

***Rooted in Resilience: Growing Healthy Soils and  
Opportunities for Kentucky Organics***  
**#OAK2023 - January 26-28, 2023**

Don't Miss Out! Register today!



**#OAK2023:**

**350 farmers & ag experts.  
30+ sessions & farm tours.  
6 immersive workshops.  
2 keynote speakers  
and YOU!**

Get the full AGENDA here

**This event is open to everyone!**

Join the hundreds of Kentuckians and neighbors active in community food systems: farmers, researchers, nonprofit professionals, federal and state agency partners, allied service providers and conscious consumers working collectively to build a local, resilient and healthy food system.

Register today and join the OAK Community in January 2023 at [KSU's Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm](#).

**Registration is open and scholarships are available.**

## New for #OAK2023: SIX Pre-Conference Workshops!

**Want to dig deeper into a topic that will take you and your farming operation to the next level?**

OAK is offering you just that opportunity with 6 immersive, exciting workshops offered on **January 26**.

Take advantage of this third day of learning with the OAK community and register for pre-conference workshops along with the main conference. Note - upon registering, there is an additional cost for this extra day of learning and a locally-sourced lunch!

- **Marketing Success Workshop** *with Farm Marketing Guru Corinna Bench*
  - **Forest Farming** *with Appalachian Sustainable Development's Robin Suggs and Rural Action's Andrea Miller*
  - **Nutrient Budgeting** *with UK's Krista Jacobsen, and Grow Appalachia's Chris McKenzie*
  - **Year-Round Salad Greens** *with Farmer/Farm Consultant Ray Tyler*
- Funding Opportunities for Kentucky Farms** *with KCARD, KSU, KDA, NRCS, and more!*
- Maximizing High Tunnels** *with OSU's Matt Kleinhenz, UT's Annette Wszelaki, and Kentucky Farm Consultant Paul Wiediger*

[Register here](#)

# 2023 Conference Sponsors, Partners & Funders



National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service



We are grateful for the strong support from these 2023 partners and sponsors!

## OAK Members: Member Perks! and Save The Date!

**OAK Members**, mark your calendars for OAK's **Annual Member Meeting**: March 2, 2023, 5:30-7pm, online.

Join together with OAK Members, connect with the OAK Board and Staff and be inspired with guest speakers for this annual opportunity to gather virtually.



**OAK Members**, keep an eye on your inbox for the full Member Meeting agenda and registration. We'll also send out our **Annual Member Survey** very soon... this feedback is essential to improving our programs and tailoring the future of OAK! And don't forget to use your [member discounts](#) when ordering those farm supplies for 2023!

**Not Yet A Member? Join OAK Today!**

The OAK community is an engaging group of farmers, eaters, ag professionals, entrepreneurs and more! From farmers who are using regenerative practices to those whose farms have been certified organic for decades, we are committed to creating a healthier, more nourishing food landscape.

Join or Renew TODAY

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## Online Farmer Education From / For Kentucky Farmers



We're planning our 2023 Farmer Field Day schedule and have a great year planned - check back in February for details and registration for these on-farm learning events.

Catch up on archives of our virtual farmer and consumer education events on our [OAK YouTube page](#) for recordings, snapshots, and lessons learned from host farmers. Have suggestions or ideas for future farms, practices or topics to highlight? [Let OAK know](#).

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## Opportunities, the Latest News & Calls to Action

### SARE Releases Publication on Transitioning to Organic Production

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE) has released a new bulletin, [Transitioning to Organic Production](#), that lays out basic transition strategies for livestock, field crop, and horticultural systems, including a summary of the certification process and the National Organic Program standards. Practices common to all organic systems are also addressed. The free publication also outlines how organic production practices, paired with sound transition strategies such as flexible timelines, using alternative labels, and coordinating with NRCS programs, can help farmers successfully navigate the transition process. From [ATTRA News](#)

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### Kentucky Leopold Conservation Award Seeks Nominees

Are you a Kentucky farmer or forester who improves soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat on your working land? Apply for the 2023 Kentucky Leopold Conservation Award®.



Sand County Foundation and national sponsor American Farmland Trust present the Leopold Conservation Award to private landowners in 25 states for extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. In Kentucky, the \$10,000 award is presented annually with the Kentucky Agricultural Council and the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts.

