



**Nov.-Dec. 2022**

Brett Wolff, Editor  
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### **What's inside**

2022 Census of Ag ..... 2  
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### **Coming up**

**Dec. 14** - MarketReady  
Advanced Topics: Logistics  
& Distribution. 11:30 a.m.  
EST via Zoom. For details  
and to register, [click here](#).

**Dec. 21** - MarketReady  
Advanced Topics: Packaging  
& Labeling. 11:30 a.m. EST  
via Zoom. For details and to  
register, [click here](#).

**Jan. 2-4** - Kentucky Fruit  
and Vegetable Conference,  
Bowling Green. For more  
information, visit [https://  
kyhortcouncil.org/2023-  
kentucky-fruit-and-vegeta-  
ble-conference/](https://kyhortcouncil.org/2023-kentucky-fruit-and-vegetable-conference/).

**Jan. 11-13** - From Food to  
Flowers: Everything Local  
Hybrid Conference, Spring-  
field, IL. [Click here](#) for de-  
tails.

**Jan. 26-28** - Organic Asso-  
ciation of Kentucky Confer-  
ence, KY State University,  
Frankfort. For details see  
**Page 3**.

# KY Fruit and Vegetable Conference to feature new educational tracks

*From the 2023 Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference Program*

The 2023 Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Sloan Convention Center in Bowling Green on Tuesday and Wednesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Pre-conference offerings on January 2<sup>nd</sup> include a Farmers Market Short Course, Farm Food Safety Plan Writing Workshop, and a Bringing the Farm to School Grower Training followed by Vegetable and Tree and Small Fruit Round Table Discussions.

Conference sessions include Direct Marketing, Commercial Fruit and Vegetable Production, Organic Production, Protected Ag (High Tunnel) Production, Marketing and Business Management, a Cut Flower Short Course, and more new educational tracks. Speakers include many growers as well as a number of excellent out-of-state speakers. The trade show will feature more than 60 exhibitors. The conference program is [available here](#). Pre-registration is available online at <https://2023KYFruitVegConference.eventbrite.com>, or by mail using [this form](#). The grape and wine short course, previously part of the Fruit and Vegetable Conference, will be held as a separate conference in Frankfort on January 9th. See **Page 4** for details.

Registration for the Fruit and Vegetable Conference includes the exhibitor/grower luncheon on Tuesday and the conference luncheon on Wednesday, both featuring Kentucky Proud products. The \$50 meeting pre-registration fee or \$75 registration on site includes a year's membership in the KVGA, KSHS, or OAK and entrance into all educational sessions as well as lunch on both days. Pre-regis-

**Continued on Page 2**



# Census of Ag crucial to funding, policy, variety of farm programs

By David Knopf, Regional Director  
USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service,  
Eastern Mountain Regional Field Office

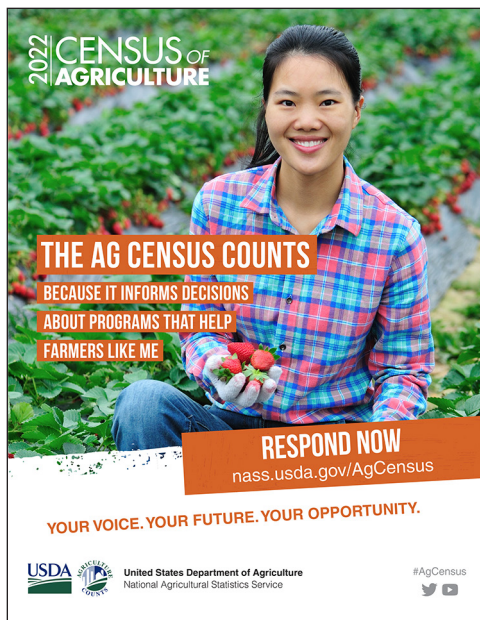
The 2022 Census of Agriculture is underway and gives producers across the Commonwealth a voice to share their story. The Census of Agriculture, conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), is a complete count of U.S. farms and the people who operate them. The survey is for all producers, even those with 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, taken once every five years, looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures. It provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive, and impartial agriculture data for every state and county in the nation. In fact, it is the only time produce production is measured in Kentucky by NASS.

Many grant monies and federal funds are allocated on the basis of data collected during the Census. This makes it critically important that every Kentucky agriculture producer be counted

for the state to get the funding it needs to continue to have farming success.

To learn more about the 2022 Census of Agriculture, visit [nass.usda.gov/AgCensus](https://nass.usda.gov/AgCensus).



## Census of Agriculture Facts

- Taken every five years, it's a complete count of U.S. farms and the people who operate them.
- The only source of uniform, comprehensive and impartial agriculture data for every county and state in the nation.
- A farm is defined as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year.

