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## Harvest Conference (September 5&6) Features Janisse Ray, Award-Winning Author

### Press Release August 2014

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For Immediate Release:

**Asheville, NC.** ORGANIC GROWERS SCHOOL is thrilled to be welcoming award-winning author, activist, naturalist and farmer Janisse Ray as workshop leader and keynote speaker for the 1<sup>st</sup> annual Harvest Conference on September 5&6, 2014. The long-awaited [Harvest Conference](#), is a fall event featuring all the popularity of the Organic Growers School's Spring Conference with a focus on season extension, home cooking, fermentation, preservation, fall & winter growing, self-reliance, homestead skills, seed saving, composting, herbal medicine, and wild ideas.

Janisse Ray is author of five books of literary nonfiction, including *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, a memoir about growing up on a junkyard in the ruined longleaf pine ecosystem of the Southeast. Her latest book, on open-pollinated seeds, is *The Seed Underground*, published in 2012. Janisse holds an MFA from the University of Montana, and in 2007 was awarded an honorary doctorate from Unity College in Maine. She is a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellow and a visiting professor, scholar-in-residence, and writer-in-

### More Information

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### Details

**Name:** Harvest Conference, Savor the Abundance

**Date:** September 6, 2014

**Location:** AB Tech, Main Campus, Asheville, NC 28801

**Cost:** \$40 until 9/5. \$45 at the door.

**Pre-Event:** Pre-conference workshops on Friday, Sept. 5, 2014

**Pre-Event Location:** Warren Wilson College

**Pre-Event Cost:** \$40-70 until 9/4.

**Keynote Address:** A Field Guide to Hope with Janisse Ray, Saturday, September 6, 2014 at Ferguson Auditorium, AB Tech Campus, Asheville.

**Register:** Online [here](#).

**Follow:** [Facebook Event](#).

**Website:** [here](#).

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### Extended Bio



residence at colleges across the country. Janisse lectures widely on nature, community, agriculture, wildness, sustainability and the politics of wholeness. She is an organic gardener, seedsaver, and slow-food cook. [Extended bio for Janisse Ray.](#)

Janisse will be teaching at the following times:

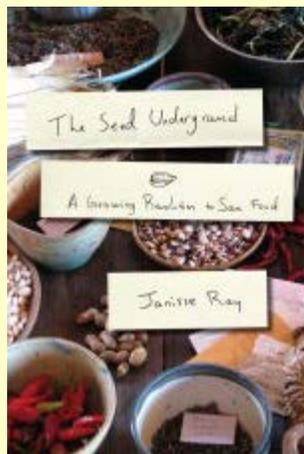
### Full Day Workshop

Saturday, September 5th, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM  
The Pavilion at Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, NC  
\$70 by 9/4

Workshop Description:

#### ***Speaking of Nature—Place-Based Creative Writing***

Only by telling our stories will we create a new era of the human. One in which we all lead sustainable and meaningful lives. If you are a lover of food and nature, a farmer with a literary bent, in the likes of Gene Logsdon or David Kline, or if you want to acquire more skills to spiff up your garden blog, this is the workshop for you. Join Janisse Ray, author of *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* and *Seed Underground*, to explore ideas of nature, place, community, and sustainability. In a satisfying blend of journaling, writing prompts, nature-as-muse experiences, and thought-provoking exercises, we will investigate our personal relationships to the land and enrich the body of literature with our love of the natural world. Register here.



### Class

At the Harvest Conference, Saturday, September 6th, 2:00-3:30PM  
At AB Tech, Main Campus, Asheville, NC  
\$40 by 9/5 for a full day of classes. \$45 on-site.

Class Description:

#### ***Seed Underground—A Growing Revolution to Save Seed***

Of the thousands of seed varieties available at the turn of the 20th century, 94 percent have been lost — forever. With a lyricism that prompted a New York Times writer to proclaim her the Rachel Carson of the south, Janisse brings us the

inspiring stories of ordinary gardeners whose aim is to save open-

Writer, naturalist, and activist Janisse Ray is author of five books of literary nonfiction and a collection of naturepoetry.

Her most recent book, *The Seed Underground: A Growing Revolution to Save Food* is a look at what's happening to seeds, which is to say the future of food. The book has won the Arlene Eisenberg Award for Writing that Makes a Difference, American Horticultural Society Book Award, Nautilus Gold Book Award, Garden Writers Association Gold Award, and Green Prize for Sustainable Literature Award.

Ray is the William Kittredge Distinguished Visiting Writer at the University of Montana 2014.

pollinated varieties like Old Time Tennessee muskmelon and Long County Longhorn okra—varieties that will be lost if we don't grow, save, and swap the seeds.

### Keynote Address

*At the Harvest Conference, Saturday, September 6th, 2014, 8:00PM*

*AB Tech, Main Campus, Ferguson Auditorium*

Free for Harvest Conference Attendees or \$5-15 sliding scale.

