

OAK CONFERENCE: SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2025

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



KENYA ABRAHAM

OAK

Kenya Abraham is an award-winning Fayette County farmer and co-founder of micro-dairy, Slak Market Farm LLC. She is also a trained organic

crop and livestock inspector, and former liaison for Equity in Agriculture. In her role with OAK, Kenya manages a mentorship program for organic farmers and delivers one-on-one organic certification technical assistance to farmers across Kentucky.

oak-ky.org/organic-transition



KEVIN ARCHER

Dandelion Ridge Farm

Coming from a long line of subsistence and tenant farmers, Kevin Archer grows culinary herbs and specialty produce at Dandelion Ridge Farm in

Woodford County. He has established and cultivated gardens from coast to coast, from USDA Hardiness zones 5b to 8b. Also a certified chef, Kevin has led kitchens from Denver to Mendocino, from Santa Fe to Manhattan. His culinary background informs many of the growing decisions made at the farm. YES! Magazine includes him among their "Chefs We Love."



CHELSEA BARBOUR

High Five Farm

Chelsea Barbour is a farmer and co-owner of High Five Farm, a small-scale vegetable and herb business operating on two leased acres in central

Kentucky. High Five Farm offers fresh produce year-round at two farmers markets, farmer-led sliding-scale foodshare programs, local restaurants and through their sliding-scale CSA. In collaboration with community leaders at the Franklin County Farmers Market, Chelsea is committed to making farmers markets vibrant, inclusive and economically viable spaces where fresh, local food is accessible, affordable and consistently available.

[@highfivefarmky](https://twitter.com/highfivefarmky)



TAMMY BARNES

*National Center for
Appropriate Technology*

Tammy Barnes is sustainable agricultural specialist for National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) and

provides technical assistance to producers enrolled in Accelerating Appalachia's Building Soil Building Equity Program (BSBE). Before joining NCAT, Tammy was Cooperative Extension Field Faculty with Oregon State University and a Nutrient Management Specialist and Agriculture Water Educator with the University of Kentucky.

[@ncat_org](https://twitter.com/ncat_org)



MATEO BARNETT

Common Earth Gardens

Mateo Barnett has been digging in the dirt for as long as he can remember. He gardens and cares for house plants and loves birds. He

believes that community gardening and neighborhood greening are two of the most vital things to build for the future and is happy to be part of a crew with Common Earth Gardens that makes both available to communities in Louisville. Mateo also consorts regularly with local musicians and currently plays electric mandolin in Isolation Tank Ensemble.

[@commonearthgardens](https://twitter.com/commonearthgardens)



JOHN BELL

Elmwood Stock Farm

John Bell farms with his extended family in Scott County, Kentucky, at Elmwood Stock Farm, a sixth-generation family farm invested in the health of

their land, animals and community. A certified organic farm, Elmwood cultivates a diversity of crops, including grain, forages and produce, and five species of livestock. John oversees the crop-livestock rotation, striving to build soil while producing healthful food. John has been a dedicated member of OAK since its inception.

elmwoodstockfarm.com

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JESSE BUIE - KEYNOTE

Ole Brook Organics

Jesse Buie has farmed for over 30 years and is President/Farmer of Ole Brook Organics, Inc., a certified organic farm for

over ten years. Currently his farm produces mixed vegetables, melons, ginger and turmeric, and produces a private-label certified organic tea for sale to local groceries and directly to consumers. Jesse serves as a certified mentor for the Southeast Region of the Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP). Jesse served on the National Organic Standards Board from January 2016 to January 2021. During his tenure, he was twice elected to the Executive Board and served as Chair of the Crops Committee and Vice Chair of the Livestock Committee. olebrookorganics.com



KAYLA CAREY

Kentucky Flower Market

Kayla Carey is a flower farmer in Frankfort, Kentucky, where she grows specialty cut flowers using regenerative practices with her partner, Connor. As the

owner of The Kentucky Flower Market, Kayla leads a group of local flower farmers who sell collaboratively. She also works for Rooted Farmers, supporting farmers and collectives nationwide with inventory management and wholesale relationships via farmer-built software. [@thekentuckyflowermarket](https://www.instagram.com/thekentuckyflowermarket)



HOLLY CHIANTARETTO

Hallow Springs Farm

Holly Chiantaretto is an independent organic crop inspector and consults as an OAK transition specialist. Holly and co-farmer James

Robinson own and operate a diversified farm on the edge of the mountains of Eastern Kentucky. They run cattle and goats on steep hillsides and maintain market gardens. Holly is a teacher at the local county high school and works to promote local food systems as the Rockcastle County farmers market manager and a member of the Rockcastle Growers Association. [@hallowsspringsfarm](https://www.instagram.com/hallowsspringsfarm)



