janet Aardema, Broadfork Farm**

Farming is often an active lifestyle but full of repetitive movements and not always ideal ergonomics. In order to keep farming the way that best suits you, avoid injury (and/or recover from), and enjoy best physical fitness, you'll benefit from stretching and strengthening complementary muscle groups on a regular basis. Drawing on experience from 12 years of market farming, preceded by collegiate athletic competition, Janet will help bring awareness to where your physical ability to farm is vulnerable and how to keep yourself able to farm, comfortably strong and without injury, through building stretching and strengthening sessions into your weekly routine. Think you don't have time? Join in to learn why prioritizing these habits is a worthwhile investment in your farming future.

### Heirloom Varieties for the Mid-Atlantic

**Dominic Carpin, delli Carpini Farm**

Using my experience of 8 years raising heirlooms in Hanover County Virginia and Goochland County Virginia I will present the best recommended varieties along with photographs of the crops and production and post harvest.

### Organic Production of Winter Greens

**Ira Wallace, Southern Exposure Seed Exchange**

Learn some of the best practices for producing and post-harvest handling of greens through the winter with covers and greenhouses, and outside in the south. Long-time producer Ira Wallace will discuss tips and timing for growing kale, collards, mustards and turnip greens, as well as lettuce and salad greens with herbs.

### Labor support for socially disadvantaged farmers 2023

**Michael Carter, Jr.**

Need help on your farm. Carter Farms and Africulture is working with agricultural worker agencies to utilize and share H2A workers for small farmers in Virginia. Consistent labor can be quite challenging and expensive, and our H2A labor share opportunity will assist in reducing the costs while providing labor when you need it. This opportunity is open to all small farmers in need of some other labor solutions.



### **Maximize Your Backyard Harvest**

**David & Nicole Schauder, Permaculture Gardens  
(Bethany Farm, Leesburg)**

Grow more food all year for you and your family!

In this 90-minute workshop, you will learn:

- How to grow with the SEASONS, So that you don't miss a planting window for a crop you want to harvest!
- How to optimize your SPACE, So you can take advantage of microclimates and your precious real estate.
- How to improve the fertility of your SOIL throughout the year! So that you ensure the vigor and nutrient quality of your backyard harvest.
- Bring your notebooks or computers so that we can
- Map your plants into a seasonal "Production Plan"
- Draw out a plant layout for your backyard
- Take steps to interpret the state of your soil

### **Make-and-Take your own vermicompost bin (\$10 materials fee)**

**Karen Fetty, Hanover-Caroline SWCD**

Learn how composting kitchen scraps can divert waste from landfills to create black gold for your garden! With the help of red wiggler worms, produce your own natural fertilizer that increases plant health and productivity while also improving soil structure. All bin materials and a coupon redeemable for 1 lb. of Buckeye Organics red wiggler worms included in workshop fee. Scholarships may be available.



### **Biomimicry at a systems level**

**Ben Friton, The REED Center for Ecosystem Reintegration**

An exploration of the laws governing thriving ecosystems that allow them to grow indefinitely and how humans can leverage biomimicry in our relationships, dwellings, farms, communities and society. Ben's time in politics as well as his time with refugees and the food insecure and displaced, give him rare insights on the interface of economics and ecology, and some surprising ways in which human history has determined the world we've inherited and what we can do about it.

### **Practical Pastured Poultry: Notes and lessons from 15 years of production**

**Adam Aucoin**

This talk will focus on various types of poultry production. We will discuss a broad overview as well as dive into the specifics involved in raising poultry for both meat and egg production. After 15 seasons of commercial production I'll share mistakes I've made along the way and provide insights into what works and what hasn't worked in the various poultry operations I've been apart of. We will also discuss the benefits of adding livestock that can potentially compliment a poultry operation. My goal is to have anyone who listens to this session leave feeling that starting a backyard or commercial poultry flock isn't as daunting as it may seem.

