



THE ALABAMA  
SUSTAINABLE  
AGRICULTURE  
NETWORK

# ASAN UPDATE

Spring 2018

Published Quarterly

## 2017 IN REVIEW: "CULTIVATE ASAN" STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

By Lindsey Mullen

In 2017, we decided to set aside some time to do some listening and visioning. We had three goals for the year: We wanted to re-align our mission with our work. We wanted to develop middle and long-term strategies to operationalize, and we wanted to re-connect with you—the people who make up this network.

We called this work "Cultivate ASAN" because we understand it to be the work that yields growth; it's the kind of work that doesn't yield im-



Photo credit Kendrick Photo & Video

mediate or flashy results, but creates a more fertile long-term environment for us to grow.

We hosted seven assemblies across the state and distributed a statewide survey, trying to engage Alabamians with deep questions about the current and future state of our

(Continued on page 3)

## 2017 IN REVIEW: FOOD & FARM FORUM

In December, ASAN hosted its statewide Food & Farm Forum at Camp McDowell in Nauvoo, Alabama. It was a chilly weekend with a brisk wind but the sun was out and shone bright and beautifully. Some folks arrived late Thursday night, while

(Continued on page 8)



## SEED SAVING 101: HARVESTING AND PROCESSING

By the Sand Mountain Seed Bank

This is part 3 in our series on seed saving. We left off in part two, having grown out our crop; ensured proper isolation, population size, and pollination; and selected the individual plants to save seed from.

You have kept impeccable records and have brought your healthy, productive plants to maturity... Now it is time to harvest the seed and process it for storage! Bear in mind that what follows are broad

outlines, and further research on your specific plants is needed.

The general rule is to let the fruit or seed stay on the plant until the seed can reach full maturity, before harvesting. Then, processing generally falls into two categories -- wet and dry -- which we'll get more into later.



Photo courtesy the Sand Mountain Seed Bank

### HARVESTING

Knowing when to harvest seed from crops that are drying in the field, is a lesson in shades of gray. It takes close observation of plants and especially of the weather. Check every day to see how fast your seeds are drying.

(Continued on page 6)

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Letter from ASAN Board President	2
Thanks to Outgoing Board Members	3
Save the dates for 2018 Graze and Food & Farm Forum	3
Report-back from SSAWG Conference	4
Southeast Organic Partnership Update	4
ASAN Member Profiles	5
News from Your Neighbors	11
Classifieds & Resources	11
Upcoming Events	11

## WHO'S FEATURED IN OUR FIRST MEMBER PROFILES?

Turn to page 5 to find out!



Email nominations for future features to [info@asanonline.org](mailto:info@asanonline.org). Nomination can be an individual, family, farm, business, or organization, but must be an ASAN member!

Not a member yet? Join today, at <http://asanonline.org/join-asan> or use the paper form on page 15!

## LETTER FROM THE ASAN BOARD PRESIDENT



Hello all! I'm Gabriel Denton, a small-scale family farmer producing eggs, fruits, vegetables, herbs, and crafts in South-west Alabama. I have been in-

involved with ASAN for a number of years and am thrilled to have recently become President of ASAN's Board of Directors.

Welcome to a new year, a new growing season, and a new beginning for the Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network! What a name to live up to!

This is an important new beginning for ASAN because of the exciting strategic planning we did in 2017. ASAN is exceedingly grateful to Lindsey Mullen who facilitated the strategic planning process. (Read Lindsey's synopsis of the process, which starts on the front page of this newsletter!)

This process involved eight events in places all over Alabama, in which we got feedback about what direction ASAN should go. We engaged people. We listened, and we heard a lot.

People expressed their disappointment in the disconnection and brokenness of the

current agricultural system. People also expressed the value of being connected with the people in our communities, including growers, community leaders, and good food advocates, and also being connected with local food and land.

So, how can we repair and deepen the relationship between the people of Alabama and the food we eat? We can celebrate culturally important food. We can teach people of all ages how to grow and prepare food.

How can we repair and deepen the relationship between the people of Alabama and the place we live? We can incorporate local food into Alabama schools, prisons, and hospitals. We can have programs that teach about agriculture's impact on our watersheds. We can have events that work towards food sovereignty, empowering communities with control over their local food economy and ultimately what food they eat.

How can we repair and deepen the relationship between the place we live and the food we eat? We can connect Alabama growers to Alabama consumers. We can host forums on agriculture that

will heal the land water and air. We can hold workshops on seed saving. We can partner with other organizations working to protect and heal our mother earth.