Nominations may be submitted on behalf of a landowner, or landowners may apply themselves. The application can be found at [www.sandcountyfoundation.org/ApplyLCA](http://www.sandcountyfoundation.org/ApplyLCA). The application deadline date is April 1. The committee prefers application materials to be sent electronically. Applications can be emailed to [colemansteve51@gmail.com](mailto:colemansteve51@gmail.com) or postmarked by April 1, and mailed to: Leopold Conservation Award c/o Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts P.O. Box 4027 Frankfort, KY 40604-4027 [Learn more here](#)

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## 2023 Agroforestry Symposium - Online

The Annual Agroforestry Symposium is an opportunity for learning and connection with a knowledgeable and experienced community of scientists, practitioners, and partners. Each year, the Center for Agroforestry presents a theme that pushes the boundaries of the field, including perspectives that help shape their work.

This year, in collaboration with the New Roots for Restoration Biology Integration Institute, the Symposium will consist of presentations and panel discussions on (1) existing tree crop selections, gaps in research, and emerging opportunities; (2) new developments in perennial herbaceous crops; and (3) on-the-ground producer perspectives on native perennial cultivars.

The Agroforestry Symposium is free and open to the public, but donations are encouraged. [Learn more and register here](#)

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## Educational & Farming Support

### In-person Events

#### **Third Thursday Thing: Farm & Home Loans | Natural Resources Management**

January 19, 2023, 10am

1525 Mills Ln, Frankfort, KY 40601

Agenda:

Welcome- Edwin Chavous, Kentucky State University

Farm Service Agency Loans- Caleb Thomas, USDA FSA

Rural Development Home Loan Program

Free Lunch

Native Warm Season Grasses: Productive Pastures and Wild Pleasures- Nat Colten, Kentucky State University

Tree Planting Methods -Jody Thompson, Kentucky State University

[Learn more here](#)

#### **2023 Eastern Kentucky Farmer Conference**

February 24 -25, 2023

## Virtual Events

### **Webinar Series: Practical Training for On-Farm and Collaborative Plant Breeding**

Jan 17, 2023 2pm

Jan 24, 2023 2pm

Jan 31, 2023 2pm

Feb 7, 2023 2pm

Join eOrganic for a series of webinars in January and February 2023. on organic plant breeding for independent plant breeders, farmers interested in selection, regional seed companies and plant breeding students. The webinars will be led by the Organic Seed Alliance and collaborators on a NIFA OREI funded project on collaborative plant breeding project in the Upper Midwest. Although the content will be targeted to the Upper Midwest, much of the material will be relevant to other regions as well. Participants will benefit from online interaction with independent breeders, seed company breeders and farmer breeders from around the U.S. Webinars will be interactive and accompanied by an online resources section. [Learn more here](#) Registering just once will allow you to attend all the webinars in the series! [Register here](#)

### **Stories From The Front Lines - Real Organic Project**

January 17, 2023, 1-8pm ET

A virtual offering as part of EcoFarm Pre-Conference, the Real Organic Project highlights 12 organic leaders offering give TED-style talks on the dysfunction surrounding the USDA Organic label and real solutions for the future of food. [Learn more and register here](#)

### **Federal Funding Opportunities for Livestock Farmers**

January 17, 4-5pm ET

Join FACT and Margaret Krome, an experienced grant writer with the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, for this free webinar to learn how to succeed at using federal programs to support your farm or sustainable agriculture initiatives, including loans, grants, and cost-share programs. [Learn more and register here](#)

### **Pesticides & Climate Change Report**

January 17, 12-1pm ET (Report Findings)

January 24, 12-1pm ET (Solutions)

Pesticide Action Network has announced a new report, Pesticides and Climate Change: A Vicious Cycle, to be released in just a couple of weeks. It's the first-ever, in-depth scientific review of how pesticides contribute to climate change, and how climate change impacts in turn lead to increased pesticide use. The report also outlines how policymakers can help break the vicious cycle of pesticide use and climate change by supporting agroecological farming practices and pesticide reduction targets, as well as promoting the rights of people most impacted by pesticide use. [More information here](#)

### **Crunching Numbers on Agrivoltaics: Context and Costs of Agrivoltaics in the U.S.**

January 18, 2023

This free webinar is the first in the AgriSolar Clearinghouse Webinar Series. In this episode, NREL's Jordan Macknick and James McCall will discuss the context and costs of agrivoltaics in the United States. [Register here.](#)