## Why Respond?

- Combined responses show the value and importance of U.S. agriculture.
- Only measure of produce production in Kentucky by NASS.
- Census data inform decisions about policy, farm and conservation programs, infrastructure and rural development, research, education, beginning farmer programs, and more.
- Response is required by federal law. The same law requires USDA to keep all personal information confidential.
- The Census of Agriculture is your opportunity to have a voice in the future of U.S. agriculture.

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## Continued from Page 1

tration forms or online registrations need to be received by Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. After this date you may continue to register online or on site at the conference at the \$75 rate. Phone registrations will not be accepted.

We are committed to hosting a safe and enjoyable conference, so please check the conference website (<https://kyhortcouncil.org/2023-kentucky-fruit-and-vegetable-conference/>) for additional infor-

mation about meeting precautions and any meeting updates.

Please make your room reservations directly with the hotel at 1-800-HOLIDAY using the block code KFV or using the [group booking link](#). Our block of rooms will be held until December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022. After this date, room prices will be higher. For additional details about hotel reservations, please see **Page 3** of the conference program at [https://kyhortcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2023-FV-Conf-Program\\_28Nov2022\\_Final.pdf](https://kyhortcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2023-FV-Conf-Program_28Nov2022_Final.pdf).



## OAK Conference offers half-day workshops, diverse topics

*From the Organic Association of Kentucky (OAK)*

Join in the learning and networking at the Organic Association of Kentucky's annual farming conference: Rooted in Resilience: Growing Healthy Soils and Opportunities for Kentucky Organics January 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year, the conference includes a growing audience of 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. This event is open to anyone interested in sustainable farming practices. The primary focus of OAK Conference programming is on-farm production systems, techniques and practices farmers can use, regional research on organic practices and strengthening community connections among farmers.

The conference will take place at Kentucky State University's [Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm](#) in Frankfort, KY. The program features three days of inspiration from local and regional speakers, useful trade show resources and abundant networking opportunities to empower and support farmers and food system change-makers. NEW this year: [#OAK2023](#) offers an additional day of learning and networking with Pre-Conference Half-Day Workshops on January 26<sup>th</sup>.

See the full agenda and speakers online at <https://www.oak-ky.org/annual-conference>.

On January 26<sup>th</sup>, pre-conference workshops include Growing and Selling Profitable Greens Year-Round (Ray Tyler, Rose Creek Farm), Beyond Compost: Nutrient Budgeting for Small Organic Farms (Krista Jacobsen, University of Kentucky; Chris McKenzie, Grow Appalachia), and Introduction to Forest Farming: Almost Everything You Wanted to Know but Were Afraid to Ask (Andrea Miller - Rural Action; Robin Suggs - Appalachian Sustainable Development), all from 8:30 a.m.-noon ET; and High



Tunnelling to Profit: Managing Your Crops, Soils, and Structures (Matt Kleinhenz - Ohio State University; Paul Wiediger - Au Naturel Farm; Annette Wszelaki - University of Tennessee), Optimizing Your Farm Sales Funnel - Marketing Success! (Corinna Bench - Shared Legacy Farms/My Digital Farmer), and Is There a Grant for That? Focus on Your Farm Funding (Myrisa Christy and Cara Stewart - Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development; Jamie Ponder - Natural Resources Conservation Service; Christopher McKenzie - Grow Appalachia; Joni Nelson - Kentucky State University; Melanie McPartlin - Kentucky Department of Agriculture; Bryce Baumann - Lazy Eight Stock Farm), all from 1-4:30 p.m.

January 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> offer inspiration from keynote speakers Nazirahk Amen and John Ikard. And local and regional experts share sessions and panels covering content on dry bean production, cut flowers, tomato grafting, cover crops, agroforestry, cooperatives, organic vegetable seed breeding, mushroom inoculation, pest management, integrated crop livestock, organic transition conversations, sales funnels, on-farm energy, farm tours and more.

Scholarships are available. Early bird pricing is offered through December 15<sup>th</sup>. Registration information is available at <https://www.oak-ky.org/annual-conference>.

Contact OAK with any questions: [conference@oak-ky.org](mailto:conference@oak-ky.org) or 502-219-7378.

# CSA production manual now available from UK

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Production Manual of the Organic Farming Unit at the University of Kentucky (HO-127) is now available online at <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/HO/HO127/HO127.pdf>. Authors are Kristi Durbin, Mark Williams, Krista Jacobsen, and Rachel Rudolph of the Department of Horticulture

Durbin completed this work in fulfillment of a master's degree of science in integrated plant and soil science. She has worked as the University of Kentucky CSA manager since February 2016. All information gathered for this project was the result of documenting production practices and improvements made since the program's inception.

This manual provides benchmarking for new and established operations; tips for production efficiency; the framework adopted at UK-CSA to run a CSA; and tools that can be adapted and customized to other farms. The tools in this document include templates for planning CSA shares and executing field plans; calendars for keeping production on target; and a fertility planner.