Much of this work has been a big part of what ASAN does, but now it can be even more so. After a year of strategic planning and listening, we now have a new mission statement. **"ASAN: We deepen relationships between the people of Alabama, the food we eat and the place we live."**

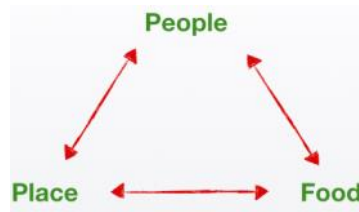
Relationships are now clearly defined as our core work. We will work to cultivate and strengthen these relationships. Strong relationships

will enable us to realize our vision of a resilient agricultural system in Alabama.

I have faith that you and I will bring new positive connections that will bring delicious, real, Alabama food to our communities.

Happy growing!

Gabriel Denton  
ASAN Board President



## CONTRIBUTORS: SPRING 2018

**The Sand Mountain Seed Bank** is a collection of open-pollinated, locally and regionally adapted seed varieties collected and lovingly maintained by Dove Stackhouse, Charlotte Hagood, and others. Learn more at [https://savetheseed.net/wiki/Category:Sand\\_Mountain\\_Seed\\_Bank](https://savetheseed.net/wiki/Category:Sand_Mountain_Seed_Bank).

**Lindsey Mullen** is non-profit consultant, a birth doula, and the director of a summer camp for people of all abilities. She lives at Wild Hydrangea community in Blount County.

**Gabriel Denton** is ASAN's Board President and a farmer at Jubilee Promise Farm in Vinegar Bend, AL (Washington County).

**Meagan Mullen** is a part-time staff member of ASAN. She lives in Rainbow City with her partner, Sadie, and their two cats, Raj and Wolfie. They are in the process of purchasing a school bus to convert to live and travel in throughout the next year.

**Mindy Santo** is a women's empowerment coach in Birmingham and works part-time on the staff of ASAN. An advocate of getting in the right mindset to bring your intentions to fruition, she works one-on-one and in-community to help you bring them into existence.

**Alice Evans** is the Executive Director of ASAN. She is a native of Huntsville, and now lives in Birmingham with her partner Lisa, their four fur-babies, and their new (human) baby.

## ABOUT ASAN:

The mission of the Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network is to deepen relationships between the people of Alabama, the food that we eat, and the place that we live.

ASAN provides peer-to-peer education, training, and networking opportunities to our broad network of farmers, gardeners, food-based businesses, agricultural resource organizations, and community leaders. We are a membership-based organization that seeks to improve the lives of small farmers and rural and urban communities and make a positive impact on the state's environment and health.

We define sustainable agriculture as farming that supports families and communities while conserving natural resources. We embrace the breadth of overlapping ways — ecological, economic, social, historical, etc. — that together, we can build a more sustainable food system. Find out more at <http://asanonline.org>.

## 2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Majadi Baruti** — Dynamite Hill-Smithfield Community Land Trust, Birmingham

**Gabriel Denton** (President) — Jubilee Promise Farm, Vinegar Bend

**Lindsey Lunsford** — TULIP Community Garden / Tuskegee Extension, Tuskegee

**Frewin Osteen** (Forum Chair) — Prichard Housing Authority, Prichard

**Lori Sawyer** (Vice President) — Wind Creek Hospitality, Walnut Hill, FL

**Karen Wynne** (Treasurer / Finance Chair) — Rosita's Farm / Crotovina Consulting, Huntsville

**Suzanne Wright** (Secretary) — Gaucho Farms, Slocumb

We will be electing several new board members this spring, whose terms will start in June!

## “CULTIVATE” (CONT'D)

(Continued from page 1)

food, land, and agriculture. Traveling from Decatur to Fairhope, Tuskegee to Livingston, we did our best to invite broad participation from people with different perspectives. Over potlucks and fresh food, we asked questions like “Is the food movement an environmentalist movement? Does an organic certification make a farm more sustainable? Is it important that people of all backgrounds are represented in our agricultural system? What would it take for the people of Alabama to be sovereign over our own food?”

Our staff and board participated in these gatherings, keeping ears open to hear what our members were saying. We wanted to understand what ASAN’s role could and should be in our changing agricultural landscape. Synthesizing what we’d heard into a clear mission and vision for an organization was no small task. In looking for the right words to capture what we felt we had heard, we began to see that ASAN’s place

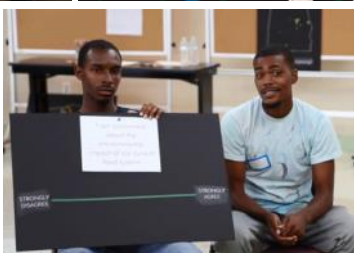
seemed to be that of a connector—bringing people into relationship with one another; giving them reasons to talk. We repeated stories of both connection and disconnection; we wrestled with the idea that people used to be connected to the land, to each other, and to the food they consumed, and searched for answers for why this connection had become so frayed. We asked “What makes relationships strong? How do we build connections that are resilient?”

tions that are resilient?”