Supporting the Family Farm,  
Promoting Conservation, and  
Strengthening Communities  
Through Sustainable Agriculture  
Strategies

Learn more about research grants and sustainable ag resources at:

**<https://southern.sare.org>**

# Sunday, January 8, 2023

## 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM

Morning Stretch Session

Ann Mooney

Roanoke  
Ballroom D

## 7:30 AM - 8:15 AM

Facilitators

Regional Networking Meetings

Mountains Region

Brent Wills,  
Adam Taylor

Appalachian

Regional Networking Meetings

Coastal Region

Terry Connell

Mill Mountain

Regional Networking Meetings

Piedmont Region

Seyra Whitney

Buck Mountain

## Session E: 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Track

Title

Presenters

Location

SEEDS

Value-Added Seed Saving: Adding Value While Preserving Agrobiodiversity

Ben Casteel

Mill Mount

BUSINESS & SYSTEMS

Mission-driven farming: increasing profits by fighting food insecurity

Sam Hedges

Monroe

CROP SPECIFIC

Alliums Year Round

Pam Dawling

Wilson

EQUITY IN FARMING

Paid Focus(ed) Group for socially disadvantaged farmers

Michael Carter, Jr.

Appalachian

HOMESTEADING/BEGINNING FARMER

Farming With Vintage Tractors

Dominic Carpin

Shenandoah A

MICROBIAL, BUGS, & COMPOST

Spiders: an overlooked tool for keeping insect pest populations in check

Cerruti RR Hooks

Pocahantas

PERMACULTURE/AGROFORESTRY

Human Centric Ecosystem Mimicry in Agriculture and Global Economic Struc-

Ben Friton

Buck Mount

SOIL HEALTH, REGENERATIVE GRAZING

Work-Flow Calendar for a Low-Input Cattle and Vegetable Farm

Jeff Poppen

Shenandoah B

**Value-Added Seed Saving: Adding Value**

**While Preserving Agrobiodiversity**

**Ben Casteel, Virginia Highlands Community College**

Southern Appalachia is home to the highest Agrobiodiversity in the country and close to the highest in the world. This session will inform participants of how to play a significant role in preserving this living history while creating value-added products and maximizing revenue. Join this discussion at the crossroads of sustainable agriculture and culinary conservation. The session will focus on Solanaceae and Cucurbitaceae crops.

**Mission-driven farming: increasing profits**

**by fighting food insecurity**

**Sam Hedges, Local Environmental Agriculture Project**

LEAP will facilitate a panel discussion on integrating a mission to fight food and nutrition insecurity into a farm business. LEAP has held food access as a core value since its foundation and has proven that farmers can earn more by serving a more diverse customer base that includes people with limited food budgets and high food insecurity. Our healthy food incentives draw in customers enrolled in SNAP (formerly known as food stamps), Medicaid, WIC, and other services, and we support farmers markets, co-ops, and farms around



the state in building successful incentive programs. More and more, the local food community is challenging the base assumption that fresh, nutritious food is reserved for those with wealth, but it takes a mission-driven commitment from our producers to lower the barriers to food: cost, proximity, and awareness. The customers who use healthy food incentives at our markets shop because they want to choose good food and they want to know the people who grow it. In this session, LEAP will invite farm partners with missions to fight food insecurity to speak about ways in which a farm business can reach more people, increase income, and improve the health of their communities. Panelists will include Susanna Thornton of Thornfield Farm, Cam Terry of Garden Variety Harvests, Vanessa Clemens of Community Roots, and LEAP Market Manager Connie Kenny. LEAP Director of Support Services Sam Hedges will act as moderator.

### **Alliums Year Round**

#### **Pam Dawling, Twin Oaks Community**

You can grow onions or some of their relatives in every month of the year in the mid-Atlantic. As well as bulb onions and garlic, this workshop includes leeks, perennial alliums, scallions, garlic scapes, elephant garlic, shallots, pickling onions, and many unusual alliums. This workshop covers planting, caring for the crop, harvesting, storage (when possible) and saving seed stock for replanting.

### **Paid Focus(ed) Group for socially disadvantaged farmers**

#### **Michael Carter, Jr.**

The purpose of the Focus group will be to highlight the experiences of individual Black farmers who are contributing to Virginia's rural and urban food systems and to connect Black farmers who are organizing at the grassroots level with each other for networking purposes. To accomplish this purpose, I am seeking Black farmer organizers' participation in a 60-90minutes focus group discussion. Compensation for participation is available.



Photo Credit: Kyra Aulani

### **Farming with Vintage Tractors**

#### **Dominic Carpin**

Explore my experience owning and operating the Farmall Cub, Farmall Super A and Ferguson TO35 tractors how to use them in your production system as well as various care and maintenance items.

