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Organic Growers School

Supporting Sustainable Agriculture
in the Southern Appalachians through
Educational Programs and Outreach



...e-news

CRAFT Tour at Full Sun Farm!

CRAFT: Farmer Training ~Peer Support ~Resources ~Roundtables ~Workshops



Alex Brown and Vanessa Campbell of **Full Sun Farm** were our gracious hosts at the second CRAFT tour of the season, May 19th. We were greeted by beautiful weather and had a great turnout!

The topic for our second tour was "Equipment for 5-10 acres of Vegetables," and with 15 years of farming experience Alex and Vanessa had plenty of insight into farm equipment to share with us all. We thank them again for inviting us to their farm and shedding some light on the complexities and mysteries of small farm equipment!

Full Sun is an 18-acre farm located along the beautiful and fertile bottom land of Sandy Mush and has been operating since 1997. Assisted by their two daughters and four seasonal interns, Alex and

Vanessa market their vegetables, berries and cut flowers at two tailgate markets and through a 60 family CSA.

We started our tour with a walk through the greenhouse where Alex and Vanessa grow their transplants for market and for the farm. Moving on to their two high tunnels we saw their young tomatoes and over-wintered flowers already well on their way.

This year Vanessa and Alex are experimenting with a Tomato Rollerhook Assembly – a simple device used to string up tomatoes. The string connects to a plastic loop around the bottom stem and as the tomato grows it can be lowered to open more space for the tomato to keep right on growing.

Between their greenhouses and fields Vanessa and Alex cultivate four acres of vegetables with a collection of farm equipment they have carefully compiled over the years with a mix of thoughtful research and ingenuity. Our first stop along the array of equipment was their 1948 Allis Chalmers G



Cultivator tractor, followed by their two Massey-Ferguson tractors and their various implement attachments for cultivating, planting, and harvest. . . .

. . . [READ MORE about the CRAFT tour of Full Sun Farm and see more photos here!](#)

Gardener's Corner

Ask Ruth: Basic Garden Maintenance



Dear Ruth,

My wife and I started our first vegetable garden this year. We are a bit worried about fitting it into our busy schedule. Do you have any basic suggestions for us as beginning gardeners?

-Albert and LucyAsheville

Dear Albert and Lucy,

Congratulations for jumping in and planting something to eat. Harvesting dinner right from your own garden is always a thrill. Here are a few hints to help streamline your garden chores, so that you can spend less time on maintenance and more time enjoying the fruits of your labors. Big, tough weeds and bug-eaten plants are discouraging to most of us, so strive to minimize those problems.

[. . . READ MORE: READ this month's FULL "Ask Ruth" ARTICLE HERE.](#)

Ruth Gonzalez is a former market farmer, gardener, local food advocate, and founder of the Tailgate Market Fan Club where she blogs at [Tailgate Market Fan Club](#). In her job at Reems Creek Nursery, Ruth offers advice on all sorts of gardening questions and benefits daily from the wisdom of local gardeners.

Ask Ruth © 2010 Ruth Gonzalez & Organic Growers School

**Gardeners:
Got a question for Ruth?**
[Email it to us](#)

Farmer's Corner

Join CRAFT!



CRAFT (Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training) is a program of the Organic Growers School.

A year-round farmer training collaborative, CRAFT offers farmers and their interns networking and learning opportunities.

Membership is rolling, so join anytime! [For more information or to join, click here.](#)

Membership is open to beginning and experienced farmers, apprentices and farm workers, and anyone else who has a strong desire and drive to begin farming.

Training is done mainly through a series of on-farm tours held by experienced growers in the region. In addition to the tours, members receive a comprehensive CRAFT handbook, rich with regional information on all aspects of farming and much of the information is farmer generated, containing invaluable knowledge gained from many years of farming in the southeast Appalachians.

CRAFT also offers a series of winter workshops, both for beginning farmers and for experienced farmer members. These workshops are held as "roundtables" and are places for members to come together to discuss such issues as production planning, record keeping, labor issues, etc. For CRAFT members just getting into farming, roundtables focus on business planning, loans, gaining access to land and capital, etc.

CRAFT membership fees are \$20 - \$30/year and give members access to a wealth of summer tours and winter workshops.

Ask Tom: Succession Planting



Dear Tom –

How do you plan the timing of succession crops? Thanks

- Adam in Fairview

Dear Adam,
We sow nearly every week starting in February and ending in late September. Some crops like peppers are sown once for the season but we sow many crops repeatedly through the season to meet market demand. The timing of those successions is complicated. Here are some of the factors that influence when we sow succession crops.

... READ MORE: READ This Month's FULL "Ask Tom" ARTICLE HERE.

**Commercial Farmers:
Got a Question for Tom?
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To learn more about CRAFT and to join: [CLICK HERE](#) or contact Cameron Farlow, OGS Farmer Programs Assistant at 828.338.9508 or email Cameron at: cameron@organicgrowersschool.org.

Stay in Touch!



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Donate! Make an instant tax-deductible contribution online or mail a check to: Organic Growers School, 788 Mount Hebron Road Old Fort, NC 28762.

Help OGS by Recycling!

OGS Partners with Planet Green



The Organic Growers School has just signed up to fundraise by recycling inkjet cartridges, cell phones and other small electronic with Planet Green.

[Check out this video](#) and

help OGS help organic growers by recycling!

Most of us have these recyclable items sitting around our homes collecting dust and now you can recycle them and help us raise money at the same time. [Click here to find out more!](#)

Businesses! Reach Organic Consumers and Growers

Gain exposure to OGS's community of organic gardeners, farmers, and consumers: connect with the Organic Growers School to discuss marketing opportunities for your business.

- Want to expose your business to foodies, farmers, and conscious consumers in the southeast? Advertise in the Organic Growers School E-newsletter! [Email us for more information.](#)
- Want to partner with OGS year-round and gain year-round exposure for your business? [Learn more about the Organic Growers School Growth Partner Program.](#)

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