



The Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network (ASAN) presents
2016 Regional Food & Farm Forums

Kymulga Grist Mill – Childersburg, AL
Monday, October 10, 2016

- 8:30-9:00am Registration, visit exhibit tables
- 9:00-10:30am Welcome, overview, and group activity
- 10:40-11:40am Tour
- 11:45am-12:45pm Lunch + Lightning Talks
Lightning talks are brief (1-2 minutes) "elevator pitches" to inform the entire group about relevant projects, programs, resources, etc. If you have something to share, step up!
This is also the time to suggest a roundtable discussion topic, if there's one you want to add to the mix! (See bottom of page 2 "Your Suggestion")
- 12:55-1:45pm Roundtable discussion (session I)
- 1:55-2:45pm Roundtable discussion (session II)
Short break to stretch and visit exhibit tables
- 3:05-3:55pm Roundtable discussion (session III)
- 4:05-4:30pm Group wrap-up, evaluations, and additional time with exhibitors
If you haven't already completed your evaluation, please do so now!

This Forum made possible by the generous support of:



Thank you for supporting ASAN!

Be sure to visit the exhibit tables!

First South Farm Credit
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Creating and Sharing Inclusive Space:

Sustainable agriculture holds that a diverse, interdependent farm system is a stronger, healthier, and more resilient farm system – the same holds true for our human communities as well. Sameness may be easier, but it is weaker.

Please move through the Forum today with gentleness and openness towards other perspectives and experiences – they will not all be the same as yours, a fact that should be not feared but cherished and nurtured.

GENDER PRONOUNS:

If you don't know what your gender pronouns are, ask yourself: how do people refer to me in the third person? Most likely they use she (and her and hers) or he (and him and his). For example, "She invited me to visit her on her farm."

In English, as in many languages, we are typically taught that these are the only two sets of options. However many people do not identify with either of those two options, and may reflect that by using the pronouns they in the singular (and them and theirs), ze (and hir and hers), or others. For example "Pat invited me to visit them on their farm."

You can't actually assume someone's gender pronouns by their clothes, body, name, or appearance. To embrace and practice this, we ask you to **write your gender pronouns on your nametag**, along with your name. Please observe and respectfully use the pronouns people have written for themselves.

This may be a new concept for you, and it may make you uncomfortable because it is new. While this discomfort is perfectly okay, please **show respect by taking this process seriously**. Refrain from

saying that it doesn't matter what pronouns people use for you, or jokingly telling people to use the wrong ones. It may not be important to you, as your gender identity may not ever be questioned – but again, not everyone has had your experience.

If you have any questions, there are folks available to help – please feel free to seek them out at any point throughout the day.

TAKE SPACE, MAKE SPACE:

Central to ASAN's guiding philosophy is that **we are all experts, and we are all learning**. We opt for roundtable discussions instead of single presenters because we believe everyone around a table deserves some time at the mic, and that we all may benefit from what is shared at that mic.

So, recognize that **you are one among many**. If you are someone who normally dominates a conversation, pull back a little and focus on active listening, to make room for others to share. If you are someone who has a hard time jumping in, make a conscious effort to speak up and share something. Facilitator shorthand for this trade-off is "**take space, make space**."

Roundtable Discussions:

These discussions are open to all knowledge and skills levels! Facilitators have experience in their topic, and they will help keep the conversations going, but these are not lectures or presentations.

* **Your suggestion:** Passionate or curious about a topic you don't see here? Suggest it during the lightning talks, and see if others want to join!

Session I (12:55-1:45pm):

- Table 1) **Mushrooms** – Edible mushrooms grow in a wide variety of conditions; some are easily "domesticated" while others are better foraged. Learn how to incorporate which mushrooms into your farm or garden, for home use and/or for sale. – *Shiyrah and Charles Crowther (Grandview Farm)*
- Table 2) **Small Scale Dairy** – Discuss ways to integrate dairy animals into your homestead or small farm, for an additional source of income or simply to provide food for your family. Discuss how to select breeds, basic needs and care (nutrition, shelter, space, fencing, protection), and some basic processes for making cheese,



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soaps, and other products. The focus of this session will not be on certified/inspected commercial scale production. – *Will and Liz Doonan (Heron Hollow Farm)*

