

2025

Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference

**Kentucky State Horticultural Society
169th Annual Meeting**

**Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association
54nd Annual Meeting**

**Organic Association of Kentucky
and
Kentucky Horticulture Council**

In cooperation with
University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
Kentucky State University College of Agriculture, Communities and the Environment
and
Kentucky Department of Agriculture

January 6-7, 2025

Marriott Griffin Gate
Lexington, KY



CONFERENCE AT-A-GLANCE

	Sunday, January 5	Monday, January 6		Tuesday, January 7	
Salon A & B	Tradeshow Set-up	Tradeshow & Coffee Break	Tradeshow & Coffee Break	Tradeshow & Coffee Break	Tradeshow
Salon C	Bringing the Farm to School Workshop	General Session	Direct Marketing	Organic Production	Marketing & Business Management
Salon D	Farmers Market Short Course		Fruit Physiology & Abiotic Stress — KY Strawberry Association Meeting	Fruit Pest & Disease Management — KSHS Business Meeting	Production Systems of Fruit Crops
Salon E	Farm Food Safety Plan Writing Workshop		Vegetable Production (Experienced)	KVGA Business Meeting — Vegetable Production (Beginner)	Urban & Small-Scale Farming
Salon F			Beginning Farmers	Specialty Cut Flower Short Course	Specialty Cut Flower Short Course
Salon G & H		KSHS Board (G) KVGA Board (H)	Greenhouse Production	High Tunnel Production	Specialty Crop Block Grant Project Reports
Lane's End, Dixiana, Darby Dan, and Calumet Rooms	Tradeshow Set-up	Tradeshow & Coffee Break	Tradeshow & Coffee Break	Tradeshow & Coffee Break	Tradeshow

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

All Times are Eastern Standard Time

Sunday, January 5 — Pre-Conference Sessions

3:00–9:00 p.m.	Registration	Front Foyer
4:00–6:00 p.m.	Bringing the Farm To School Grower Training	Salon C
4:00–7:00 p.m.	Farmers Market Short Course	Salon D
4:00–6:00 p.m.	Farm Food Safety Plan Writing Workshop	Salon E
6:30-7:30 p.m.	Vegetable Growers Meet & Greet	Salon F
7:30-8:30 p.m.	Fruit Year in Review / Meet & Greet	Salon F
3:00-9:00 p.m.	Exhibitor Set-up	Foyer, Salons A&B, Lane’s End, Dixiana, Darby Dan, and Calumet

Monday, January 6 — Conference Sessions

8:00 a.m.	Exhibits and Registration Desk Open
8:45 a.m.	General Session, Salons C-F
10:30 a.m.	Break
12:00 p.m.	Luncheon Salons A & B, C-F
1:30 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions Direct Marketing, Salon C Fruit Physiology & Abiotic Stress, Salon D Vegetable Production for Experienced Growers, Salon E Beginning Farmers, Salon F Greenhouse Production, Salons G & H
2:30 p.m.	Break
5:00 p.m.	Exhibits Close
5:20 p.m.	Kentucky Strawberry Association Meeting, Salon D
6:00 p.m.	Urban & Small Farms Meet & Greet: Building a Supportive Agricultural Community, Hotel Bar Area

Tuesday, January 7 — Conference Sessions

8:00 a.m.	Exhibits and Registration Desk Open
8:30 a.m.	Concurrent Sessions Organic Production, Salon C Fruit Pest & Disease Management, Salon D Beginning Vegetable Production, Salon E Specialty Cut Flower Short Course, Salon F High Tunnel Production, Salons G & H
10:00 a.m.	Break
11:45 a.m.	Luncheon Salons A & B, C-F
1:30 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions Marketing & Business Management, Salon C Production Systems of Fruit Crops, Salon D Urban & Small-Scale Farming, Salon E Specialty Cut Flower Short Course, Salon F Specialty Crop Block Grant Project Reports, Salons G & H
3:00 p.m.	Exhibit Hall Closes
3:45 p.m.	A Deep Dive into Urban & Small- Scale Farming: Solutions-Based Roundtable
4:00 p.m.	Post-Conference Orchard Tour

Dear Fruit and Vegetable Growers:

The 2025 Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference will be held in-person at the Marriott Griffin Gate in Lexington, KY, on **Monday and Tuesday, January 6 and 7, 2025**. You may pre-register by mail or online (<https://kentuckyhorticulturecouncil.ticketspice.com/2025-kentucky-fruit-vegetable-conference-attendee-tickets>).

The event will begin on Sunday, January 5 with a pre-conference Farmers Market Short Course, Farm Food Safety Plan Writing Workshop, and a Bringing the Farm to School Grower Training followed by Vegetable and Fruit Grower Round Table Discussions.

Conference sessions include Direct Marketing, Commercial Fruit and Vegetable Production, Organic Production, Protected Ag (High Tunnel) Production, Marketing and Business Management, a Cut Flower Short Course and more new educational tracks. We have many growers on the program as well as a number of excellent out-of-state speakers this year and our trade show will feature more than 60 exhibitors.

Note that registration includes the luncheons on Monday and Tuesday featuring Kentucky Proud products. A Trading Post bulletin board will be available to sell used equipment, so bring along any descriptions containing your name, phone number, and the equipment price for posting.

PLEASE make your room reservations directly with the hotel at 859-231-5100 or using the [group booking link](#). Our block of rooms will be held until Friday, December 13, 2024. After this date, room prices will be higher. Be sure to let the hotel know that you will be staying for the Kentucky Fruit & Vegetable Conference to obtain our special room rate for a single or double of \$119.00. We encourage growers to stay at the Marriott Griffin Gate to help cover meeting overhead expenses.

