



THE ALABAMA  
SUSTAINABLE  
AGRICULTURE  
NETWORK

# ASAN UPDATE

Winter 2015-16

Published Quarterly

## FOOD POLICY BRIEFINGS

By Karen Wynne

### GMO Labeling

This summer, the US House of Representatives passed HR1599, ironically named the “Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2015” but known to opponents as the “Deny Americans the Right to Know”, or DARK, Act. In reaction to local legislation in Connecticut, Maine and Vermont requiring labeling of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in packaged foods, Congress drafted a bill that would nullify existing GMO labeling and production laws and would give the USDA jurisdiction over non-GMO labeling. The Senate had its first hearing in October, but there’s been little news since then. Stay tuned with the Environmental Working Group, [www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org).

### Meat Processing

Now for some good news. Also this summer, HR 3187 was introduced, which would empower states to pass laws allowing the sale of custom processed meat. From the Farmer-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund: “[T]he Processing Revival and Intrastate Meat Exemption (PRIME) Act, would give individual states the freedom to pass laws allowing the sale of custom-slaughtered and -processed meat within their states. Passage of the

#### More on:

- Food-based business regulations > pg. 10
- Food Freedom Acts > pg. 10
- Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) > pg. 10
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PRIME Act would support small farmers who currently lack reasonable access to processing facilities, improve consumer access to locally raised meats, and help revitalize rural communities.” You can follow the story at [www.farmtoconsumer.org/blog/tag/prime-act/](http://www.farmtoconsumer.org/blog/tag/prime-act/).

### Poultry

Representatives of Alabama’s small farming community and a representative from the Farmer-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund recently met with staff at the Alabama Department of Agriculture, including Commissioner John McMillan, State Veterinarian Dr. Tony Frazier, and Dr. Isaac Barrett, Associate State Veterinarian and Head of the Meat Processing Division. The state is seeing an increase in small-scale pastured poultry production and processing and is working to ensure that produc-

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## NOTES FROM THE FIELD: NATIONAL COMMUNITY LAND TRUST CONFERENCE

By Susan Diane Mitchell

On October 19-22, 2015, I had the privilege to attend the National Community Land Trust Network's conference “Intersections 2015” in Lexington, KY. I, along with Majadi Baruti (Grassroots Organizer for the Magic City Agriculture Project) and Audrey Van Horn (a community member and craft entrepreneur) together represented the Magic City Agriculture Project and the nascent Dynamite Hill-Smithfield Community Land Trust, at the conference.

This conference was one of the best, value-packed events I have attended since I began working with the Magic City Agriculture Project last June. Going out into the field and experiencing first hand what is happening with communities and people all across the Southeast and the world, has blessed with me with a global perspective on the myriad ways in which people adapt in order to live on

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## LETTER FROM THE ASAN BOARD PRESIDENT



My term as ASAN President is coming to an end, and I look back on 2015 with a sense of accomplishment and appreciation. It's been a year since our productive ASAN Board retreat, where we

worked with a professional facilitator to develop a plan for 2015 and beyond. We mapped out a timeline of events and created a list of goals, and I'm happy with our progress! Our accomplishments this year included fun new challenges along with some less-than-sexy, serious "business." I want to make sure our members are aware of both, because they are equally important to ASAN's long-term success.

We started off the year with another great Southern SAWG conference in Mobile, where we led attendees – including 30 Alabama farmers who attended the

conference on ASAN scholarships -- in a productive state break-out session. Afterward ASAN members gathered for a locally-sourced meal and fellowship at The Noble South Restaurant. (We are planning a member gathering in conjunction with the February Georgia Organics conference in nearby Columbus, GA – keep your eye on our email updates for more details!)

I hope you were able to participate in one of our 2015 Regional Food & Farm Forums, which wrapped up in early December. The Board considered an annual conference of our own, but opted to continue with the multi-location series format – it seems to resonate well with folks, and it offers us the opportunity to bring new people into our ASAN family. If you're one of those new people – welcome!

BIG THANKS to the hosts, attendees, local volunteers who served on planning committees, and folks who cooked up delicious food for the Regional Forums. (Check out photos and more on

page 4!) Planning for the 2016 Forums will soon begin, so please share any suggestions for topics, locations, or improvements. A great way to support ASAN is by joining the planning committee for your local Forum. It's a team effort and we want and need your help!

Speaking of team efforts, we held our first big farm-to-table fundraiser, *Graze: Birmingham*, in September at Avondale Brewery. It was a great success, and aptly named – guests are issued a fork at the door, then set free to graze to their heart's content on local variety and deliciousness, all while chatting with local chefs and food artisans. We plan to hold more *Graze* events around the state in the coming years, so if you'd like to help organize one in your town, let us know!

