

15th Annual

Virginia Biological Farming Conference

*From the Soil Up:
Local & Organic Works!*
January 31 - Feb 1, 2014

Conference information found at: VABF.org



Co-hosted by:



College of Agriculture

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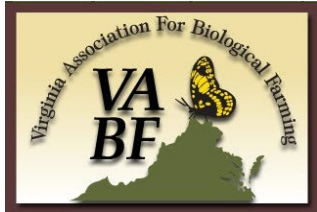
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VABF Registrar
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Conference Hosts:



2014 Virginia Biological Farming Conference January 31 - February 1, 2014

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel
1021 Koger Center Blvd, Richmond VA 804-379-3800
(A few miles SW of the City of Richmond,
Midlothian Tnpk/Rt 60 exit off of the Powhite Pkwy)

Hotel reservation info: We have a block of rooms at the special rate of \$83 per night. Please see <http://vabf.org/dates-location/> for a link to reserve your room online at this rate, or call 804-379-3800 and mention the Virginia Biological Farming Conference rate. *****The special room rate will be available until January 15th or until the group block is sold-out, whichever comes first.*****

Rates	Members	Non-Members
Early Registration (ends November 30)	\$130	N/A
Regular Registration (Dec 1 - Jan 15)	\$145	\$190
Late Registration (Jan 16 - 27)	\$160	\$220
Youth Program -first child	\$40	\$40
Youth Program - each add'l child	\$30	\$30
Exhibitors: Not-for-profit or Gov't Agency	\$145	\$145
Exhibitors: For-Profit or Gov't Agency	\$190	\$190

Exhibitors:

Interested in being an Exhibitor at the conference? You may register for an exhibit space through the main registration web-site. Please contact Lorrie Jufes at LorrieH7@swva.net or 540-651-3227 with any questions.



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9:00 -12:45 pm Virginia Biological Farming Conference Registration

9:45 -11:45 am **Session A**

Growing Cool Season Vegetable Crops in High Tunnels, Paul and Alison Wiediger, Au Natural Farm, Smiths Grove, Kentucky

The Sustainable Home & Small Farm Flock: Moving Toward a New Feeding Paradigm, Harvey Ussery, The Modern Homestead, Front Royal, Virginia

Increasing Farm Profits through Food Hub Participation and Development, Dr. Theresa Nartea, Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia and Adriana Vargo, Local Food Hub, Charlottesville, Virginia

Land and/or Location? Finding the Right Site and Situation for Your Farm , Sue Ellen Johnson, Farm Innovation Group

11:00 am **Exhibit Hall Opens**

11:45 am **Organic Foods Festival - Potluck Lunch**

1:00 pm **Welcome and Announcements**

Janet Aardema – Executive Director, Virginia Association for Biological Farming
 Jewel Hairston – Dean, College of Agriculture, Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia
 Franklin Jackson – Associate Dean, College of Agriculture, Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia

1:00 pm **Youth Program Begins**

1:15 pm **Plenary Presentation**

Ray Archuleta, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Greensboro, North Carolina

2:30 pm **Break and Trade Show**

3:00 pm **Session B**

Beneficial Insects and Farmscaping, Richard McDonald, “Dr. McBug,” Symbiont Biological Pest Company, Sugar Grove, North Carolina

How to Use the Internet to Find Local Buyers, Theresa Nartea, Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia

43560 Project Clif Slade, Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia

Meat Goat Production and Marketing, Renard Turner, Vanguard Ranch, Gordonsville, Virginia

Brewers and Bakers: Successful Collaborations between Artisans, Evrim Dogu, Subrosa, Richmond, Virginia, Jenifer Lapidis, Carolina Ground, Asheville, North Carolina, Brent Manning, Riverbend Malt, Asheville, North Carolina, - Moderator: William Hale, All Farm Organics

Simple Farm Structures, Gavin Sanderlin, Pamplin, Virginia

4:30 pm **Break and Trade Show**

5:30 pm **Dinner**

7:30 pm **Plenary Presentation**

Gunter Hauk, Spikenard Farms, Floyd, Virginia

9:00 pm **Film Presentations: TBA**

7:00 am **Breakfast on your own**

8:30 am **Youth program continues**

8:30-10:00 am **Session C**

Update on Virginia Pests, Richard McDonald, Symbiont Biological Pest Company, Sugar Grove, North Carolina

Biodynamic Beekeeping, Gunter Hauk, Spikenard Honeybee Sanctuary, Floyd, Virginia