Searching for metaphors for what ASAN does, we engaged the image of ASAN as the mycelial network that makes up a large part of the fungi we know as mushrooms. This underground information highway creeps out underground, sharing nutrients and communicating information. It connects those things which appear to be separate; it makes the whole community of life stronger and better able to adapt. We imagined ASAN as a healing web, bringing energy and power to the places where it’s needed, sending information and resources so that the network as a whole is stronger.

**Check out the video!**  
<https://vimeo.com/247687892>

Big thanks to Kendrick Photo and Video for capturing all the beauty, love, and energy we felt during this process!



At the end of the year, our board passed a mission statement that reflects the work that we see before us. ASAN: **We deepen relationships between the people of Alabama, the food that we eat, and the place that we live.** We continue to ask and reflect on how we

can forge connections that will support farmers and the work that they do. We continue to build a vision of Alabama agriculture that replenishes the land and nourishes the people, and of a network that makes this vision possible.

## MANY THANKS TO SEVERAL OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS

Big big thanks to Charles Walters, Graydon Rust, and Alice Love for their service to the ASAN board of directors! Alice spent a year on the board, and Graydon two years, and Charles served for three years including two on the Executive Board as Vice President (2016) and President (2017). Thank you all for lending your time, talents, sweat, and resources to help build a better ASAN and a better Alabama!



Clockwise from above: Alice Love, Charles Walters, and Graydon Rust

## ..... SAVE THE DATES!

**Sunday, Sept 9  
Graze: Birmingham**

**December 6-9  
Food & Farm Forum  
Camp McDowell  
Nauvoo**  
.....

## SSAWG COMES TO CHATTANOOGA

By Katie Willis

In mid-January as snow threatened to cover roadways and gusts of frigid wind pushed southerners into a late season hibernation, 1100 people from all over the southeast and beyond, gathered in Chattanooga, Tennessee for the 27th annual Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group conference. Attendees were farmers, eaters, policy makers, garden educators, and agriculture advocates.

Speakers encouraged farmers and their employees to be gentle with their bodies and take time for rest and rejuvenation. A mushroom expert and enthusiast presented about the importance of mycorrhizae cultivation for healthy soils. Educators, social justice organizers, and youth employees held space to discuss how systemic racism has become entrenched in school garden education and employment and strategize about ways to unlearn it.

During the state breakout session, nearly fifty folks from Alabama met and shared their experiences, their successes and failures, and their hopes for the future of agriculture in the state. The breakout session also held space for networking and community building and kicked off a conversation about beginning a chapter of the National Young Farmers Coalition in Alabama to support and nurture aspiring and beginning farmers in their agricultural journeys.

The conference, which spanned January 17 - 21, not only provided attendees with education and innovation to increase farm and food system sustainability, but gave farmers a small respite before their growing seasons really begin. The SSAWG winter conference is always a success as a stage for knowledge sharing and is imperative for the continued health and growth of sustainable agriculture in the South and across the United States.

## UPDATE FROM THE SOUTHEAST ORGANIC PARTNERSHIP AT TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY

By Leslie Grill



*Tuskegee Professor and Project Director Dr. Kokoasse Kpomblekou, and organic grower partner Kenneth Lansing of Memphis, TN, evaluate a potential on-farm research plot to perform organic variety trials starting this spring. Photo courtesy Leslie Grill.*

The Southeast Organic Partnership at Tuskegee University is the new nickname given to the large, inter-institutional, USDA-funded project designed to strengthen organic farming infrastructure through consumer education, market development, and integrated extension and research programs in the Southeastern region. Tuskegee University is leading this regional effort with the help of ASAN, Auburn University, Mississippi State University, North Carolina State University, and Oregon State University.

We have recruited nearly 40 organic and transitioning growers for on-farm variety trials. Each of the farms will host a research plot consisting of two different crops and two varieties of those crops. The growers have chosen two varieties of one of the main crop choices of squash, tomato, southern pea, and sweet potato. They will also grow two varieties of a crop of their choice that they find challenging to grow.

In addition, the project will implement OMRI approved pesticide trials on three research stations in Mississippi, Alabama and North Carolina. Tuskegee University will lead the consumer education efforts

WHAT DOES

# The FARM

MEAN TO YOU?





*Whatever The Farm means to you, let us finance it for you.*

First South supports young, beginning, small, and non-traditional farmers seeking financial avenues to enter Alabama's retail agricultural markets.