### **Spiders: an overlooked tool for keeping insect pest populations in check**

#### **Cerruti RR Hooks, University of Maryland**

Spiders are a diverse group of generalist predators and considered one of the most important groups of natural enemies of insects worldwide. They are important to agriculture because they represent more than half the predatory fauna in cropping systems and are frequently the first natural enemies to colonize newly planted fields. Similar to other natural enemies, production and land management practices conducted within and in areas, neighboring crop fields affect spider diversity, numbers and efficacy as biological control agents. Farming practices that can reduce or enhance spiders' efficiency as biological control agents will be discussed.

### **Human Centric Ecosystem Mimicry in Agriculture and Global Economic Structures**

#### **Ben Friton, The REED Center for Ecosystem Reintegration**

Mr. Friton will discuss leveraging research & technologies that give us perspectives that no human ancestors could have known as they designed the systems that dictate our modern lives. From the study of microbiology, and the countless organisms that self-organize for maximum plant, human & ecosystem health, to technologies like satellite imagery that show us our first multi-generational macro perspectives, he will describe the natural systems our species must mimic to avoid catastrophe.

### **Work-Flow Calendar for Low Input Cattle and Vegetable Farm**

#### **Jeff Poppen, Barefoot Farmer, Long Hungry Creek Farm**

Long-term market gardens thrive with a continuous and liberal supply of aged manure/hay compost. A grass-based operation creates excess fertility that dovetails nicely with truck farming. We will look at the workload through the months of a year on our farm, raising six acres of vegetables and managing 40 head of cattle while minimizing off-farm inputs.

## Session F: 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Track	Title	Presenters	Location
BUSINESS & SYSTEMS	Agricultural solutions to climate change for Virginia	Cathy Day and Mark Schonbeck	Monroe
CROP PRODUCTION	Growing Great Vegetables in VA	Ira Wallace	Mill Mount
CROP SPECIFIC	Asian Greens in the Winter Hoophouse	Pam Dawling	Wilson
HOMESTEADING/BEGINNING FARMER	Introductory Biodynamics: Holistic Basis of a Self-Sufficient Farm	Stewart Lundy	Shenandoah A
MICROBIAL, BUGS, & COMPOST	Get to know your arthropod allies	Thomas Kuhar and Tim Kring	Pocahontas
PERMACULTURE/ AGROFORESTRY	Urban agriculture	John Wilson	Buck Mount
SOIL HEALTH, REGENERATIVE GRAZING	Agroforestry: The Ins, Outs, and Future	John Munsell	Shenandoah B
	Roanoke Foodshed Network working group	Katie Trizzio	Appalachian
12:00 to 1:15 PM	LUNCH & Annual VABF Member Meeting	Roanoke Ballroom CH	

### **Agricultural solutions to climate change for Virginia** **Cathy Day and Mark Schonbeck, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition & Organic Farming Research Foundation**

Like much of the east coast of the United States, Virginia is expected to experience more extreme and erratic rainfall events and possibly more intense or sudden-onset droughts as a result of climate change. Its plant hardiness zones are expected to shift by another full zone well before the end of the century. Higher temperatures combined with high humidity are also expected to create increasing challenges for the agricultural workforce as well as aggravating crop diseases and livestock stress. How should Virginia's farmers prepare for such increasing challenges? We will discuss the farming systems that are most likely to help with mitigating future climate risk, while also helping to decrease agricultural greenhouse gas emissions. From planting more trees and other perennial crops to building rotations that keep the ground covered and build soil health, we will discuss top recommendations for building climate resilience. We will also discuss how federal policies can help farmers to implement such systems. Federal conservation programs, including cost-

share and loan programs, as well as the technical assistance associated with them, provide farmers pathways to integrating conservation approaches on their land.

### **Growing Great Vegetables in VA** **Ira Wallace, Southern Exposure Seed Exchange**

Tips and techniques for growing garden fresh produce all year-round. Covers great new varieties and beloved standards for Virginia, including vine ripened tomatoes, crisp green peppers, outstanding winter collards, and dozens of other delicious edibles. Discussion of soil building, planting dates, succession sowing, mulch, managing water, selecting the best varieties for success, and more.

### **Asian Greens in the Winter Hoophouse** **Pam Dawling, Twin Oaks Community**

This workshop covers the production of Asian greens in the winter hoophouse, for both market and home growers. Included are tips on choosing among over 20 types of Asian greens, ways to keep the space fully planted: filler greens, follow-on cropping, interplanting, and succession planting. Harvesting is covered, as well as crop rotation, irrigation and pest and disease management.



