



Providing Organic Education Since 1993

23rd Annual Spring Conference, 2016
Organic Growers School, Asheville, NC

Press Release
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For Immediate Release:

Asheville, NC. Registration is open for the 23rd Annual Organic Growers School Spring Conference. The conference, for healthy eaters, home growers, & farmers, takes place Saturday & Sunday March 12 & 13, 2016, at UNCA in Asheville, North Carolina.

Organic Growers School (OGS) will draw thousands of gardeners, farmers, and foodies for a weekend of workshops scheduled for March 12 & 13, 2016 at the University of North Carolina Asheville in Asheville, NC. The annual event features classes for beginning backyard growers to advanced commercial farmers, plus a farm to table dinner, trade show, seed exchange, children's program, and pre-conference, events. The OGS Spring Conference is largest, locally-run, sustainability conference in the Southeast. The cost is: \$50 for Saturday, \$45 for Sunday with early registration discounts by January 31, 2016. Cost for registration is an additional \$15 after January 31st and at the door.

The event, which is open to the public, provides practical, regionally-appropriate workshops on organic growing, permaculture, homesteading, urban farming, and rural living. This year's conference offers more than 70 sessions per day in themed tracks including Gardening, Mushrooms, Soils,

March 12&13, 2016



More Information

[Press Release as .pdf](#)

[Press Release as .doc](#)

Details

Name: Organic Growers School Spring Conference
Date: March 12-13, 2016
Location: UNCA, Asheville, NC
Cost: \$50 for Saturday, \$45 for Sunday (Early Bird Registration by January 31, 2016). Registration is an additional \$15 after January 31st and at the door.
Pre-Event: Pre-conference workshops on Friday, March 11, 2016.
Register: Online [here](#).
Follow: [Facebook Event](#).
Website: [here](#).

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Livestock, Herbs, Permaculture, Sustainable Forestry, Homesteading, Cooking, Poultry, and Farmers Beginner to Advanced. New tracks for 2016 include Sustainable Living and Voices from the Field. A complete list of the classes can be viewed on the website but a sampling includes: Sustainable Hemp Production, How to Diagnose Vegetable Diseases, How to be a Fruit Nut, Mead Making, Intuitive Plant Medicine, Urban Orchard, Root Cellars, Mushroom Cultivation, Sustainable Poultry, Soils 101, Rooftop Farming and Tiny Houses.

Throughout the weekend, there are also half-day, limited space, hands-on workshops that host specialized instructors. These half-day classes focus on do-it-yourself subjects:

- Reclaiming the Apothecary with Melissa Fryer
- Create a Four Season Garden with Ira Wallace
- Spoon Carving the Old Way with Becky Beyer
- Permaculture Designs for Small Farms and Homesteads with Shawn Jadrnicek
- Self Reliant Animal Feed with Karl Warkomski
- Homesteading with Hoops, Hops, Hives and Habitats with Becki Janes
- Domestication of Wild Plants and Human Connection with Natalie Bogwalker
- The Art of Friction Fire with Tyler Lavenburg
- Hands-On with Cordage with Rachel Shopper
- Log Inoculation with Rodney Webb
- Orchard with James Geoffrey Steen
- Holy Honey Bees with Skye Taylor
- Ferments and Broth with Janelle Lucido-Conate
- Bird Language with Luke Cannon and Clint Corley

The 2016 Spring Conference will feature these full-day, pre-Conference, workshops on Friday March 11th



The Principles of Biodynamics: An In-depth Study
with The Barefoot Farmer, Jeff Poppen

Join the Barefoot Farmer for a full day of inspiration looking deeper into the knowledge of how people grew plants and animals before the advent of industrial agriculture. Nature knows best, and we can mimic her on our farms and in our gardens. This introductory workshop will take the foundational material and show how to grow a garden and tend farmland profitably, easily and sustainably, without extensive off-farm inputs. This workshop will first give a general overview of the basic building block elements of plants and how the biodynamic method ensures healthy plant growth through microbial interaction with the whole farm organism. Biodynamic principles that will be focused on include: remineralization; legumes and cover crops; livestock and composting; and proper loosening of the soil.

Ten Medicinal Herbs to Know and Grow: A Sustainable Apothecary in

[Newsletter Signup](#)

How to Register

Interested participants may register online at www.organicgrowersschool.org, or request a mailed registration form from sabrina@organicgrowersschool.org or (828) 278-9332.