The \$80 meeting pre-registration fee or \$100 registration on site includes a year's membership in the KVGA, KSHS, or OAK and entrance into all educational sessions as well as lunch on both days. Pre-registration means your tickets and name tag will be ready for you at the registration table when you arrive at the meeting. Name badges will be required to enter meeting rooms. Pre-registration forms or online registrations need to be in our hands by Friday, December 13, 2024. After this date you may continue to register online or on-site at the conference at the \$100 rate. Phone registrations will not be accepted.

NOTE: we strongly urge you to pre-register as on-site registration will be \$100 and luncheon tickets may not be available.

If you would like to serve on the Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association (KVGA) or Kentucky State Horticultural Society (KSHS) boards of directors or would like to nominate another member, please designate this at registration.

If you are unable to attend and you would like to remain a member of the KVGA, KSHS, or OAK, please complete online registration or return the registration form with a check to KHC, PO Box 21736, Lexington, KY 40522-1736 to continue your association membership.

We are committed to hosting a safe and enjoyable Conference, so please check the Conference website (<https://kyhortcouncil.org/kentucky-fruit-and-vegetable-conference/>) for additional information about meeting precautions and any meeting updates.

Sincerely,

Shubin Saha

Shubin Saha, President
Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association

Kevan Evans

Kevan Evans, President
Kentucky State Horticultural Society

BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

KY STATE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

President: Kevan Evans, Georgetown
Vice-President: David Haney, Nancy
Secretary: Joanna Hinton, Hodgenville
Treasurer: Amanda Gajdzik, Shelbyville
Directors:
Brandon Barnett, Cynthiana
Stuart Brenneman, Tipton, IN
Kevin Byrnside, Shelbyville
Megan Fields, Versailles
Adam Jones, Morgantown
Tommy Parker, Louisville
Billy Reid, Owensboro
Michelle Sigler, Paducah

Advisors:

Daniel Becker, Princeton
Kirk Pomper, Frankfort
Jonathan Price, Bowling Green
Caroline Roush, Morehead
John Strang, Lexington
Shawn Wright, Jackson



KY VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION

President: Shubin Saha, Stanford
Vice-President: Nathan Howell, Scottsville
Secretary: Rhonda Cornett, London
Treasurer: Ben Wilson, Richmond
Directors:
Andre' Barbour, Canmer
Jonathan Berkshire, Glencoe
Travis Cleaver, Hodgenville
Ron McMaine, Salvisa
David Neville, Campbellsburg
Brad Reid, Owensboro
Catherine Shake, Louisville
Megan Sharpe, Georgetown
Kiristen Webb, Hazard
Joel Wilson, Nancy

Advisors:

Sandi Deutsch, Taylorsville
Annette Meyer-Heisdorffer, Owensboro
Rachel Rudolph, Lexington
John Strang, Lexington
Shawn Wright, Jackson



Are you interested in serving on the board of one of Kentucky's prestigious produce organizations?

You can indicate your interest at registration or contact the organization's current president with any questions:

Kentucky State Horticultural Society

Kevan Evans (Kevan@evansorchard.com)

Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association

Shubin Saha (s.saha@kyfreshharvest.com)

Why join the board of directors of KSHS or KVGA?

- Support your industry
- Expand your network
- Develop knowledge and skills to advance your business
- Influence policy decisions

Being a board member is an important responsibility and can have a tremendous positive impact on your personal business!

BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

Chair:	Andrew Oles, Berea College, Madison County
Vice-Chair:	SaraVard Von Gruenigen, Central KY Ag Credit, Garrard County
Exec. Director:	Brooke Gentile, Fayette County
Secretary:	Bryce Baumann, Lazy Eight Stock Farm, Madison County
Treasurer:	Steve Muntz, Firefly Farm, Montgomery County
Directors:	Maggie Dungan, Salad Days Farm, Woodford County Carolyn Gahn, Applegate, Jessamine County Julia Sampson, Consultant, Washington County, AR Amber Sciligo, The Organic Center, Fayette County Tonya Smith, Kentucky Ag Development Advocacy, Barren County
Advisors:	Sean Clark, Berea College, Madison County David Gonthier, UK, Fayette County Krista Jacobsen, UK, Anderson County David Koester, UK, Boone County Rachel Rudolph, UK, Fayette County Mark Williams, UK, Fayette County



PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5

All Times Are Eastern Standard Time

4:00-6:00 p.m. **FARMERS MARKET SHORT COURSE**

Kate Hamilton and Sharon Spencer Presiding, Salon C

Are you a farmers' market leader, farmers' market vendor or even just someone thinking about selling at a farmers' market? Join us for the pre-conference session for an engaging and interactive short course on farmers' markets. Come learn how to grow your market and grow your individual sales. Learn about new changes for 2025 for the farmers' market program, funding opportunities and updates from the farmers' market nutritional programs (Senior and WIC). But that's not all, from our partners with the University of Kentucky to learn about the farmers' market price reports from 2024 for rural vs. non-rural markets. Also, the UK team will be partnering up with CFA to discuss events, promotions and challenges facing markets. Lots of good information to take back to your markets.

4:00-6:00 p.m. **FARM FOOD SAFETY PLAN WORKSHOP**

Bryan Brady and Courtney Bartlett, Presiding, Salon D

Attention to food safety is critical to your farm's reputation. GAPs audits are becoming a standard requirement for many buyers of Kentucky produce crops and can give you a competitive advantage when selling. To help Kentucky growers focus on food safety and access markets that require third-party audit certification, we are offering a workshop focused on writing a farm food safety plan. The session will include an overview of different GAPs audits and details about on-farm technical assistance. You will learn the main structural components of a food safety plan such as standard operating procedures (SOPs), common food safety policies, and how to keep records efficiently. We will work through SOP and recordkeeping templates, and you will even get to write some specific to your operation with hands-on assistance. If you have a laptop, bring it along to work on the templates digitally. The format will be very interactive with opportunities to discuss challenges and develop solutions with experts.

