



Only 2 Weeks Left to Submit Your Proposal for #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!

Share an innovation from your farm and receive free registration for the day!
We're now accepting proposals for farm hacks, sessions, and workshops for #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

ORGANIC ASSOCIATION OF KENTUCKY

HIRING

OPEN POSITIONS

Organic Transition Program Manager
Organic Production Specialist
Farmer Education Coordinator
Marketing and Outreach Coordinator



APPLY NOW

Learn more at oak-ky.org/careers

Work With OAK!

Learn more about these four BRAND NEW positions via the link below.

Don't delay - deadline to apply is August 4, 2023.

Send inquiries and questions to jobs@oak-ky.org

Learn More and APPLY TODAY!

Upcoming Field Day at Coleman Crest Farm

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



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
OAK Social Meetup to follow - details below!

CSA Production, Packing and Planning
Rains and Sun Farm -- Independence -- September 19, 2023, 1-4pm ET

Register TODAY

Join OAK for our September Social Meetup

Are you curious about OAK? Interesting in meeting more of our community? We are an engaging group of farmers, eaters, ag professionals, entrepreneurs and more! If you are interested in mingling with folks who are committed to creating a healthier, more nourishing food landscape, then plan to join OAK Staff and community members for an informal social gathering on **September 5, 2023, at the new red barn at Big Spring Farm in Adolphus, Kentucky.** It will be a perfect time to meet old friends and make new connections.

Save the date and plan to meet us for an evening of fun and friendship.
ALL ARE WELCOME.

There is no charge to attend, and food or drink is available for purchase.

Already registered for OAK's "FARM FIELD DAY: Scaling Up While Lessening the Work: Farmer Collaborations and Efficiencies at Flourishing Herbs Farm in Scottsville, KY? Please plan to pop over following the Field Day and join us for a drink or dinner or just plain fun. The new Red Barn is less than a mile away!

RSVP and Share with Friends TODAY!



KY PROUD FALL CSA WEEK

Sept. 18-22, 2023



Mark your calendars for KY Proud Fall CSA Week!

CSA farmers, if you offer a fall share, or have capacity in your main season CSA, or a year-round CSA for Kentucky consumers consider signing up for KY Proud Fall CSA Week! This virtual promotion takes place on **September 18th-23rd, 2023** to raise awareness of what CSA is, what CSA shares are available Sept. -Dec, and how Kentucky eaters can find a CSA nearby. **Learn more and express interest in becoming a Fall CSA week partner farm by August 4th**

Register TODAY!

#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. We've just released these additional offerings :

- * Reconnecting with the Roots of Organics - keynote
- * High Tunnelling to Profit: Managing Your Crops, Soils and Structures - workshop
- * Corraling High Tunnel Arthropod Pests Through Integrated Pest Management
 - * Tips and Resources for Beginning Farmers
 - * Farm Bill - What's in it for you?
- * The Basics of Tomato Grafting: What, Why and How
- * Costs and Benefits of Integrating Poultry into Vegetable Rotations

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

Click [HERE](#) to see all public releases from #OAK2023

Not-To-Miss Opportunities

Farmers, Join Your Local 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.

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. **OAK encourages all farmers in our community to apply!**

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

LFPA IN KENTUCKY



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 is currently prioritizing procurement of local animal protein products (eggs, meat, etc.) 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! NOTE: Products must adhere to USDA food safety standards - find out more [here](#).

Assistance For USDA Farm Loan Borrowers Who Have Faced Discrimination

Financial Assistance Application Process Now Open!

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the opening of the financial assistance application process for eligible farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who experienced

discrimination in USDA farm lending programs prior to January 2021. Section 22007 of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) directs USDA to provide this assistance.

Farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who experienced discrimination by USDA in its farm loan programs prior to January 1, 2021 and/or are currently debtors with assigned or assumed USDA farm loan debt that was the subject of USDA discrimination that occurred prior to January 1, 2021, are eligible for this program. To apply, borrowers have the option to apply via the e-filing portal at 22007apply.gov or submit paper-based forms via mail or in-person delivery to the program's local offices. The application process will be open until October 31, 2023. The DFAP Call Center will assist applicants with general inquiries and answer questions in completing an Application. Reach them by email at info@22007apply.gov or phone at 1-800-721-0970.

