



## Call for Proposals #OAK2024

**OAK's 13th Annual Conference** will return to the KSU Demonstration and Research Farm in Frankfort, KY, from January 25-27, 2024. We want you to be a part of it!

We're now accepting proposals for farm hacks, sessions, and workshops at #OAK2024. Learn more via the link below, and start planning YOUR contribution to our next OAK Conference!

**Don't delay - the deadline to submit is August 4, 2023!**

[Click HERE](#) for details on how to submit a proposal

Don't want to submit a proposal but have ideas for a Session? We still want to hear from you! Let us know who you'd like to see present and / or what content you want to learn about at #OAK2024: submit your suggestions for content [here](#).

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## #OAK2023 Recordings Released Monthly

OAK is thrilled to offer recordings of the inspiring and informative sessions from January 2023's Annual Conference for public access. Currently released for full access are the recordings of the following:

**Farming Towards a Healthy Future**  
**Is There a Grant For That? Focus On Your Farm Funding**  
**Outdoor Mushroom Inoculation**  
**Livestock Systems Promoting Soil Health and Biological-Based Fertility**  
**On-Farm Vegetable Breeding: Developing Varieties Uniquely Adapted to the Southeast**  
**Pathways to Organic Transition and Organic Careers**

OAK will continue to release new content monthly through October. We hope you enjoy and learn from these incredible presentations!

[Click HERE](#) to see the June releases from #OAK2023

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## Two OAK Field Days in July

Join your peer farmers and ag professionals for on-farm learning!



### **Integrating Sustainability in a Solar Farmhouse and Organic Market Garden**

Cedar Ring Greens -- Frankfort, KY -- June 20 2023, 1-4pm ET

*THIS EVENT IS FULL - WATCH FOR FOLLOWUP RESOURCES ON OUR WEBSITE*

### **Keeping our Balance: Diversified Farming with Steep Hills and Off-Farm Jobs**

Hallow Springs Farm -- Climax, KY -- July 6, 2023, 9am-noon ET

### **Restoring the Family Farm with Organic Production**

Coleman Crest Farm -- Lexington -- July 25, 2023, 9am-noon ET

### **Scaling Up While Lessening the Work: Farmer Collaborations and Efficiencies**

Flourishing Herbs Farm -- Scottsville -- September 5, 2023, 1-4pm CENTRAL

### **CSA Production, Packing and Planning**

Rains and Sun Farm -- Independence -- September 19, 2023, 1-4pm ET

Register TODAY

## **Check out OAK's new Classifieds Page**

where farming and food system ads are shared with the community





OAK's new website offers incredible opportunity for community engagement, flawless interface between your OAK Membership and event registration (don't forget current OAK members get discounted registration to all OAK events).

Hot off the press: OAK has just unrolled another Member Only Benefit, [a classified page](#)! Do you need to advertise that piece of farm equipment that no longer serves you? Are you looking for employees for the season ahead? **OAK Members can place any number of appropriate listings on the Classified Page - for free.** Use this submission form and let OAK help you spread the word. **Anyone can view listings!**

[View or Submit a Classified Ad HERE](#)

## Juneteenth: a Day for Reflection

OAK staff will join the nation to celebrate Juneteenth on Monday, July 19. Also known as Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, and Black Independence Day, Juneteenth commemorates the end of slavery in the United States – two years after the Emancipation Proclamation and two months after the end of the Civil War.

As we celebrate Juneteenth, we also reflect on and learn more about the many contributions that Black leaders have made to our U.S. food system, and we continue the work to support efforts to address ongoing inequities. We share [this inspiring read](#) on multiple Black innovators who have influenced our American food system.

## National Pollinator Week

It's National [#PollinatorWeek](#) June 19-25, 2023!

Did you know that pollinators like bees, butterflies, and bats, provide 1 out of 3 bites of food we eat?

Organic farming supports 34% more plant, insect, and animal specific and have 50% higher pollinator species diversity.