4:00-6:00 p.m. **BRINGING THE FARM TO SCHOOL GROWER TRAINING**

Laurie White, Presiding, Salon E

Are you a KY producer interested in selling to school markets? We invite you to attend our Bringing the Farm to School Grower Training program. The Bringing the Farm to School curriculum is a series for ag producers from the National Farm to School Network meant to prepare producers to sell to school markets. With our KY spin, we hope you'll walk away feeling ready to approach your local school! All agriculture producers are invited to attend the training.

6:30-7:30 p.m. **VEGETABLE GROWERS MEET & GREET**

Rachel Rudolph, Presiding, Salon F

7:30-8:30 p.m. **FRUIT GROWERS YEAR IN REVIEW / MEET & GREET**

Brent Arnoldussen, Presiding, Salon F

5:00-9:00 p.m. **Exhibitor Set-up**

Foyer Area, Salons A&B, and Lane's End, Dixiana, Darby Dan, and Calumet Rooms

GENERAL SESSION

MONDAY, JANUARY 6

All Times are Eastern Standard Time

(1) General Session

Salons C, D, E, F

Kevan Evans, Presiding

- 9:00 a.m. 2025 Fruit & Vegetable Conference Welcome — Shubin Saha
- 9:10 a.m. Kentucky Horticulture Council Update — Trevor Terry
- 9:25 a.m. University of Kentucky Horticulture Department Update — Mark Williams
- 9:35 a.m. Kentucky State University Update — Marcus Bernard (invited)
- 9:45 a.m. Kentucky Department of Agriculture Produce Safety Update — Jonathan Shell
- 10:00 a.m. Kentucky Farm Bureau Farmland Transition Program — Renee Carrico
- 10:20 a.m. Building Bridges to Farmer Mental Health – Paul Norrod
- 10:40 a.m. Cider/Coffee Break and Visit Exhibits — Trade Show Areas
- 11:00 a.m. Weather Alert: NEW smartphone app from the UK Ag Weather Center – Matt Dixon
- 11:30 a.m. Produce Safety Grower Updates – Doris Hamilton and Paul Priyesh
-
- 12:00 p.m. EXHIBITOR/GROWER LUNCHEON — Salons A-F
-
- 12:00 p.m. KSHS and KVGA BOARD MEETINGS
KSHS and KVGA board members should pick up their lunch at the buffet in Salons A&B and then meet in the designated room.
- Kentucky State Horticultural Society – Salon G
- Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association – Salon H

MONDAY CONFERENCE SESSIONS

MONDAY AFTERNOON, JANUARY 6

4 CONCURRENT SESSIONS — All times are Eastern Standard Time

Concurrent sessions enable participants to attend topics of interest in different sessions.

(2) DIRECT MARKETING

Salon C

Sharon Spencer, Presiding

- 1:30 p.m. *Deepening Customer Relationships Through Email Marketing* – Brett Wolff and Emily Spencer
- 2:00 p.m. *Succession Planning - Is it time to have “the talk”?* Kellie Padgett and Spencer Guinn
- 2:30 p.m. **Cider/Coffee Break and Visit Exhibits — Trade Show Areas**
- 3:10 p.m. *Mapping the Customer’s Journey: Marketing Strategies to Find & Keep Customers* – Emily Spencer
- 3:40 p.m. *Using Business Entities for Agriculture* – Rusty Rumley
- 4:10 p.m. *Landowner Liability and Agritourism Statues in Kentucky* – Rusty Rumley

(3) FRUIT PHYSIOLOGY AND ABIOTIC STRESS

Salon D

Sarah Imbus, Presiding

- 1:30 p.m. *Developing Small-Scale Container Production of Native Fruiting Shrubs* — Marcus Wilkerson
- 2:00 p.m. *Branching Out: Overcoming blind wood and increasing lateral bearing surface in apple orchards* — Annie Vogel
- 2:30 p.m. **Cider/Coffee Break and Visit Exhibits — Trade Show Areas**
- 3:10 p.m. *Understanding and Managing Bitter-pit and other Calcium-related Disorders in Apple* — John Strang
- 3:40 p.m. *Impacts of Weather and Climate Trends on Fruit Production in Kentucky* — Matt Dixon
- 4:10 p.m. *Malusim: A free application for precision management of apple* — Brent Arnoldussen
- 4:40 p.m. *Fruit Physiology and Abiotic Stress Grower Panel*

(4) VEGETABLE PRODUCTION FOR EXPERIENCED GROWERS

Salon E

Robert Brockman, Presiding

- 1:30 p.m. *Maximizing Production Among the Rows* – Annette Wszelaki
- 2:00 p.m. *Getting the Most out of Your Winter Squash Crops: Which Types Yield and Store Best* – Annette Wszelaki
- 2:30 p.m. **Cider/Coffee Break and Visit Exhibits — Trade Show Areas**
- 3:10 p.m. *Pest Outlook for 2025* – Ric Bessin
- 3:40 p.m. *Southern Blight: The Hot Weather Foe* – Nicole Gauthier
- 4:10 p.m. *Biofumigation in Kentucky: Is it feasible?* - Rachel Rudolph