To support producers throughout the application process, USDA is ensuring that organizations with extensive experience conducting outreach to farm organizations are able to support individuals who may be eligible for the program. These groups include [AgrAbility](#), [Farmer Veteran Coalition](#), [Farmers' Legal Action Group](#), [Federation of Southern Cooperatives](#), [Intertribal Agriculture Council](#), [Land Loss Prevention Program](#), [National Young Farmers Coalition](#), and [Rural Coalition](#).

Please note: this application process is free, and you do not need a lawyer to apply!



USDA National Organic Program Releases New Publication for Understanding "Strengthening Organic Enforcement"

Consumer confidence in the USDA organic seal has fueled industry growth and market expansion, according to the agency's National Organic Program (NOP), which is tasked with ensuring rules protect the organic market as it grows. The NOP has published the [Strengthening Organic Enforcement \(SOE\)](#) final rule to improve market protections, making it harder to cheat the system, according to the NOP.

"SOE protects the integrity of the organic supply chain and builds consumer and industry trust in the USDA organic label by strengthening organic control systems, improving farm to market traceability, and providing robust enforcement of the USDA organic regulations," according to a

USDA news release. To help organic certifiers and operations comply with the rule, NOP has published a new [SOE reference resource](#) online.

Air Quality Awareness

Wildfire Smoke: Sample Farm Safety Plan

Agriculture Justice Project shared draft guidance on how farms could consider operations during poor air quality - and adapt the plan to their own operation. [Find the Plan here](#)

Staying Safe While Working in Conditions of Smoke and Fire

FairShare CSA Coalition shared their Best Practices and Resources for [Working in Smoke & Fire Conditions](#)

Upcoming Partner Events & Opportunities

Third Thursday: Fencing and Pastured Poultry

THURSDAY, July 20, 2023, 10 a.m. ET

Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm, Frankfort KY

or streamed online at youtube.com/kysuag/live

Join Kentucky State University's monthly sustainable agriculture workshop, featuring fencing and pastured poultry in July! Free event; lunch included. [Learn more and RSVP here](#)

Growing Home - A Community Revival

July 26-29. 2023

Letcher County, KY

- Would you like to visit a multi-thousand-acre former mine site re-envisioned as a cluster of interconnected regenerative projects?
Are you interested in learning more about growing and selling woodland crops like ginseng and tree nuts?
- Do you have questions about building soil health, applying for permits for streambank stabilization, or implementing regenerative agricultural practices?
- Are you interested in being part of conversations about forest farming that include farmers and staff from agencies that support farmers and landowners?

[Register for this free multi-day event](#) highlighting opportunities related to forest farming and agriculture that are an integral part of the overall program of workshops, performances, discussions, and more. We believe that woodland growing can and should be a more substantial part of the economy. Workshops and discussions will be led by:

- Appalachian forest farmers and forest farmers from other regions.
- Agroforestry business planning consultants.
- Staff of agencies which provide support to farmers and landowners.

Sessions that are part of this Appalachian Woodland Growers Initiative will be held across several locations from July 26 through July 29. Indoor workshops will be held at the Letcher County Extension Office in Whitesburg, Kentucky. A limited amount of free lodging in Whitesburg is available. If free lodging will help make it possible for you to attend, please contact Valerie Horn at valerieisonhorn@gmail.com to learn more.

Kentucky State University Beef Cattle Workshop

July 26, 2023, 6pm ET

Bluegrass Stockyards, Lexington, KY

Topic: Heat Stress Management & Forage Testing

No-Till Alley Cropping Workshop at Woodcock Preserve

July 28, 2023, 5:30-7:30pm

New Marshfield, OH

Join Rural Action and the Southeast Ohio Chestnut Company on Saturday, July 28 from 5:30 to 7:30 PM at Woodcock Nature Preserve for a workshop demonstrating methods for no-till alley cropping! Register [here](#).