So talk with us about a Direct loan from First South or participation with the USDA Farm Service Agency and the U.S. Small Business Administration.



## First South

Farm Credit

*Your Rural Lender Since 1916*

**FIRSTSOUTHLAND.COM**

**800-955-1722**

and Auburn University will lead the market research, both of which will focus only on Alabama.

We look forward to providing more updates on this project soon so stay tuned! For additional information about the project, please reach out to the Project Coordinator, Leslie Grill, at [organic@tuskegee.edu](mailto:organic@tuskegee.edu).

## INTRODUCING: ASAN MEMBER PROFILE SERIES

Introducing our newest feature: membership profiles! Since many of you are miles apart, and since opportunities to gather in person are few and far between, we are hoping to deepen relationships among ASAN's diverse, amazing, and ingenious members across the state, with these regular features. **Thanks to these and all our members** for their ongoing support!

To read the **extended cut of these interviews** visit our blog at [www.asanonline.org](http://www.asanonline.org).

Want to be featured in a future profile, or know an ASAN member who deserves a little light shined their way?

**To nominate an individual, farm/family, or business/organization to be featured in a future profile**, drop us a line at [info@asanonline.org](mailto:info@asanonline.org)!

Not a paid member yet? Join today, at <http://asanonline.org/join-asan> or fill out and mail us the paper form on page 15!

### MEMBER PROFILE: KRISTIN WOODS

Kristin is a Regional Extension Agent for the Cooperative Extension System where she specializes in food safety, food processing, and poultry meat quality. She is the proud owner of Jim's Farm in lower Marengo County. Kristin has been a member of ASAN for four years. We are so grateful for her knowledge, presence, and support.



*Photo courtesy Kristin Woods*

#### Why did you choose your career path?

I had an innate desire to work with and care for animals, food animals in particular. I learned to ride horses at an early age and have pretty much been involved in agriculture in some way ever since.

#### What excites/concerns you most about the current food movement in Alabama?

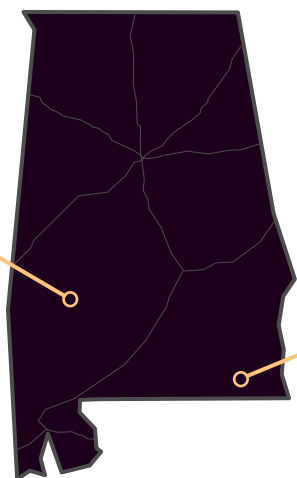
While there has been progress made, I want so much more for the food movement in Alabama. My hope is that folks will learn to connect the delicious locally grown food they are consuming to a deeper understanding of the hard work and sacrifice it takes to produce such tasty ingredients.

#### After almost 30 years working in the agricultural field, what keeps you motivated?

Support is key: education, healthcare, resources to thrive instead of struggle. The produce industry is where I see the most potential for Alabama ag. Untapped potential and room for progress. We have fertile soil, access to quality water sources, people in need of jobs, and people in need of fresh fruits of vegetables – we need to link these things together and develop our industry.

#### What are your thoughts on the future of ASAN?

I want to see ASAN continue to help develop and strengthen our local food system, creating better access to quality food for the people that live in Alabama, and a decent quality of life for those producing that food.



### MEMBER PROFILE: WORKING COWS DAIRY



*Photo courtesy Working Cows Dairy*

Jan and Rinske de Jong, originally from Holland, established Working Cows Dairy in 1985. Their dairy farm is located in Slocomb, Alabama. They have been members of ASAN for a number of years, and even hosted one of ASAN's Regional Food & Farm Forums in 2015. For more information about their farm and products be sure to visit their website, [www.workingcowsdairy.com](http://www.workingcowsdairy.com).

#### How did you all first get into dairy farming?

Jan's father was a dairy farmer and he grew up in the trade.

#### Has the family tradition of dairy farming continued with your sons?

Unfortunately, no. Currently the farm is run by myself and one other employee, the rest of the family has stepped away from farming. My oldest son, Jonny, runs Alabama's Organic Dairy Products, which is the processing and marketing side of the farm — he handles all the steps from raw milk to store shelf, so his work is at least still closely related to the farm.

#### Can you tell me about the mission of Working Cows Dairy?

Our mission is to satisfy the demanding taste buds of the Southeast with delectable, local, organic, grass fed dairy products.

#### What advice would you share with other farmers considering the transition to organic?

I'm not sure. It's been a hard road from conventional to organic in the dairy industry. Before you're approved, you're required to feed your cows organic feed for an entire year, unfortunately while still only being able to fetch conventional prices. I'm not sure if it's the same for produce farmers.