(5) BEGINNING FARMER BASICS

Salon F

Delia Scott, Presiding

- 1:30 p.m. *Essential Cover Crops for Beginning Farmers* – Steve Diver
- 2:00 p.m. *Producer Perspective* — Melissa Wyatt
- 2:30 p.m. **Cider/Coffee Break and Visit Exhibits — Trade Show Areas**
- 3:10 p.m. *What Can the UK CCD Do for You?* — Alexis Sheffield
- 3:40 p.m. *Equipment Basics for Beginning Farmers* – Steve Higgins
- 4:10 p.m. *Finding Your Market and Growing Your Sales: Marketing Strategies for Beginning Farmers* – Kati Bowman
- 4:40 p.m. *Resources for Beginning Farmers* – Delia Scott

MONDAY CONFERENCE SESSIONS

MONDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING, JANUARY 6

All Times are Eastern Standard Time

(6) GREENHOUSE PRODUCTION

Salons G & H

Arundathi Sharma, Presiding

1:30 p.m. *Managing Greenhouse Diseases: Factors that Influence Fungicide Efficacy* — Nicole Gauthier

2:00 p.m. *Insuring Greenhouse Equipment* — Casey Byrd

2:30 p.m. **Cider/Coffee Break and Visit Exhibits — Trade Show Areas**

3:10 p.m. *Improving Lighting in Controlled Environments* — Qinglu Ying

3:40 p.m. Morehead State University Student Research Projects: *Developing a zeoponic lettuce production system in a controlled environment* — Hudson Cox and Ricky Young // *Establishing Blueberries in High-pH Soils: Concerns and Outcomes* — Kirsten Brown and Emma Miller

4:10 p.m. *Climate Management for Greenhouse Production* — Andrew Brooks

4:40 p.m. *On-farm Water Management in a Large-Scale Strawberry Greenhouse* — Bosch Berries

5:00 p.m. Exhibits Close

5:20 p.m. KY Strawberry Association Meeting

6:00-9:00 p.m.

Urban and Small-Scale Grower Meet and Greet: Building a Supportive Agricultural Community

Are you an urban or small-scale grower currently engaged in or interested in learning more about how to start or expand a produce or horticulture business in Kentucky? Join us for a Meet & Greet in the terrace bar area, open to all urban & small-scale growers and technical service providers.

TUESDAY CONFERENCE SESSIONS

TUESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 7 — All times are Eastern Standard Time

8:00 a.m. Exhibits Open & Registration Opens

5 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Concurrent sessions will enable participants to attend topics of interest in different sessions.

(7) ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Salon C

Sarah Guerink, Presiding

- 8:30 a.m. *Dialing in fertility on high tunnel tomatoes for quality and yield* – Adam Barr and Rachel Rudolph
- 9:00 a.m. *Compost use in organic vegetable systems: goals, alternatives, and precautions* – Rachel Rudolph
- 9:30 a.m. *Organic weed management between annual vegetable crop beds* – Kristi Durbin and Erin Haramoto
- 10:00 a.m. **Cider/Coffee Break and Visit Exhibits — Trade Show Areas**
- 10:40 a.m. *Organic lettuce production across all seasons from seed to storage* – Bryce Baumann, Joseph Monroe, and Anna Raines
- 11:10 a.m. Continued

(8) FRUIT PEST & DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Salon D

Brent Arnoldussen, Presiding

- 8:30 a.m. *Neopestalotiopsis in Strawberry: New Disease with New Challenges* — Nicole Gauthier
- 9:00 a.m. *Automated pest monitoring systems for orchards* — Ric Bessin
- 9:30 a.m. *Effects and interactions of annual applications of prohexadione calcium and actigard on orchard establishment, yield, and disease management* — Annie Vogel
- 10:00 a.m. **Cider/Coffee Break and Visit Exhibits — Trade Show Areas**
- 10:40 a.m. *Persistence of Woody Plant Diseases: Cankers Diebacks, and Blights* — Nicole Gauthier
- 11:10 a.m. KSHS Annual Business Meeting

(9) BEGINNING VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

Salon E

Kimberly Leonberger, Presiding

- 8:00 a.m. KVGA Annual Business Meeting
- 8:30 a.m. *Effects of Organic vs. Inorganic Fertilizers on Soil Health and Tomato Yield* – Myrrisa Belcher
- 8:45 a.m. *Impact of Compost on Soil and Plant Tissue Nutrition* – Eva Bogue, Anna Griggs, and Jonathan Barnes
- 9:00 a.m. *Movin' on Up! Grower perspectives on scaling up your farming operation* – Jonathan Berkshire, Brent and Rhonda Cornett, Scott and Shae Lowe, and Susan Miller
- 9:30 a.m. *Grower Perspectives, continued*
- 10:00 a.m. **Cider/Coffee Break and Visit Exhibits — Trade Show Areas**
- 10:40 a.m. *Herbicide Use 101* – Shawn Wright
- 11:10 a.m. *Tomato Blight - What is it anyway?* — Nicole Gauthier

TUESDAY CONFERENCE SESSIONS

TUESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 7 — All times are Eastern Standard Time

5 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Concurrent sessions will enable participants to attend topics of interest in different sessions.