We will review how tarps, crimpers, mowers, and no-till planting techniques combine with multi-species cover crops for producing diverse food and market crops.

Come participate in a hands-on demonstration on the use of a flail mower and an occultation tarp to terminate a cover crop. Learn finer points of tarping technique and no-till planting. Please bring questions and ideas for applications of cover crops to your operation

People's Summit on Food Systems and Urban Agriculture

Sept. 8 - Sept. 9, 2023

Early Bird Registration (\$25) deadline is August 1, 2023

Weaving the Food Web: The People's Summit on Food Systems and Urban Agriculture is the first conference of its kind in Kentucky! The People's Summit is an initiative of the Partnership for a Greater Louisville Food Council and Food Vision 2030, a coalition of organizations and individuals which Food in Neighborhoods coordinates alongside Food Literacy Project, Change Today Change Tomorrow, Community Food Louisville, Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Community Farm Alliance. We are committed to building a much more equitable and sustainable local-regional food system, supported by urban agriculture and thriving farms in Louisville and in surrounding counties. The Summit is hosted by Food in Neighborhoods and Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension. [Get your ticket today!](#)

Upcoming Virtual Events

Hidden Voices: Why Inclusive Storytelling Is Critical To Accelerating Climate Solutions

TOMORROW, July 19, 2023, Noon ET

Join Project Drawdown online for the next Drawdown Ignite webinar, "[Hidden voices: Why inclusive storytelling is critical to accelerating climate solutions.](#)" Project Drawdown director of storytelling and engagement Matt Scott will discuss why the way we talk about climate and whose voices we uplift matter, and how can we use stories to "pass the mic" to those who frequently go unheard—and, in the process, bring effective solutions to life.

Marketing & Social Media Basics for Small Businesses

July 25, 2023, 5 - 6pm ET

Every small business has a story to tell and social media can be a great way to share your story with your customers. In this webinar, we will discuss how to build a marketing strategy, social media content ideas, and other tips on how to share your story! Join this Rural Action webinar featuring Appalachian Center for Economic Networks (ACEnet) staff to learn the basics of using social media to promote your small business.

This webinar will be held via Zoom. [Register here](#)

Crop-Livestock Integration in Organic Produce Crops: Its Impacts on Food Safety & Soil Health

July 26, 2023, 2pm ET

Join The Organic Center when they convene researchers from Minnesota, California, and Maryland as they present their findings on the impacts of cover-crop grazing on food safety and soil health for fresh spinach and cucumbers in organic systems. This webinar will provide attendees with an understanding of how grazing of cover crops in fresh vegetable production systems can be implemented in 3 different climates: humid coastal, humid continental, and semi-arid. This work has been completed through funds from a USDA-ARS grant in collaboration with The Organic Center, University of California, University of Minnesota, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, and USDA-ARS. During the webinar, you'll learn:

- The goal and main outcomes of grazing cover crops in organic systems across three states with distinct climates
- The benefit and tradeoffs associated with the integration of livestock in cover-crop production for all stakeholders, including the produce and livestock industry, policymakers, and consumers
- Nutrient cycling and soil health benefits of this practice and implications to support sustainable cropping outcomes
- Cover crop and grazing strategies for adequate wait periods for increased food safety of produce in integrated-livestock cover and specialty crop production.

[Learn more and register here](#)

Organic Seed: Current Research in Availability, Production Challenges, and Producer Needs

August 1, 2023 3 pm ET

Join this webinar during which we will discuss research findings from Organic Seed Alliance on organic seed availability, climate challenges, and more. This webinar will describe findings from Organic Seed Alliance's State of Organic Seed report. Trends in organic seed sourcing and availability, needs of organic seed producers, climate change impacts, and the importance of adapted varieties will be highlighted. This webinar is presented in partnership with Oregon Tilth, as part of a series of webinars on organic topics. [Learn more here](#)