MUST get there early - first come, first serve - seats will fill.

Keynote Address Description:

#### ***A Field Guide to Hope***

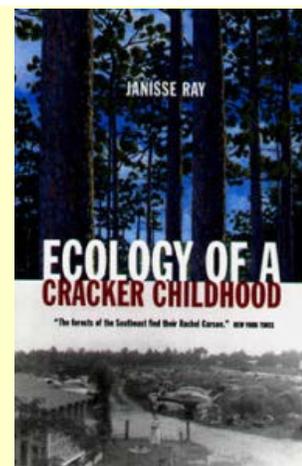
More and more it seems that looming threats are underlying our days. Being up against the giants of climate change, corporate rule, and genetic modification affects everything we do. Yet across the country, and without fanfare, folks are reclaiming biodiversity, local food, and community. Janisse offers stories of big movements and little, individuals and towns, to remind us why we're doing this important work and inspire us that we're not alone. When we hear real-life stories, whether of success or failure, they are a powerful and profound guide to help us gather strength and carry on renewed. Join us for this artful convergence of life, truth, and community as we remember together how to give thanks.



Organic Growers School is well-known to offer down-to-earth advice on growing and sustainable living, while remaining affordable and accessible.

The Saturday schedule of workshops is designed with the backyard grower, homesteader, and home-scale farmer in mind. [Full Schedule is available.](#)

Now in its twenty-first year, The Organic Growers School has



She holds an MFA from the University of Montana and in 2007 was awarded an honorary doctorate from Unity College in Maine.

Her first book, *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, a memoir about growing up on a junkyard in the ruined longleaf pine ecosystem of the Southeast, was published by Milkweed Editions in 1999. The book won Southeastern Booksellers Award for Nonfiction 1999, American Book Award 2000, Southern Environmental Law Center 2000 Award for Outstanding Writing, and Southern Book Critics Circle Award 2000. It was a New York Times Notable Book and was chosen as the Book All Georgians Should Read. Besides a plea to protect and restore the glorious pine flatwoods, the book is a hard look at family, mental illness, poverty, and religion. Essayist Wendell Berry called the book "well done and deeply moving." Anne Raver of *The New York Times* said, "The forests of the South find their Rachel Carson."

*Wild Card Quilt: Taking a Chance on Home* (about

offered a spring event which has grown from a small gathering of 100 growing enthusiasts in 1994 to a regionally recognized spring event conference drawing over 1700 attendees, exhibitors and speakers from 18 different states and Canada. One of the largest conferences of its type in the region, The Organic Growers School has served to reinforce Western North Carolina's role as a regional leader in organic farming. The Harvest Conference is the long-awaited and much-requested fall event.

The trade show 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 major sponsors of the 21st Annual Organic Growers School are Carolina Farm Credit, Sow True Seeds, Mountain Xpress, Countryside Organics and Mountain Rose Herbs with additional sponsorship support from Johnny's Seeds, Katuah Market, Chelsea Green, Gaia Herbs, Reedy Fork Farm, WNCW, Iwanna, The American Herbalists Guild, Celtic Sea Salt, Nature's Path, French Broad Food Coop, WNC Woman, Laurel of Asheville, Mother Earth News Fair, and WCQS.

The Organic Growers School is organized annually by the Organic Growers School INC, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

A full-day of workshops for beginning to advanced growers plus a trade show, seed exchange, keynote address, and pre-conference events. Cost: \$40 for Saturday Registration. Pre-Conference Workshops are \$40-70. Register online at [www.organicgrowersschool.org](http://www.organicgrowersschool.org), register by phone at (828) 564-1179, or request a mailed registration form: [jenn@organicgrowersschool.org](mailto:jenn@organicgrowersschool.org).

All other inquiries: Contact Executive Director, Lee Warren at [lee@organicgrowersschool.org](mailto:lee@organicgrowersschool.org) or call (828) 772-5846.

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rural community) was published by Milkweed Editions in early 2003. *Pinhook: Finding Wholeness in a Fragmented Land* (the story of a 750,000-acre wildland between south Georgia and north Florida) was published by Chelsea Green in 2005. Ray's first book of poetry, *A House of Branches*, came out in 2010 from Wind Publication and won a Southern Booksellers Award for Poetry 2011. *Drifting Into Darien: A Personal and Natural History of the Altamaha River—a lovesong and a call to action*—was released by UGA Press in 2011.

The author has been visiting professor and writer-in-residence at many universities and colleges across the county. She has given hundreds of lectures and readings. When at home, Ray attempts to live a simple, sustainable life on Red Earth Farm in southern Georgia with her husband and daughter. Ray is an organic gardener, tender of farm animals, slow-food cook, and seed-saver. She lectures nationally and widely on nature, community, agriculture, wildness, sustainability, and the politics of wholeness.

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