### **Tomato Variety Trends: how breeding influences your seed selection**

Thursday, January 19, at 2 pm ET

Want an inside look at trends in the tomato world? Discover where your tomato seed comes from and what's on the horizon! Join Johnny's Seeds Tomato Product Manager Pete Zuck and Tomato Trial Technician Daniel Yoder as they review recent trends in tomato variety improvement, including disease resistance, market type, flavor, and adaptation. Pete will also break down some of the esoteric inner workings of the international tomato breeding business, which ranges in scale from independent backyard breeders to multinational conglomerates. A Q&A session, moderated by Farmer and Sales Representative Dana Hilfinger, will follow the presentation. [Register here](#)

### **Carbon Markets for Livestock Operations: Producer Perspectives**

January 20, 2023, 2:30 pm ET

Sustainability for livestock operations depends not only on what is occurring on the facility itself, but also what is happening as manure nutrients are recycled on the croplands that grow feed. Following up on the previous two webinars, this webinar will focus on producer perspectives related to carbon markets on their livestock operation. The webinar will feature a lawyer who will share what to look for in contracts when considering entering the carbon market, followed by a panel discussion that highlights two producers who have current carbon market contracts. [Register here](#)

### **Eastern Kentucky Virtual Beekeeping School**

January 21, 2023, 9am-1pm ET

Learn all about beekeeping from the comfort of your own home. Whether you are a beginner or an advanced beekeeper, this is something in this for you! [Click here for more information](#)

### **Farm Bill Basics - Black Farmer Focus**

January 23, 2023, 5pm ET

An online discussion of the Farm Bill regarding issues, programs, and policies of particular interest to Black farmers. Learn about what is in the Farm Bill, who writes it, the process of passing the bill, and how to make your voice heard on issues important to you. Brought to you by Community Farm Alliance. [Go here to register](#)

### **How to Select a Tax Preparer**

January 23 1-2:30pm ET

Filing taxes for an agricultural operation can be challenging, but there are many options for professional assistance including certified public accountants, enrolled agents, attorneys, and many others who don't have a professional credential. Join USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Dr. Tamara L. Cushing, Extension Forest Business and Economics Specialist, University of Florida for this free educational webinar for producers. [Register here](#)

### **How Can Cover Crops Improve Soil Health?**

January 25, 2023 2-3 pm ET

Join Dr. Kristie Wendelberger, Rodale's Climate Smart Project Director, to learn about the benefits of cover cropping on soil health, the soil microbial community, and Climate Smart Agriculture. Cover crops are known for reducing soil compaction, increasing infiltration, and feeding the soil microbial community via root exudates. Dr. Wendelberger will explain how this process works and how cover crops can help you improve your overall soil health and the environment. [Register here](#)

### **KY Food Action Network Upcoming Trainings**

January 25, 2023 at 3pm ET: Media Training

[The Kentucky Food Action Network \(KFAN\)](#) is a collective of individuals and organizations united under the common purpose of creating accessible and resilient food systems that prioritize the health of Kentuckians and the land across our Commonwealth by nurturing all aspects of Kentucky's food system, from the producer to the consumer.

### **Winter Forest Farming Office Hours**

Join the Appalachian Beginning Forest Farmer Coalition for a lunchtime zoom conversation about forest farming, NTFPs, resources, links and networking. This is a perfect time to ask questions, find forest farming resources, make a plan or set goals for the year, as well hear from other forest farmers who are doing the same! Please visit [the ABFFC page](#) to learn more and sign up to receive the zoom link by email.

### **Vegetable Farms Becoming the Employer of Choice**

Motivating and managing employees is essential to most diversified vegetable farms, and rare is the farmer who comes to farming with those labor management skills. Whether you have worked with employees for many years or are in the early stages of hiring staff, this series from Fair Share CSA Coalition will give you practical tools to make your farm an employer of choice. Please note that this program is for all vegetable farm owners and for hired managers with at least 10 years of experience.