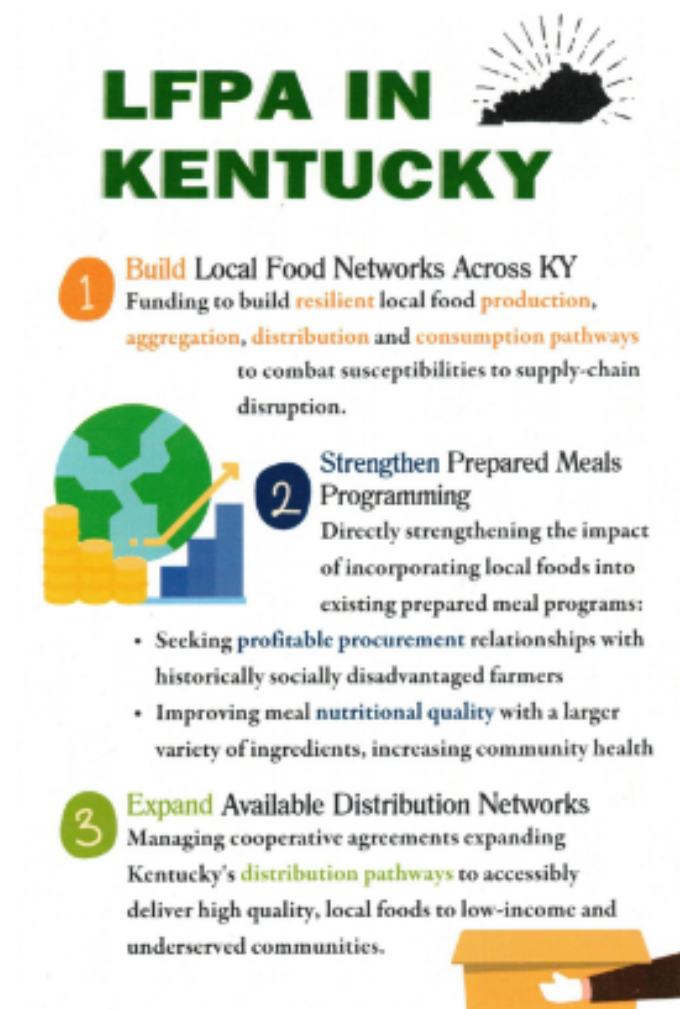
[Learn more on "why organic matters" here](#)

Learn about a farm and garden's most necessary guests -- the pollinators!

Learn about the pollinators native to your community and what your community can do to be hospitable to pollinators in a **webinar from the Xerces Society and USDA's People Garden on June 22, 2023, at 3pm ET.** [More info and registration here](#)



## Check out a new market opportunity in Kentucky: The Local Food Purchasing Agreement (LFPA) Program



Kentucky's LFPA program is designed to maintain and improve food and agricultural supply chain resiliency through strategic **local food purchasing and distribution** mechanisms with partners like Feeding Kentucky. Federal funds administered by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) will be used to purchase local and regional foods produced within the state (or within 400 miles of the delivery location) and distribute them to low-income or underserved communities to increase access to healthy, nutritious, and local products. A



wide variety of products will be purchased from local producers, like fruits, vegetables, seafood, meat, poultry, eggs, etc. that are fresh, raw, and significantly or minimally processed. The program prioritizes sourcing local products from Kentucky's socially disadvantaged producers.

Producers, see [the new program page from KDA](#) for more details. Scroll to find Feeding Kentucky's LFPA program details posted on this page. **Feeding Kentucky will purchase local products from farmers and growers for Local Distribution Agencies.** Read the Feeding KY Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document and complete the Producer Agreement if you are interested in this program! **Products must adhere to USDA food safety standards, find out more [here](#).**

## Upcoming Partner Events & Opportunities

### Conservation Soil Health Field Day

**Thursday, June 22, 2023, 10am-noon ET**

**GreeneLanding Farm, Lexington, KY**

The Permaculture & Soil Education Outreach Project and NRCS-Kentucky have partnered to host a soil health field day at GreeneLanding, owned & operated by OAK member JoJuana Leavell-Greene.

The Legacy began at GreeneLanding at 662 Caden Lane in early Spring 2020. During the pandemic, the Greene Family started on a journey of the soil. GreeneLanding USDA Farm 327 broke ground and tilled up an approx. 80' x 20' plot for planting and growing in Fayette County. With the success of GreeneLanding, Farm 327 turned into a large experimental garden and summer student camp.