(10) CUT FLOWER SHORT COURSE

Salon F
Nikki Rhein, Presiding

(11) HIGH TUNNEL PRODUCTION

Salons G & H
Kathryn Pettigrew, Presiding

- 8:30 a.m. *Knowing Your Production Costs* — Kelly Stanley
- 9:00 a.m. *Growing for Your Market: Color and Texture* — Alexis Sheffield
- 9:30 a.m. *IPM in the Cold: What Could Be Bugging You in the Winter?* — Jonathan Larson
- 10:00 a.m. **Cider/Coffee Break and Visit Exhibits — Trade Show Areas**
- 10:40 a.m. *Tulip Trauma and How to Avoid It* — Natalie Lane
- 11:10 a.m. *Introduction to Weed Management for Cut Flower Producers* — Shawn Wright

- 8:30 a.m. *Crops Under Cover: Tips and Tricks for Using Row Cover* — Elaine Losekamp and Katie Fiske
- 9:00 a.m. *High Tunnel Maintenance: Start Now or Forever Hold Your Peace!* - Kayla Preston
- 9:30 a.m. *Soil Solarization for Managing Weeds, Pests, and Diseases* — Luize Lessmann and April Lamb
- 10:00 a.m. **Cider/Coffee Break and Visit Exhibits — Trade Show Areas**
- 10:40 a.m. *Grower Perspectives: Crop Rotation in High Tunnels* — Adam Barr, Donald & Lesley Dennis, and Maggie Dungan
- 11:10 a.m. *Grower Perspectives - Continued*

11:45 a.m. TUESDAY LUNCHEON — Salons A—F

TUESDAY CONFERENCE SESSIONS

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JANUARY 7 — All times are Eastern Standard Time

5 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Concurrent sessions will enable participants to attend topics of interest in different sessions.

(12) MARKETING & BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Salon C

Savannah Columbia, Presiding

- 1:30 p.m. *Farming the Digital Landscape: Building Your Brand Through Story* – Emily Spencer
- 2:00 p.m. *Building Resilient Partnerships with Retailers and Distributors* – Brandi Button-Johnson and Faye Kuosman
- 2:30 p.m. *Planning an On-Farm Event* – Ally Vallandingham, Stepping Stone Farm
- 3:00 p.m. *Creating Your Business Roadmap: Key Steps for Developing a Comprehensive Business Plan* – Kati Bowman
- 3:30 p.m. *Intro to Time Studies for Decision Making* – Brett Wolff & Alexis Sheffield

(13) PRODUCTION SYSTEMS OF FRUIT CROPS

Salon D

Brent Arnoldussen, Presiding

- 1:30 p.m. *Adapting Raised-bed Blueberry Systems to Kentucky* — John Strang
- 2:00 p.m. *Blackberry Production Systems* — Daniel Becker
- 2:30 p.m. *Update on Peach and Pear Systems Trials* — Brent Arnoldussen
- 3:00 p.m. *Production Systems Grower Panel*

Bonus Outdoor Training Sessions (North Farm)

- 4:00 p.m. Intensive Training Systems for Peach Production
- 4:20 p.m. Tall Spindle Apple System for High Density Apples

(14) URBAN AND SMALL-SCALE FARMING

Salon E

Michael Zachary, Presiding

- 1:30 p.m. *Cultivating Tomorrow: Harnessing Aquaponics for a Sustainable Future* – Trevor Claiborn
- 2:00 p.m. *Cultivating Tomorrow: FoodChain Student Research Projects*
- 2:30 p.m. *Maximizing Your Small-Scale Farm: Secrets to Successful Thriving* – Andre Barbour
- 3:00 p.m. *Farmers in Focus: An interview with Ryan Hodge and Rita Sims* – Ryan Hodge and Rita Sims

Bonus Grower Roundtable Discussion

- 3:45 p.m. A Deep Dive into Urban & Small-Scale Farming: Solutions-Based Roundtable – Tonya Smith

(16) CUT FLOWER SHORT COURSE

Salon F

Kristin Hildabrand, Presiding

- 1:30 p.m. *Grower Round Table – Let's Talk about Flowers* – Cindy Finneseth
- 2:00 p.m. *FSA-Noninsured Crop Disaster Program - Floriculture* – Macei Moore
- 2:30 p.m. *Lessons in Building a Floral CSA & Subscription Program* – Mary Chauvin
- 3:10 p.m. *Elevating Your Seed Starting* – Tara Watkins Vaughn

TUESDAY CONFERENCE SESSIONS

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, JANUARY 7 — All times are Eastern Standard Time

5 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Concurrent sessions will enable participants to attend topics of interest in different sessions.

(17) SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT PROJECT REPORTS

Salons G & H

Brett McQueary, Presiding

Bonus outdoor event: training systems and pruning demo at the new UK modern training systems orchard at the UK north farm

1:30 p.m. *New Digital Tools and Marketing Strategies for a Post-COVID-19 Marketplace* — Brett Wolff

1:45 p.m. *Evaluating the Inter-season Rotation of Tomato with Fresh-cut Flowers in a High Tunnel System for Improved Pest, Disease, and Soil Management* — Rachel Rudolph

2:00 p.m. *Increasing Consumer Demand for Kentucky Specialty Crops and Inspiring Beginning Farmers through Extension-Supported Gardening Programs* — Nicole Breazeale

2:15 p.m. *Kentucky Specialty Crop Block Grant Program: Tips and Keys for Success* — Brett McQueary

4:00 Intensive training systems for peach production

Learn about the new high-density training systems for peach, including v trellis systems, planar systems, and free-standing systems including pruning demos on the pruning principles.

4:20 Tall Spindle Apple System for high density apples

Hands on pruning demo looking at the different pruning

Bonus Grower Roundtable Roundtable Topics:

Bridging the Gap: How Small Farmers Can Gain Visibility in a Big Ag World - exploring strategies for small and urban farmers to get noticed by government agencies, larger markets, and consumers, ensuring their voices are heard in spaces often dominated by big agriculture.

Navigating Agency Interactions: Building Strong Relationships with USDA, NRCS, and FSA - a practical discussion on how to effectively engage with government agencies, understand their processes, and ensure you're accessing the right resources. This includes tips on making your case and advocating for yourself as a small-scale farmer.

Protecting Your Farm: Avoiding Scams and Exploitation by For-Profit Agencies - recognizing warning signs of fraudulent offers and services targeted at small farmers, providing tips on how to verify the legitimacy of funding opportunities, resources, or partnerships. Also, exploring ethical alternatives to for-profit agencies.

