



THE ALABAMA
SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURE
NETWORK

ASAN UPDATE

Winter 2018-19

Published Quarterly

OUTLOOK: 2018 FOOD & FARM FORUM

It's that time of year again! This year we plan to hold our best Food & Farm Forum yet, and we hope you'll join us to be a part!

The Food & Farm Forum is ASAN's largest annual event and largest gathering of our network members from all across the state (and region!). The Forum

is part-conference – packed to the gills with interesting and educational peer-to-peer learning sessions – and also part-retreat and end-of-the-season celebration. It's a space for learning valuable information for you to take back home and rein-

(Continued on page 4)



QUICK DETAILS — REGISTRATION:

Adults: \$85 Children (6-13): \$30
Youth (14-21): \$50 Children <6: free (must register!)
Meals included, free child care provided, lodging additional

DEADLINE NOV 19 <http://asanonline.org/forum18>

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Letter from ASAN Board President 2

New ASAN Board Members 3

Meet the Members of the Youth Council 5

Graze: Birmingham Write-up 6

ASAN Member Profiles 8

SSAWG "Growing Farm Profits" Scholarship Opportunity 13

Survey for Fruit, Vegetable, and Nut Producers 13

Note about Enclosed Document 13

News from Your Neighbors 10

Classifieds & Resources 10

Upcoming Events 10

SAVE WITH THE ALABAMA RENEWABLE ENERGY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM



By Jared Carter, Alabama Mountains Rivers and Valleys RC&D

You can save money with renewable energy! If you are a farmer in North Alabama OR own a business in a North Alabama town with fewer than 50,000 residents, you can qualify for a free renewable energy assessment that helps you navigate the best options.

Alabama's Mountains, Rivers and Valleys RC&D is partnering with EnSave to reach North Alabama's rural areas and farm-lands to get our producers and businesses involved in leading our state to a more sustainable future. We provide an unbiased evaluation of your renewable

(Continued on page 10)

HOMETOWN ACTION AND ASAN LAUNCH COMMUNITY SURVEY

By Kathleen Kirkpatrick, Hometown Action

When I began thinking more strategically about possible partnerships for Hometown Action's growth as an organization, Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network (ASAN) was an obvious choice. A primary reason I was originally drawn to Hometown Action is our emphasis on people-centered, sustainable solutions for small towns and rural communities. We pro-

(Continued on page 7)

ASAN ATTENDS U.S. FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ALLIANCE ASSEMBLY

By Laura Núñez, ASAN staff

From October 11-13 I attended the 4th national U.S. Food Sovereignty Alliance assembly in Bellingham, Washington. The USFSA is a membership organization composed of regional organizing bodies (South, Midwest, West, and Northeast). USFSA members, do-

(Continued on page 12)



Solidarity rally at Bellingham City Hall. photo credit David Meek

ASAN MEMBER PROFILES



Clif Joulain and
Meg Ford

SEE PAGE 8

LETTER FROM THE ASAN BOARD PRESIDENT



Dear ASAN Family,

ASAN has been and will continue to be a network that supports and furthers the work of sustainable agriculture in

Alabama. ASAN has seen many years of growth and development over the years. We have more staff and a larger base, and we can do more than we used to. The time is ripe for us to act, and yet even as we act we must have patience as these endeavors can sometimes take many years. It may seem that we are not doing enough because the need is so great. But know that we are working to build capacity and reach out to help people in agriculture.

Because we are a membership organization, our foundation and power lies in you — our members and our potential members. We are dependent on your involvement. That's why it is so important that you are brought in to know what we are doing and understand where ASAN wants to go. Please check out our ASAN guiding document published in this newsletter. It speaks

to our values as we go about this work.

This is, of course, not all. There is so much more work to do.

One area of focus in the coming months will be to ask what, specifically, small-scale and sustainable farmers need, across the state. What needs do those representing other parts of the food system have as well? How can ASAN help meet those needs?

We suspect that the needs are as diverse as our members and our state as a whole. Some farmers need public support as they battle unfair or overcomplicated regulations. Some farmers need better access to land, or reliable help, or markets. Our natural habitats need healing and protection and care. Many rural and urban communities need better governance, leaders who will fight for real, sustainable economic development, viable health care systems, and more. Those historically marginalized within our agricultural communities need recognition and healing and a meaningful place at the table.

It is by working on each of these issues and many others that we will bring change to the systems that have plagued our agricultural system over the years.

After discovering what our needs are,

ASAN will find its priorities through the input of our members, and then do what we can to solve these issues on an individual and systematic basis. We have and will continue to go through disagreements as to what is the highest priority, but I have faith that we will continue to be a helpful and relevant collective force. We are a strong diverse group, unified by a desire to support and be the sustainable agriculture of Alabama!

With much love,

Gabriel Denton
ASAN Board President

CONTRIBUTORS: WINTER 2018-19

Jared Carter is the projects manager for AMRV RC&D and Education Manager with WaterWorks Center for Environmental Education.

Kathleen Kirkpatrick is the Strategic Initiatives Organizer for Hometown Action, and serves on the board of Coosa Riverkeeper. She lives in Wetumpka.

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

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.

Laura Núñez is ASAN's Administrative and Program Assistant. A California native and graduate of UPenn, she is glad to have made Alabama her new home. Outside of work Laura volunteers with Greater Birmingham Period, an organization that provides menstrual products to those experiencing houselessness and incarceration.

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 (human) baby, Moss.

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

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

Brett Dungan — retired, Bayou La Batre

Carol Gundlach — Arise Citizens Policy Project, Montgomery/Shorter

Matthew Lawrence — Marble Creek Farmstead / Marble City Meats, Sylacauga

Lindsey Lunsford — Tuskegee Extension, Tuskegee

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

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

Jasmine Ratliff — Carver Integrative Sustainability Center, Tuskegee

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

INTRODUCING ASAN'S NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS

We had a mighty fine new crop of folks join the ASAN board of directors in June, and we want you to know who they are!