## SEED SAVING (CONT'D)

(Continued from page 1)

For **beans/peas** you can harvest them when they are tan but not completely dry. They can be a little leathery and flexible where the stem meets the pod. You need to harvest before a rain, as mold will be present even when you can't see it.

You can let **corn** stand in the field until the shuck dries and turns brown. As long as the weather is good, drying on the plant is preferable, so nature does the work for you. If you are fearing rain, you can harvest before the husk is open wide, but the husk should still be dry and the kernels fully formed before harvesting. Then shell it off the cob and continue drying.

For crops that put up a flower/seed stalk like **brassicas** (cabbage, broccoli, kale, collards), **arugula**, and **radishes**, the seeds should be left to dry on the plant. Again, look daily when they start to dry -- they won't all ripen at the same time, and the birds love them. Many of them will release their seed and some, like **cilantro**, will throw their seeds, so you need to be vigilant to catch them before you lose all your seed.

If rains threaten you can pick a little early, but you *must* make sure the seeds are mature. Compare the color and luster of the seeds. Fully mature **turnip** seeds will be black or dark brown and dull looking, where unripe seeds will be green or just turning color.

If birds are becoming a problem, bend the stalks near the ground, as birds don't like being that close to the ground. They will still get some of your seeds, but they won't strip them all. You can harvest them by cutting the most fully formed stems with nice fat seed pods into a large bag.

**Sunflowers** and other flowers where the seed is part of the blossom, should be left in the field to dry until mature.

**Lettuce** should be harvested before it fluffs like dandelions.

Seeds from fleshy fruit like **tomatoes**, **cucumbers**, **melons**, and **squash** need to ripen past human consumption; most need varying degrees of fermentation. (More on this below.) **Tomatoes** can be harvested at eating stage, but I let them stay on the plant a few days beyond, as long as there isn't disease about.

**Cucumbers** and **summer squash** need to get big and hard, turning yellow or a very

dull color. **Winter squash** and **pumpkins**, harvest when the stems have turned brown and dried, then store them until they naturally start to rot (in-place fermentation). When allowed to sit for a few days after harvest, the seed of these crops continue to mature "after ripen," which raises germination rates.



Left: tomato seeds fermenting. Above: fully fermented, strained seeds, ready to be dried and stored. Photo credits: Dove Stackhouse

**Dry processing:** Crops that have dried in the field need to be shelled or threshed, put on plates or trays, and further dried. Threshing turnip or radish seeds is easy -- just rub the stalk inside the bag until most of the pods/ seeds have fallen off the stem, then winnow (separate by blowing air through) the seed from the chaff (the dried plant matter that's not the seed).

Grains can be cut then dried in the field as in sheaves. When dry, spread them on a sheet and walk on them to separate the seed from the chaff, then winnow them.

Some flowers like zinnias it is hard to see the seeds after they dry in the flower head. Let them self-sow, plant a whole flower head or painstakingly separate them.

**Wet processing:** Most of the seeds from fleshy fruit need to be fermented anywhere from a few days (as for cantaloupes) to a week or more (as for tomatoes). For tomatoes and cucumbers, the gel or placenta that the seeds are encased in contains growth inhibitors to prevent early germination. Fermentation separates the seeds from the gel.

Squeeze or scoop out the seeds and gel into an open container. Some people put the fruit into a blender first, a method that is especially helpful with eggplant. After a few days when the mixture has formed a scum on the surface and the flies are really

liking it, it is ready to process. Good seeds will sink to the bottom, so simply pour off the pulp, scum and bad seeds, then rinse the seeds once or maybe twice. Don't rinse too much, as the more you rinse the lower the germination rate will be. Then spread the cleaned seeds on a glass or plastic plate to dry. Don't use paper towels as the seeds will stick to them!

In some cases the required fermentation can happen "in place". Winter squash and pumpkins, for instance, can be harvested and stored until they start to rot. Then harvest the seeds, rinse them, and you're done. Peppers and eggplant can be processed both ways, depending on what you prefer. (Note: be careful to wear gloves when gathering hot peppers, and wear a mask when processing them as the dust will irritate your mucus membranes.)

Lastly, a parting piece of advice: label, label, label! As we can attest to, you will never remember what is what, once it gets on a plate and is drying.

Our next article will be on storage, how to carry over tubers and other helpful odds and ends.