Introduction to Aquaponic Food Production, Charlie Shultz, Lethbridge College, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

The Small-Scale Poultry Flock: An All-Natural Approach to Raising Chickens and Other Fowl for Home and Market Growers, Harvey Ussery, The Modern Homestead, Front Royal, Virginia

A Bio-Intensive Market Garden, Jean-Martin Fortier, Les Jardins de la Grelinette, Quebec, Canada

Harmonious Herd Management for Land and Animals, Ben Coleman, Mountain Run Farm, Bedford, Virginia

10:00 – 10:30 am **Break and Trade Show**

10:30 – 12:00 pm **Session D**

Greenhouse Herb and Transplant Production for Profit, Paul and Alison Wiediger, Au Natural Farm, Smiths Grove, Kentucky

Free-range and Certified Humane Berkshire Hogs, Tony Seward, Red Barn Berkshires, Surry, Virginia

Postharvest of Vegetables and Berries, Penny Perkins-Veazie, North Carolina State University, Kannapolis, North Carolina

Edible Landscape Plants, Michael McConkey, Edible Landscaping, Afton, Virginia

Broadturn Farm: Our Experiences with Production and Marketing, Stacy Brenner and John Bliss, Broadturn Farm, Scarborough, Maine

12:00 pm **Lunch**

12:30 pm **Business Meeting** – Virginia Association for Biological Farming

1:30 – 3:00 pm **Session E**

Exploring WIX for Creating a Professional Business Webpage, Theresa Nartea, Virginia State University, Petersburg, Virginia

How to Germinate Seeds Year Round, Ira Wallace, Southern Exposure Seeds, Mineral, Virginia

Practical Tools for Small Growers, Nazirah Amen, Purple Mountain Organics, Takoma Park, Maryland

Organic Cut Flowers, Mark Cain, Dripping Springs Garden, Huntsville, Arkansas

Women in Agriculture Panel: Amy Hicks, Amy’s Garden, Toano, Virginia Rachael Bynum, Water penny Farm, Sperryville, Virginia, Elaine Nolt, Woods Edge Farm, Singers Glen, Virginia, Stacy Brenner, Broadturn Farm, Scarborough, Maine - Moderator: Janet Aardema

Session Descriptions

Lunch Keynote Address

Ray Archuleta is a Conservation Agronomist at the NRCS East National Technology Center, in Greensboro, North Carolina. Ray teaches soil health and the principles of agroecology throughout the country. He has 25 years of experience with the Natural Resources Conservation Service working in New Mexico, Missouri, Oregon, and now in North Carolina and has held the following positions: Soil Conservation Technician, Soil Conservationist, Nutrient/Irrigation Specialist, Water Quality Project Manager, District Conservationist, and Area Agronomist. He is also a Certified Professional Soil Scientist with Soil Science Society of America. Ray worked for two years in Guatemala as a Livestock Specialist in the Peace Corps. His infectious enthusiasm for soil health has earned him the moniker, Ray the Soils Guy. He has a B.S. in Agricultural Biology.

Cool Season Crops in High Tunnels – Herbs and Transplants from Greenhouses

Paul and Alison Wiediger operate Au Naturel Farm in Smiths Grove, Kentucky. They produce a number of horticulture crops year round and have written a book called “Walking to Spring”. They are well known sought after presenters and proponents of protected culture. In the two sessions, attendees will learn about how to grow cool season crops in the winter months and about how to make profits from herb and transplant from greenhouses. Visit their website at <http://aunaturelfarm.homestead.com>

Small-Scale Poultry Flock – New Feeding Paradigm for Home Poultry

Harvey Ussery and his wife Ellen produce all their own eggs and poultry, year-round, on three good acres in northern Virginia. Harvey has written extensively for Mother Earth News, Backyard Poultry, and Countryside & Small Stock Journal. His book, The Small-Scale Poultry Flock (Chelsea Green, 2011), sets a new standard for holistic poultry husbandry. Visit his website at www.themodernhomestead.us. During Harvey’s two presentations attendees will learn natural methods for raising chickens and about new methods for sustainable sources of food for poultry. Both will be geared to home and small-scale flocks.

