

# Virginia Biological Farming Conference

**Full and Half Day Pre-Conference Workshops**

**Saturday, January 11, 2020**

**Hotel Roanoke**

## **Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training and Certification**

**Laura Strawn and Amber Vallotton, Virginia Cooperative Extension**

**(8:00 AM – 5:00 PM) \$35**



The PSA Grower Training Course is one way to satisfy the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirement outlined in 112.22(c) that requires “At least one supervisor or responsible party for your farm must have successfully completed food safety training at least equivalent to that received under standardized curriculum recognized as adequate by the Food and Drug Administration.”

In addition to learning about produce safety best practices, key parts of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements are outlined within each module. There

will be time for questions and discussion, so participants should come prepared to share their experiences and produce safety questions. The course will provide a foundation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and co-management information, FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements, and details on how to develop a farm food safety plan.

Includes the Hotel Roanoke lunch buffet, breaks and light snacks.

## **Advanced Organic Vegetable Production**

**Ellen Polishuk, Plant to Profit (8:00 AM – 5:00 PM) \$150**



You’ve got the basics covered. Now it’s time to refine your skills, processes and planning. We’ll dive into how to grow better crops starting with great transplants, then addressing fertility, weed and pest issues. Then, checking in with rotation planning, crops and managing harvest and post-harvest. What tools might you want to upgrade to gain efficiencies? All of this technical talk, while holding fast to our goal of having the farm make us a good living!

# The Business of Farming

Michael Reilly, Virginia Foodshed Capital,

Resi Connell, LOCAL STEW U, Maggy Gregory, Gregory Family Farms

(8:00 AM – 12:00 PM) \$50



Have you been too busy with the day-to-day demands of running your farm to pay sufficient attention to the business side of your operation? Or maybe there are some aspects of running the business that intimidate you... or bore you... or just seem to always get pushed off to the side. You're certainly not alone! We all need to take some time to sharpen our business skills or tackle those dreadful parts of running a business that we've been avoiding for far too long.

This dynamic workshop will provide both new and experienced farmers with a concise yet comprehensive tutorial on the critical aspects of running a farm business. The workshop is being sponsored and moderated by Virginia Foodshed Capital, a statewide non-profit formerly known as Slow Money Virginia and dedicated to the financial needs of our local farming community.

The workshop will be comprised of several modules, each conducted by a farmer, or a person with knowledge of farming. Resi Connell, VABF board member and founder of LOCAL STEW U, will tackle the all-important aspect of marketing your business. Maggy Gregory, who runs Gregory Family Farms with her husband and practices law in Chatham, will provide an overview of the most common legal questions and scenarios that independent, CSA and direct-marketing farms have during the first ten years of their operation. We will also have a financial module led by farmers who have developed an expertise in bookkeeping and cash flow analysis. Michael Reilly will also talk about how to make your business credit worthy and access the capital you need to grow and improve your business. Included in this discussion will be how to present and promote your business using technical tools like PowerPoint, as the power of your voice to tell your story. The workshop will provide ample opportunity for individual participants to receive one-on-one training in as many of the modules as they'd like. Please bring a laptop if you can, and come prepared to do some work and make your farm business shine!

# Welcome to the World of Wedding Flowers

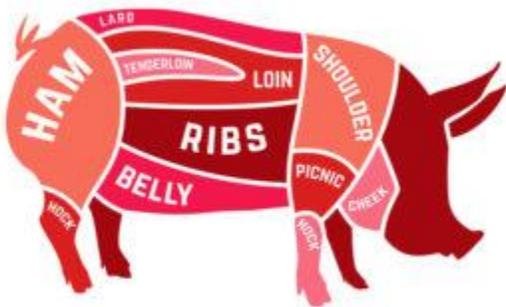
Gwynn Hamilton, Stonecrop Farm (10:00 AM – 1:00 PM) \$75



So you think you might want to enter the world of wedding flowers. Let's talk about how to match your skills with the appropriate audience and select your level of commitment to the world of wedding flowers. We'll discuss how to keep track of all the details for everyone involved without giving up your growing time to sitting at the desk. Gwynn will demonstrate crafting the personal pieces — bouquets, boutonnieres, and corsages — and give you time to practice.

# Nose to Tail Butchery and Eating

Tanya Cauthen, Belmont Butchery (9:00 AM – 4:00 PM) \$150



From chef turned butcher, Tanya Cauthen of Belmont Butchery. This two part workshop is designed for farmers and home cook. In part 1 - Tanya will demonstrate how to break down a pig into retail cuts, make a simple sausage and set up bacon to cure. We are going to go slow enough that farmers and home cooks should be able to do this at home! Part 2. (after lunch) Tanya and Henry (her husband and partner in

meat & wine) will cook all the odd bits of the pig, as well as rarely used parts from lamb and beef. We will demo and share cooking techniques for liver, kidneys, heart, trotters, cheeks and tongue! In addition, will cook and sample some of the more unusual muscle cuts - hangers, bavette, denver and ranch, to name a few.

# Growing Gourmet and Medicinal Mushrooms

Mark Jones, Sharondale Mushroom Farm (2:00 – 5:00 PM) \$75



In this introduction for gardeners and homesteaders, learn to grow several different types of mushrooms using low-tech, low-cost methods in your garden or woodlot. We will explore the biology and ecology of fungi in agriculture, using mushrooms for personal and planetary health, and methods for cultivating shiitake, oyster, lion's mane, reishi, and other mushrooms in wood, straw, and compost. Take home knowledge and a sample of mushroom culture.

# On Farm Seed Saving and Crop Diversity Trials

Chris Smith, The Utopian Seed Project & Sow True Seed

Ira Wallace, Southern Exposure Seed Exchange

(1:00 PM – 5:00 PM) \$75



On farm seed saving is somewhat of a lost art, but has many benefits to the farmer (and some challenges). This workshop aims to give you the knowledge to start saving your own seeds as well as a realistic look at generating income through seed grow-outs for seed companies.

- Basic botany of seed production.
- Seed processing and special equipment.
- The business of seed growing (contract growing and

dual cropping potential).

Crop trialing is another on farm activity that can add a lot of value, either in collaboration with researchers (sometimes paid) or for your own research. Crop trialing can be effective for marketing and farm differentiation, while at the same time growing a marketable crop. This workshop will cover the nuts and bolts of setting up (or participating in) a successful crop trial.

- Setting up an effective trial.
- Marketing and publicity benefits of on farm trials.
- Getting involved with larger trialing efforts.