Leveraging Resources: How Small Farmers Can Access Support Beyond Big Agriculture - non-traditional funding and support networks for small-scale and urban farmers, including community grants, cooperative funding, and alternative financial tools to help farmers access capital without relying on big agriculture.

Advocacy in Action: Raising Awareness and Fighting for Representation as a Small-Scale Farmer – focusing on how small farmers can organize and advocate for policy changes, gain representation in agricultural boards, and participate in local and state-level discussions to ensure their unique needs are met.

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Dr. Brent Arnoldussen, Extension Fruit Specialist, Department of Horticulture, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Andre Barbour, Grower, Barbour's Farm, Canmer, KY

Dr. Marcus Barnard, Dean of the College of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources and Director of Land Grant Programs, Kentucky State University, Frankfort, KY

Jonathan Barnes, Student, Murray State University, Murray, KY

Adam Barr, Grower, Barr Farms, Rhodelia, KY

Bryce Baumann, Grower, Lazy Eight Stock Farm, Paint Lick, KY

Daniel Becker, Small Fruit and Vegetable Extension Associate, University of Kentucky Research and Education Center, Princeton, KY

Myrrisa Belcher, Student, Western KY University, Bowling Green, KY

Jonathan Berkshire, Grower, Berkshire Farms, Glencoe, KY

Dr. Ric Bessin, Extension Entomologist, Dept. of Entomology, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Eva Bogue, Student, Murray State University, Murray, KY

Kati Bowman, Marketing and Business Development Specialist, Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, Elizabethtown, KY

Nicole Breazeale, Associate Professor, Community Leadership Development, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Andrew Brooks, Business Development Manager: Southeastern US, Priva

Robert Brockman, Boone County Extension Agent for Horticulture, Burlington, KY

Kirsten Brown, Student, Morehead State University, Morehead, KY

Brandi Button-Johnson, Western Kentucky Value Chain Coordinator, The Food Connection, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Casey Byrd, Extension Associate, Department of Horticulture, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Renee Carrico, Director, Commodity Division, KY Farm Bureau, Louisville, KY

Mary Chauvin, Grower, Calamity Blooms, Oldham County, KY

Trevor Claiborn, Aquaponics Educator, FoodChain, Lexington, KY

Savannah Columbia, Extension Associate, University of KY Dept. of Ag Economics, Lexington, KY

Brent and Rhonda Cornett, Growers, Cornett Enterprises, London, KY

Hudson Cox, Student, Morehead State University, Morehead, KY

Donald and Lesley Dennis, Solway Farm, Eastview, KY

Steve Diver, Farm Superintendent, University of Kentucky Horticulture Research Farm, Lexington, KY

Matt Dixon, Senior Meteorologist, UK Ag Weather Center, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Maggie Dungan, Grower, Salad Days Farm, Versailles, KY

Kristi Durbin, Farm Manager, Univ. of KY Horticulture Research Farm – Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Unit, Lexington, KY

Tiffany Bellfield El-Amin, Executive Director, KY Black Farmers Association, Madison County, KY

Kevan Evans, President, KY State Horticultural Society (KSHS) and Grower, Evans Orchard and Cider Mill, Georgetown, KY

Dr. Cindy Finneseth, Extension Specialist, Department of Horticulture, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Dr. Katie Fiske, Post-Doctoral Research Associate, Department of Entomology, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Dr. Nicole Gauthier, Extension Plant Pathologist, Department of Plant Pathology, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Anna Claire Griggs, Student, Murray State University, Murray, KY

Sarah Guerink, Organic Production Specialist, Organic Association of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Spencer Guinn, Business Specialist, Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (KCARD), Elizabethtown, KY

Doris Hamilton, Plant Division Director, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Frankfort, KY

Kate Hamilton, Farmers Markets, KY Department of Ag, Frankfort, KY

Dr. Erin Haramoto, Associate Professor, Department of Plant and Soil Sciences, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Dr. Steve Higgins, Assistant Adjunct Professor, Director of Environmental Compliance, Dept. of Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Kristin Hildabrand, Warren County Extension Agent for Horticulture, Bowling Green KY

Ryan Hodge, Grower, Hodge Family Farm, Hodgenville, KY

Kelly Jackson, Horticulture Agent, Christian Co Cooperative Extension Service, Hopkinsville, KY

Faye Kuosman, Central Kentucky Value Chain Coordinator, The Food Connection, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Dr. April Lamb, Post-Doctoral Research Associate, Department of Plant Pathology, University of KY, Lexington, KY

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Natalie Lane, Grower, Tulip Lane Flower Farm, Paducah, KY

Dr. Jonathan Larson, Extension Entomologist, Department of Entomology, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Kimberly Leonberger, Extension Associate, Department of Plant Pathology, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Luize Lessmann, Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Horticulture, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Elaine Losekamp, Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Entomology, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Scott & Shae Lowe, Growers, Lowe Farms, Murray, KY

Ryan Mairs, Produce Safety, KY Dept. of Agriculture, Frankfort, KY

Brett McQueary, Program Coordinator Specialty Crop Block Grants, Office of Agriculture Marketing, KY Dept. of Agriculture, Frankfort, KY

Emma Miller, Student, Morehead State University, Morehead, KY

Susan Miller, Grower, Miller Farms, Stanford, KY

Joseph Monroe, Grower, Valley Spirit Farm, Campbellsburg, KY

Macei Moore, USDA- FSA NAP Specialist, USDA Farm Service Agency, Lexington, KY

Dr. Paul Norrod, Assistant Professor, University of Cincinnati College of Nursing, Cincinnati, OH