Now, a word about the "business" of ASAN. An organization can flounder without formal, written policies and procedures. I appreciate the efforts of our newly formed Governance Committee – Lindsay, Kirk, Charles, Jessica, and Alice – whose diverse skills, talents and experience were all put to good use to develop

(Continued on page 3)

## CONTRIBUTORS: WINTER 2015-16

**Thank you to everyone who contributed to this newsletter, including (but not limited to):**

**Karen Wynne** is an organic consultant, soil scientist, and owner of Rosita's Farm in Hartselle, AL.

**Susan Diane Mitchell**, a resident of Birmingham since 1991, is Priestess at Udja Temple and a Board member of the Magic City Agriculture Project (MCAP).

**Natilee McGruder** is the Director of the River Region Food Policy Council in Montgomery. She is also part of the Alabama Food Policy Council, and serves on the Junior Board of EAT South.

**Renee Maas** is the Senior Southern Region Organizer for Food & Water Watch. She lives in Durham, NC.

**Jayne Oates** lives in Notasulga and is the director of Farm-scapes Solutions.

**Anne LaBelle** is ASAN's Board President and the co-owner of MightyGrow Organics in Fruitdale.

**Alice Evans** is the Executive Director of ASAN.

## ASAN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Lucy Buffett**, Lulu's (Gulf Shores)

**Laurie Gay**, End of the Road Farm (Summerdale)

**Randall Hastings**, Hastings Farm (Bay Minette)

**Kirk Iversen** (Auburn) — Board Vice President

**Anne LaBelle**, MightyGrow Organics (Fruitdale) — Board President

**Ayanava Majumdar**, ACES (Auburn)

**Jessica Norwood**, Emerging Changemakers Network (Mobile)

**Jodie Powell**, Sweet Home Organics (Leroy)

**Deborah Thomas**, Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative, and the Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama (Montgomery)

**Lindsay Turner**, Druid City Garden Project (Tuscaloosa) — Board Secretary

**Charles Walters**, River Oaks Farm (Millbrook)

**Andrew Williams**, The United Christian Community Association, and the Deep South Food Alliance (Safford)

**Myles Wright** (Montgomery) — Board Treasurer

## BOARD PRESIDENT LETTER (CONT'D)

(Continued from page 2)

and adopt standardized practices in order to bolster ASAN's long-term sustainability. Big thanks to all the committee members for the countless, thoughtful hours you put in!

It's been a big year, and we have big plans for 2016 and beyond. It's exciting and gratifying to me, to see how this organization is growing – but there's so much that ASAN could do, with additional staffing and financial resources. If you haven't already, you will soon be receiving email and/or print mail correspondence about ASAN's end-of-year fundraising campaign. Please give it your attention, and please donate what you can – to round out a banner year in ASAN's growth, and to position the organization to start 2016 firing on all cylinders.

Lastly, I want to recognize our hard-working Executive Director, Alice Evans. I cannot fully express my appreciation for her dedication, enthusiasm and unwavering sense of fairness. Please give her a hug, or at least a pat on the back, when you see her next.

THANK YOU to everyone who contributed this year in any way. As I move onto the Advisory Board in 2016, I look forward to working with friends new and old to realize the vision of our founding members. Let's keep this momentum going!

Sincerely,



Anne LaBelle  
Board President

## ASAN BOARD TRANSITIONS

At the end of this year, seven people will conclude their service to ASAN's Board of Directors. Some will transition onto the newly formed Advisory Board, and some will remain part of the broader ASAN family while pursuing other projects. All are deeply valued for the contributions they have brought to ASAN during their service on the Board; the ASAN family, and Alabamians in general, are fortunate to have them in our midst. If you see these people in the coming months, please thank them for all they have done to build and grow ASAN into the organization it is today!



LUCY BUFFETT  
Gulf Shores



LAURIE GAY  
Summerdale



RANDALL HASTINGS  
Bay Minette



AYANAVA MAJUMDAR  
Auburn



ANDREW WILLIAMS  
Safford

Not pictured:  
JODIE POWELL  
Leroy

Pictured at left:  
ANNE LABELLE  
Fruitdale

Six phenomenal people have been elected to join the board in January, and we couldn't be more pleased to bring them onto the team. Keep an eye out for their profiles in the Spring 2016 issue!



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## ENERGY, IDEAS, WISDOM, AND FELLOWSHIP ABOUND IN 2015 REGIONAL FOOD & FARM FORUMS SERIES



This year marks the 8th annual ASAN Food & Farm Forum, but the third year running in which that event has actually been multiple events. The past three

years ASAN has hosted the Regional Food & Farm Forums, in multiple locations around the state each year. As in previous years, the 2015 Regional Forums have brought together many familiar old friends and fresh new faces. The Regional Forums provide a platform for farmers, gardeners, food-based entrepreneurs, resource/support professionals (like nonprofit representatives and Extension agents), and other community leaders to convene, collectively problem-solve, share knowledge, and form the foundation for future collaborations.