### Advertise in the ASAN Update!

Print and electronic distribution to 3000+ across Alabama  
Diverse, informed readership of farmers, foodies, community  
leaders, and more

Support ASAN's ongoing work to unify and amplify statewide  
efforts in sustainable agriculture and local food systems

Contact [alice@asanonline.org](mailto:alice@asanonline.org) for details

FUN FOOD • BOAT DOCKAGE • LIVE MUSIC

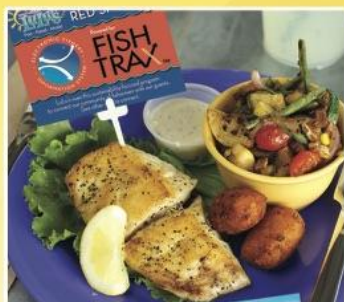
We're  
Growin' for

# LuLu's

ORDONEZ PRODUCE

WE PROUDLY SERVE:

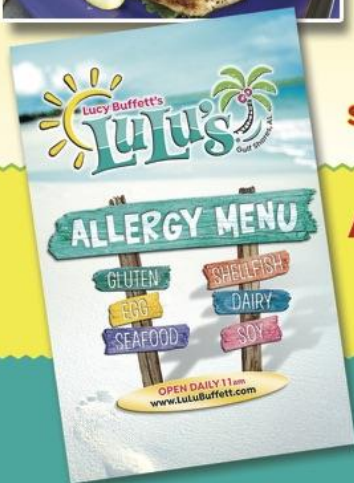
- 🌀 Fresh Local Produce when available
- 🌀 Fresh Red Snapper powered by Fish Trax
- 🌀 Local Seafood from Gulf Seafood
- 🌀 Organic Blueberries from Weeks Bay Plantation (Seasonal)



**LuLu's supports family farms and serves local produce when available.**

**Open Daily 11am**

**Allergies?** No worries! Check out our ALLERGY MENU. Regardless of your diet or taste, everything at LuLu's is made with love, in-house & fresh to order.



**LuLu's Gulf Shores:**

200 East 25th Ave. ☎ 251-967-LULU (5858)

Under the Bridge in Gulf Shores, AL

[www.LuLuBuffett.com](http://www.LuLuBuffett.com)



## FORUM (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

others joined us for breakfast Friday morning before sessions began.

By mid-morning Friday we started hearing news of significant amounts of snowfall in south and central Alabama. The ground was bare where we were, but as folks arrived at the registration table we heard stories about six inches of snow in some parts of the state and blizzards happening just miles from where we were. Unfortunately, a number of attendees and presenters couldn't make it to the Forum, but over eighty attendees *did* make it, and that small-but-mighty crowd made for a very successful weekend of learning and bonding and building.

Even amid cancelled sessions, impromptu logistics changes, and freezing temperatures, everyone remained exceedingly positive, agreeable, supportive, and enthusiastic -- this is why we so love all the people

who make up ASAN!

Participants dove into sessions on seed saving, growing winter greens (both led by Ira Wallace of the Southern Exposure Seed Exchange in Virginia), organic certification, the 2018 Farm Bill (both led by Marty Mesh of Florida Organic Growers), growing elderberry (led by Terry Durham of Riverhills Harvest in Missouri), permaculture (Alan Booker of the Eldenbridge Institute), the "Fresh Stop Market" movement (Sagdrina Jalal of the Georgia Farmers Market Association), herbal medicine and growing herbs (herbalist Phyllis Light), as well as sessions from the American Farmland Trust (of "No Farms No Food" fame), Deep South Food Alliance, Crotoquina, Produce Safety Alliance, Mahalah Farms and Snow's Bend Farm.

Scattered throughout the agenda were additional sessions called "beehives", peer-to-peer sharing sessions in which participants were invited to crack pecans, clean garlic, sort turnip seed, and do other tasks while also engaging in constructive dialogue together. Beehive topics included everything from grassfed beef, land ownership, and farmers

(Continued on page 9)

Many thanks to these sponsors and grantors for supporting this wonderful event and helping us keep registration costs affordable for our participants!

EBSCO Industries

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama

Southern Partners Fund

Sierra Club Alabama Chapter

Farm Aid

Alabama Department of Ag & Industries /  
Specialty Crops Block Grant Program

Southern SARE

American Farmland Trust  
Highlands Bar & Grill

Eldenbridge Institute  
First South Farm Credit

Oak Street Garden Shop  
Alabama Rivers Alliance

River Hills Harvest  
Harpersville Family Medicine



All photos credit Kendrick Photo & Video

## FORUM (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 8)

market management to closed-group caucus sessions for people of color in the food movement and LGBTQ people in the food movement.

Also intermixed among the regular sessions were four themed tours of the McDowell Farm School and other features of Camp McDowell's amazing 1100+ acre property, led by the Farm School's fantastic staff.