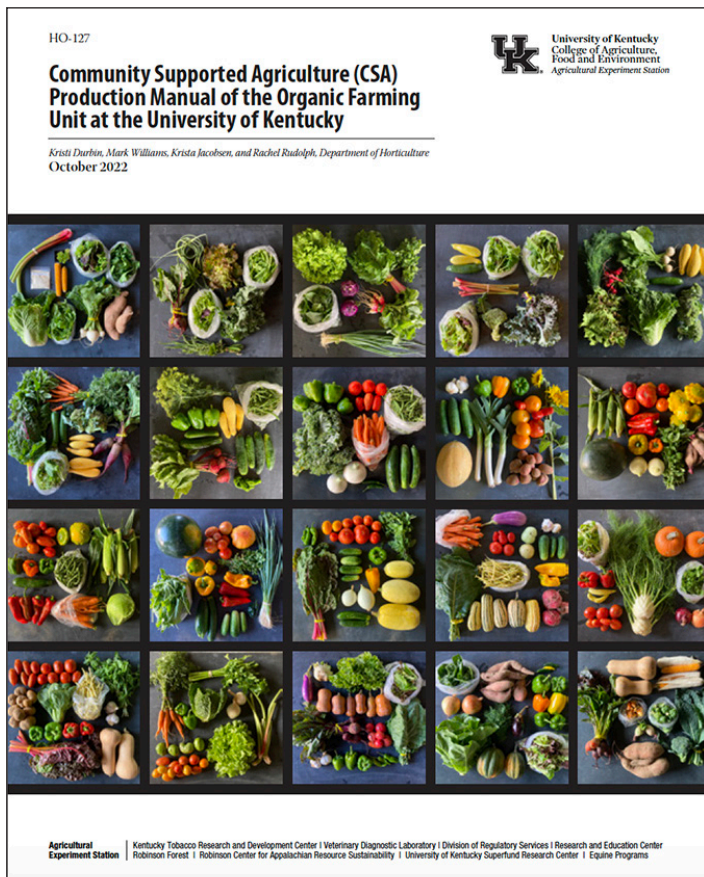
Links to the production manual, share and field

## Kentucky Wineries Association Conference set for Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> in Frankfort

*By Patsy E. Wilson, UK Extension Specialist, Viticulture*

We are excited to announce a change in the winter grape and wine short course for 2023. On January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, the Kentucky Wineries Association will be holding its annual winter conference at Prodigy Vineyard and Winery in Frankfort, KY, instead of holding it within the Fruit and Vegetable Conference and Trade Show. The KWA conference will look a little different, too. We will have a heavier focus on grower and winery connections, marketing, and connecting vineyards and wineries to local tourism and business opportunities. Whether you are just starting out or have been in the grape and wine industry for a while, this meeting will be an excellent way to boost your vineyard and winery business and make new connections.

We will also hold the Commissioner Cup Wine Competition Awards Ceremony and Luncheon during



planner and fertility planner workbooks, and videos from the UK Organic Farming Unit are available on the Center for Crop Diversification website at <https://www.uky.edu/ccd/content/UK-organic-farm>.

this meeting. Awards will be presented by the Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture, Ryan Quarles.

The full program will be released soon. Speakers and topics include: Deputy Commissioner for the Kentucky Department of Tourism, Mona Juett; President and CEO of the Kentucky Chamber, Alishi Watts; Allen Carter, Board Member of the Kentucky Chamber and owner of Silver Springs Winery; talks on social media, shipping, and app development presented by grape and wine industry specialists; and wine cultivar updates from UK specialists.

Registration (\$40) is open, and includes the awards luncheon catered by Prodigy Vineyard and Winery, access to all talks, and a sparkling wine tasting. Hotel and registration information can be found here: [2023 KWA Conference](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Patsy Wilson at [patsy.wilson@uky.edu](mailto:patsy.wilson@uky.edu), or 859-494-1657.



# UK Horticulture hires new Extension Associate, adds new role

## *Sharma brings diverse background to Controlled Environment Ag*

Arundathi Sharma is the new Extension Associate for Controlled Environment Agriculture in the University of Kentucky Department of Horticulture. She grew up in New Jersey and holds a B.S. in mechanical engineering, but she has maintained a long-term interest in food systems and agriculture. She previously worked as a Technical Program Manager at a vertical farming start-up in Berlin, Germany, where she focused on horticultural lighting and biofeedback systems, and led an app development team. Most recently, she worked on task-tracking and quality control software at a high-tech greenhouse operation here in Kentucky.



In her new role, Arundathi will be focused on identifying current and future controlled environment growers, evaluating their needs, and developing appropriate support resources. She can be reached at [arundathi.sharma@uky.edu](mailto:arundathi.sharma@uky.edu).