Jasmine Ratliff is a New Orleans native who has a former background in Business Management & Human Resources. After realizing the consistent inequalities in her hometown's rebuilding efforts post-Hurricane Katrina she decided to obtain a Master's Degree in Community Planning from Auburn University.

AmeriCorps VISTA granted Jasmine the opportunity to be the Project Coordinator for a community garden in Tuskegee, AL where she saw the desperate need for a local food system. She is now pursuing a PhD in Integrative Public Policy and Development to create the needed local food system and intends to build an entire sustainable community when she's done.

ASAN has attracted Jasmine's interest through their efforts to bring a sustainable and just food system to Alabama and she is on board to do her part!



Carol Gundlach is a policy analyst working on state tax, budget, and safety net issues at Alabama Arise, an organization she helped to found thirty years ago. Prior to that she served for over twenty years as the Executive Director of the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence and, before that, as State Coordinator for the Alabama Coalition Against Hunger.

Carol holds both a Masters in Social Work and in Horticulture, where she wrote her thesis on insect resistance in the black-eye pea.

Carol has had a long-time interest in small scale agriculture and its role in alleviating both hunger and poverty. Carol lives on ten acres in rural Macon County and is an avid gardener, reader, and amateur photographer.



Brett Dungan makes his home on the Alabama Coast where he retired after 40+ years in the shipbuilding industry. He currently serves as Vice Chair of Alabama Coastal Foundation's Green Coast Council which hosts the annual South Alabama Sustainability Summit each January.

Brett said: "We have the opportunity to use our life learning and experience to create a sustainable future for our kids and grandkids." <https://www.joinacf.org/green-coast-council>



Matthew Lawrence is a farmer and co-owner with his wife Jesie of Marble Creek Farmstead and Marble City Meats, in Sylacauga.

Matthew began his professional career in the mortgage industry in the early 2000's. After the crash he felt a keen need to understand the impact of his actions and ensure that whatever he did, made the world better. He wanted to lead an examined life centered on creation not consumption.

He says he figured out fairly early that the best people he could find were farmers. He loves to cook and as he learned more about where his food came from, he was driven to create a better food system.

Matthew has always been a huge supporter of ASAN's work and is honored to be on its board. He hopes to learn others' views and be challenged in his own. He hopes to bring a sense of belief that farming done right can not only compete but beat a consumption-driven style of agriculture.



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 for details

FORUM (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

vest in your farm, garden, organization, business, or community. It's also a space for finding your people, enjoying one another's company, listening to one another's stories, eating good food together, and drinking hot cider!

This year, in addition to all the fantastic concurrent sessions featured at right, we'll again have the Friday evening "market fair," featuring exhibitors, vendors of food and crafts, a seed swap, a job fair, and more! On Saturday morning we'll have a block of plenary sessions including a panel of elders in Alabama's sustainable food movement, a workshop on equity, a review of ASAN's past year and coming year of work, and a renewal of ASAN's core beliefs (see insert).

Inaugural Youth Food & Farm Forum

This year, we're especially excited because alongside the typical "adult" Forum we will, for the first time ever, also be holding a Youth Food & Farm Forum geared towards youth ages 14-21! Our Youth Forum Coordinator Margaret and our awesome Youth



Find all you need to know about the program, scholarships, lodging, registration, and more, at:

<http://asanonline.org/forum18>

YOUTH FORUM SESSION LIST

Concurrent sessions: (1) Planting 101 and (2) Greywater Systems for Farming and Home Life

Youth Voice and Power Through Anti-Adulthood Work

What is Equity and Why Does It Matter?

Concurrent sessions: (1) Animal Butchering Workshop and (2) Young Vegies (Vegan Cooking Workshop)

Concurrent sessions: (1) Intro to Seed Saving and (2) The Radical History of Food

Healing through Food

Sustainable Agriculture/Food Career Panel

Concurrent sessions: (1) Pork Cooking Workshop and (2) Medicinals for the Skin: From Ground to Medicine Cabinet

Wrap-up: G.R.O.W.T.H: Applying Farm Knowledge Everyday



Council (see page 5) have been hard at work since the summer, planning an outstanding lineup of sessions and presenters.

Scholarships available

Need help in order to attend? We're here for you! At the time of writing there are still funds available for scholarships, covering registration and/or shared lodging expenses, for adults, youth, and kids! Find the link to apply for a scholarship at the main Forum landing page (see orange box). Deadline is rolling, and scholarships will be awarded until funds expire, so apply now!

Don't wait! Register by 11/19. And we'll see you in December!

ADULT FORUM SESSION LIST

OPTIONAL PRE-FORUM SESSION: THURSDAY 3:00-5:30PM

Getting Along: The Basics of Group Decision-Making (must register)

FRI-SAT CONCURRENT SESSIONS

The Permaculture Approach to Perennial Crops

Value-Based Marketing: Digging Deeper into the Needs of Your Customer

Fermentation 101

Leadership Development Intensive for Farmers Market Managers

TOUR: McDowell Farm/Programs/Property at a Glance

Farm Hacks - Building our Way to Sustainability

Off Farm Processing - Using a Processing Plant

When Do You Know if You're Ready for Wholesale?

Sustainable Woodland Management for Small Farms and Landowners

Make Compost Not Waste!