MAGGIE DUNGAN

Salad Days Farm

Maggie owns and operates Salad Days Farm, a certified organic diversified vegetable farm in Woodford County. The first seeds were planted in

2015 and since then the operation has grown from half an acre to three acres using intensive sustainable market gardening practices. With year-round sales through farmers markets, restaurants, an on-farm store and wholesale accounts, it has been Maggie's goal to exemplify the sustainability of local organic food from small farms. [@saladdaysfarmky](https://www.instagram.com/saladdaysfarmky)



KATIE FISKE

University of Kentucky Entomology

Katie Fiske is the project coordinator for a USDA OREI (Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative) grant

awarded to the Gonthier Lab in UK's Entomology Department. She received her PhD in Entomology in 2024 and a Bachelor of Science in Sustainable Agriculture in 2014 from UK. While pursuing her undergraduate degree, she was a staff member of the UK Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program where she gained valuable farming experience. cropsundercover.ca.uky.edu



LAURA FREEMAN

Mt. Folly Farm / Mt. Folly Enterprises

Laura Freeman is a seventh-generation Kentucky landowner, farmer and regenerative agriculturalist. Laura founded

Laura's Lean Beef in 1985, the number one selling natural beef brand in the United States, and Mt. Folly Enterprises in 2016, a farm, distillery and mercantile featuring consciously grown and raised goods. She has been a farmer since 1981 and certified organic since 2014. mtfollyfarm.com

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ALEXIS GAUGER

University of Kentucky

Lexi Gauger (she/her) is a PhD student with the Gonthier Agroecology Lab at the University of Kentucky. She grew up on a small family

farm outside of Cincinnati, Ohio, where she learned to love the natural world and the process of growing food. Her PhD research examines the relationships between bee health and crop yield in diversified agroecosystems, with the goal of supporting effective pollinator conservation and sustainable food systems. gonthierdavid.wixsite.com/djgonthier



DAVID GONTHIER

University of Kentucky

David Gonthier is a professor and agroecologist at the University of Kentucky's Department of Entomology. He manages UK's Gonthier Lab

which studies the ecology and economic viability of agricultural management practices and sustainable food systems. His research focuses on alternative pest control strategies, integration of poultry into vegetable rotations and profitability of small-holder coffee production in Latin America. gonthierdavid.wixsite.com/djgonthier



OM HA

Mindat Community Garden

Om Ha is a farmer who grows vegetables in Louisville, KY, with his Myanmar cultural group, the Mindat Community Garden. He grew up in

Myanmar with an agrarian background and is excited to share his experience and practices with the larger Kentucky audience. [@Mindat-Community-Garden-of-Louisville](https://www.instagram.com/Mindat-Community-Garden-of-Louisville)



FATIMA JACKSON

Action Jackson Farms

Fatima and Justin Jackson farm an 80-acre livestock meat goat operation in Salvisa, Kentucky, where they raise two young children. They love

raising goats and maximizing herd performance through sustainable practices and good genetics. They currently own a herd of about 100 meat goats, including registered myotonic meat goats and commercial myotonic crosses. Their goal is to continue to grow and improve their farm and mentor other farmers in sustainable livestock production. [@actionjacksonfarm](https://www.instagram.com/actionjacksonfarm)



THOMAS LEONARD

Contour Lines / Modern Harvest Farms

Thomas Leonard is an agroforestry consultant and regenerative farmer. He is passionate about sustainable

agriculture and social justice. As co-founder of Contour Lines, Thomas provides agroforestry grants to over 1,400 farmers and has planted over three million trees. Thomas is also a Carbon Farm Planner for Seed2Shirt, on Organic Growers School's Board of Directors and farms/consults as Modern Harvest Farms, LLC. [@Modernharvestfarms](https://www.instagram.com/Modernharvestfarms) contourlines.org/USA



ELAINE LOSEKAMP

University of Kentucky

Elaine Losekamp is a current Master of Science student with the Gonthier Agroecology Lab in the University of Kentucky's Entomology Department, where

she researches pest management strategies for organic fruit and vegetable production. She has a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from Western Kentucky University and previously worked for multiple organizations in the southcentral Kentucky food system, including the Community Farmers Market, Need More Acres Farm and Glean Kentucky. cropsundercover.ca.uky.edu

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KEITH MCKENZIE

Knob Hill Farm

Keith McKenzie owns USDA-certified organic Knob Hill Farm, a 70-acre family farm in Breckinridge County. He has renovated pastures,

expanded his crop production and educated himself on organic farming practices and certification. In 2022, Keith formalized his learning by working with OAK's Transition Trainer Program and transitioning Knob Hill Farm's crops to organic production.