Full Schedule



List of Saturday Classes by Track

GARDENING TRACK

- 1: Moss Gardens
- 2: In Defense of Okra
- 3: Intensive Vegetable Production on a Small Scale
- 4: Evolution of the Southeastern Native Garden

MUSHROOMS TRACK

- 1: Mushroom Cultivation for Everyone
- 2: Local Mushroom Identification
- 3: Medicinal Mushrooms: Cultivation, Extractions and Product Dev.
- 4: The Wood Wide Web

SOILS TRACK

- 1: Soils 101
- 2: Building Biologically Active Compost Piles
- 3: How Healthy are Your Soils?
- 4: Plant & Animal Integration

LIVESTOCK TRACK

- 1: Ecosystem Management with Meat Goats
- 2: Strategies for Farming on Leased Land
- 3: Small Scale Aquaculture and Aquaponics
- 4: Incorporating Wet Brewer's Grains Into Livestock Diets

SUSTAINABLE LIVING TRACK

- 1: Humanure
- 2: Enhancing Your Garden With Structures that Last
- 3: The Tiny House
- 4: Well-Stocked Pantry: Food Preservation without Canning

COMMERCIAL FARMERS I TRACK

- 1: Family Harmony and the Sustainable Farm
- 2: Intro to Biodynamics
- 3: New Times, New Tools: Cultivating Climate Resilience on Your Farm
- 4: Introduction to Seed Saving

your Garden and Forest
**with Patricia Kyritsi
Howell**

Plant an apothecary in your garden and learn the practical art of herbal self-reliance! Discover 10 essential herbs that will produce medicine, food, and beauty for you and your family. This in-depth, full day workshop introduces each herb, its historical and current uses, detailed, easy-to-follow guidelines for growing and harvesting, as well as medicine making instructions and recipes for incorporating these herbs into everyday life. Get inspired in your garden and learn how to grow and use these wonderful herbs from a renowned herbalist. Plants covered include: Ashwaganda (*Withania somnifera*); Boneset (*Eupatorium perforatum*); Echinacea (*Echinacea spp.*); Elder (*Sambucus nigra/Canadensis*); Holy Basil (*Ocimum sanctum*); Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinale*); Sage (*Salvia officinalis*); Vitex (*Agnus castus*); Motherwort (*Leonurus cardiac*); Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*)



Backyard Chickens & Beyond, **with Jim Adkins
of the Sustainable
Poultry Network**

Are you interested in learning the entire process of breeding, hatching & growing your own chickens? This on-farm workshop will cover everything you need to know including: identify the poultry breed that best suits your farm; learn how to brood, properly feed & grow poultry, basic husbandry, disease control, and also the basics of processing & cooking. Join these sustainable poultry specialists for the A-Z of homesteading, backyard chickens; and you'll be off and running in no time.

New for the 2016 Spring Conference is an evening event entitled Farm to Table Dinner: Dine with Pierre & OGS: to benefit Organic Growers School. The event will be held on Saturday, March 12, 2016 at 5:30pm at the UNCA Campus, Asheville, NC. Directly following the last class, participants will enjoy exclusive reception and organic, farm-to-table dinner in an elegant setting. Diners will celebrate local food and farmers and extend the joy and connection of the day. All proceeds benefit the important work of Organic Growers School, and tickets can be purchased on a sliding scale.

COMMERCIAL FARMERS II TRACK

- 1: Diagnose Common Vegetable Diseases
- 2: Crossing Your T's Dotting Your I's
- 3: Evaluating Scale: Does My Farm Fit Me?
- 4: Climate Resilience Mgmt. Tools for Commercial Agriculture

POULTRY TRACK

- 1: Poultry Management: What works for Your Farm?
- 2: Advanced Chick Care
- 3: Introduction to Sustainable Poultry
- 4: Permaculture Chickens

COMMUNITY FOOD TRACK

- 1: Grow Food Where People Live
- 2: Community Permaculture: How to Throw a Permablitz
- 3: Re-localizing the Food Shed
- 4: Racial Equity in the Organic Food Movement

PERMACULTURE TRACK

- 1: Case Study: Applying Permaculture Design to Community Food Projects
- 2: Permaculture 101: A Toolkit for Designing Homes, Gardens, & Lives
- 3: Real Life Forest Gardening and Farming
- 4: Action Learning: Hands-on Permaculture Educational Models Panel

HERBS TRACK

- 1: Intuitive Plant Medicine
- 2: Bitter Herbs: Wild and Cultivated
- 3: What Granny Knew: Appalachian Herbal Healing
- 4: Astounding Appalachians: Ecology, Diversity, and Wild Gourmet

SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY TRACK

- 1: Growing Ginseng & Native Botanicals in Your Woods
- 2: Silvo-Pasture Production Systems
- 3: Biological Controls: Woolly Adelgid in NC
- 4: Inoculation, Species, and Methods

HOMESTEADING TRACK

- 1: Urban Orchardling
- 2: Hosting on the Homestead
- 3: Observing and Interacting with Water in the Landscape
- 4: The Root Cellar

COOKING TRACK

- 1: Introduction to Charcuterie
- 2: Mead Making 101
- 3: Food As Medicine: The Rainbow of Health
- 4: Inflammation: Foods and Health

List of Sunday Classes by Track

GARDENING TRACK

- 1: Moss Gardens
- 2: In Defense of Okra
- 3: Milpa Gardening and Cuisine
- 4: Growing Great Garlic

MUSHROOMS TRACK

- 1: Intermediate-Advanced Mushroom Cultivation Techniques
- 2: Sustainable Wild Crafting & Propagation



Very special Guest, Bill Whipple, aka Pierre Geaux, will host the OGS fundraising dinner with all the finesse of a French food snob. Pierre is a passionado for what the French call "Terroir" or local flavor. Recently released from detainment at Guantanamo Bay for telling US customs that he was a "Terrorist", he found American cuisine there to be lacking in what he would say as, "Les choses interessant". Despite this misunderstanding, Pierre is on a mission to teach Americans something about cuisine, and he encourages us to eat something "interesting" by exploring the local flavors of small farms. Pierre will be addressing the dinner audience with profound, esoteric, arrogant, and amusing insights related to food, culture, delight, and the heart.

Expect four delicious courses of expertly curated local foods: colorful samplers showcasing the best in local charcuterie, cheeses, and pickles, unique presentation and mouthwatering main dishes for all palettes, plus delectable dessert. The forthcoming menu is in the works, and promises to showcase spring's freshness, and WNC's bounty.

Additional long-standing traditions at the OGS Spring Conference weekend include the following:

The 12th annual Children's Program for kids ages 4 to 12 which focuses on the importance of the natural environment and gardening sources. This supervised full-day event is split into two age groups, 4-6 and 7-12, with a registration limit of 40 children. Activities include Nursery Dairy Goats, Pollinator Awareness, Starting & Saving Seeds Crafting & Grafting, Urban Gardening & Making Seedballs, Fibers & Felting with Wool, Appalachian Storytelling, and Herbs for Kids. Cost is \$30 per child



- 3: Wild Food: The Cure for our Eden Disorder
- 4: Reishi: Magic, Medicine, and Mystery
- SOILS TRACK
- 1: Soils 101
- 2: Building Biologically Active Compost Piles
- 3: Plant & Animal Integration
- 4: How Healthy are Your Soils?
- LIVESTOCK TRACK
- 1: Ecosystem Management with Meat Goats
- 2: Strategies for Farming on Leased Land
- 3: Small Scale Aquaculture and Aquaponics
- 4: Incorporating Wet Brewer's Grains Into Livestock Diets
- SUSTAINABLE LIVING TRACK
- 1: Enhancing Your Garden With Structures that Last
- 2: The Tiny House
- 3: Solar at Your Home
- 4: Introduction to the Living Building Challenge
- COMMERCIAL FARMERS I TRACK
- 1: Family Harmony and the Sustainable Farm
- 2: Addressing the Farm Land Access Crisis
- 3: Intro to Biodynamics
- 4: Small-Scale Sustainable Hemp Production
- COMMERCIAL FARMERS II TRACK
- 1: Crossing Your T's Dotting Your I's
- 2: Discovering Industrial Hemp Production
- 3: Practical Plant Pathology
- 4: On-Farm Variety Trials: Finding the Best Seedstocks for Your Farm
- POULTRY TRACK
- 1: Poultry Housing: Backyard & Pasture
- 2: Sell Your Poultry Products
- 3: The Joys and Challenges of Incubation
- 4: Feeds and Feeding your Flock
- COMMUNITY FOOD TRACK
- 1: Re-localizing the Food Shed
- 2: Perennial Food in the Commons
- 3: How to Be a Fruit Nut
- 4: Connecting Lives & Landscapes
- PERMACULTURE TRACK
- 1: Permaculture 101: A Toolkit for Designing Homes, Gardens, & Lives
- 2: Case Study: Applying Permaculture Design to Community Food Projects
- 3: Wild Abundance:
- 4: Practical Urban Permaculture
- HERBS TRACK
- 1: Green and Healing Magic
- 2: Bitter Herbs: Wild and Cultivated
- 3: DIY Chinese Herbs
- 4: Wildcrafting Wild Appalachia
- SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY TRACK
- 1: Growing Ginseng & Native Botanicals in Your Woods

per day.