Growing Weeds as Food Crops: Turn Weeding into Profits

Global Growers: Incubating multi-cultural sustainable agriculture and a thriving local food ecosystem

Traditional Ecological Knowledge Applied to Alabama Foodways

Hydroponic Farming in Shipping Containers

Farm Truck 912: Expanding Food Justice in Your Community

Cooperative Farm Marketing

Improving Soil and Water Health for Healthy Crops, Farms, and Ecosystems

Women Farmers Roundtable

Putting Solar to Work on the Farm Using Passive Solar Structures and Off-Grid Solar Photovoltaic

Free The Land & Feed The People: Cooperation Jackson's Freedom Farms Coop Struggle For Food-Sovereignty

On Farm Processing of Poultry and Rabbits

Regenerative Earthworks: Working with Water in the Landscape

Vegan Made Easy

Pests and Weeds - How are you managing them? A farmers' roundtable

Carpentry Life Skills

Rural Organizing for Sustainable Communities

Making Space for Youth: Youth Leadership Development in Food/Ag Work

Introduction to Herbal Tincturing

Land Access and Retention

Growing a New Market with Microgreens

FARM TOUR: Livestock focus

MEET THE BRILLIANT YOUNG PEOPLE BEHIND THE YOUTH FOOD & FARM FORUM

The six youth below make up the inaugural Youth Council, who along with Margaret Weinberg (our Youth Food & Farm Forum Coordinator, introduced in our last issue) have been hard at work planning an incredible first-ever Youth Food & Farm Forum!

My name is **Ella Nichols**. I am 15 years old and in high school. Why I am a part of the ASAN Youth Council is because I want to be able to help give everyone the chance to have local, healthy, fresh produce, and to learn more about the importance of food. Food and farming is an art that I believe people need to be educated on and know how to practice. I believe in equality. To me, I believe that, as people, it is our right to help deliver the opportunity of healthy food and nutrition to every child.



My name is **Zee Wilson** and I am currently a first year Apprentice at Jones Valley Teaching Farm. I graduated from Woodlawn High School where I held an intern position at the WHS Urban Farm. JVTF is a non-profit located in Birmingham AL. I can seem really passive, but get something interesting in front of me and I will talk your ear off! I am a quick learner, consistent communicator, and a curious engineer, all of which I apply in my job and life settings. I've always been into food, as I used to want to be a chef, but now I see the broader scale of that which is farming. ASAN was a great catalyst for me to push me out into the world of food and farming.



My name is **Jocelynn Horton**. I am a motivated and passionate young woman from the great city of St. Louis, MO, also known as "The Gateway to the West". I thrive on the success of agriculture and our youth. I am also a collegiate tennis player. When I am not on the court I am out in my community educating, inspiring, and motivating our future leaders to get active. I personally stay active by being a part of Tiger Paws (youth mentoring program), Agribusiness Club (Treasurer), and Childgarden Day-care (Volunteer), just to name a few. Also I currently sit on the Youth Council for Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network. With my love for agriculture and the environment, I am currently obtaining my undergraduate degree in Agribusiness (Market Management) and Animal Science from the illustrious Tuskegee University. I later plan to pursue my Doctorate.



I am **Jerick Hamilton**, but I go by Mission to those who know me well. I am a recent graduate from Woodlawn High School in Birmingham, Alabama. Since my junior year at Woodlawn High School I have been working for Jones Valley Teaching Farm as a Woodlawn High School Farm Intern. I've grown and harvested beautiful organic crops, transplanted, direct sowed and irrigated. I even learned how to till soil. All of these are skills that I apply to my life whether it be in farming or another field. I am currently a full time employee of JVTF as an Apprentice, where I continue to give my all in farming and food education across all JVTF Teaching Farm sites. My greatest qualities as a person and in my work is that I hold myself accountable to my work, and I take the initiative and push to be efficient everyday. I stand tall, yet I won't hesitate to give my all. I am who I am and I am Mission.



My name is **Caroline Parrish** and I am a 16 year-old with a passion for healthy, organic, and sustainable foods. I am from Geneva, Alabama where I am a 10th grader at Geneva High School. I was introduced to healthy eating at the age of 13, where I decided that in order for me to feel her best, I must eat my best. I enjoy reading every book I can get a hold of, cooking, and helping others.



My name is **Isaac Burnette**, I am 16 years old and I attend Northridge High School in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. I am currently considering schools around the South East, namely Auburn, Mississippi State, the University of Alabama and Berry College, when college comes to mind. Over the summer, I created an internship program for myself at the farm at Camp McDowell, which secured in my mind my passion about farming and sustainable agriculture. I currently am working in my front yard garden, but wish to work on some larger-scale areas in the near future, possibly with Schoolyard Roots (formerly the Druid City Garden Project). After my time working at Camp McDowell, I heard from a friend about the ASAN Youth Council and immediately knew I had to apply for a position on the council.

SEPTEMBER SHOWERS MAKE FOR GREAT GRAZING

2018's *Graze: Birmingham* is a wrap, and boy, did it pack a punch! The food was phenomenal, and the company was even better! The rain held off for the first hour or so, but then the down-pour came fast and hard. People made fast friends with their fellow shelter-seekers under the nearest market tent, and the kids relished the puddle-stomping opportunities. The rain stopped as quickly as it had started, and we all proceeded to enjoy more food, drink, music, and merriment together!

As always, we couldn't be more grateful to our chefs and farmers, our volunteers, musicians, artists, and more, who make this event exceedingly enjoyable to put on!

Thank you to Say Bre Photography and Mary Fehr Photography for the fabulous photos featured here!