Food Hub Participation – Finding Local Buyers through the Internet – WIX for Business Webpages

Dr. Theresa Nartea is an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in marketing and agribusiness at Virginia State University. Serving in various regulatory, industry, education, and extension outreach roles since 1993, she has worked closely with small family farms throughout the United States to stay in business through direct marketing techniques, whole farm management practices, and awareness and adherence to governmental regulations. In the three presentations from Theresa, attendees will learn 1) the social and economic benefits of food hub participation, instructions on how to participate in a food hub, new food hubs; 2) how to use the internet to: (a) Find local buyers for their farm products, (b) Increase local buyer awareness of farm products, and (c) Increase local farmer/food producer awareness of local food buyers; and 3) how to use Wix.com to create a business webpage by editing professionally designed webpage templates. At the end of this class, attendees will have increased self-confidence to create a business webpage with minimal stress and financial cost. All three sessions are suitable for beginning and existing farmers.

Land and/or Location? Finding the Right Site and Situation for Your Farm

Sue Ellen Johnson - When starting a farm venture-- whether for full or partial income or for subsistence -- you need to consider multiple factors. Soils, slope, distance to markets, market traffic, zoning, distance to "home", buy, borrow or lease.. This session will give you an overview of what to consider when deciding on a farm site. There will also be an opportunity to work through or towards your farm- land siting decision.

Beneficial Insects and Farmscaping – Virginia Pest Update

Dr. McBug, aka Richard McDonald, Ph.D., has had a lifelong interest in insects, and how they relate to the rest of nature. Living in the Ozarks of Missouri as a child, his mother was a naturalist and encouraged him to collect bugs, turtles, birds, lizards, snakes, and frogs. With mom’s encouragement, he made his first color bug book in 1959, at the age of 3. He received his B.S. in Integrated Pest Management (‘82) and M.S. in Entomology (‘86) from the University of Missouri and his Ph.D. in Entomology from Virginia Tech in 1990. He was Biological Control Administrator and State Apiarist from 1990 to 1997 for the North Carolina Department of Agriculture in Raleigh, NC. He served on the board of the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association for the maximum 6 years and chaired the CFSA’s Sustainable Agriculture Conference 6 or 7 times. He and his wife Kate Cahow moved to Sugar Grove NC in 1996 to pursue their dream of living and working in the mountains. He was fortunate to be a part of the first GoldenLEAF grant for Watauga County, helping to transition tobacco growers to organic vegetable production. Through this work he, along with the late great ‘Dr. Broc.’ Charles Church, and organic farmer Susan Owen, helped to start and name New River Organic Growers – now a co-op with more than 50 farms. Dr. McBug enjoys teaching farmscaping principles to anybody that needs them. Attendees, in the two sessions, will learn about pest management using ecological principles. During the Pest update session, attendees are encouraged to bring questions and actual bugs for identification. Visit his webpage at <http://www.drmcbug.com/>

43,560 Project

Clif Slade graduated from Virginia State University and is retired with 28 years of service from Virginia Cooperative Extension at Virginia Tech. He has farmed all his life and currently raises a variety of horticulture crops on his farm in Surry County, Virginia. Clif is also a Small Farm Outreach Technician with Virginia State University. Clif’s presentation will inform attendees about work he is doing with square foot growing. The idea behind the 43,560 project is to get growers to think about the value of each square foot of space and the crops that have the most market value in the area.

Experiences with Meat Goat Production and Marketing

Renard and Chinette Turner own and operate Vanguard Ranch in Louisa, Virginia. They combine sustainable agricultural practices with value added production of gourmet quality meat goat products. Their goat burgers, goat kabobs and curried goat are enjoyed at several local area food festivals. Renard is a past national secretary of a major meat goat association with over twelve years' experience raising meat goats. They support conservation of America's landrace breed the Myotonic meat goat. During the session they will take a look at the dynamics of marketing goat meat! Visit their website at <http://vanguardranch.com/>

Brewers and Bakers: Successful Collaborations with Farmers – Panel Discussion

Panelist from North Carolina and Virginia will discuss their experiences with the movement of grains from the farmer to baked, malted and brewed products. Session moderator will be William Hale from All-Farm Organics, Louisa, Virginia.

Simple Farm Structures

This session will cover the basics of farm infrastructure improvements. Topics include long term farm infrastructure planning, project design and layout, preparing for construction, and construction technique. Specific examples showcased include wood framed pole structures, buried pipeline, metal bow high tunnels, and deer fencing. The instructor for this session is Gavin Sanderlin of Sandyfoot Farm in Pamplin, Virginia, where he and his wife currently grow produce for local markets and have been working to develop their farm. Prior to moving to Pamplin, Gavin and his wife managed another established farm that was well developed for season extension and had many structures that required periodic maintenance. Gavin also works part-time for a Soil & Water Conservation District planning, designing, and inspecting agricultural best management practices and farm infrastructure improvements. Visit their website at <http://sandyfootfarm.com/>