**Introductory Biodynamics: Holistic Basis of a Self-Sufficient Farm**

**Stewart Lundy, Perennial Roots Farm**

Learn about the principles of making a farm more self-sufficient with integrated livestock, diverse crops, and fertility management. Practice treating the farm as if it is a living organism and nurture it in a way that reduces input costs by creating fertility from within the farm or garden.

**Get to know your arthropod allies**

**Thomas Kuhar and Tim Kring, Virginia Tech**

Beneficial organisms including arthropods play an important role in the agroecosystem. Helping growers to recognize the organisms that drive natural pest control can aid them in IPM decision making as well as conservation measures.

**Urban agriculture**

**John Wilson, Drishti Compost**

Why we need to decentralize our food system. The role urban ag could play in that. How to go about it.

**Agroforestry: The Ins, Outs, and Future**

**John Munsell, Virginia Tech**

Attendees learn about temperate agroforestry principles, practices, and strategies. Presentations on applications in Virginia and beyond draws on more than 15 years of experience. Case studies and technical and financial assistance programs provide attendees real-world insights and opportunities, including a deep dive into emerging large-scale conversion support initiatives that attendees can use to integrate agroforestry production into their operation.



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***Silent Auction Reminder!***

**Bidding Ends at 2 PM Sunday**

**Pick-up Items and Payment from 3-6 PM**



## Session G: 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Track	Title	Presenters	Location
BUSINESS & SYSTEMS	Certified Naturally Grown: Stewarding Community, Peer Learning, and Market Success	Erin Worrall	Monroe
CROP PRODUCTION	Taking the "suck" out of succession	Bill Whipple	Mill Mount
HOMESTEADING/BEGINNING FARMER	A Survey of Home Preservation Methods	Maureen Diaz	Shenandoah A
MICROBIAL, BUGS, & COM-POST	Demystifying Vegetable Fermentation	Emilie Tweardy	Pocahontas
SEEDS	Growing, Saving and Eating Heirloom Collards	*Chris Smith/Bonnetta Adeeb	Buck Mount
SOIL HEALTH, REGENERATIVE GRAZING	Integrating Livestock and Vegetable Production	Stewart Lundy	Shenandoah B
2:00 PM	Silent Auction Bidding Ends		Roanoke Ballroom AB
3:00 to 6:00 PM	Silent Auction Pick-Up & Payment		Roanoke Ballroom AB

### Certified Naturally Grown: Stewarding Community, Peer Learning, and Market Success

#### Erin Worrall, Certified Naturally Grown

For 20 years Certified Naturally Grown (CNG) has offered peer-review certification for farmers producing food for their local communities according to high ecological standards. The grassroots approach emphasizes accessibility and continuous improvement. Learn how CNG goes beyond providing a marketing edge, but also works to create peer-learning opportunities that boost success for vegetable and flower growers, beekeepers, and livestock operations. Join this panel of CNG producers and a representative of the organization. They will share about new peer-learning and community building opportunities, and speak about their own experience and the benefits of CNG certification.



### Taking the "suck" out of succession

#### Bill Whipple, W.T. Farm

Succession is Nature's subtle, runaway, freight train moving through time. Farms are growing up all around us and that can suck a lot of energy from the landowner. It is said, "we clear, and we clear, and we clear, and then we die." After working with trees and plants in a way that encourages wild edge and diversity for the last 35 years, the scale easily tips towards Nature overwhelming us. This discussion focuses on first understanding succession, and then strategizing techniques with plants to guide this formidable force so we farmers can decrease stress, increase yield and resiliency through diversity, replacing "SUCK-session with SUCCESS-ion.



Photo Credit: Kyra Aulani



## A Survey of Home Preservation Methods

**Maureen Diaz, Weston A. Price Foundation**

In this we cover everything from fermenting, canning, salting, drying, root cellaring, and more. Including value-added ideas and methods for the small scale farm or cottage kitchen.

## Demystifying Vegetable Fermentation

### **Emilie Tweardy, Appalachian Sustainable Development**

Students will leave this session with the skills and confidence to go home and ferment without fear! We'll talk about 'What is Fermentation?', cover basic krauts and brines, and demo each process in a participatory way. This casual session will feature lots of Q and A, and help troubleshoot any challenges attendees may be experiencing in their own fermentation projects.