Thank you to our amazing food/drink providers: Belle Meadow Farms, BDA/Bois D'Arc Farms, Caver Farms, DSR Farms, East Lake Farmers Market farmers, Grateful Acres, Grandview Farms, Greene Prairie Aquafarm, Hamm Farm, Hepzibah Farm, Heron Hollow Farm, Marble Creek Farmstead, Snow's Bend Farm, Stillwater Farm, Walden Farms, Jones Valley Teaching Farm, Avondale Common House, Chez Lulu/Continental Bakery, City Club Restaurant, Downstairs Diner at East Lake UMC, East 59 Vintage & Café, El Barrio Restaurante, Golden Temple Café, Pelham Culinary Academy, Magic City Sweet Ice, Red Sea Ethiopian & Mediterranean, Rusty's BBQ, Sprout & Pour, The FIT Biscuit, Tropaleo, Underground Cooking Academy, and Harvest Roots Ferments!

Thank you to our sponsors: We are so grateful for the generous support of EBSCO Industries for helping make this year's event possible! Many thanks also to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama, Piggly Wiggly, Birmingham Mountain Radio, Harpersville Family Medicine, Avondale Brewery, and Pepper Place Market for their support!

Thank you to our stellar volunteers, businesses and organizations who donated to our raffle table, and so many more of y'all who contributed to the ongoing magic of this event. We love you!



SURVEY (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

vide a strong network and training to help people where they are, building local power through citizen engagement and the electoral process.

ASAN's mission is to train farmers, educate consumers and policy-makers, and strengthen the bonds that hold together our local food systems. Both organizations' grassroots approach to building stronger communities is vital to long term success.

Agriculture has historically been a major economic driver in Alabama, providing many jobs and supporting a variety of local industries. Small-scale gardening and growing is also an important food source for many families. Agriculture and related industries are estimated to contribute over \$70 Billion and more than 580,000 jobs in Alabama. And yet the people of our state are suffering – especially in smaller towns and rural communities. Corporate interests have increasingly taken over, leaving small communities destitute as businesses and necessary support systems such as schools and hospitals close. Young people move away when they can, with no local prospects for a good education or jobs in their home area. Our environment is exploited and polluted for short-term profit by non-resident corporate interests.

ASAN and Hometown Action have launched a survey we developed to help identify local and regional needs and

Take the survey at
<http://bit.ly/HA-ASAN-survey>



Volunteer canvassers, and Hometown Action's t-shirt, photos courtesy Hometown Action / Kathleen Kirkpatrick

address concerns in Alabama's small towns and rural communities. Please take a few minutes to complete our survey and share it with your family, friends, and other community members.

Take the survey today, at <http://bit.ly/HA-ASAN-survey>!



We plan to review early results at this year's ASAN Food & Farm Forum on December 7-8. The survey will remain open for wider distribution through the Spring of 2019. Anyone who needs assistance completing the survey by al-

ternate means can also contact Kathleen at 334-513-1103 to provide their confidential responses. If your organization is interested in helping us recruit participation in the survey, please contact Kathleen Kirkpatrick via email to skathleenkirkpatrick@gmail.com

About Hometown Action:

Hometown Action was formed in late 2017 as a network for all of the people of Alabama with a vision for an inclusive and sustainable future, with a particular focus on rural communities. Whether you are a lifelong resident or a newcomer to our beautiful state, we invite you to get involved at hometownaction.org. Together we can build the multiracial working class power we need to achieve sustainable communities.



EBSCO INDUSTRIES

@EBSCOInd EBSCO Industries, Inc.



MARBLE CITY MEATS

USDA AND CUSTOM PROCESSING

PORK, LAMB, GOAT, BEEF, CHICKEN, AND TURKEY

DEER PROCESSING • PREMIUM BUTCHERY

WE'RE SUSTAINABLE FARMERS, TOO, AT MARBLE CREEK FARMSTEAD. WE STARTED OUR PROCESSING PLANT TO ENSURE THE HIGHEST QUALITY FOR OUR OWN PRODUCTS. NOW WE WANT TO SHARE THAT QUALITY WITH OTHER FARMERS.

MARBLECITYMEATS.COM

205-936-6120

MARBLECITYMEATS@GMAIL.COM • 514 ODENA ROAD NORTH • SYLACAUGA, AL 35150
* MUST HAVE APPOINTMENT BEFORE DROPPING OFF LIVE ANIMALS *

ASAN MEMBER PROFILE SERIES

Since many of you are miles apart, and since opportunities to gather in person are few and far between, we initiated this series of member profiles as a way to deepen relationships among ASAN's diverse, amazing, and ingenious members across the state. **Thanks to these and all our members** for their ongoing support!

To read the **extended cut of these (and other) interviews** visit <https://asanonline.org/category/member-profiles/>.

Want to be featured in a future profile, or know an ASAN member who deserves a little light shined their way? **To nominate someone to be featured in a future profile**, drop us a line at 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: CLIF JOULIAN, THE NURSE FARMER



Photo courtesy Cliff Joulian (right)

What frustrates or challenges Cliff about the work he does? He finds it frustrating that people do not get or understand what he does as "The Nurse Farmer". However, he's working hard to change that perception, because to him, it's a natural combination. In fact, being able to convey that message to his audience is paramount, so he created his own youtube channel--"The Nurse Farmer."

How long have you been a member of ASAN? Since about 2016 while we were still living in California.

Why did you become a member of ASAN? My partner and I are originally from the Mobile area. After living in California for several years, we decided we wanted to move back to The Gulf Coast to start a small family farm. Joining ASAN was a way for us to 'watch' from afar and keep up with other farmers and gardeners in Alabama. I am also The Nurse Farmer. My mission is teaching how and why gardening activities can help us live healthier lives. Now that we are settled in Alabama, I am able to focus more time and energy on developing my business and concept as The Nurse Farmer.

Describe your farm – where is it, how big is it, what do you raise, who helps manage it with you? How long have you had your farm?

We have a ten acre property which we have partially cleared. We moved here in July and are just getting our farm started. We have an existing barn. We have built one raised bed from pine trees cleared from the front where we are growing collards for the fall and winter. We also have a few small containers and wine barrels where we're growing lettuce, carrots, and a few other fall and winter vegetables.