Some other highlights of the week-end included the Market Fair held on Friday evening before dinner. There, vendors had a variety of goodies for sale and exhibitors had a plethora of knowledge to share. After that we set the tables and gathered 'round for another delicious and locally sourced meal. Many folks stuck around after dinner to mingle, make smores over the fire, and listen to music. It was a truly wonderful end to the first day of the Forum.

Saturday just before lunch, we held a plenary session to review ASAN's year of visioning, share what we heard through our "Cultivate ASAN" events, and invite everyone to continue visioning with us into 2018 and beyond. (More on pages 1-3.)

Some of our most anticipated sessions were held on Saturday afternoon, with herbalist Phyllis Light leading a discussion on native plants, and possibly the most well-attended session of the Forum, *Decolonizing Your Diet*, led by Sehoy Thrower. There was an air of satisfied exhaustion by the time we gathered for one last meal together, exchanged contact information with new friends, and said goodbyes.

We have overflowing thanks and appreciation for all the volunteers and paid staff who contributed your magic to this event and helped it run smoothly... or at least as smoothly as it could have, in the face of a blizzard! You know who you are and we love

you!

Thanks to Katie Thompson for designing our beautiful graphics and adorable hankies, which doubled as Forum swag and as reusable napkins for the week-end. Thanks to Camp McDowell and the McDowell Farm School for their beautiful space and the energy and support they brought towards hosting us in it.

**We are holding another statewide Food & Farm Forum in 2018, again in early December** — save-the-date announcements will be sent out this spring, so keep an eye out and make plans to attend! You won't want to miss it!

Many thanks to all who helped nourish and fuel Forum-goers' minds and bodies:

Alabama Acres  
Bluewater Creek Farm  
Camp McDowell Staff  
Caver Produce  
Continental Bakery  
E.A.T. South  
The Farm at Windy Hill  
Ghost Train Brewing  
Hamm Produce  
Isom's Orchard  
Jubilee Promise  
Mahalah Farms  
Marble Creek Farmstead  
Montgomery Super Suppers  
REV's Urban Food Project  
River Hills Harvest  
Rosita's Farm  
Rusty's BBQ  
Sand Mountain Seed Bank  
To Your Health Sprouted Flour  
Viperville Vegetable Farm



**Financing Your Rural Way of Life**—Guarantees are hard to come by. Thanks to Alabama Ag Credit and Alabama Farm Credit, a reliable source of capital is not. For one hundred years we've lived and worked in the same communities as the people we serve. Our cooperative structure ensures we never stop caring—and our financial support means your farm never stops growing.

AlabamaAgCredit.com  
(800) 579-5471

AlabamaFarmCredit.com  
(877) 681-6087



## NEWS FROM YOUR NEIGHBORS

Congratulations to **ASAN's Executive Director Alice Evans** and her partner **Lisa Moyer** who gave birth at home to their first child, **Moss Río**, on December 27, 2017!

Congratulations and lots of love to parents **Dominique Villanueva** and **Chris Gooden**, and big sister **Maria Lucia**, on the birth of baby **Malcolm Ausar Gooden Villanueva**, on February 24!

Congratulations to **Matthew and Jesie Lawrence** of **Marble Creek Farmstead** in Sylacauga, who gave birth on March 7 to their second son, **Elijah Roy**. Elijah's big brother **Luke** is excited to show him the ropes of farm life.

**Allison Stewart** of **To Your Health Sprouted Flour** and her husband **Banjo Stewart**, formerly of **Kowaliga Restaurant** on Lake Martin, moved to Bluffton, Georgia, where they are both now employed at **White Oak Pastures**. Allison is still working some remotely with To Your Health. Best wishes, y'all!

Best wishes to **Deacue Fields**, who left his position as Chair of **Auburn University's** Ag Economics and Rural Sociology Department, to become the new dean of the **University of Arkansas's** Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food, and Life Sciences. Congratulations Deacue!

## CLASSIFIEDS AND RESOURCES

**RESTAURANTS ISO GROWERS:** Baldwin County restaurants looking for local sources for microgreens and edible flower blossoms. You don't have to live in the county to be a producer/seller of these products. It may be a lucrative proposition for a small organic farmer. For further information please contact **Holly Clark**, 251-605-5402.

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.

**Taylor Myers** in Huntsville is looking for a grain farmer who is interested in transitioning to organic but is limited based on multiple year-to-year leases. A regenerative farmland finance start-up is in the process of being formed that seeks to offer **evergreen, long-term contracts** to farmers who agree to transition farmland into organic certification and maintain certification. For more information contact Taylor at [tbyers02@gmail.com](mailto:tbyers02@gmail.com).