This event will feature

- Gathering soil samples to get an accurate analysis
- Soil Layers & Nutrients
- Simple ways farmers can perform soil research
- Suggestions for natural remedies
- Q & A discussion
- Various Soil Demos

Fayette County Soil & Conservation will give an overview of their work and how your county soil and conservation district can help you on your farm.

OAK's Director Brooke Gentile and Farmer Education Coordinator Jenny Howard Owen will attend to share how OAK can assist farmers in transitioning to organic regenerative agriculture.

[Register today for this free event](#), and be sure to say hi to Brooke and Jenny!

### June Urban Ag Meeting

**Thursday, June 22, 12-1:30pm ET**

Kentuckiana Backyard Farms, Louisville

This month's Urban Ag Coalition meeting will be held in person (with goats & chickens!) at Kentuckiana Backyard Farms - email [kentuckianabackyardfarms@gmail.com](mailto:kentuckianabackyardfarms@gmail.com) for more details and location.

### Flower Farmers, register your farm for Kentucky Grown Cut Flower Month!

**Deadline June 30, 2023**

Just a reminder that the Kentucky Grown Cut Flower Promotion is coming up in July. To participate, **simply fill out the [2023 Kentucky Cut Flower Promotion Nomination form](#) before the end of June.** Each day in July different businesses will be featured in the [Kentucky](#)

[Grown Cut Flower Promotion group](#), and on the Kentucky Horticulture Council's Instagram and Twitter pages to help consumers learn more about cut flowers in Kentucky and how to connect with local growers. To see Center for Crop Diversification (CCD) resources on cut flowers, including a Kentucky Commercial Cut Flower Grower Directory, [visit this UK CCD site](#)

### **KWIA Annual Conference - 2023 College Scholarship Application Now Available**

#### **Deadline June 30, 2023**

This year, the Kentucky Women in Agriculture (KWIA)'s annual conference will take place October 15-17 in Somerset, KY. In keeping with the mission to empower women in agriculture through education, involvement, and action, the Kentucky Women in Agriculture organization offers a scholarship for women who are full-time students entering their junior year in college through graduate school. Scholarship applicants must demonstrate the degree they are seeking relates to agriculture, demonstrate need, and be enrolled as a full-time student. [Apply Today](#).

### **Job Opportunity: Kentucky Food Action Network Coordinator**

Kentucky Equal Justice Center seeks an advocate with experience in community organizing as the Coordinator for the [Kentucky Food Action Network \(KFAN\)](#). 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. [Learn more here](#)

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## **Not-to-Miss Opportunities**

### **Funding Opportunity for Renewable Energy Systems**

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that USDA is accepting applications for \$1 billion in grants to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses invest in renewable energy systems and make energy-efficiency improvements. USDA is making the \$1 billion in grants available under the [Rural Energy for America Program \(REAP\)](#), with funding from President Biden's landmark Inflation Reduction Act, the nation's largest-ever investment in combating the climate crisis. For additional information on application deadlines and submission details, see page 19239 of the March 31 [Federal Register](#).

### **Farmers, Join your County's FSA County Committee!**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is now accepting nominations for county committee members for elections that will occur later this year. All nomination forms for the 2023 election must be postmarked or received in [your local FSA office](#) by Aug. 1, 2023. Farm Service Agency County Committees are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA and allow grassroots input and local administration of federal farm programs.

County committee members make important decisions on how federal farm programs are administered locally. The committees are made up of three to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Committee members are vital to how FSA carries out disaster programs, as well as conservation, commodity and price support programs, county office employment and other agricultural issues. Elections will occur in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAA) for members. LAAs are elective areas for FSA committees in a single county or multi-county area and may include an urban or suburban area.

Customers can locate their LAA through a [new GIS locator tool](#) available at [fsa.usda.gov/elections](https://fsa.usda.gov/elections).

Agricultural producers may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee if they:

- Participate or cooperate in a USDA program; and
- Reside in the LAA that is up for election this year.

A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation to FSA, even if they have not applied or received program benefits. Individuals may nominate themselves or others and qualifying organizations may also nominate candidates. USDA encourages minority producers, women and beginning farmers or ranchers to nominate, vote and hold office.