### 11/17: AFRICATOWN



### SO MANY THANKS...

To the sponsors, food providers, hosts, and other contributors who made the 2015 Regional Food & Farm Forums possible:

#### Full Series:

Alabama Association of RC&D Councils  
Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries  
First South Farm Credit  
Sierra Club—Alabama Chapter  
Alabama Rivers Alliance  
Alabama Ag Credit

#### Slocomb:

Working Cows Dairy  
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#### Mentone:

The Farm at Windy Hill  
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#### Africatown:

Mobile County Training School Alumni Association  
Mobile Environmental Justice Action Coalition  
Bay Area Food Bank

#### The Noble South

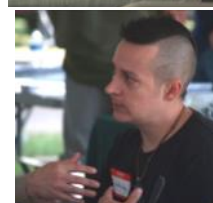
The Pure Vegan  
Project South  
Center for Reproductive Medicine  
John Wathen Photography

#### Jemison:

Petals from the Past  
To Your Health Sprouted Flour Grow Selma / Blackbelt Benefit Group  
Deep South Food Alliance  
Andrea Mabry Photography



### 10/13: MENTONE



### 10/29: SLOCOMB



Lastly, *enormous* thanks to all our many devoted discussion facilitators, planning committee members, and other volunteers for all their work, behind the scenes and in front of them, to make these events the rich, welcoming, and fruitful gatherings that they are. The Regional Forums would most certainly not exist without you and your passion, your ideas, and your hard work.





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## WHERE ARE ALL THE RADICLES? EXAMINING THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN ALABAMA

By Natilee McGruder

*Here, root yourself beside me.*

*I am the tree planted by the river,*

*Which will not be moved*

- "A Rock, A River, A Tree" by Maya Angelou

As we enter into the 60th Anniversary of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, one of the most successful non-violence resistance movements in modern history, I am left asking myself, just as I did earlier this year during the 50th Anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery marches, where are the current narratives of resistance?

We are by no means past the issues of the past. Sankofa, the concept of looking back at one's past to know one's future, is an African practice that serves me well as I seek to address and change systems of oppression in our food culture. Alabama workers and sharecroppers of the '30s laid the groundwork through sacrifice and blood that allowed for the mass Civil Rights Movements of the '50s and '60s. This narrative, as outlined in Robin Kelly's seminal work on black radicalism in Alabama, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists during the Great Depression*, is rarely told.

In botany a radicle is the part of a seed that develops into the root. We must nurture the root components of Alabama's sustainable agriculture: our youth, our dynamic culture, and, as the workers and sharecroppers of the '30s did, our collective power.

### Youth Empowerment

Our young people are beautiful and powerful-- one fifth of the global population is made up of youth, ages 15 to 24! We must help them create a connection to their food as they become the world's largest group of consumers and hopefully producers. I

recently spoke with Catherine Doe of EAT South who talks passionately about the 14-18 year olds she works with. They are finding an alternative in gardening. . Not just an alternative to street life and a violent environment, but an alternative to low expectations, negative public perception and low self-worth. Young people were guided to nurture life, overcome challenges, harvest flowers, honor the land, and contributed to the financial and physical wellbeing of their families, and they found it empowering. Some will resist, as seeds do, but others flourish into the radicle.

The youth must own their involvement in agriculture. Laura Anne Sanagorski, who works with environmental horticulture extension facility at the University of Florida, notes that programs for youth must not be developed by telling young people what to do and think, but "from the existing perceptions youth have about farming, food production and sustainable agriculture, and the contributions they are already making." She notes that globally in rural areas, agriculture is declining and youth are migrating to urban areas for work and school. To address this issue we need better services and education designed for rural areas, that use modern information and communication tools like social media, video series and other interactive online media.

Additionally, by highlighting areas where young people are already making a difference, we can empower youth to identify themselves with issues of food choices, sustainability, agriculture and land use. One such example is the children at the Betty Shabazz International Charter School, who learn about agriculture as a form of self-sufficiency and who take advantage of frequent opportunities to engage with and learn from their natural environment. We



Top: Young people concerned about climate change, agriculture and diversity congregate at the Alabamians for Restoration Conference in Lowndes County, September 2015. (Photo credit: The Climate Reality Project) Bottom: Community garden blessing in Macon County (Photo courtesy Natilee McGruder).

as adults have the responsibility to engage and inspire our youth to participate (even more) in guiding the growth of sustainable agriculture.

In fact, young people are already taking that role in the development of sustainable agriculture's future. But how will we help them shape it?