- The Trade Show, which showcases a wide array of exhibitors and products: local farms, gardening suppliers, and cottage industries that specialize in organic products, books and resources for organic growers and Permaculture practitioners, and several non-profit organizations with information on related topics. (A full list of exhibitors is on the Organic Growers School website and is updated regularly.)
- The Seed and Plant Exchange booth is open throughout the weekend and offers us the opportunity to preserve genetic diversity and protect regionally adapted varieties. Attendees may bring excess seeds and small plants to share, barter, or trade. Seed saving supplies and recommended readings will be provided.

Sabrina Wells, OGS Conference Coordinator, says "We are really excited about this year's lineup. We have some exceptional teachers on the schedule and our classes really reflect what our attendees have been asking for."

This event has grown exponentially, from a small gathering of 100 growing enthusiasts in 1993 to a regionally recognized conference drawing over 2000 attendees, exhibitors and speakers. "Our teachers reflect the best our region has to offer, from long time farmers on the cutting edge of biodynamics to renowned herbalists to the very best mushroom experts and thought provoking discussions on community food," says Executive Director, Lee Warren. Warren also says, "while this conference represents exceptional learning opportunities, we also work hard to ensure that our admission prices are some of the lowest in the country for this type of conference. We want to make sure as many people as possible have the opportunity to attend."

As the largest grassroots conferences of its kind in the region, Organic Growers School has served to reinforce Western North Carolina's role as a regional leader in sustainable food and farming. Attendees come from 18 states and Canada, and have described the event as a ritualistic kick start to the growing season, and even "a peeling off of winter," according to local attendee, Lara Ladendorf.

The major sponsors of the 23rd Annual Organic Growers School are Carolina Farm Credit, French Broad Food Co-op, Mountain Rose Herbs, Living Web Farms, Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, Reems Creek Nursery, Earth Tools, Organic Valley, WNC Woman, Living Web Farms, Mountain Xpress, WNCW, Plough to Pantry, Fedco Seeds, Biltmore, Mother Earth News Fair, Tyme in the Garden, Hendersonville Community Co-op, Chelsea Green Publishing, Lenoir-Rhyne University, Nouris and Flourish, Nature's Nog, Fedco and IWANNA.

The OGS Spring Conference is organized annually by Organic

- 2: Silvo-Pasture Production Systems
 - 3: Biological Controls: Woolly Adelgid in NC
 - 4: Inoculation, Species, and Methods
- HOMESTEADING TRACK**
- 1: Urban Orchardring
 - 2: Hosting on the Homestead
 - 3: Got Milk? The Sudsations of Milk Soap!
 - 4: Observing and Interacting with Water in the Landscape
- COOKING TRACK**
- 1: Introduction to Charcuterie
 - 2: Mead Making 102
 - 3: Food As Medicine: The Rainbow of Health
 - 4: Inflammation: Foods and Health

Conference Instructors

Jim Adkins, *Sustainable Poultry Network*
Abby Artemisia, *Mighty Oak From Little Acorn*
Cyndi Ball, *National Ladies Homestead Gathering*
Byron Ballard, *Mother Grove Goddess Temple*
Matt Bennett, *Sundance Power Systems*
Becky Beyer, **Becky's Farm**
Natalie Bogwalker, *Firefly Gathering*
Jack Britt, *WNC Brewers Grain LLC*
Andrew Goodheart Brown, **Orchardist**
Brant Bullock, *King Family Farm*
Vanessa Campbell, *Full Sun Farm*
Luke Cannon, *Astounding Earth*
Ali Casparian, *Bounty and Soul*
Tom Celona, *Nutty Buddy Nurseries*
Janelle Lucido-Conate, **Our Daily Kraut**
Clint Corley, **Living Earth School**
Tradd Cotter, *Mushroom Mountain*
David Cozzo, *Revitalization of Traditional Cherokee Artisan Resources*
Ken Crouse, *Peaceful Valley Gardens*
Ken Czarnomski, **Architect**
Jeanine Davis, *NC State University*
Pam Dawling, *Twin Oaks Community*
Mark Dempsey, *Carolina Farm Stewardship Association*
Suzanna Denison, *WNC Farm Link*
Todd Elliott, **Naturalist**
Tom Elmore, *Thatchmore Farm*
Ashley English, *Small Measure*
Stephens Smith Farrell, **Architect**
Kifu Faruq, *Southeast Wise Women*
Zev Friedman, **Living Systems Design**
Melissa Fryar, *French Broad Food Coop*
Pat Foreman, **The Gossamer Foundation**
Josh Fox, *Fox Herbs & Acupuncture*
Edmund Frost, *Common Wealth Seed Growers*
Dylan Ryls-Hamilton, *Transition Asheville*
Jonathan Hartsell, *Blue Ridge RC&D*
Chad Hellwinckel, *University of Tennessee*
Ronnie Holman, *Hardrock Beef Cattle*
Justin Holt, *The Roots Foundation*
Patricia Kyritsi Howell, *BotanoLogos School of Herbal Studies*
Shawn Jadrnicek, *Clemson University Student Organic Farm*
Becki Janes, *Becki's Bounty*
Karen Johnston, **Sustainable Poultry Network**
Sydney Klein, **Polk County Ag Center**
Tyler Lavenburg, **Forest Floor Wilderness Program**
Meredith Leigh, *Living Web Farms*
Laura Lengnick, *Author*