(Continued on page 9)



MEMBER PROFILE: MEG FORD



Left photo courtesy Meg Ford. Right: Meg and her father Doug play at this year's Graze: Birmingham! Photo credit Bre Conley / Mary Fehr

If you attended our 4th Annual Graze: Birmingham event this year, hopefully you got a chance to listen to the sweet sounds of Meg Ford, and her dad, Doug. A classically-trained violinist, Meg's background is varied. According to her Ruffner Mountain bio, where she holds the position of Programs Coordinator, she has many other talents and interests, like; singing, working for the symphony, managing educational programs, and being a resident advisor.

How long have you been a member of ASAN? Not long enough! I began my membership this year in 2018.

Why did you become a member of ASAN? I fell in love with Alabama's food movement when I was a teenager. The concept of having a handshake relationship with the people that feed you was new and refreshing to me at the time, and is a sentiment that I've carried with me into adulthood. It's even an idea that I use as a musician and teacher. I love that ASAN facilitates necessary conversations about food--something that touches us all--and that's why I'm a member. Additionally, I met Alice a couple of years ago when she was in need of a meeting space and reached out to Ruffner Mountain. Alice, Mindy, and the rest of the staff at ASAN are hardworking, kind, and plain old awesome. It was simply impossible to not support them any longer!

What is your favorite ASAN event, and why? I thoroughly enjoyed attending Graze this year! It was great to see ASAN's mission fulfilled in such a fun and memorable way. I also have

(Continued on page 9)

CLIF (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 8)

Is it what you thought it would be like? If not, why? Farming is above and beyond what I expected in the context of health promotion and disease prevention. I just had no idea how the farming and gardening is so interconnected with our health until I started 'digging in' so to speak, literally and figuratively!

What tool, piece of equipment, etc., could you not live without? My partner and my sons! Ibuprofen and Naproxen Sodium are two of my best friends!

What do you love about being part of ASAN / part of the food movement in Alabama? To find out what he loves, and more, go to <https://asanonline.org/asan-member-profile-clif-joulian/>!

MEG (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 8)

to say: the fact that there's a youth portion of the Food Farm Forum is seriously great! As I mentioned above, my love for the food movement started when I was a teenager and has stayed with me since then. I'm so glad that ASAN is engaging young people in this dialogue.

What do you love about being part of ASAN / part of the food movement in Alabama? I think that most facets of life could stand to take a page from Alabama's food movement, in that it's based in relationships and honest dialogue. I just can't think of anything that can't be massively improved with the addition of those two things. Spaces to ask questions, gain perspective, and meet new people have always been important, and perhaps are of particular importance today.

What frustrates or challenges you about the work you do, and/or the broader context in which you do it? What keeps you up at

night? I work at Ruffner Mountain, and I think my work here shares a common challenge with the work I did in food/ag a few years ago, which is that I want our projects to be inviting and inclusive for people of all backgrounds. If I can be cheesy for a moment, Ruffner's mission is rooted in ecology--the study of the relationships between living organisms and the spaces that they share. I think that humans could be fairly factored into any ecosystem, certainly the urban ones, and we therefore each have an important role in overall health of the spaces we occupy. We're all very powerful individually, but even more impactful together. I think that something similar can be said about the choices we make when eating, so I'm grateful for groups like ASAN for being highly inclusive in their conversations about agriculture and food.

To read more, go to <https://asanonline.org/asan-member-profile-meg-ford/>!



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



RENEWABLE ENERGY (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

energy project to determine its viability, ensure the proper size, and determine your return on investment.

Every day people are innovating and redesigning green energy technology to be more

efficient and less expensive. Renewable energy is better today than it was ten years ago, and it only continues to improve. Like everything else, if we demand it, people will put their minds to meet our needs.

Here are some benefits of renewable energy:

1. **Federal, state, and local incentives:** Our

country wants to be more sustainable, so there is money to help you make the transition. For example, your assessment can be used to access the USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) which provides grants up to 25% of your project cost and loan guarantees up to 75%. Furthermore, the federal solar tax credit allows you to deduct 30% of the solar installation cost from your federal taxes!

2. **Long-term money savings:** Renewable energy allows you to reduce and eliminate your energy bill. Upfront costs of materials and installation may be intimidating, but with the help of incentives and savings, you will pay everything off and reap the rewards. The utility company may even pay you!
3. **Additional income for your farm or business:** When you don't have to pay the energy bill or only have to pay a small portion, this allows you to put that money somewhere else. By having renewable energy, the money saved can be put back into the farm or business, create jobs, expand your variety of products and services, increase efficiency, broaden marketing, or provide for that early retirement you know you want.
4. **Energy independence:** Whether your goal is to be off the grid or to be more economically sustainable, it never hurts to get rid of one more string. With renewable energy, you can lessen your farm's and business's dependence on the utility company next door. And in case of emergency, with the right set-up you can have power when everyone else's power goes out.

Your free assessment is only three steps away. First, call AMRV RC&D at (256) 773-8495 with any questions and request an application or visit www.amrvrcd.org/areap. Second, sign and return an agreement, and provide 12 months of energy use history. Third, receive your assessment within 8 weeks, and use it to make your business decisions and access funding.

AMRV RC&D is here to help. Feel free to call with any questions.

MORE INSIGHT

helps you make the most of
your farm's cash flow.

KNOW YOU HAVE A DEDICATED BANKER WHO UNDERSTANDS YOUR INDUSTRY AND YOUR NEEDS.