Webinar: How to Build Soil Organic Matter in Organic Grain Systems

August 2, 2023, 2-3pm ET

Join Rodale's Organic Consultants Catherine Peebles, Léa Vereecke, and Nic Podoll, to learn about building soil organic matter in organic grain systems. Soil organic matter is a key indicator of soil health and is associated with water holding capacity, aggregate stability, nutrient availability, and inherent soil fertility. Thus, maintaining good levels of organic matter will help grow healthy crops. Our consultants will discuss how it is derived, the balance between gains and losses, and different management practices' influence on soil organic matter. [Register here](#)

Educational and Farming Support

Apply for Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance

Deadline is July 26, 2023

The Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program (ODMAP) was created to assist certified organic dairy producers facing a unique set of challenges in recent years, including higher costs attributed to the pandemic and drought conditions across the country.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is providing financial assistance for a producer's projected marketing costs in 2023 based on 2022 costs. ODMAP provides a one-time cost-share payment, based on marketing costs, on pounds of organic milk marketed in the 2022 calendar year.

Organic dairy producers should apply by July 26, 2023 at their local USDA Service Center.

[Learn more.](#)

Clean Lakes, Estuaries, And Rivers initiative (CLEAR30)

Deadline is July 31, 2023

CLEAR30 is an option available through the USDA's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), which is one of the largest voluntary private- lands conservation programs in the United States. CRP was originally intended to primarily control soil erosion and stabilize commodity prices by taking environmentally sensitive lands out of production. The program has evolved over the years, providing numerous conservation and economic benefits.

Agricultural producers and landowners with certain expiring CRP contracts can receive additional rental incentives and extend that land's role in conservation for another 30 years.

CLEAR30 is a part of the CLEAR initiative, which prioritizes water quality practices as a part of Continuous CRP enrollment, and is one of several CRP enrollment opportunities.

CLEAR30 allows producers and landowners enrolling certain water quality practices to enroll in 30-year contracts, extending the lifespan and strengthening the benefits of important water quality practices on their land. Like other CRP enrollments, CLEAR30 is a voluntary, incentive-based conservation opportunity offered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

To sign up for CLEAR30, landowners and producers should contact their local USDA Service Center by July 31, 2023. Contact information can be found at farmers.gov/service-locator. Additionally, [fact sheets](#) and other resources are available at fsa.usda.gov/crp.

Kentucky State University's Small-scale Farm Grants

Next deadline: August 1, 2023

Kentucky farms with sales between \$1,000 - \$250,000 in the previous two years are eligible for funds up to \$5,000. Priority areas for the grant are aquaculture/aquaponics, certified organic agriculture, value-added enterprise, food insecure area production, agroforestry, and farmer education assistance. [Learn more and apply here](#)

Funding for Urban and Community Forestry Investments

U.S. Forest Service [Urban & Community Forestry National Challenge Cost Share Grant Program](#) is providing up to \$500,000 for Urban and Community Forestry investments that address the [National Ten Year Urban and Community Forestry Action Plan](#): Goal 5 Improve Urban and Community Forest Management, Maintenance and Stewardship. *Application deadline: August 15, 2023.*

Forest Farming Planting Stock Is Now Available

Have you always dreamed of starting a forest farm? The Appalachian Harvest Herb Hub of Appalachian Sustainable Development (ASD) is now selling Goldenseal, Wild Yam, Solomon's Seal, Black Cohosh, Bloodroot, and Blue Cohosh rootstock on our NEW online store. All planting stock is sustainably produced by ASD's Point of Harvest (PoH) trained and certified supplier network. Supply is limited! [Order today for fall shipment](#)

Understanding Climate Change in the American Mind

George Mason University's Center for Climate Change Communication shared encouraging insights into perspectives on climate change earlier this week. Among other things, the research group found that more than 75% of U.S. registered voters polled supported climate-friendly policies such as helping farmers protect soil and improving energy efficiency of low-income housing. Learn more at [Climate Change in the American Mind: Politics & Policy, Spring 2023](#).