Growers School, Inc., a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with a mission to inspire, educate, and support people to farm, garden, and live organically. Organic Growers School is the premier provider of practical organic education in the Southern Appalachians. OGS envisions a mutually supportive network of prosperous farmers, productive gardeners and informed consumers engaged in creating healthy communities.

The Spring Conference grew out of the volunteer efforts of a group of farmers and extension specialists who, in 1993, gathered to discuss the need for nuts and bolts, region-specific crop growing information applicable for farmers in Western North Carolina. From this meeting, the Spring Conference was born, along with a mission to deliver practical information about organic agriculture at a reasonable price.

OGS is proud to offer over 150 opportunities for individuals to attend the conference by means of a work exchange program. Persons interested in applying for work exchange/volunteer status should visit the OGS website, and fill out an application. Shifts are filled on a first come, first-served basis.

Interested participants may register on-line at www.organicgrowersschool.org, or request a mailed registration form from sabrina@organicgrowersschool.org or (828) 278-9332.

Registration forms are also available at area retail stores and Cooperative Extension offices. All other inquiries: Contact Coordinator Sabrina Wells at sabrina@organicgrowersschool.org or call (828) 278-9332.

####

- Michael Lewis, *The Growing Warriors Project*
- Chris Link, *Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy*
- Eliza Lord, *SC Upstate Permaculture Society*
- Jean-Marie Lunginbuhl, **NC State**
- William Lyons, **Bluebird Farm**
- Chuck Marsh, *Useful Plants Nursery*
- Annie Martin, Author
- Inga Meadows, *NC Cooperative Extension*
- Shona Jason-Miller, *Slow Food Asheville*
- Ryan Milt, *Asheville Wild Foods*
- Elizabeth Murphy, **Author, Farmer**
- Alan Muskat, *No Taste Like Home*
- Becca Nestler, *Balsam Gardens*
- Tim Ormond, **HydroCycle Engineering**
- Joel Osgood, *Osgood Landscape Architecture*
- Sunil Patel, *Patchwork Urban Farm*
- Elizabeth Pavka, **Nutritionist**
- Marissa Percoco, **Fermentation Enthusiast**
- Jeff Poppen, *The Barefoot Farmer*
- Dov Shoneman, *Daoist Traditions College of Chinese Medical Arts*
- Rachel Shopper, **Forest Floor Wilderness Instructor**
- Chris Smith, *Sow True Seed*
- Jeremy Stauffer, *Nanostead*
- James Geoffrey Steen, *Raven Ridge Farmscapes*
- Asia Suler, *One Willow Apothecaries*
- Skye Taylor, **Author**
- Brad Todd, *Lucky Clays Farm*
- Cindy Trisler, *Mudluscious Pottery and Gardens*
- Eric Walker, **University of Tennessee**
- Ira Wallace, *Southern Exposure Seed Exchange*
- Margot Wallston, *Hemlock Restoration Initiative*
- Kevin Ward, *SouthEast Ecological Design*
- Karl Warkomski, *Prota Culture, LLC*
- Jane Weaver, *Earth & Spirit Design*
- Rodney Webb, *Salamander Springs Garden*
- Bill Whipple, *Nutty Buddy Collective*
- Kelley Wilkinson, *Laughing Frog Farm*

Registration Brochure



Organic Growers School • PO Box 17804 • Asheville, NC 28816

<http://www.organicgrowersschool.org>

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