Working in agriculture takes true commitment. At PNC, we appreciate the hard work that's required and apply that same work ethic to help our clients stay productive and successful. With dedicated Agriculture Bankers, PNC provides tools and guidance to help you get more from your business. The PNC Advantage for Agriculture Professionals helps farmers handle a range of cash flow challenges, including changing seasons, price fluctuations and farming equipment purchases. With PNC, we'll help you be ready for the peaks and valleys of the agriculture industry.

ENSURE ACCESS TO CREDIT | ACCELERATE RECEIVABLES
IMPROVE PAYMENT PRACTICES | MONITOR & PROJECT CASH
PURSUE FINANCIAL WELL-BEING

PNC CFOSM
Cash Flow Optimized

Call Teresa Smith, VP, Agricultural Banking at 256-230-1045 or tsmith@pnc.com or go to pnc.com/agriculture



Cash Flow Optimized is a service mark of The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. ("PNC"). All loans and lines of credit are subject to credit approval and require automatic payment deduction from a PNC Bank business checking account. Origination and annual fees may apply.

©2018 The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. All rights reserved. PNC Bank, National Association.

Member FDIC

BB PDF 1015-091-198608

FUN FOOD • BOAT DOCKAGE • LIVE MUSIC

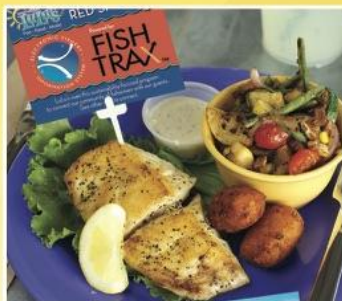
We're
Growin' for

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



FOOD SOVEREIGNTY (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

mestic allies, and international guests convened in Bellingham to report back on regional campaigns, participate in workshops, celebrate victories, and develop regional and national work plans.

What is food sovereignty?

The term food sovereignty was coined by La Via Campesina, an international movement of millions of peasants, small and medium sized farmers, youth, indigenous people, migrants, and agricultural workers from around the world. Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sustainable methods, and people's rights to define their own food and agricultural systems.

Food sovereignty also asserts that the people who produce, distribute, and consume food – rather than corporations and market institutions – should control the mechanisms and policies of food production and distribution.

At the assembly

The first day of the assembly I attended a discussion about the struggle to build food sovereignty within the context of capitalism. The panel included a Canadian farmer-member of the North American Via Campesina chapter, a farmer-member of the Mississippi Association of Cooperatives, and two international guests and farm workers from Argentina and Nicaragua. A couple of anecdotes stuck with me from that session. One was of the plight of family hog farms in Canada. Farmers in Canada



Scenes from the USFSA 4th national assembly, photo credits David Meek and Laura Núñez

were going hungry and were unable to afford their own products so local food banks opened their doors to them. The Canadian farmer detailed the sad irony of hog farmers and began to cry as she recounted her family being pushed out of the hog industry by corporate farms.

The second anecdote was shared by the farmer from Mississippi. She talked about racism in our existing food system. Despite jumping through several certification

hoops, many black farmers in Mississippi cannot get their produce into stores and schools. The farmer also talked about struggling to make a living wage and her frustration with being able to sell her produce at farmers markets in affluent communities but not being able to sell in her own community.

The second day of the assembly I attended a political education workshop. Collectively we expressed the need to articulate common content and create an ideological framework for the USFSA.

Political education is necessary because it helps name various forms of systemic oppression.

What is political education?

Our daily lives are political. When we share our stories we are doing the work of political education. Political education looks like a professor and students discussing Marx and Hegel on a college campus. Political education also looks like farmworkers forming a theatrical troupe (Teatro Campesino) to make the connection be-

tween the pesticides used in the fields of Delano, California and the pesticides used to kill people during the Vietnam War (like Agent Orange). Political education looks like a small Canadian family farmer telling the story of being beat out by corporate farms in the same room with a Puerto Rican farmer explaining the colonial state of her country and how corporations moving to her country for tax breaks are draining resources from a country in overwhelming debt.

By enacting a political education process, the USFSA is committed to building curriculum that helps members and allies understand the political context of the movement and critically analyze power. After a large group discussion, we broke into smaller groups to brainstorm proposals. My group came to a consensus that the content of our curriculum had to include content about agroecology and farm workers movements. We agreed that the political education working committee needed to include both indigenous people and farmworkers in order to center their experiences in the food and agriculture system. Our group also agreed that the pedagogy would include inquiry-based collective learning so as to draw from the experiences and knowledge in the room. We proposed that several versions of a lesson plan be made to make the information accessible to people in academia, farm workers, members of different peasant movements, and other supporters of the food sovereignty movement.

ASAN joins as a member

During the 4th national U.S. Food Sovereignty Alliance assembly ASAN was nominated and voted into membership of

(Continued on page 13)

"GROWING FARM PROFITS" SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR FARMER-MENTOR TEAMS

The Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SSAWG) is offering free tuition plus up to \$500 travel scholarship for farmer-mentor teams to participate in their "Growing Farm Profits" pre-conference short course on January 23-24, 2019 in Little Rock.

Interested applicants must apply as two member teams, one member being a diversi-

fied horticulture or livestock farmer and the other from an organization seeking to provide support to the farmer member (extension, nonprofit, lender, etc).

The "Growing Farm Profits" training teaches practical methods for understanding, tracking, and managing for profitability on the farm. In addition to participating in the course, selected teams will establish specific farm goals to work towards in the coming year using what was learned in the course and providing mutual support and accountability to each other through the year.

More details at <https://www.ssawg.org/2019-growing-farm-profits-short-course>. Deadline to apply is November 26.