### **Agroforestry Trainings for Natural Resource Professionals**

Do you advise land managers, and have an interest in learning more about forest farming, silvopasture, or alley cropping? The increasing interest in agroforestry has produced a growing need for technical assistance. Join us to learn more about these practices to provide agroforestry technical assistance to your clients. This program offers a series of in-person workshops combined with online courses, all designed to be a la carte, so you can attend one or all! [Learn more here](#)

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## **Upcoming Virtual Events**

### **2023 Kentucky Woodland Owners Short Course**

**June 20, 22, 27 and 29, 2023, 7– 8:30 p.m. ET**

July 15: Pennyrile State Forest + July 29: Elk Cave Farm, Boyle County – *In-Person*

Registration for the 2023 Kentucky Woodland Owners Short Course is open. The forest management courses provide new and experienced woodland owners with knowledge and skills to manage their forests for environmental value, timber production, wildlife considerations and personal enjoyment. The series includes webinars and in-person field activities.

Workshops include presentations by forestry and wildlife experts. Registered attendees may attend any or all live webinars or watch the recorded sessions at their convenience. The four webinars will educate participants on beginning or expanding woodland management initiatives. Webinar topics include woodland management and tree identification, managing forests in a changing climate, managing woodlands to assist wildlife and woodland health evaluation skills.

The cost is \$20 for individuals or \$30 for couples and includes all four webinars and one field tour with lunch, a clipboard binder and reference resources. The webinar-only option is \$10. For more information on the courses and to register, visit <https://wosc.ca.uky.edu>.

### **Capitalism and Climate Change: Moving Toward Solutions**

**Wednesday, June 21, 2023, 12pm ET**

Few topics in the climate community are more charged than the capitalism vs. climate change debate. Is capitalism compatible with a world in the throes of climate change? Can endless economic growth persist on a finite planet? Is it even possible to dismantle our current economic system—and build a new one—in the next 7 years? Many of us have passionate, deep-seated reactions to this topic, and for good reason: the stakes are impossibly high. Because emotions also run high, these topics are rarely afforded



authentic, meaningful discussion in the public square. But this “third rail” elephant in the room is one that we can no longer afford to tiptoe around.

[Join this webinar](#) with Jamie Beck Alexander, founding director of Drawdown Labs at Project Drawdown, as we delve into some of the places we might find common ground. This boundary-pushing webinar will include an exploration of the role of the private sector and how employee power, the Drawdown-Aligned Business Framework, and the Drawdown Roadmap may point the way to the future. This webinar is part of Project Drawdown’s new monthly Drawdown Ignite webinar series. Drawdown Ignite provides information and inspiration to guide your climate solutions journey. Updates on future webinars can be found by visiting [drawdown.org/events](https://drawdown.org/events)

### **Hemp Production in Regenerative Organic Agroecosystems**

**Wednesday, June 21, 2023, 2-3 PM ET**

Hemp, with approximately 50,000 declared uses, has been grown in North America since the 17th century. Hemp is grown for a variety of purposes such as fiber production and paper industry, cosmetics, medicinal properties and in the creation of construction material. *C. sativa*, with hundreds of phytocannabinoids, terpenoids, flavonoids and fatty acids, is recognized as a plant with a rich chemical profile. Attend this webinar to see if hemp can fit into your farm's system. [Register here](#).

### **Webinar: Energy, biochar, and carbon credits**

**Thursday, June 22, 2023 11am ET**

The US Forest Service in partnership with the US Biochar Initiative and the Southern Regional Extension Forestry will be presenting its latest Biochar Webinar titled: "The interplay of three products: energy, biochar, and carbon credits." This month's speaker is Josiah Hunt. Josiah graduated from UH Hilo in 2004 with a BS in Agroecology and Environmental Quality. From his rural home farm on the Big Island of Hawaii he has helped to pioneer methods for biochar production, processing, and application in farming systems using organic and biological approaches since 2008. He is founder and CEO of Pacific Biochar Benefit Corporation. [No pre-registration required; details here](#).