[@knobhillfarmky](#)



EVELENIA MITCHELL

PercyAnnie Farms

Evelenia Mitchell is the owner and matriarch of a small-scale organic vegetable and fruit farming operation, PercyAnnie Farms, in Vine Grove, KY. The

vision of PercyAnnie Farms is to assist those with a passion for farming, especially young people and veterans, in owning farms or pursuing meaningful careers in agriculture. Mitchell's comprehensive approach includes farming education, public engagement and benefit sharing, reflecting her unwavering belief in the transformative power of agriculture.



JOSEPH MONROE

Valley Spirit Farm

Joseph Monroe lives and farms diversified vegetables and grass-fed cattle on 118 acres in Henry County where he and his wife, Abbie Scott-

Monroe, steward the land with respect and integrate community throughout their work. Valley Spirit Farm incorporates organic and conservation practices and adaptive grazing techniques into their production. They were among the first farms in the Our Home Place Meat initiative. They also sell at the Douglass Loop Farmers Market and contribute to the Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) program.

[@valleyspiritfarm](#)



TIMOTHY PEIFFER

Peiffer Produce

Timothy Peiffer learned about raising organic vegetables as an intern on an organic farm in Virginia in the early 1990s. He then grew extensive organic

gardens at his home in English, Indiana, and eventually moved to Frankfort, Kentucky, where he has sold organic vegetables at the Franklin County Farmers Market since 2010.

Note: Timothy Peiffer is a backup speaker Saturday.



CANDACE POLLOCK-MOORE

Southern SARE

Candace Pollock-Moore is the grant manager of Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education's (SARE) Producer Grant

Southern SARE is a USDA program, based out of the University of Georgia. The program's main goal is to provide funding opportunities to farmers, researchers and NGOs to conduct research and educational projects on sustainable agriculture production and marketing practices

southern.sare.org



JEFF POPPEN

Barefoot Farmer / Long Hungry Creek Farm

Jeff Poppen's lectures stem from his livelihood: 40 years with cattle, hay and a five-acre market garden/community

supported agriculture (CSA) using biodynamic and old-time farming principles. Jeff learned from farming elders and now it's his turn. Experiences with the humid conditions, erratic weather and worn-out soils of the Southeast taught him the value of soil tilth, biology and rock dust, among other things. Jeff's new book, *Barefoot Biodynamics*, is his third book and he also has a series on the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). [@barefootfarmer](#) barefootfarmer.com

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DAVID ROBB

Eden Prairie Farm

David Robb has been involved in organic agriculture for 25 years. He has worked in and managed an organic dairy, a large East Coast organic

growers cooperative and a veggie farm employing individuals with disabilities. He served on North-Central Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education's (SARE) grant review committees. His home farm, Eden Prairie, sells veggies and meat to restaurants and through farmers markets in the Indianapolis area.



RANDY SMALLWOOD

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Randy Smallwood has provided 32 years of service with USDA-Natural Resources

Conservation Service (NRCS),

including the last 13 years as the Kentucky NRCS State Agronomist. Randy is from Menifee County and grew up on his family's beef and tobacco farm. He currently farms with his wife and four children on a small commercial cattle farm.



SHARON STONE

Two Suns Farm

Sharon Stone operates Two Suns Farm, an urban farm in Lexington, Kentucky. The farm provides community members with freshly-grown produce

using organic production practices and offering a wide variety of vegetables such as leafy greens, tomatoes, peppers, winter squashes and herbs. Sharon also serves as the farmer liaison and a grower for the Woodhill International Market, a sliding-scale, bi-weekly market that offers a community-supported agriculture (CSA) share to any member of the Woodhill community.

[@twosunsfarm](#)



AYSHA TAPP-ROSS

American Farmland Trust

Aysha Tapp Ross is a soil health scientist with American Farmland Trust. She leads several research projects focused on the soil health

effects of conservation practices. She is also a PhD candidate with the University of Louisville's Department of Biology, where she focuses on the effects of conservation agriculture on soil microbial communities. In her spare time, she owns and operates a farmstead and apiary with her husband and four children.

farmland.org/biochar



PAUL VINCELLI

University of Kentucky

Paul Vincelli, a plant pathologist at the University of Kentucky and the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) 1862 land

grant liaison. Vincelli leads the Southern SARE outreach team to promote the SARE program among administrators, faculty, staff and cooperative extension in colleges of agriculture and other community stakeholders across the region.

southern.sare.org



BRETT WOLFF

UK Center for Crop Diversification

Brett Wolff is a senior extension specialist in the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Kentucky, where he

coordinates the Center for Crop Diversification (CCD) and Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) programs. Since 2017, Brett has led the development and delivery of the innovative *Marketing for All* educational program, which won the 2022 Outstanding Program Award from the Kentucky Association of State Extension Professionals (KASEP).

[@ccduky](https://uky.edu/ccd)

[RETURN TO MAIN SPEAKER PAGE](#)