### Dynamic Collective Power and the Future of Sustainable Agriculture

In 2043 people of color will make up over 50% of the population. What does that mean for the future of sustainable agriculture? It means more now than ever we must nurture young people of color as the future farmers and producers of America. However, this colorful eventuality is poorly re-

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## RADICLES (CONT'D)

(Continued from page 6)

flected in the way our food system is currently shaped. The recent report from the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society entitled *The US Farm Bill: Corporate Power and Structural Racialization in the United States Food System*, summarizes,

that inequity within the food system—such as limited access to nutritious and affordable food, high quality land, or farmers support program benefits—cannot be addressed without addressing inequity within society as a whole, such as low income and limited employment benefits, unfair treatment by state and federal institutions, and limited democratic influence and access to positions of power. As such, corporate control and struc-

tural racialization within the US food system and society as a whole are of central concern...

The dynamic future of our country should be seen as a boon and not a burden. But in order to benefit we must address the inequities head on as part and parcel of what sustainable agriculture is. Speaking to the concern of dialogue in the sustainable food movement, Janani Balasubramanian says that it's not "that activists in the sustainable food movement are unconcerned with issues of identity, but that their rhetoric tends to disallow discussions on race, history, and food in a number of ways." What is her final conclusion? "All social

movements need a variety of voices, but I argue that food reform requires this diversity even more urgently because it is so universal in its reach."

Strategic planning, extensive training, integrity, identity, consistency, collaboration and uncommon courage formed the roots of the Civil Rights Movements and the untold movements upheld by Alabama's farmers that preceded it. I am confident that by focusing our strategy on youth engagement

and staying consistent in our commitment to expose our youth to agriculture, particularly youth of color, we can ensure a food system in Alabama that sustains us and once again provide a positive example of a strong radicle of change to the rest of the world.



*Solutions and thoughts from a table of participants at the Peace Within MGM unconference. PPhoto courtesy Natilee McGruder.*



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## POLICY BRIEFINGS (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

ers understand the regulations regarding on-farm processing and sales.

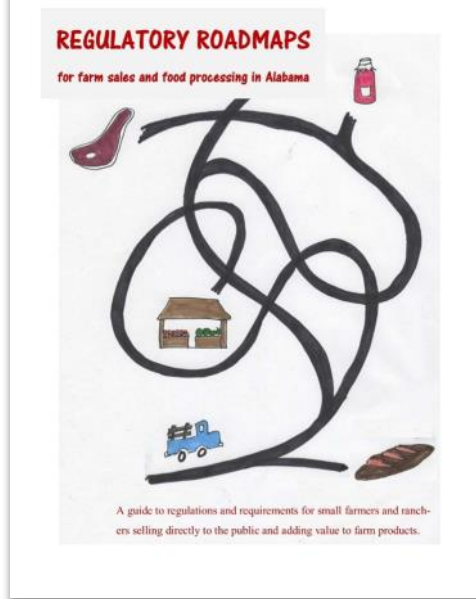
While poultry producers are exempt from varying levels of inspection if they slaughter less than 1000 and 20,000 birds annually on their farm, they are not exempt from basic processing standards. Details can be found in the new guide, *Roadmaps for Direct Marketing and Value-Added Farm Products* (see below).

### Farm Business Roadmaps

This summer, Rosita's and friends worked to compile and distill information for farmers exploring direct marketing and value-added product options. As more farmers and food producers market their products directly to customers through farmers' markets, community supported agriculture (CSAs), and other retail outlets, many questions arise. Confusion abounds for farmers looking through the regulations regarding business licenses, taxes, and permits, commercial kitchens and home processing, and sales of dairy, meat, and eggs.

Rosita's Farm has published a *Regulatory Roadmap* for small farmers and ranchers in Alabama working to understand the regulations that apply to direct retail sales and value-added processing. The Roadmap serves to guide farm and food businesses through considerations such as licenses and permitting, sales taxes, insurance and certifications, and the use of home and certified kitchens, and to connect the business with the right agency for additional information.

The latest version is online at [www.rositasfarm.com/resources/roadmap](http://www.rositasfarm.com/resources/roadmap). For suggestions, edits, and other input please contact Karen at 256-520-2400 or [rositasfarm@gmail.com](mailto:rositasfarm@gmail.com).



Cover image courtesy Karen Wynne

### Food Freedom Acts

In response to increasing regulation of small producers and consumer demand for unadulterated food straight from the farm, a number of states and local governments are working to adopt food freedom acts. The acts generally exempt small farms selling directly to consumers from certain regulations, though farmers are still liable for their products. This spring, Wyoming adopted a Food Freedom Act that will deregulate many direct sales. "HB 56 allows the unlicensed, unregulated sale of any food except meat (the bill allows poultry) direct from producer to informed consumer. Sales are allowed at the producers' premises, through delivery, and at farmers markets. The producer must inform the consumer that the product is neither regulated nor inspected." (Farm to Consumer Legal Defense Fund, Marh, 2015) Groups in Virginia, Maine, Georgia, and Mississippi have all worked on food freedom legislation, and many more have targeted the deregulation of direct sales of raw milk and other farm products. A growing number of farmers and consumers in Alabama are exploring the option of developing legislation for the state. Interested? Contact Karen at

the email/phone in the previous section, to get you connected.