Table 3) **Pastured Poultry** – The basics of raising free-range birds for meat or eggs. Discuss care for poultry, including nutrition, predators, and various living spaces. – *Matthew Lawrence (Marble Creek Farmstead) and Charles Walters (River Oaks Farm)*

Table 4) **Access to Capital** – *There are many costshare programs, grants, low-cost loans, and other sources of capital that can help make it easier to attain the money necessary to start, grow, and sustain a sustainable farm. Learn about some of these opportunities, what types of projects or purchases they fund, whether you may be eligible, and what it takes to apply.* – *Karen Wynne (Crotovina Consulting, Rosita's Farm)*

Table 5) **Assessing Soil Quality and Maintaining Good Soil Health** – Good soil grows good crops and livestock, and is the first line of defense against crop nutrient deficiencies, pests, and diseases – so it's worth investing in. Learn what makes a healthy soil, and how to understand and improve your soil's health. – *Kirk Iversen (NRCS)*

Table 6) **Your suggestion***



Session II (1:55-2:45pm):

Table 1) **Selecting and Maintaining Tools and Equipment** – It's not always all about that big green tractor, after all. Which tools and equipment are must-have, and which are a waste of time and money? Discuss what farm equipment is right for your scale and your vision, and how to take care of basic maintenance and repairs without breaking the bank. – *Charles Walters (River Oaks Farm)*

Table 2) **Medicinal Herbs** - Learn how you can use different herbs and wild whole foods to treat and nourish your whole body, and support spiritual, physical, and digestive health. – *Phyllis Light (Appalachian Center for Natural Health)*

Table 3) **Small Livestock Production** – Learn the ins and outs of raising and marketing small livestock including rabbits, goats and sheep. – *Robert Spencer (ACES), Sandra Simone (Gardens of Huckleberry Hills) and Amanda Edwards (River Oaks Farm)*

Table 4) **Farm Certifications: Costs, Benefits, and What's Right for You** – USDA Certified Organic, Certified Naturally Grown, and a long list of other options exist, to help speak for your farming methods when you can't, to help give your customers extra confidence and clarity, and to bring a higher price for the products you pour yourself into raising. Discuss why certain farms have chosen certain certifications, the costs and benefits of different certification processes, and how to decide what's right for your circumstances. – *Margaret Ann Snow (Snow's Bend Farm) and Charlie Griffin (Hepzibah Farms)*

Table 5) **Pest and Disease Management** – What ARE the pests and diseases plaguing your crops, and how (and when) should you manage them? Which "pests" are actually beneficial? – *Joe Kemble (ACES)*

Table 6) **Your suggestion***

Session III (3:05-3:55pm):

Table 1) **High Tunnel Production** -- Learn about the challenges and benefits specific to growing crops in enclosed, passively heated hoop houses, or high tunnels. Talk about which crops do well (and which don't), and which pests and diseases do well (and how to beat them). Also learn how to acquire, select and build the right tunnel for your situation. – *Joe Kemble (ACES)*

Table 2) **Building Strong Farm-to-Restaurant Relationships** – Many farmers are interested in selling their products to restaurants, and many chefs and restaurant managers are interested in supporting local

farms... But it's rarely that simple. Farmers and chefs alike, discuss what to do and what NOT to do, to initiate and sustain strong, mutually beneficial purchasing relationships with one another. – *JR Jacobson (Dixieland Kitchen Consulting)*

Table 3) **Water Sampling and Water Quality** – Discuss ways to learn and monitor what's in your water, how your findings might affect your farm, and how your farming methods can affect water quality for those downstream. – *Kathleen Kirkpatrick (Coosa Riverkeeper, US Green Building Council)*

Table 4) **Livestock Nutrition** – We say "food is medicine," but sometimes don't extend that same logic to the health of the animals we're raising. Discuss diet-based strategies to promoting holistic animal health, and how to foster robust nutrient cycles and soil ecosystems in your pastures. – *Jimmy Parker (Hillsboro Feed)*

Table 5) **Your suggestion***

Table 6) **Your suggestion***

Evaluations: *Please* take the time to share your feedback and reflections! Evaluations help us know how this Forum was, and how to improve future Forums. If you have to leave before the end, there will be a basket on/around the registration table where you can turn in your evaluation.



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