### **Webinar: Conservation on Grazing Land and NRCS cost-share Opportunities**

**June 22, 2023 12pm ET**

Whether you graze poultry or livestock on pasture or woodlands, join RAFI-USA, Muse 3 Farm of Louisiana, and a Natural Resource Conservation Service expert in regenerative grazing methods for this webinar. Muse 3 Farm will present how they have successfully applied and completed NRCS enhancements in their pasture settings and attendees will learn how to seek similar and other NRCS cost-shareable enhancements to open pasture, woodland settings, forages, and waterways to ultimately improve livestock and environmental health. [Details and registration here](#)

### **Xerces Society and USDA's People Garden Present: Pollinators!**

**June 22, 2023, at 3pm ET**

Learn about a farm and garden's most necessary guests -- the pollinators! Learn about the pollinators native to your community and what your community can do to be hospitable to pollinators. [More info and registration here](#)

### **Organic Soil Health Practices for Water Management and Water Quality**

**Jun 26, 2023, 1:00 pm EDT**

Join us for this webinar during which we will discuss water management in organic agriculture, cover the ways that soil health can enhance water use efficiency and nutrient retention, and outline conservation strategies that optimize the stewardship of water resources.

[Registration and details here.](#)

### **Nutrition Assistance Programs and the Farm Bill**

**June 28, 2023, 12-1pm ET**

Last reauthorized in 2018, the Farm Bill remains one of the most significant and comprehensive pieces of legislation affecting American agriculture and rural communities. This event is the first in a two-part virtual series, "Beyond Talking Points: The Past, Present and Future of the Farm Bill," which aims to provide relevant perspectives on the Farm Bill reauthorization debate.

This virtual conversation will cover Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs, notably SNAP and WIC, which made up roughly 80% of the 2018 Farm Bill's funding allocation. Buoyed by additional temporary funding through the pandemic, many nutrition assistance program recipients are facing smaller amounts of support in the coming months. As Congress considers reauthorization of the Farm Bill, experts from Duke and Syracuse will share insights from their research on potential changes to these programs, which could make them more efficient as well as reduce the food insecurity and food resource gap between White, Black and Hispanic demographic groups. [Register here](#)

### **Soil Health Principles & Practice**

July 1, 2023 8:30-5:00 ET

Salamander Springs Farm, Rockcastle County, KY

Register by June 2 for early-registration discount.

Create healthy mycorrhizal soils that build carbon, water and nutrients for nutrient-dense food--without outside inputs! Incorporate contour swales for water and nutrient capture, maintain permanent beds and fields that integrate cover crops without tillage.

Utilize mulches, compost and humanure. Close the loop by cycling "wastes" locally.

[Register here.](#)

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## **Educational and Farming Support**

### **Farm Bill 101: What Is a Marker Bill? Webinar Recording**

From [Pasa Sustainable Agriculture](#): In large omnibus legislation like [the federal Farm Bill](#), it's easy for good ideas to get lost. Grouping proposed legislation into small packages focused around key issues can help get the attention of lawmakers—that's where marker bills come in!

Marker bills are not intended to pass as standalone bills; they are introduced to show collective interest in an idea and build momentum. Pasa Sustainable Agriculture recently welcomed two policy experts from [National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition \(NSAC\)](#) to highlight a few key marker bills and, more importantly, to discuss what we can do as farmers to support them. [Watch the recording here](#)

### **Farming into the Future by Centering Farmworkers: New Publication**

This new resource from Fair Share Coalition was informed by farmworkers' voices and aimed at supporting positive, long-term employment opportunities for workers on diversified vegetable farms. The discussion focuses on four key areas farmworkers have said they deeply value in a workplace: communication, work environment, opportunities for growth and advancement, and livable wages.

Both farmworkers and farm owners experience real struggles in this profession. While some are unique to their identities as workers or owners, others - like quality of life and a desire for respectful communication - they hold in common. As collaborators striving to

support positive experiences and sustainable careers in this field, we encourage you to share this resource with the farming communities you work with. While it speaks directly to farm owners, this resource also strives to paint a picture of what's possible for those individuals who seek to build a career in farmworking. [Read the document here.](#)

### **USDA Innovation Grant bale grazing study yielding positive results in Kentucky**

Kentucky is a dream state for cattle producers, with lush pastures that dot the landscape throughout most of the year. However, winter cattle feeding can be time-consuming, messy and inefficient. Thanks to a \$2.3 million [U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Innovation Grant](#), Greg Halich, a [University of Kentucky agricultural economics](#) professor, is leading a six-state, multi-year bale-grazing study that is already making winter feeding easier for Kentucky cattle producers.

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### **Stay in touch:**

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