Photo Credit: Kyra Aulani

## Growing, Saving and Eating Heirloom Collards

### **Chris Smith/Bonnetta Adeeb**

The Heirloom Collard Project is working with over sixty varieties of heirloom collards to regenerate seed and celebrate the history, culture and cuisine of collards. This presentation will cover the work of stewarding these varieties (we need more seed stewards) as well as the cultural importance of collards, taste testings, variety trials and using and marketing collards. If you want to take a deep dive into collards or just learn more about collaborative seed work, then this presentation is for you.

## Integrating Livestock and Vegetable Production

### **Stewart Lundy, Perennial Roots Farm**

Learn about the benefits of a diversified farm and the possibility of producing meat from less fertile soil as well as producing fertility for the garden from livestock. Add an additional revenue stream as well as reducing fertility costs for the garden.



*The Edwards Mother Earth Foundation (EMEF) - enhancing the sustainable and diverse quality of life by addressing disruptions caused by global climate change*

<https://edwardsmotherearth.org/>

EMEF is pleased to announce the Catalyzing Agroforestry grant program for farmers who seek to join in their effort to mitigate climate change through use of agroforestry applications. Agroforestry practices sequester carbon, sustain productive and healthy farms and forests, protect water quality, regenerate soils, and enhance biodiversity.

The program is managed by Virginia Tech University in partnership with Appalachian Sustainable Development in Bristol, Virginia and Rural Action in Athens, Ohio

For more information, please see representatives at their VABF conference exhibition hall booth or visit <https://www.appalachianforestfarmers.org/emef>



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Rural Action  
Working Together to Revitalize Appalachian Ohio

## Session H: 3:30 PM - 5:00 PM

Track	Title	Presenters	Location
BUSINESS & SYSTEMS	Balancing Farm and Family	Janet Aardema	Monroe
CROP PRODUCTION	Climate Change Vegetables	April Jones	Mill Mount
HOMESTEADING/BEGINNING FARMER	Build Your Homestead in Seven Steps	Leah M. Webb, MPH	Shenandoah A
MICROBIAL, BUGS, & COM-POST	Compost: How To Make It and Use It	John Wilson	Pocahontas
PERMACULTURE/ AGROFORESTRY	Closing The Nutrient Loop In Regenerative Agriculture Systems	Jay Dunbar	Buck Mount
SOIL HEALTH, REGENERATIVE GRAZING	Grassfed Cattle Production: Genetics & Management, Fun & Profit	Gil Yearwood	Shenandoah B
BUSINESS & SYSTEMS	MarketLink: Grant funding to help direct marketing farmers & farmers' markets accept SNAP/EBT	Phil Blalock	Appalachian

**Pick up and pay for Silent Auction items before leaving!**

### **Balancing Farm and Family**

**Janet Aardema, Broadfork Farm**

“The only thing harder than farming is parenting.” <- This unattributed statement often feels true! Part presentation, part interactive session for parents and farmers of all stages: Struggling with the juggle of farming and parenting? Want to start farming and/or parenting? Join in for peer support, community interaction, and new ideas. Join in to learn from a living example of a farmer-mother 15 years in and still joyfully engaging in both. Janet will share photos, stories, tips, and tricks for giving plants, customers, and children each appropriate attention while balancing their unique needs, including a Farm Share-centric farm and homeschooling children. Spoiler alert: Janet’s approach hinges on bomb-proof systems and heart-led communication, and children are incredibly capable when given the need and space to initiate responsibility.

### **Climate Change Vegetables**

**April Jones, Pinehurst Farmers Market**

Climate Ready Farming Practices. Become your own climate hero! Learn about the ways that you can combat climate, to create a more friendly and kind farming practice. Learn how you can create your own direct climate action plant, and the types of drought tolerant plants that you can plant and profit from and to grow revenue at your farm. Protecting natural resources, storing carbon and building resiliency.

### **Build Your Homestead in Seven Steps**

**Leah M. Webb, MPH**

Building a highly productive homestead is best accomplished using incremental steps that increase your workload and skillset overtime. Leah will discuss the seven steps and corresponding inputs she’s used to slowly build her diverse homestead using no-dig, no-till, deep organic practices that are applicable for both rural and urban settings. Her own home-



stead was built on just three quarters of an acre in an urban community and started with just a few beds. She slowly expanded to include berries and fruit trees, perennial crops, four season growing, storage crops, and eggs. Participants will learn how to dream big while setting realistic and achievable homesteading goals.

#### **Compost: How to Make it and Use it.**

##### **John Wilson**

My history of making compost, my reliance on for fertility, and the many benefits.