Be prepared to attend online sessions with your camera on and ready to engage in discussions with your farmer peers. [Space is limited - register here.](#)

16 January from 4-6 PM CT: Employee Onboarding and Training

19 January from 9-11 AM CT: Farm Business Culture

23 January from 4-6 PM CT: Reviews and Feedback

30 January from 4-6 PM CT: Becoming an Ethical H-2A Employer

2 February from 9-11 AM CT: Developing Intercultural Competence for Farm Employers

6 February from 4-6 PM CT: Managing Conflict

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## **Resources for Farmers**

### **EKY Flood Damage Farm Equipment Program**

A program for commercial farmers to repair/refurbish small-scale farm equipment damaged during the floods. If you would like to donate to this program, please send an email to [info@kyhortcouncil.org](mailto:info@kyhortcouncil.org). [Learn more and apply here](#)

### **Appalachian Foodways Practitioner Fellowship**

Applications are open until February 1, 2023

Calling all farmers, chefs, seed savers, gardeners, home cooks, cookbook authors, bakers, hunters, keepers of recipes, keepers of traditional foodways knowledge, and everything in between! Grow Appalachia is partnering with Mid Atlantic Arts' Central Appalachian Living Traditions Program and the Appalachian Studies Association to offer the 2023 Appalachian Foodways Practitioner Fellowships! [Click here to learn more.](#)

### **Complete your Ag Census - Make sure your farm is counted!**

[The Census of Agriculture](#) is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Even small plots of land - whether rural or urban - growing fruit, vegetables or some food animals count if \$1,000 or more of such products were raised and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the Census year. The Census of



Agriculture, taken only once every five years, looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures. For America's farmers and ranchers, the Census of Agriculture is your voice, your future, and your opportunity. Respond by February 6!

### **CSA Week 2023 Promotional Package**

The CSA Innovation Network is excited to share a free digital toolkit filled with resources, tools, and templates to help you promote CSA during CSA Week and beyond! [Visit this page to sign up](#) and receive your promotional package. And join others across the country in celebrating community supported agriculture by putting yourself on our CSA Week Participant Map.

### **USDA Nationwide Survey for Prospective Farmers, Ranchers and Forest Managers**

Take [this very important survey](#) by March 31, 2023!

This voluntary, anonymous survey will take about 10 minutes to complete and asks about your general views and interactions with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) agencies delivered by farm programs: Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Risk Management Agency (RMA). All farmers, ranchers and forest managers are encouraged to take the survey. Existing customers and prospective customers both provide unique perspectives they'd like to hear. They'd especially like to hear from a new audience this year of prospective customers, those who don't know about USDA farm programs or have yet to work with them, and those who were unable to participate in the past.

### **Shade Cloth Aids in High Tunnel Pest Control**

Southern SARE reported on a [High Tunnel Pest Exclusion research project](#) in Alabama. As part of the project, on-farm participatory research and demonstrations conducted at 22 farms across Alabama from 2017-2021 found that 50% shade cloth was effective at keeping 72% to 100% of macro-insect pests out of high tunnels. The woven shade cloth is installed inside high tunnel side walls and remains in place when side walls are open, impeding insect entry. The shade cloth is used in conjunction with other IPM practices to achieve pest control in a high tunnel. Researchers point out that the exclusion also keeps out larger beneficial insects, including pollinators, but if they're released inside the tunnel, the shade cloth helps keep them in place. From [ATTRA News](#)

### **Urban Agroforestry Tipsheet: Food Forests and Beyond**

Urban agroforestry, sometimes called community agroforestry, is the intentional integration of perennial trees and shrubs into farms and communities in urban and suburban areas to provide benefits to the community and to improve sustainability and resilience. Urban agroforestry is inspired by Indigenous land stewardship and food production methods but is now being applied to urban spaces. This new ATTRA tipsheet by Katherine Favor introduces readers to urban agroforestry and describes what it might look like in practice. The publication lists some of the considerations for establishing and maintaining an urban agroforestry project. It also offers ideas for engaging the community. From [ATTRA](#)

### **Grain Mixtures Could Offer Climate Adaptation**

Cornell University scientists published [research on ancient cereal grain mixes](#) and their potential to adapt in real time to climate change. Researchers learned that some farmers in Ethiopia sow cereal grain mixes called maslins that can contain rice, millet, wheat, rye, barley, triticale, emmer, and more. Researchers found that maslins have been used for more than 3,000 years and in at least 27 countries, for food and livestock fodder, but the ancient practice is nearly forgotten. The crops are grown together, and the resulting grain

is used as a single product, which varies in composition depending upon the current growing season's conditions. The variety within the crop helps farmers deal with climate variability, and also allows maslins to be drought tolerant, pest resistant, and produce more stable yields than a single crop.

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### Stay in touch:

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