And as always, you can call your representative and let them know what you think. Find your U.S. and state representatives at <http://capwiz.com/state-al/home/>.

### Food Safety Modernization Act

The long-awaited, if not eagerly-anticipated, final version of the Produce Rule of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) was released in mid-November, just as this newsletter was going to press. Keep an eye out for more information and analysis based on the released text, in the months to come.

FSMA gives the Food and Drug Administration new responsibilities to regulate food safety standards, focusing on potential contamination by pathogens for some fresh produce and food processing facilities. Two new rules are being put into effect: the Preventive Controls Rule and the Produce Rule. The Preventive Controls Rule regulates food safety in processing facilities; the new rule was released in September and does affect some farms. The Produce Rule is being released this month and addresses a broad array of potential contamination sources including water and manure, domestic and wild animals, farm workers, and harvest and washing facilities. Some farms will be exempt from compliance, and others will need to meet modified requirements. The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) has been keeping us updated as news comes out: visit them online at [www.sustainableagriculture.net](http://www.sustainableagriculture.net).

The Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industry held the first meeting of its new Produce Task Force in October. The Task Force is working to strengthen the produce industry in the state and address issues regarding FSMA as farmers and processors begin to comply with the new rules.



## TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP: THE SOUR TASTE OF FREE TRADE

By Renee Maas

Earlier this month, after more than seven years of secrecy, the text of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade deal was finally released. The devil in the TPP details is worse than we thought.

The TPP, is an international trade deal that was negotiated by 12 countries including the United States, Canada, Mexico, Chile, Peru, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Japan and Brunei, encompassing an estimated 40 percent of the global economy. Until recently, the details behind the TPP were being negotiated behind closed doors between the countries and hun-

dreds of "advisers" from some of the world's most powerful corporations while Congress and the public have been shut out.

Over the past 20 years, free trade agreements similar to the TPP – like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and others – have served to disadvantage American workers, undermine domestic food safety and prevent developing countries from using sensible economic development policies to grow their economies.

Most of the agreement is really about eroding com-



Courtesy Food and Water Watch ([foodandwaterwatch.org](http://foodandwaterwatch.org))

monsense environmental, public health and consumer safeguards in the name of free trade. Foreign governments and even foreign corporations can use trade disputes to trump our democratically enacted regulations as illegal trade barriers. The cryptic trade jargon in the TPP is actually more aggressive than prior trade deals that have already been successfully used to challenge provisions like the Clean Air Act, country of origin labeling for meat, and dolphin-safe tuna rules. The very premise of the TPP puts trade ahead of protecting people, sustainable agriculture and the environment.

### Impact on Food Safety and Local Food

The TPP could be used to weaken systems that are supposed to keep us safe. The parts of the TPP that cover food safety are especially troubling. It would let exporting countries and shippers challenge individual border inspection decisions, second-guessing U.S. inspectors and discouraging rigorous oversight of imported foods. It also encourages the use of private food safety certifications for imported food instead of government inspec-


tion, potentially leaving consumers to rely on corporate assurances that imports are safe. We have already experienced some significant foodborne illness outbreaks from domestic companies

who had received the same kind of food safety certifications.

Of particular concern is the potential increase of unsafe seafood imports. Several of the TPP nations produce farmed seafood that is raised with chemicals and antibiotics that are prohibited in the United States, and already these products are shipped here with minimal U.S. inspection. We already import nearly two billion pounds of seafood from TPP countries, including almost all our catfish imports and a large portion of shrimp imports. This tide of imports will only rise under the TPP. In Alabama, this also translates to an increase in unfair competition from abroad, even further jeopardizing our seafood industry.

The TPP could even have an impact on local food policies. The TPP has provisions to ensure that foreign companies get an equal crack at government purchasing, even though government procurement is often used to reinforce other public policy goals. Nationwide, communities have used procurement policies to rebuild local food infrastructure like farm-to-


(Continued on page 14)