Kellie Padgett, Senior Business Development Specialist, Kentucky Center for Ag and Rural Development, Elizabethtown, KY

Kathryn Pettigrew, Department of Horticulture, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Kayla Preston, Social Enterprise Manager, Grow Appalachia, Berea, KY

Dr. Paul Priyesh, Food Science/Safety Specialist, Animal and Food Sciences Food Science Innovation Center, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Anna Raines, Grower, Rains and Sun Hilltop Farm, Independence, KY

Nikki Rhein, Marshall County Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Benton, KY

Dr. Rachel Rudolph, Assistant Professor and Extension Vegetable Specialist, Department of Horticulture, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Rusty Rumley, Senior Staff Attorney, National Ag Law Center, Fayetteville, AR

Dr. Shubin Saha, President, Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association, and Chief Operating Officer, Kentucky Fresh Harvest, Stanford, KY

Delia Scott, Extension Associate, Department of Horticulture, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Arundathi Sharma, Extension Associate, Department of Horticulture, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Alexis Sheffield, Extension Specialist, Center for Crop Diversification, Dept. of Horticulture, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Jonathan Shell, Commissioner, KY Department of Agriculture, Frankfort, KY

Rita Sims, Grower and Community Director, Kentucky Ag Development Advocacy, Hopkinsville, KY

Tonya Smith, Generational Farmer and Founder, Kentucky Ag Development Advocacy, Park City, KY

Emily Spencer, Extension Associate, Department of Ag Economics, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Sharon Spencer, Division Director, Direct Farm Marketing, Kentucky Department of Ag, Frankfort, KY

Kelly Stanley, Grower, Gray Arbor Farm, Georgetown, KY

Dr. John Strang, Emeritus Extension Fruit and Vegetable Specialist, Department of Horticulture, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Ally Vallandingham, Grower, Stepping Stone Farm, Paris, KY

Tara Watkins Vaughn, Nursery Crops Extension Associate, Department of Horticulture, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY

Michelle Wheeler, Grower, River Bend Blooms, Scottsville, KY

Laurie White, Central Kentucky Local Food Coordinator, Community Farm Alliance, Berea, KY

Marcus Wilkerson, Student, KY State University, Frankfort, KY

Dr. Mark Williams, Chair, Department of Horticulture, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Brett Wolff, Extension Associate, Department of Ag Economics, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Dr. Shawn Wright, Extension Horticulture Specialist, Department of Horticulture, University of Kentucky, Roberson Center for Appalachian Resource Sustainability, Jackson, KY

Melissa Wyatt, Owner/Operator, Wyatt's Chapel Farm, London, KY

Dr. Annette Wszelaki, Vegetable Extension Specialist, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN

Dr. Qinglu Ying, Controlled Environment Production Extension Specialist, Department of Horticulture, University of KY, Lexington, KY

Ricky Young, Student, Morehead State University, Morehead, KY

Michael Zachary, State Outreach Coordinator, USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service, Lexington, KY

2025 Conference Sponsors



**GOWAN SEED
COMPANY**



**BYRNSIDE
ORCHARD**



TRADE SHOW EXHIBITORS

Aero Ag, LLC
324 S Lincoln Blvd.
Hodgenville, KY 42748
270-401-6877
calebcanter22@gmail.com
www.aeroag.us/

Agrauxine by Lesaffre
316 Key West Dr
Evansville, IN 47712 US
414-340-1648
j.klostermann@agrauxine.lesaffre.com
https://agrauxine.com/us/

Bluegrass Ag Workers Services
1890 Starshoot Pkwy Ste 170-110
Lexington, KY 40509
859-279-2057
buffy@bluegrassagworkers.com
www.bluegrassagworkers.com/

Bluegrass Blueberries
11051 Porter Pike Rd.
Oakland, KY 42159
270-432-5836
blueberrynurseryky@gmail.com
www.bluegrassblueberries.com

Central Kentucky AgCredit
2429 Members Way
Lexington, KY 40544-4100
859-252-4717
888-820-3270
www.agcreditonline.com/

Clifton Seed Company
P.O. Box 206
Faison, NC 28341
910-267-2690
brandim@cliftonseed.com
www.cliftonseed.com

Continental Industries
P.O. Box 865
Shepherdsville, KY 40165
502-543-2600
jchamilton@windstream.net

Deerfield Supplies
8208 W. Jefferson DavisHWY
Elkton, KY 42220

Fairview Produce Auction
10292 US Hwy 68E
Pembroke, KY 42266
270-887-0053

Ferris Farm
83 Ferris Rd
New Wilmington, PA 16142
724-971-0888
www.ferrisfarm.net/

Fresh Start Growers' Supply
1007 E. Jefferson St
Louisville, KY 40206
502-442-7883
steveparadis@gmail.com
www.freshstartgrowers.com/

Gowan Seed Co
25445 Chualar River Rd.
Chualar, CA 93925
831-679-1900
831-744-9069
info@gowanseed.com
Tsimpson@gowanseed.com
https://www.gowanseed.com

Grow Appalachia
210 Center St.
Berea, KY 40403
info@growappalachia.org
https://growappalachia.berea.edu/

Kentucky Cabinet for Economic
Development
Old Capitol Annex
300 West Broadway
Frankfort, KY 40601
502-564-7670
800-626-2930
www.ced.ky.gov

Kentucky Center for Agriculture and
Rural Development
411 Ring Rd
Elizabethtown, KY 42701
502-536-3391
lkurtz@kcard.info
https://www.kcard.info/

Kentucky Department of Agriculture
Office of Marketing
111 Corporate Drive
Frankfort, KY 40601
502-782-4115
www.kyagr.com/marketing