#### **Closing The Nutrient Loop In Regenerative Agriculture Systems**

##### **Jay Dunbar, River Ridge Organics**

The farm eco-system is a constant flow of energies and resources, and one of the farmer's primary objectives is to manage this flow in the most efficient and productive way possible. Among other strategies, farmers strive to close the nutrient loop or re-capture "wastes" which can become feedstocks for other processes. Using this systems approach, we will explore the ways in which we can hone our farm enterprises to require fewer off-farm inputs and build more resilient, low-input farm systems. Using his experiences with organic berry production as an example, Dunbar will lead attendees through a conversation, exploring practical ways in which on-farm resources and complimentary farm enterprises can provide fertility, pest control, and more. We will also discuss the ways in which understanding the nutrient loop can aid beginning farmers as they design and re-design their farm.

#### **Grassfed Cattle Production: Genetics & Management, Fun & Profit**

##### **Gil Yearwood, Ellet Valley Beef Co**

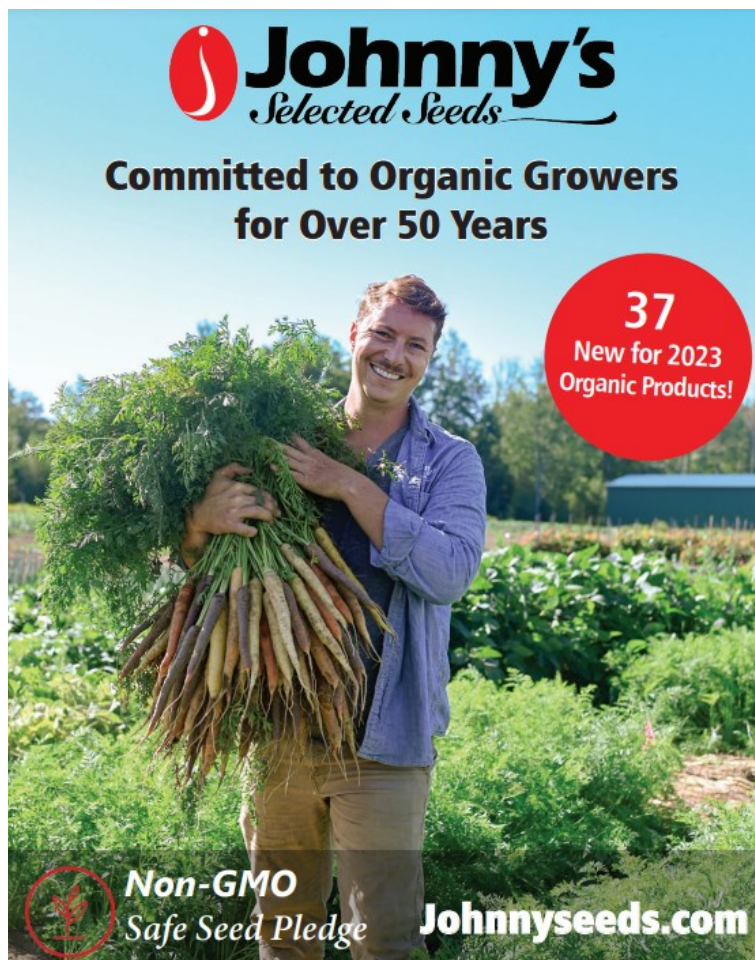
which we will discuss grassfed cattle production in the fescue country of southwest Virginia, to include the genetics and management practices that may simplify the task. A focal point will be how implementing regenerative grazing can increase profit and enhance quality of life for the producer and the cattle, while building soil and helping the environment.

#### **MarketLink: Grant funding to help direct marketing farmers & farmers' markets accept SNAP/EBT**

##### **Phil Blalock**

MarketLink is a program of the National Association of Farmers Market Nutrition Programs ("NAFMNP"). In partnership with the USDA and Novo Dia Group ("NDG"), MarketLink assists farmers and markets with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") Retailer Application, and con-