Organic Cut Flowers

Mark Cain of Dripping Springs Garden has been producing certified organic vegetables and cut flowers for almost 30 years for the popular Fayetteville Farmers Market in the Arkansas Ozarks. In this workshop, we'll take a look at the best-selling varieties; how to plan for a constant supply of blooms from early spring markets through Thanksgiving; how season-extension hoopouses are an integral part of cut flower production; and a look at special production techniques and tools for small-scale flower growing. Visit the website at <http://drippingspringsgarden.com/>

Introduction to Aquaponic Food Production: Practical Considerations for Prospective Producers

Mr. Shultz earned two B.S. degrees, Biology and Fisheries Science, from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in 1996. He has recently completed his graduate coursework and research on indoor lighting options for aquaponic food production and is expected soon to receive his M.S. degree in aquaculture from Kentucky State University. Mr. Shultz worked as a tilapia broodstock manager & laboratory technician at the Virginia Tech Aquaculture Center & as an aquaculture research analyst for 14 years at the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) Agricultural Experiment Station where he specialized in Tilapia production in Aquaponic and Biofloc culture systems. Currently, Charlie serves as the Aquaponics Researcher at Lethbridge College in Southern Alberta, Canada. He authored or co-authored more than 20 papers (journal articles, publications in conference proceedings and popular articles) and has given more than 50 presentations at conferences and workshops across the U.S., throughout the Caribbean, and many other countries including Mexico, Singapore, New Zealand and Abu Dhabi. Mr. Shultz co-taught the UVI International Tilapia Aquaculture and Aquaponics Course 14 times and has co-taught intensive short courses in Puerto Rico, Arizona, Michigan, Tennessee, North Carolina, Singapore, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. Attendees will learn practical techniques for producing fish and horticulture crops in a combined system.

A Biointensive Market Garden

Jean-Martin Fortier and his wife Maude-Hélène Desroches are the founders of Les Jardins de la Grelinette, an internationally recognized micro-farm known for its high productivity and profitability using low-tech, high-yield methods of production. A leading practitioner of biologically intensive cropping systems, Jean-Martin has more than a decade's worth of experience in small-scale organic farming. He has written articles about his work for popular magazines such as Canadian Organic Grower, La Terre de Chez Nous and Growing for Market, and he has facilitated more than fifty workshops and conferences around the globe promoting the idea of micro-scale farming as an alternative lifestyle. Jean-Martin also contributes occasionally as a tool and equipment advisor for companies such as Johnny's Selected Seeds and Dubois Agri-Novation. His first book, *Le Jardinier-Maraîcher* sold more than 15,000 copies in the original French language since its release in the fall of 2012. His new book, **The Market Gardener: A Handbook for Small-Scale Organic Farming**, published by New Society Publisher will be released next spring. For more info visit www.themarketgardener.com. Attendees will hear Jean-Martin Fortier provide an overview of all aspects of vegetable production at les Jardins de la Grelinette demonstrating how adopting intensive methods of production can lead to the optimisation of a cropping system.

Harmonious Herd Management for Land and Animals

Ben and Carly Coleman own and operate Mountain Run Farm in Sedalia, Virginia. They raise beef, poultry, pork, turkey and catfish. Follow the journey of this first-generation farmer seeking truth and holistic health that works on any scale. Our Earth's land base has been used and abused for generations. This session will discuss hands-on methods for living on the land without detriment, using proven methods of healing and encouraging the Earth to provide her caretakers with abundant food and water. Visit their website at <http://mountainrunfarm.com/>

Session Descriptions

Free-Range and Certified Humane Berkshire Hogs

Tony and Lisa Seward own and operate Red Barn Berkshires in Surry, Virginia. They are third generation farmers and hog producers. In 2011, they decided to raise free-range, certified humane, certified Berkshire Hogs as a way of bringing traditional methods of raising hogs back to their small community. Attendees will learn about their experiences in raising and marketing certified humane Berkshire hogs. Visit their website at <http://redbarnberkshires.com/index.html>

Postharvest of Vegetables and Berries

Dr. Penelope Perkins-Veazie – Is a professor at North Carolina State University, located at the Plants for Human Health Institute. Dr. Perkins-Veazie formerly worked for USDA-ARS in postharvest research. She now heads research on postharvest physiology and technology for fruits and vegetables for NCSU. Her research involves storage methods to extend shelf life, collaborative studies to determine fruit and vegetable roles in human health, storage technologies to enhance functional food compounds, and the identification and quantification of health-related compounds in fruits and vegetables and from production systems. She also evaluates food safety, quality and consumer-appeal characteristics such as fla-vor, color, antioxidants and texture to make sure growers will have better quality fruits and vegetables for high-value markets.