**FOR SALE:** ASAN is selling a custom-made 8' two-stage **roller crimper**. Attaches to three-point hitch. Located in Shorter, AL. Must be a current paid ASAN member to purchase. Asking price \$2415. For more information and photos go to <http://asanonline.org/rollercrimper>.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

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

*March 10—Birmingham*  
Urban Collective's Dessert Cafe

*March 15 - Mobile*  
Mobile Urban Growers (MUG) Monthly Meeting

*March 17 - online*  
Free Webinar: Crop Planning for Urban Agriculture

*March 23 — Headland*  
Southeast Alabama Cover Crop Field Day

*March 24 - Montgomery*  
Farm in the City: Organic Gardening 101

*March 24—Jemison*  
Citrus in the Home Garden Workshop

*March 27 — Shorter/Auburn*  
Central Alabama Cover Crop Field Day

*March 28—Tuskegee*  
Healthy Soil for Healthy Pastures Training

*March 29—Tuscaloosa*  
Connect to Your Coast Tuscaloosa

*April 3-5—St Louis, MO*  
SARE's Our Farms, Our Future Conference: Crafting a Vision for Sustainable Agriculture

*April 7—Huntsville*  
Free Family Farm Day

*April 7—Birmingham*  
Ruffner Spring Native Plant Sale

*April 7—Fort Payne*  
Medicinal Plants ID Workshop

*April 7 - Tuscumbia*  
Shoals Earth Day Fest

*April 11—Robertsdale*  
Gulf Coast Beekeeping School

(Continued on page 11)

Help us build a better Alabama.

## Join ASAN or renew your membership today!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me: \_\_\_\_\_ monthly e-updates

\_\_\_\_\_ quarterly

print newsletter

If you're interested in making a larger donation to ASAN, or have any other questions, contact [info@asanonline.org](mailto:info@asanonline.org) or (256) 743-0742.

### MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

Donations and annual dues are tax-deductible.

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Supporter: \$25

\_\_\_\_\_ Farm or Household: \$50

\_\_\_\_\_ Business or Organization: \$200

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Additional donation

\$\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL enclosed**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date submitted

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 2533, Birmingham, AL 35202.

## UPCOMING EVENTS (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 10)

April 15 — Birmingham

Darter Festival

April 15 - Montgomery

EAT South Spring Harvest Brunch

April 20-22—Epes

CoopEcon hosted by the Southern Grassroots Economies Project

April 20-22 - Mentone, AL

Midsouth Women's Herbal Conference

April 21—Fairhope

Earth Day Mobile Bay

April 21 - Fort Payne

Medicinal Plants with the Southern Herbalist Workshop

April 22 - Huntsville

Earth Day at Monte Sano State Park

April 24 - Birmingham

Enviro Film Series: *Before the Flood*

April 28 - Fort Payne

Medicinal and Edible Plants: Everyday Uses Workshop

May 11-13 - Valley Head

Hawkwind Herbal Workshop

May 26—Jemison

The Wonder of Herbs / Medicinal Herb Class from Plant to Medicine

June 2—Jemison

Walking Tour of Black and Blueberries

June 9—Jemison

Black and Blueberry Festival

June 23—Auburn

2018 Alabama Water Watch Annual Meeting

### Submit your event to our events calendar!

Email [alice@asanonline.org](mailto:alice@asanonline.org), and be sure to include:

- Name of event
- Host group and contact info
- Location (including full address)
- Date/time
- Price
- Link to event website, Facebook event page, and/or flyer, if there is one.
- Short (3-4 sentences) description of the event written in "third person" (i.e. "XYZ Club invites you to join them for their annual meeting" vs "join us for our annual meeting")
- Please send information in the body of the email, not simply a flyer or attachment. We can link to something already online but can't upload a PDF flyer.

NEW ADDRESS:  
We have closed our PO  
box in Montgomery. Please  
update your records!

**ASAN**

PO Box 2533  
Birmingham, AL 35202

Coming to the wrong  
person? Email  
[alice@asanonline.org](mailto:alice@asanonline.org)  
to unsubscribe your  
address. Thanks!



What do YOU want to  
read about? Send us  
your ideas or suggestions  
for future features!

*healthy farms,  
healthy foods,  
healthy communities.*

## ASAN NEEDS YOU!



Are you already an ASAN member?

### HIGH FIVE!

You are part the strong, critical foundation  
that sustains our ongoing work and propels  
our future growth.

**Not a member?  
Membership expired?**

(Check above your address)

## Join or renew today!

Online at [www.asanonline.org/join-asan](http://www.asanonline.org/join-asan), or mail us your donation  
along with the form on page 11! **Thank you for supporting ASAN!**