## **First half of December will be warmer and wetter than average**

*By Joshua Knight, Sr. Extension Associate, Horticulture*

The NOAA's Climate Prediction Center is indicating an above average chance for warmer than average weather conditions in Kentucky for the first half of December. Indeed, these conditions are expected for almost the eastern half of the continental U.S., with cooler than average conditions predicted out west. Into the latter half of the month, that cooler than average weather pattern is expected to move east, resulting in cooler than average conditions in Kentucky and the upper Midwest overall for the last weeks of the year.

Wetter than average conditions are predicted for the first weeks of December for nearly all of the U.S., but especially our region. As the year ends,

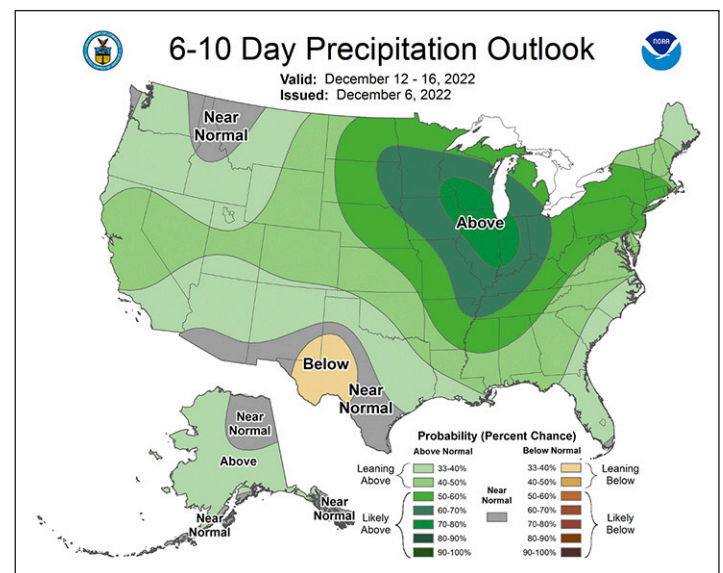
## *Scott is working with beginning farmers for fruit/vegetable production*

Delia Scott is the Extension Associate for Beginning Farmers for Fruit and Vegetable Production in the University of Kentucky Department of Horticulture. She previously worked as the Extension Associate for Floriculture, Greenhouse and Controlled Environments. She will now consult with beginning farmers on farm planning and fruit and vegetable crop production methods, develop educational materials and resources, and address other issues faced by beginning farmers.



She can be reached at [delia.scott@uky.edu](mailto:delia.scott@uky.edu) or by phone at 859-257-8605.

These positions are funded by the Kentucky Horticulture Council through a grant from the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund.



forecasting for precipitation trends is less clear with more or less equal chances of above or below average rates of precipitation.

## Controlled environment ag ecosystem in KY feasibility study available

The final report and executive summary from a 1.5-year joint project funded by the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board and the Dutch government to assess the feasibility of developing a controlled environment agriculture (CEA) ecosystem in Kentucky are now available on the Center for Crop Diversification website. The executive summary includes 10 recommendations for what will be needed for the sustainable development of this ecosystem. This information should be useful for existing growers ranging from those using low-tech tunnels to those with high-tech vertical farms; growers interested in adding environmental control to their production systems; governmental/non-governmental agencies; and the general public. The executive summary and the feasibility study can be accessed at <https://www.uky.edu/ccd/content/cea-feasibility-study>.



## New SARE publication offers insights into wholesale marketing

From USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)

SARE's newest bulletin, [\*Scaling Up Your Vegetable Farm for Wholesale Markets\*](#), provides a variety of strategies and tools to help owners of small- to mid-scale operations branch out into wholesale markets.

The publication features a range of effective strategies for business planning, working with wholesale buyers, and increasing production capacity. Producers Shakera and Juan Raygoza of Terra Preta Farm in Edinburg, Texas, share how they scaled up from 1.5 acres of diversified vegetables to growing 15 acres of organic radishes for local wholesale markets. Raygoza says that transitioning to wholesale markets was a “game changer” for the farm and for the surrounding community.

Specialized crop production, combined with smart investments in equipment, appropriate marketing strategies and improved postharvest handling, can help farmers to scale up to sell their products more efficiently and consistently. In some cases, working together can give producers the opportunity to expand by overcoming barriers that have previously limited access to profitable wholesale markets.

Download or order your free print copy of *Scaling Up Your Vegetable Farm for Wholesale Markets* at [www.sare.org/wholesale-marketing](http://www.sare.org/wholesale-marketing) or by calling (301) 779-1007. *Scaling Up Your Vegetable Farm for Wholesale Markets* is also available in quantity for free to educators for use in educational workshops, classes or tours.



## Thanks for reading!

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*Christy Cassady*

Christy Cassady, Extension Specialist

