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Organic Growers School and Acclaimed Author,
Laura Lengnick, Collaborate to bring
Farm Beginnings® farmer training program to WNC.

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Asheville, NC: Organic Growers School (OGS) and Laura Lengnick, author and long-time sustainable agriculture educator are teaming up to develop Farm Beginnings® a comprehensive, year-long, whole-farm planning and business course to start October 24, 2015. Farm Beginnings® is a farmer-led training and support program designed to help WNC farmers plan and launch sustainable farm businesses.



For many years, Organic Growers School has worked to increase support for regional farmers by offering education, training, education, and mentoring. But new farms have a high failure rate and many in the region saw a need for a new approach. "We knew we wanted a collaborative approach and a comprehensive, regionally-informed farmer training curriculum," says Cameron Farlow, the Farmer Programs Coordinator at OGS.

Since 2011, OGS has been interested in joining the [Farm Beginnings® Collaborative](#), a national alliance of independent, regional groups of farmers and farmer-training support organizations working together to promote Farm Beginnings®, a farmer training model that is community based, rooted in sustainable principles, and farmer led.

Earlier this year OGS invited Laura Lengnick, former professor of Sustainable Agriculture at Warren Wilson College and author of the new book, *Resilient Agriculture*, into the Farm Beginnings® development team to help generate ideas for the design of a new farmer training program for the WNC region. As it turns out, Laura had been teaching Holistic Farm Management and



Agroecology principles, two core components in the Farm Beginnings curriculum, to future farmers for more than 14 years. Given the shared values, vision, and timing, OGS and Lengnick became easy allies. “Bringing Laura Lengnick on the Farm Beginnings® team was the natural next step in our process,” says Farlow, “Pairing her experience in teaching sustainable agriculture with OGS’s long-time experience working with farmers

across the region ensures that this course will offer a high quality of instruction geared toward the needs of WNC farmers.”

“Providing beginning farmers with a strong foundation in agricultural ecology, holistic decision-making and adaptive management is essential if we want to cultivate the climate resilience of our communities. Farm Beginnings® is an important step along the path to a resilient food future for WNC,” says Lengnick.

To support the sustainability and profitability of WNC farms our region must rebuild a path to agriculture for new and expanding growers. Organic Growers School’s Farm Beginnings® is a full-year program starting October 24, 2015 in Asheville, NC. The program is designed to offer beginning farmers the practical skills and knowledge needed to start-up and grow successful long-term farm businesses that enhance the sustainability and resilience the WNC region.

Farm Beginnings® is open to farmers in WNC and surrounding Southern Appalachian states – Tennessee, Virginia, Georgia, and South Carolina. Trainings will be inclusive of farmers of all ages, races, genders, experience levels, and production models.

To learn more about the program, visit:
www.organicgrowersschool.org/farm-beginnings

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