Continuous Living Cover & Agroforestry in NRCS Practices

Continuous Living Cover (CLC) crops, rotations, and systems address multiple conservation resource concerns, making CLC a highly efficient use of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) funding and technical assistance. CLC farming establishes and maintains year-round live plant cover in ways that diversify and bolster the farmer's economic portfolio, while also protecting and nurturing natural resources. There is great potential to enhance conservation outcomes if more program funds are prioritized to deploy CLC systems. [Learn more in this new document](#)

Webinar Series - Recordings: Incorporating Indigenous Knowledges into Federal Research and Management

The National CASC hosted a webinar series on how to integrate Indigenous Knowledges (IK) into Federal research and resource management programs. It ran bi-weekly from April 6 to June 1, 2023 and centers Indigenous voices to explore ethical, legal, and scientific considerations for working within different knowledge systems and provides guidance reflecting best practices. [Find the recordings here](#)

2023 KY Fruit and Vegetable Conference Cut Flower Short Course videos now available

Recordings of the presentations at the 2023 Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference Cut Flower Short Course are now available to the public. You can access all the videos and numerous other cut flower resources on the [Center for Crop Diversification website](#)

Carbon Market Pitfalls & Better Strategies for Regenerative Organic Practices

NOFA-NH and Seacoast Permaculture presented [this January 2023 panel discussion](#) with Q&A that will addresses issues with current carbon markets programs and the challenges of trying to monetize something as elusive as carbon sequestration or best practices in farming. We also gained insights from our speakers about Vermont's efforts to encourage a regenerative relationship with the land through other types of payments for ecosystem (PES) mechanisms.

High Tunnel Basics Webinar Series Recordings

In March 2023, the University of Kentucky Vegetable Extension team hosted a High Tunnel Basics webinar series. Topics included structure design, site selection, production basics, and pest, weed, and disease management. If you missed those live webinars, the recordings can be viewed on their YouTube channel. [Here is the link to the playlist](#) with all of the recorded presentations

To stay up to date on any new videos, subscribe to the [Kentucky Vegetable Crops Extension and Research YouTube channel](#).

Kentucky Commercial Growers Vegetable Alert Listserv

Commercial vegetable growers can subscribe to the Veggie Alert Listserv. This e-mail distribution list allows growers to receive the most up-to-date information and

notifications from University of Kentucky specialists. [To subscribe to the listserv, go to this link](#), and enter your name, county, and e-mail address.

Kentucky Veggie Scout Website

The IPM Scouting Guide publications for vegetable crops are valuable resources for growers. This information can also be easily accessed through the [Veggie Scout Website](#). Be sure to bookmark this website for easy access in the future. This website provides access to the information found on the Solanaceous crops, Cucurbit crops, and High Tunnel and Greenhouse Scouting Guides. Additional scouting guides will be added in the future.

Water Quality Testing through Kentucky State University

Kentucky State University has established regional water testing labs for farmers wishing to have their irrigation water sources tested. This is a voluntary program to help farmers become familiar with some of the water quality requirements that may be required under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). The water tests are 2 free to farmers, and results are available within one week of dropping off samples at the lab. Results can supplement farmers' Farm Safety Plan, Agriculture Water Quality Plan (AWQP) and other relevant recordkeeping needs. Contact Kevin Gurtowski - kevin.gurtowski@kysu.edu or John Thomas - john.thomas1@kysu.edu for more information. [Watch this quick video to learn more](#)

New Book from SARE: Farming With Soil Life

Smart farmers know that healthy soil hosts a flourishing and diverse ecosystem of bacteria, fungi and invertebrates. But the complex relationships between soil life, productivity and resilience are not well understood. Now available from the [Xerces Society](#) and SARE, [Farming with Soil Life: A Handbook for Supporting Soil Invertebrates and Soil Health on Farms](#) is a user-friendly guide to identifying, understanding and better managing soil life to improve the sustainability of your farming system. Download for FREE, or order online at link above.

Food System Resilience: A Planning Guide for Local Governments

[Food System Resilience: A Planning Guide for Local Governments](#) is a resource guide aimed at helping local governments build food system resilience in a way that promotes equitable and just food systems. The guide, developed collaboratively by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future and partners, is available as PDFs at the link above.



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