Edible Landscape Plants

Michael McConkey is the owner of Edible Landscaping in Afton, Virginia. They carry a large variety of common and not so common edible plants. He will share with us his experiences and advice on growing various types of both beautiful and delicious plants. His website can be found at <http://ediblelandscaping.com/>

Broadturn Farm: Successful Production and Marketing of Organic Vegetables & Cut Flowers

John Bliss and Stacy Brenner operate Broadturn Farm which is a CSA farm located 10 miles from Portland, Maine that raises vegetables and cut flowers. Their vegetables are MOFGA certified organic. The farm is famous for hosting barn weddings and events, and floral design for events off-site. Produce and flowers are sold in the dooryard farm-stand, FLORA*BLISS as well as through a traditional CSA program. FLORA*BLISS is also the site where all things floral design happen. The farm provides flowers and design services for weddings throughout Maine, NH and the Boston area. The farm is partnered with The Long Barn, a non-profit whose focus is on connecting the farm with the community through programming, like the popular Broadturn Farm Summer Camp. The property is in agricultural conservation with the Scarborough Land Trust. Formerly called the Keith Meserve Farm, the land is one of the largest farm properties in the Greater Portland area. It has 100 acres of open land and about 330 wooded acres. Attendee will learn of their experiences with producing and marketing organic vegetables and cut flowers.

How to Germinate Seeds Year Round

Ira Wallace with Southern Seed Exposure will teach attendees simple techniques and timing for starting vegetable and herb seeds indoors, transplanting, growing on, and hardening off the young plants. They will learn time tables for planting vegetables direct from seed and how you can extend your season with repeat or succession plantings.

Practical Tools for Small Growers

As owner of Purple Mountain Organics and an avid horticulturalist, Nazirah Amen has over 20 years of experience in growing, and will share his insights on some of the best tools of the trade Attendees will learn about useful tools from hand tools to tractors and plant protection to harvesting equipment, this session will provide an overview of useful tools to help make life easier in the field. Visit their website at <http://purpletools.net/>

Dinner Keynote Address – Biodynamic Beekeeping

Gunther has been an educator, biodynamic gardener/farmer and beekeeper for nearly four decades. In 1996 he co-founded the Pfeiffer Center and built up one of the first biodynamic training programs in the US. Since that time he has been lecturing and giving workshops on biodynamic / sustainable beekeeping methods. His book "Toward Saving the Honeybee" was first published in 2002. Together with Vivian he co-founded Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary in 2006. Gunther is internationally known for his work and will be giving the Dinner Keynote as well as a presentation on biodynamic beekeeping. Visit his website at <http://guntherhauk.com/>

Women in Agriculture: A Panel Discussion

Join the panelist from Virginia in a lively discussion about their experience in farming. Issues specific to women farmers will be examined. Session will be moderated by Janet Aardema of Broadfork Farm in Chesterfield, Virginia.

***Early Registration ends Dec 15th
Register today and save!***



Silent Auction

VABF will operate a silent auction throughout the conference. Please contribute to this fundraising event by donating items to be auctioned and by bidding during the conference.

Items include: garden or farm tools and supplies; a sampling of nonperishable or semi-perishable foods produced at our members' farms, such as jams and other valuable added products; books related to farming, gardening, food, nutrition, or health; arts and crafts; and gift certificates to local businesses.

During the conference, check out the auction offerings and bid - bid high - on whatever you see that would be useful on your farm and/or would enhance your life.

Let us know what you will be donating to the auction by sending us the form found on our website: vabf.org/silent-auction/

Youth Program Info:

A program for youth aged 5-12 years runs concurrent with our conference.

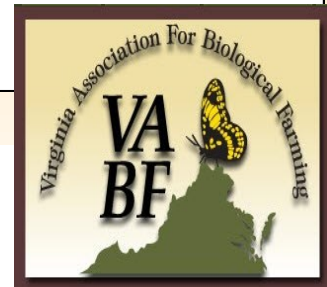
The youth and their leaders will be exploring food, fiber, food science, and crafts.

Youth Program registration rates:

\$40 per child

\$35 per additional child from same family

Register online: vabf.org/tickets/



Conference Supporters:



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Questions? Please email Conference@vabf.org or call 804-519-1620