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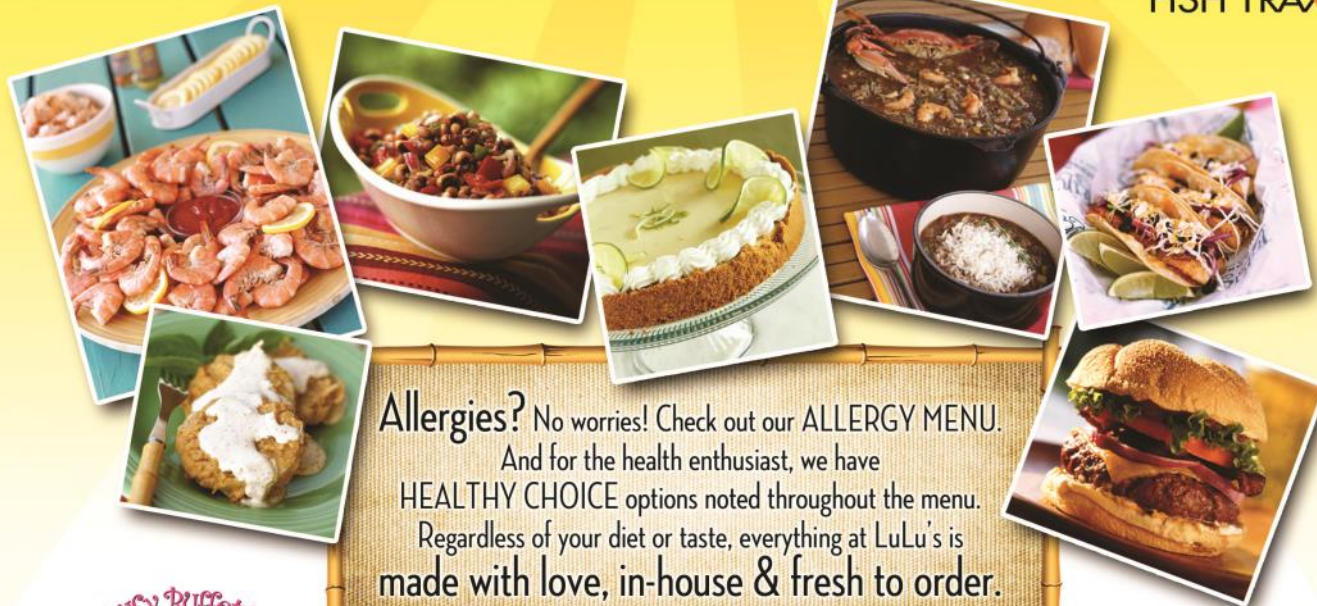
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## ALABAMA SMALL FARMS ASSISTANCE GETS A BOOST

By Jayme Oates

A group of Alabama Small Farm Stakeholder Organizations have committed to working together to enhance their collective impacts benefitting Alabama's beginning farmers, thanks to a grant awarded by the USDA's Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program.

Beginning farmers include any farmer with up to 10 years experience with the particular crop(s) they are producing. Along with ASAN, partner organizations on the project include Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES), Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SSAWG), Alabama Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association (AFVGA), Crotoquina, and Farmscape Solutions. During the next three years resources, technology, and technical assistance will be provided to beginning farmers throughout the state to strengthen the local food systems. Two key approaches will be: technology transfer and learning in the digital age, and support services.

### Interested in participating?

#### North Alabama farmers, contact:

Crotoquina — Karen Wynne  
256-520-2400

[karen@crotoquina.com](mailto:karen@crotoquina.com)

#### South Alabama farmers, contact:

Farmscape Solutions — Jayme Oates  
334-740-8515

[jayme@farmscapesolutions.com](mailto:jayme@farmscapesolutions.com)

### Technology Transfer and Learning in the Digital Age

Building on generations of experience and information, ACES is developing an on-line curriculum, complete with voluntary certification, complemented by a responsive new website and customizable IPM phone app for farmers. Bookmark the website [www.aces.edu/beginningfarms](http://www.aces.edu/beginningfarms) for future reference! The e-curriculum will be a handy tool for all educators including those on incubator or teaching farms across Alabama. In addition to crop production, pest management, and food safety training topics, SSAWG is integrating their online tool, "Growing Farm Profits" into the curriculum's Finance and

Marketing Module. On-line learning opportunities will be accompanied by a variety of hands-on workshops, conferences and on-farm demonstrations.

### Support Services

Farmscape Solutions and Crotoquina will each have a dedicated staff person working with a core group of beginning farmers to provide individualized support. The staff person will network with partners around

the state to build a long-term support team for each farm while helping new farmers overcome initial hurdles. Project Partners will supply on-site training, based on participant farmer needs and individual comprehensive consultation to participating farmers. The first round of farmers has been selected, and a waiting list for farmers interested in getting started in the next group is being generated. New farmers will enter the program every six months.

Project partners will also focus on the wide variety of organizations, businesses, state agencies, and advocates that are working with new and beginning farmers in an effort to improve communication and collaboration. The first brainstorming meeting will be held in January 2016 in Montgomery.

Online tools and technical assistance will be provided free of charge to program participants. Over the next three years 70 beginning farmers will receive direct assistance, and hundreds will benefit indirectly from online curriculum, workshops and demonstrations.

*"Either-or is a construction more deeply woven into our culture than into nature, where even antagonists depend on one another and the liveliest places are the edges, the in-betweens or both-and... Relations are what matter most."*

—Michael Pollan



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## COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

the land and gain access to clean water and fresh food, and affordable housing and energy.

