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## SAVE THE DATE!

### Mark Your Calendars Today!

JOIN THE ORGANIC GROWERS SCHOOL FOR THE 22ND ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE

**Date:** Saturday & Sunday, March 7-8, 2015  
with Pre-Conference Workshops Friday, March 6, 2015  
**Location:** UNCA Campus, Asheville, NC

It can be hard to imagine the growing season when the thermometer is reading 25 degrees, but we're doing it anyway! The team at Organic Growers School is working hard to put together two days of fun, inspiring workshops to help you shake off the frost and get ready to get your hands dirty again!



We're thrilled to announce two new tracks to our 2015 line-up!  
**MUSHROOMS & FOOD RESILIENCE**

### Important Dates

- **RIGHT NOW!** We're accepting applications for Sponsors & Exhibitors. [Click here for more info!](#)
- **Friday, March 6, 2015:** Pre-Conference Workshops
- **Saturday & Sunday, March 7-8, 2015:** 22nd Annual Spring Conference!

### [Learn more about Sponsoring & Exhibiting](#)

[Click here for 2015 Spring Conference FAQ's](#)

#### Gardener's Corner

##### Ask Ruth

Dear Ruth,

*I have heard neonicotinoids are bad for bees. What are neonicotinoids and how can I avoid buying plants that have been treated with them?*

#### Farmer's Corner

##### Ask Tom

Dear Tom –

*I seem to have trouble with aphids in cold frame crops in March and April each year. Do you have suggestions?*



Lucy  
Asheville, NC

Dear Lucy,

Pollinators are battling Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) and a complex mix of issues. Neonicotinoids (a class of insecticides) are just ONE of the issues. It will be impossible to touch on all of the complexities of this topic in this short article.

**It's serious business.** About **one third** of the food WE eat (including foods for meat animals) depends on pollination to occur, and pollinators are in crisis. This issue strikes at the heart of food security for all human beings and most of Earth's creatures. European honeybees, native bees, butterflies, bats, hummingbirds, flies, and mammals are some of the creatures that aid in pollinating plants. In 2013, the USDA expressed concern that there may not be enough pollinators to support major US crops of blueberries, apples, avocados, and more...



[Read more at Our Blog](#)

**Gardeners: Got a question for Ruth? Email it to us at**

[enews@organicgrowersschool.org](mailto:enews@organicgrowersschool.org)



Thanks  
Bill in Old Fort

Dear Bill –

Aphids are a pest for us too. We see them in early lettuce and on tomatoes in our heated greenhouse. On lettuce they are very difficult to remove and on tomatoes, they can get bad enough that we need to wipe each tomato, adding hours to tomato harvest.

Part of the problem is that aphids like cool weather better than their natural enemies and they also reproduce more quickly. I find they are less of a problem when weather warms and their enemies have a chance to catch up and keep aphid populations in check.

Here are a series of recommendation but our best success has been with beneficial insects released proactively which I describe below...



[Read more at Our Blog](#)

**Farmers: Got a question for Tom? Email it to us at**

[enews@organicgrowersschool.org](mailto:enews@organicgrowersschool.org)

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## Organic Growers School Events in December



### Women in Agriculture Gathering

ORGANIC GROWERS SCHOOL INVITES WOMEN GROWERS, FARM(H)ERS, AND FARM/FOOD PROFESSIONALS TO CELEBRATE AND SHARE

A women-only event brought to you by Organic Growers School. A relaxed, fun, one-day, celebratory style gathering with no specific theme. We will use "open-space" methods to create the conversations that suit us. Pot luck lunch, so bring your stories to share and a dish to pass!

**Date:** Saturday, December 6, 2014

**Time:** 10:00AM - 4:00PM

**Location:** Jubilee Community Church, 101 Patton Avenue, Asheville, NC 28801 (use lower entrance)

**Bring:** A dish to pass.

**Cost:** Free!

**Stay Connected:** [Facebook Page](#)

**[Register Here!](#)**

### Decoding Meat: How to Source Healthy & Local Meats

MEREDITH LEIGH RETURNS TO OGS TO OFFER FREE WEBINAR ON HOW TO BE A SMART MEAT CONSUMER  
Local? Grass-fed? GMO-free? Organic? What are the differences and how do we choose when faced with confusing options?

We do know that the commercial animal feed industry is the largest purchaser of GMO feed (soy, cotton, corn, canola, sugar beet, and alfalfa) and that Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) result in antibiotic-ridden meats and toxic pollution problems.

Join Organic Growers School's webinar and learn to decode the complex world of labels and, more important, learn what meat is healthiest and how to source it as close to you as possible.

Meredith Leigh is a die-hard advocate for good food. As a farmer, founder of a butcher shop & restaurant, and writer, she has worked on many angles of real food for over a decade. She currently teaches farming and cooking classes, consults for food and agriculture non-profits, and is writing a book about meat.

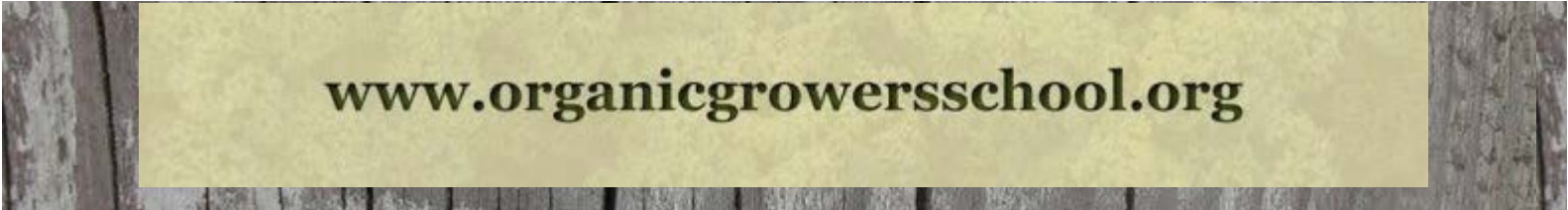


**Date:** Tuesday, December 16th

**Time:** 1:00PM – 2:00PM

**Cost:** Free!

**[Register Here!](#)**

A horizontal banner with a light green, textured background. The text 'www.organicgrowersschool.org' is centered in a dark green, serif font. The banner is flanked by vertical strips of dark wood grain on both sides.

[www.organicgrowersschool.org](http://www.organicgrowersschool.org)

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