nects them with free app-based SNAP Electronic Benefit Transfer ("SNAP/EBT") processing equipment. We also offer options for integrated credit/debit payment processing. MarketLink has a long-term vision of sustainability for farmers and markets through a broader customer base, increased sales, and profitability. Founded in 2013 in partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture, MarketLink has helped more than 3,000 farmers and markets accept electronic payments – including more than \$69m in SNAP sales and \$58m in credit/debit sales for a total impact of more than \$127m. In 2019, USDA awarded NAFMNP a Cooperative Agreement to implement the 'free equipment program', providing grant funding for equipment to direct marketing farmers and farmers markets. In 2021, NAFMNP was awarded a USDA grant to help farmers accept SNAP benefits online. The first part of the presentation explains what is provided through the MarketLink grant for eligible farmers and farmers markets, such as free point-of-sale (POS) equipment, one-year free TotilPay Go subscription, and technical assistance. Amy will then break down the requirements and best practices for the SNAP Retailer Application. The last portion of the presentation will cover additional MarketLink projects and how it will streamline farmers and markets' payments for Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) participants, such as eWIC/FMNP/incentives, and Online SNAP.



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Biological Farming is an approach to food and fiber production that respects the natural processes in the farm or garden ecosystem in order to yield top quality products, provide a viable living for the producer, and sustain long-term productivity. Practitioners use ecologically sound methods of agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, and livestock husbandry to provide food that is as nutritious and free from toxic residues as possible, and which preserves the balance found in natural ecosystems.

**VABF encompasses a community of farmers, gardeners, homesteaders, students, teachers, researchers, and general supporters of local and sustainable food systems.**

**Find out more about VABF memberships at [VABF.org](http://VABF.org)!**





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The Virginia Tech Roanoke Center (VTRC) connects the resources of Virginia Tech to the Roanoke region **and beyond**. Located on the seventh floor of the Roanoke Higher Education Center in beautiful downtown Roanoke, our team works to **create opportunities** for long-term community and individual success. We **cultivate community relationships** and bring you **learning experiences**.

We embody the **Ut Prosim** (That I May Serve) motto of Virginia Tech and fulfill that duty in the Roanoke region. We create and participate in engagement opportunities that **promote positivity**.

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- Leadership Academy for the 21st Century
- Leading through Myers-Briggs
- Generations in the Workplace

### Project Management

- Fundamentals of Project Management
- Project Management Applications
- Project Management Professional Exam Preparatory Course

### Communication Courses

- Effective Communication
- The Powerful Role of Stories in Communicating
- Public Speaking & Presentation Skills
- Media Relations Training

### Organizational Improvement

- Lean Applications
- Lean Practitioners
- Lean and Six Sigma Overview for Non-manufacturers
- Lean Foundations
- Introduction to Environmental Systems - ISO 14001
- Introduction to Quality Management Systems - ISO 9001

### Workplace Safety

- NFPA 70E (Arc Flash)
- Lockout/Tagout
- OSHA 10-hour (general industry or construction)
- OSHA 30-hour (general industry or construction)

### Emerging Technology Courses

- Data Analytics short course
- Blockchain Webinar
- Designing and Implementing a Makerspace
- Cyber & Robotics summer camp (for youth)

### Brewing Education

- Business of Brewing
- Beer Brewer Professional Certificate
- Essentials of Craft Beer

### Contact:

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## **ADDITIONAL GRANT SUPPORT FOR THE 23RD ANNUAL BIOLOGICAL FARMING CONFERENCE**

### **Soil Health track**

Funding for the Soil Health Track is provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Building Soil Health in Virginia grant project promoting increased soil health practices on Virginia farmland.



**NFWF**



**Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund**

### **Regenerative Grazing Track**

Funding for the Regenerative Grazing Track is provided by the SARE/NCAT Soil for Water project promoting holistic and regenerative grazing practices on Virginia's pastures.