The local host for the conference was the Lexington Community Land Trust, which was formed by collective efforts to preserve the Davis Bottom community, a working-class community displaced by a recent highway expansion. The federal highway project collaborated with the Lexington Community Land Trust to create Davis Park, and residents are slowly moving into homes designed and built with their input, and held in trust so as to be affordable long-term.

The Lexington Community Land Trust hosted a welcome cookout for the conference attendees on the land trust itself, and we experienced hands on education and exposure through on-site presentations of community members and a historical walking tour. At the time of our visit, about half of the original residents have moved into their new houses, while others are being housed in trailers as remaining homes are constructed. Some original residents have died in the process, or moved away. Establishing a community land trust is intergenerational work, a process requiring much patience and foresight.

### Bringing It Home

The Birmingham delegation attended this conference because we are in the process of creating our own community land trust – the first in the Birmingham area – in the historic Dynamite Hill neighborhood of Smithfield. All three members of our delegation live in this neighborhood, which earned its nickname because it was the site of numerous bombing against black citizens by the Ku Klux Klan and others.

Attending this conference was the culmination of a great collective effort

### What are community land trusts (CLTs)?

According to the National Community Land Trust Network: “nonprofit organizations — governed by a board of CLT residents, community residents, and public representatives — that provide lasting community assets and permanently affordable housing opportunities for families and communities.”

CLTs can help low-income and middle-income people access home ownership, and can help a neighborhood preserve its identity and resist gentrification, forced development, and displacement.

on the part of many people, including the many who donated to our recent crowdfunding campaign. The knowledge that we were attending the conference thanks to the collective, synergistic efforts of so many people sharing their resources with us, was truly a magical blessing.

The land under my home is the first parcel incorporated into the new Dynamite Hill-Smithfield Community Land

Trust, but we are currently raising money to purchase the lot across the street, which is the family home of freedom fighter Angela Y. Davis. This land trust will serve to maintain black and working-class land ownership, develop low income home-ownership programs, and create affordable land options for community-based cooperative businesses. Please visit

[www.magiccityag.org](http://www.magiccityag.org) to learn more and to donate towards our efforts!

Returning home to Alabama, I felt I remained connected to the land I visited, and the people there from whom I felt such warm hospitality and optimism. It feels as though a long-overdue kind of healing, a reconciliation of the land with the people, is beginning. I carry this spirit deep within my own as we journeyed back to our home and forward with our work in the Magic City.



Top: an already-finished home and one still in construction in the Davis Park area of the Lexington (KY) Community Land Trust.

Above: Group activity at the National Community Land Trust's Intersections 2015 Conference. Left: flower garden on the au-

thor's land, the "founding" property of the Dynamite-Hill Smithfield Community Land Trust in Birmingham. All photos courtesy Susan Diane Mitchell and Majadi Baruti.

## FREE TRADE (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 9)  
school and farm-to-hospital programs that foster demand for local fresh, healthy farm products. Right now, the TPP procurement provisions only cover federal purchasing (and exempt nutrition programs), but the U.S. plans to negotiate over state and local procurement rules after the TPP passes, which could let the trade bureaucrats that have already written a shoddy deal take a crack at local food initiatives.

### Empowering Corporations, Disempowering Workers and Local Government

Besides threatening both food safety and food sovereignty, the TPP would let corporations sue the United States over local, state or federal rules that frustrate their business plans and threaten to undermine expected profits. You read that right. A foreign company could sue for cash damages if a new law, ordinance, regulation impacted their earnings — which gives these overseas companies a powerful tool to attack federal and even local government policies. That means, for instance, that a foreign oil and gas company could demand monetary penalties from the United States if a town in Ohio passed an ordinance



Detail of the Beehive Design Collective mural "Free Trade Area of the Americas"

against fracking.

Corporate-driven globalization has been a disaster for working families since NAFTA. The TPP will shutter more U.S. factories, cost good jobs and exacerbate the growing wealth and income inequality in America. The TPP includes several countries with weak labor laws, dreary human rights records and low wages, and the agreement does almost nothing to improve this situation.

The TPP will do practically nothing to prevent forced labor, provide fair pay and safe workplaces or allow independent labor unions. As Communication Workers of America president Chris Shelton observed, "It forces U.S. workers to compete with the 65-cent an hour wages of Vietnamese workers and the slave labor employed in Malaysia."