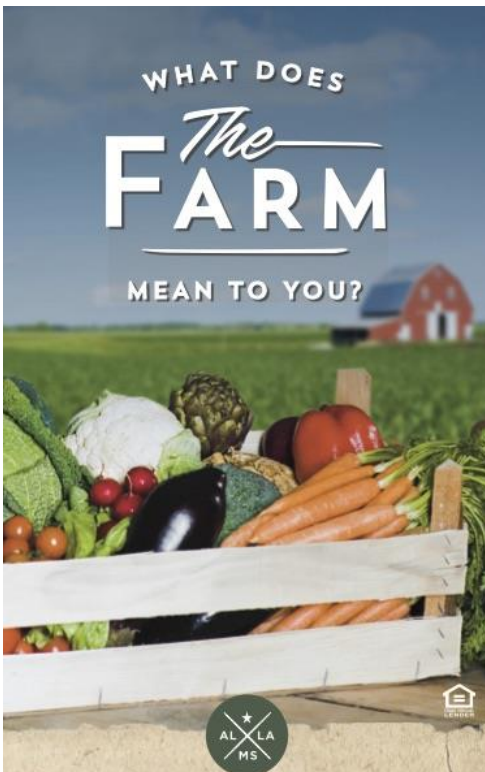
If you are interested in participating, but do not have a mentor/farmer to pair with, contact alice@asanonline.org and we may be able to help find your match!

NOTE ABOUT THE ENCLOSED ASAN ORGANIZATIONAL DOCUMENTS

Enclosed in this newsletter are the written results of ASAN's 2017-18 strategic planning process. They are by no means the *only* results of the process, but they are intended to provide a snapshot of ASAN's philosophical grounding and overarching strategic direction. As our board president Gabriel Denton outlines in his letter on page 2, there is much follow-up work that will continue, building on the fruits of the process so far.

We offer deep appreciation for the many many people throughout our network, who invested the labor of their hearts and minds and hands to create this document.

And we welcome your feedback on this document! Feel free to reach out to us by mail (address on back) or send an email to Alice (alice@asanonline.org) and/or Gabriel (flyinguba@gmail.com).



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

MARKET SURVEY SEEKS FEEDBACK OF ALABAMA FRUIT, VEGETABLE, AND NUT PRODUCERS

If you are a producer of fruits, vegetables, and/or nuts, your feedback is needed! Auburn University is conducting a market analysis survey as part of the Southeast Organic Partnership project, led by Tuskegee University. ASAN is a member of the Part-

nership as well.

The survey seeks input from organic and conventional growers alike. It takes about 15 mins to complete. To participate go to https://auburn.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cMS1E79rprTff8x!

SOVEREIGNTY (CONT'D)

(Continued from page 12)

the USFSA. Other members of the southern region include the Farmworker Association of Florida, Mississippi Association of Cooperatives (a state association of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives) and Blue Trunk Community Garden of Central Florida among others.

In our regional breakout session there was discussion of needing agriculture education starting in elementary school in order to promote the value of ecologically sound farming practices, supporting local food, and valuing ethi-

cally sourced food. Someone suggested reaching out to FFA (Future Farmers of America) for support.

There was also interest in a branding campaign for the south that labeled sovereignly produced food. Other interest areas included opposing farm consolidation, organizing around farmworkers rights, and creating more models of cooperative land ownership to support a more diverse agricultural system.

The southern region co-coordinators will be scheduling a call this fall to strategize application of the work plan.

NEWS FROM YOUR NEIGHBORS

Congratulations to **André Gallant** on the publication of his first book, *A High Low Tide: The Revival of a Southern Oyster!*

CLASSIFIEDS AND RESOURCES

..... BUY / SELL

WALK-BEHIND TRACTOR FOR SALE: Grillo two-wheel tractor in Birmingham, AL. G107D model, no attachments. New, asking \$2000. Contact alice@asanonline.org.

ORGANIC LAND FOR SALE: Certified Organic Irrigated Land in Slocomb, AL. 180ac for sale by owner, \$4500/acre. includes 110 acre Pivot & 800 Sq. Ft. House. Part of Working Cows Dairy. Call Rinske De Jong at 334-886-3839.

FARM HOUSE AND PROPERTY FOR SALE: Tasteful Garden farm/property in Heflin, AL. Including 2B/2BA home, numerous greenhouses, outbuildings, and equipment, and 11ac of pasture. For more info contact George Martin, cpgmar@centurytel.net, 256-226-2670.

POULTRY PLUCKER FOR SALE: Deluxe Tabletop Plucker (photo at right) in Madison, AL. Can be used to pluck any kind of bird with feathers in minutes (after scalding). Rotating polyvinyl drum with 28 rubber fingers, powered by 1725 RPM motor. Removable steel grate on top and steel belt guard on the side for safety. \$100 (special price for ASAN network only!), contact Kamilla Nelson, kamillanelson@icloud.com.

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

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 or (256) 743-0742.

..... JOBS / INTERNSHIPS

JOB POSTING: Assistant Farm Manager, Jones Valley Teaching Farm in Birmingham. Requires a deep understanding of organic and sustainable growing practices, and a high degree of professionalism, as well as strong management, organizational, and communication skills. More details at <https://jvtf.org/hiring/>.

JOB POSTING: Executive Director, Blackbelt Benefit Group in Selma. More details at <https://www.blackbeltbenefitgroup.org/>.

JOB POSTING: 4 AmeriCorps VISTA positions available with the North Alabama Agriplex in Cullman, and with Alabama Mountains Rivers and Valleys RC&D Council in Hartselle. One year term starts Nov 13. More information go to <http://www.agriplex.org> and click "Jobs".

..... FUNDING / RESOURCES

SUPPORT AVAILABLE: For Alabama farmers/ranchers impacted by Hurricane Michael. For more info on support offered by USDA-NRCS, search Google for "NRCS Offers Hurricane Disaster Assistance to Alabama Landowners".