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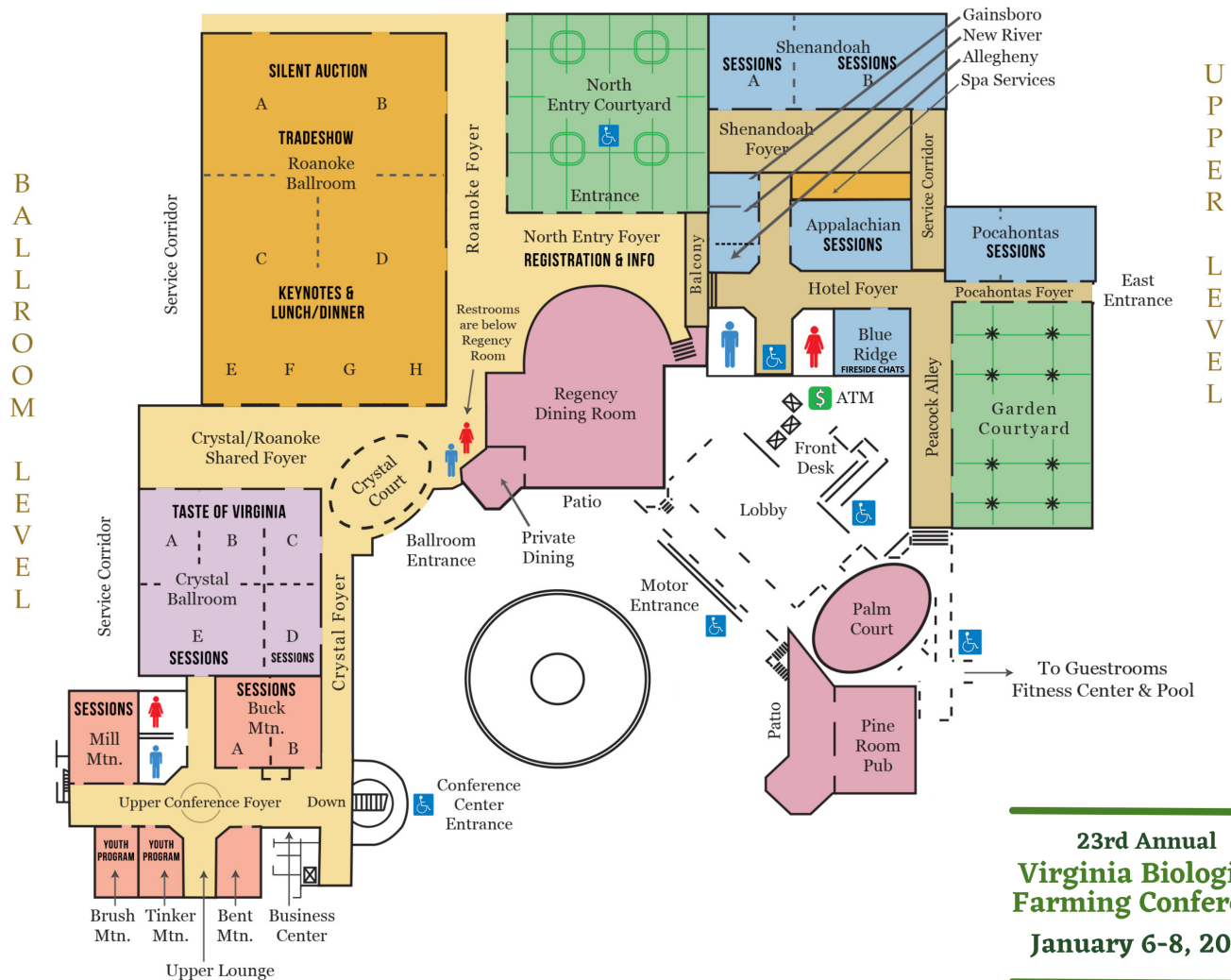


# Conference Map

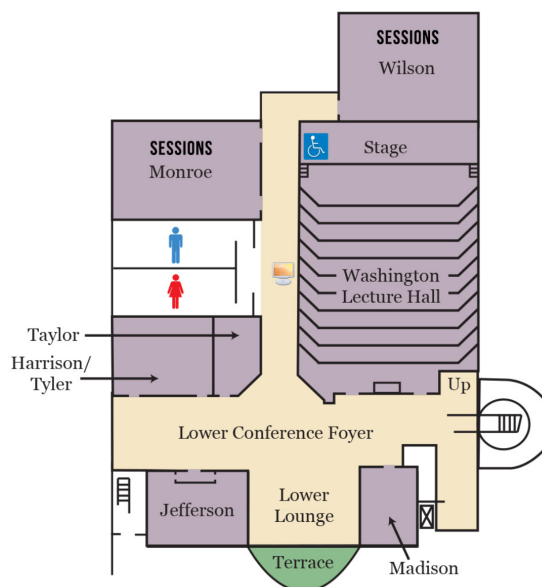


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## CONFERENCE LEVEL



**23rd Annual  
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Farming Conference  
January 6-8, 2023**

**Registration & Info**  
North Entry Foyer

**Keynotes**  
**Lunch/Dinner**  
**Tradeshow**  
**Silent Auction**  
Roanoke Ballroom

**Taste of Virginia  
Expo & Market (Sunday)**  
Crystal Ballroom

**VABF**  
Virginia Association for Biological Farming