Over the coming days and weeks the big business-Republican leadership-White House TPP alliance will be working hard to charm congressional members across the country. We can't let that happen. Contact your member of Congress and tell them to reject the TPP. For more information and updates on the TPP as they unfold, go to:

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

## GRAZE: BIRMINGHAM A BIG SUCCESS!

Thank you to everyone who made ASAN's first major farm-to-fork fundraiser, Graze: Birmingham, such a phenomenal event! *Graze: Birmingham* was held at Avondale Brewery on Sunday, September 13. It drew roughly 250 people, who enjoyed an impossibly wide variety of *stellar*, locally sourced dishes provided by the following farms and restaurants:

Deep South Food Alliance	Chez Lulu
Dixon Family Farms	Downstairs Diner at East Lake UMC
Fiddlehead Farms	American Culinary Federation
Grandview Farm	Golden Temple Café
Hamm Farms	Little Savannah
Harvest Roots Farm & Ferment	Montgomery Super Suppers
Hepzibah Farms	Organic Harvest Market & Café
Heron Hollow Farm	Sprout & Pour
Marble Creek Farmstead	Thyme Randle
My Secret Garden	West End Community Café
Snow's Bend Farm	
West End Gardens	

ASAN has enormous gratitude for the folks above, as well as to these sponsors and other contributors:

Andrea Mabry Photography (see photos at right and ad on page 11!)  
Red Mountain White Trash  
Pepper Place Market  
Avondale Brewery  
MightyGrow Organics  
Whole Foods Market  
Cahaba Group of the Sierra Club  
And all who donated items to the raffle table!

Lastly and most importantly, we could not have made this event happen without the time, talents, and heavy lifting of a fabulous team of committed volunteers! You know who you are — thank y'all so much!!

We hope to organize more Graze events — in Birmingham and elsewhere — in the future. Let us know if you'd like to help organize one in your area!





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Not sure if you need to renew? Check your address label to see when your membership expires.

Please mail checks made out to ASAN to:  
 PO Box 2127, Montgomery, AL 36102.

## NEWS FROM YOUR NEIGHBORS

**Annie Jean Davis** was born on 10/19/15, at 8lbs 2oz and 20 3/4" long. Annie is the second child of **Collins and Liz Davis** of **Bluewater Creek Farm** in Killen, AL. Everyone is doing well and Annie is loving her home on the farm.

**Kristin Woods** joined the Produce Safety Alliance October 1 through a collaborative arrangement with Alabama Extension. For the past 12 years, Kristin has worked as a Regional Extension Agent focusing on community education and economic development in the area of food safety and food systems. She has specialized in helping small farmers and retail food establishments meet food safety requirements and navigate food regulations. In this new position as a Regional Extension Associate for the Southeast, she will

These sections appear in every newsletter and feature updates both personal and professional, on ASAN members and friends: anything from a new farm, to a new baby.

They make existing resources known to others, and help spread the word for those looking to connect. Connecting people in this, the barest-bones of ways, we hope to provide a jumping-off point for folks to connect on their own in deeper ways.

Have something you want us to publish? Send it to [alice@asanonline.org](mailto:alice@asanonline.org) or (256) 743-0742.

continue to support small farmers as they navigate FSMA requirements. Kristin embraces a lifelong love of agriculture and owns a small diversified farm in Southwest Alabama.

**Anne Randle** (Randle Farms) is leaving her position with Tuskegee University Extension, and is starting a new position in December, as the Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent in Muscogee County for the University of Georgia. Don't worry; she and Franklin are still rooted to the spot in Auburn and are currently covered up with baby lambs.

## CLASSIFIEDS & RESOURCES

**Craig and Lisa Kalloch** are selling **Middle Earth Healing and Learning Center**, as they transition to a new adventure. Middle Earth is in Citronelle, AL (north Mobile County), on 42 acres, mostly wooded. Features: passive solar home heated and cooled with geothermal system and wood stove; grid-tied photovoltaics; solar hot water system; Generac propane generator; rainwater catchment; ponds; greenhouses; chemical-free garden areas; barn; and yurt. There's room for additional homesites for a community, and already set up for cottage industries! Asking price is \$440K. Visit [www.permaculturehomesteadforsale.com](http://www.permaculturehomesteadforsale.com) for more information, or call Craig or Lisa at 251-866-7204.

**EAT South** in Montgomery is currently accepting applications for a farm manager/director. Applications due by January 1. More info at [www.eatsouth.org](http://www.eatsouth.org). Full job posting is on [www.goodfoodjobs.com](http://www.goodfoodjobs.com) (search for EAT South).

## ASAN

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

DETAILS FOR THESE EVENTS  
AND MORE, AT [WWW.ASANONLINE.ORG/EVENTS](http://WWW.ASANONLINE.ORG/EVENTS)

*December 4—Montevallo*

Meet and Greet with Cliff Davis  
of Spiral Ridge Permaculture

*December 6-8 – Tuskegee*

73rd Annual Professional Agri-  
cultural Workers Conference  
(PAWC)

*January 27-30 – Lexington, KY*

SSAWG Conference: Practical  
Tools & Solutions for Sustaining  
Family Farms

*January 29 – Mobile*

Green Coast Council's Sustain-  
ability Summit

*February 12 — Huntsville*

4th Annual Seed Celebration

*February TBA — Tuskegee*

124<sup>th</sup> Annual Farmers Confer-  
ence

*February 26-27 – Columbus, GA*  
Georgia Organics Conference