GRANT OPPORTUNITY: Up to \$2,500 to individual farmers for projects that improve the welfare of their farm animals or build capacity of their operations. Deadline Nov 29. More details at <https://foodanimalconcernstrust.org/grants/>.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITY: "Farming Basics" online course available now. For beginning or experienced farmers, topics include farm management and marketing, pesticide safe-

ty, food safety, basic crop production and pest management. More details at <https://aces.catalog.auburn.edu/courses/acesfarmingbasics01>.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DETAILS FOR THESE EVENTS
AND MORE, AT
WWW.ASANONLINE.ORG/EVENTS

November 1—Birmingham
World Vegan Day Dinner at Red Sea Ethiopian

November 3 - Prichard
1st Annual Green Health and Cultural Festival

November 3—Atlanta, GA
Just Food Pop-Up Market

November 3-4—Birmingham
13th Annual Moss Rock Festival

November 4 - Hurtsboro
ASAN Tailgate Training: Bees and Pecans

November 4 - Chelsea
Hot Chocolate Hike

November 7 - Tavares, FL
Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training Course

November 9—Montgomery
Wild & Scenic Film Festival

November 15—Mound Bayou, MS
Alcorn Small Farm Equipment Workshop

November 15-16 - Clanton
AFVGA Conference & Trade Show

November 18 - Jemison
Petals Christmas Open House

November 18 - Huntsville
Twisted Fork Vegan/Vegetarian Festival

November 19 - Immokalee, FL
HACCP for Florida Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Packinghouses

(Continued on page 15)

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 _____ Date submitted

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

Donations and annual dues are tax-deductible.

_____ Individual Supporter: \$25

_____ Farm or Household: \$50

_____ Business or Organization: \$200

\$_____ Additional donation

\$_____ **TOTAL enclosed**

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

Please mail checks made out to ASAN to:
PO Box 2533, Birmingham, AL 35202.

UPCOMING EVENTS (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 14)

November 27 - Homestead, FL
Produce Safety Alliance Grower
Training Course

December 1—Birmingham
Bourbon Made in Bama Tasting

December 2-4—Tuskegee
Professional Agricultural Workers
Conference (PAWC)

December 6-8—Nauvoo
**Food & Farm Forum and Youth Food
& Farm Forum**

December 7 - Webinar
2018 All Bugs Good and Bad Webi-
nar Series: Pantry Pests

December 10 - Jacksonville, FL
FSPCA Training

December 13 - Immokalee, FL
Produce Safety Alliance Grower
Training Course

December 17 - St. Augustine, FL
Produce Safety Alliance Grower
Training Course

January 23-26, 2019—Little Rock, AR
Southern Sustainable Agriculture
Working Group (SSAWG) "Practical
Tools and Solutions for Sustaining
Family Farms" Conference

Feb 8-9, 2019—Tifton, GA
Georgia Organics Conference

February 21-23, 2019—Tuskegee
127th Annual Farmers Conference

Submit your event to our events calendar!

Email 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, Face-
book event page, and/or flyer, if
there is one.
- Short (3-4 sentences) descrip-
tion 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

Primary Business Address
Address Line 2
Address Line 3

Coming to the wrong
person? Email
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?**

Join or renew today!

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

2018-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

Our **vision** is a resilient agricultural system in Alabama. We believe that strong relationships are essential to resilient systems; strong, personal connections between growers, eaters, institutions and businesses make our agricultural system thrive and therefore our **mission** is to deepen relationships between the people of Alabama, the food we eat, and the place we live.

Core Beliefs

- A resilient agricultural system is **farmer-centered**; for an agricultural system to thrive, growers must be able to sustain themselves economically and socially.
- A resilient agricultural system is **ecologically regenerative**. In order to flourish, our agriculture should replenish the soil, protect the watershed, and enhance the ecosystem.
- A resilient agricultural system is **just**. A system based on the exploitation and impoverishment of farmers and farm-workers will ultimately fail. To create and sustain a resilient agricultural system, the historic and modern racism that pervades our current agricultural institutions and practices must be specifically addressed. All labor within the food system must be justly compensated, especially the labor of groups of people who have historically been exploited for their labor.
- A resilient agricultural system is **intergenerational**. Our elders and ancestors have agricultural knowledge that should be maintained and celebrated. The system we sustain and work for should be worthy of our children and youth, who should be engaged and invited to participate in growing, harvesting, and consuming healthy foods.

Role

In alignment with our vision, mission, and core beliefs, ASAN works in three primary ways. We:

- 1) **Convene** Alabama stakeholders in sustainable agriculture in order to **facilitate** relationships among growers, consumers, policy makers, institutions and resource providers
- 2) **Listen** to and **aggregate** the needs of growers and other stakeholders in the food system. **Amplify** the voices of the marginalized in the food system.
- 3) **Create** and **distribute** resources to lessen barriers to ownership and to promote wider meaningful participation in the food system.

Strategic Partners

Strategic partners are organizations which share a vision that is aligned with the vision of ASAN. We will recognize these partners in an effort to avoid duplication of services, and to promote complimentary work. Strategic partners can be member organizations of ASAN.

Goals

- Strong, decentralized network of symbiotic relationships between Alabama growers, consumers, businesses, organizations, and institutions
- Broader public understanding of and participation in a resilient food system as envisioned in our core values
- Institutional and political support for small scale, ecologically regenerative farming in all Alabama communities
- Robust participation and ownership in Alabama food systems by people of color, women, immigrants, LGBTQ people, people with low income, elderly people, youth, rural people, and all peoples who have been historically marginalized. We acknowledge that in order to counteract the historical decentering of these groups, we will need to make explicit and intentional efforts to center the needs and voices of these groups within ASAN spaces.
- A stable organizational foundation to support ASAN's mission-driven work