Kentucky Farm Bureau

Certified Farm Market Program
P.O. Box 20700
Louisville, KY 40250
502-495-5000
fran.mccall@kyfb.com
www.kyfb.com/federation/programs/
certified-farm-markets/

Kentucky Horticulture Council
PO Box 21736
Lexington, KY 40522
859-490-0889
info@kyhortcouncil.org
www.kyhortcouncil.org

Kentucky State University
129 Atwood Research Facility,
Frankfort, KY 40601
502-597-5942
Joni.nelson@kysu.edu
www.kysu.edu

Kentucky Women in Agriculture
P.O. Box 4409
Lexington, KY 40544-4409
(606) 307-7723
kentuckywomeninag@gmail.com
www.kywomeninag.com

Lemongrass Spa
Leitchfield, KY
pamelasshop@comcast.net
https://www.facebook.com/
PamelasLGShop/

Lewis Seed Co
130 N Spring St
Louisville, KY 40206
502-587-1241
lewisseedcompany@gmail.com
https://lewisseedcompany.com/

Lincoln County Produce Auction
2896 KY Hwy 39N
Crab Orchard, KY 40419
606-355-0030

Martin's Produce Supplies
2518 S Fork Creek Rd
Liberty, KY 42539
606-787-9389

Midwest Vineyard Supply
2300 South Twin Bridge Road
Decatur, IL 62521
217-864-9896
sales@midwestvineyardsupply.com

TRADE SHOW EXHIBITORS

National Center for Appropriate
Technology
3040 Continental Drive
PO Box 3838
Butte, MT 59702
800-275-6228
tammyb@ncat.org
www.attra.ncat.org

Nutrien Ag Solutions
7855 W 650 S
Rossville, IN 46065
765-714-8387
stuart.brenneman@nutrien.com

Ohio Earth Food
5488 Swamp St NE
Hartville, OH 44632
330-877-9356
info@ohioearthfood.com
https://ohioearthfood.com/

Organic Association of Kentucky
PO Box 22244
Lexington, KY 40522
502-218-7378
info@oak-ky.org

OrganiLock
4100 Nebo Rd
Madisonville, KY 42431
(270) 326-2006
sales@organilock.com
www.organilock.com

Raising Hope
www.raisinghopeky.com

Rockford Package Supply
1080 Vitality Dr. NW
Comstock Park, MI 49321
800-444-7225
marys@rockfordpack.com
https://rockfordpack.com

Schrock Sales
2598 HWY 39N
Crab Orchard, KY 40419

Seedway, LLC
PO Box 250
Hall, NY 14463
585-526-6394
865-548-7333
khosey@seedway.com
mrobson@seedway.com
www.seedway.com

Shelby Insurance Agency
500 Main St., Ste 8
Shelbyville, KY 40065
502-633-6108
SIA@iglou.com
www.shelbyinsuranceagency.com

Southeast Center for Agricultural
Health and Injury Prevention
1398 Nicholasville Rd
Lexington, KY 40546
859-533-3782
ashley.rockwell@uky.edu
https://www.uky.edu/scahip/

Southern Container Corp of Wilson,
Inc
PO Box 216
Wilson, NC 27894
252-230-1376
cthompson@socontainers.com
https://socontainers.com/

Sun Sugar Farms
1258 Maddox Lane
Verona, KY 41092
888-883-7259
859-630-2694
linda@sunsugarfarms.com
https://sunsugarfarms.com/

Timac Agro USA
153 Angstadt Lane
PO BOX 888
Reading, PA 19607
800-545-5474
contact@timacusa.com
john.hopson@timacusa.com
https://us.timacagro.com/

Center for Crop Diversification
University of Kentucky
N-318 Ag. Science Center North
Lexington, KY 40546-0091
859-257-1477 or 859-218-4384
cgcass0@uky.edu
brett.wolff@uky.edu
www.uky.edu/ccd

Food Connection
University of Kentucky
440 Hilltop Avenue
Lexington, KY 40506
859-218-4987
foodconnection@uky.edu
www.foodconnection.ca.uky.edu

Office of the State Entomologist
University of Kentucky
S-225 Ag. Sci. Ctr. N
Lexington, KY 40546-0091
859-257-5838
Jtcollin@uky.edu
ky-ose@lsv.uky.edu
https://ose.uky.edu/

USDA Farm Service Agency Out-
reach and Communications
771 Corporate Drive
Lexington, KY 40503
phone: 859-224-7624
jeremy.stevenson@usda.gov

United States Department of
Agriculture Natural Resources
Conservation Service
(USDA-NRCS)
771 Corporate Dr. Ste 300
Lexington, KY 40503
859-224-7314
michael.zachary@usda.gov

United States Department of
Agriculture National Agricultural
Statistics Service
(USDA NASS)
Eastern Mountain Region
601 W. Broadway St Ste 645
Louisville, KY 40202
502-907-3210
david.knopf@usda.gov

United States Department of
Agriculture Risk Management
Agency
(USDA RMA)
803 Liberty Road
Jackson, MS 39232
601-965-4771
Cody.Adkins@rma.usda.gov
www.rma.usda.gov

VanMeter Family Farm
164 Old Peonia Loop
Clarkson, KY 42726
270-963-2320
vanmeterfamilyfarm@gmail.com

TRADE SHOW EXHIBITORS

Warner Packaging
4020 Corporate Ave.
Plover, WI 54467
715-341-8563
715-340-8140
Rob.caldwell@warnerpackaging.com
www.warnerpackaging.com

Literature Exhibitor:
Seven Springs Farm Supply
426 Jerry Ln NE
Check, VA 24072
540-651-3228
800-540-9181
7springs@swva.net

HOTEL MAP