



The Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network presents
2015 Regional Food & Farm Forums

Mobile County Training School – Africatown
Tuesday, November 17, 2015

Event Schedule:

- 12:30-1:00pm Registration
- 1:00-1:15pm Welcome and introductions
- 1:15-3:00pm Storytelling: history, foodways, environment, and community power
Facilitator: Ash-Lee Henderson, Project South
- 3:15-4:05pm Roundtable discussion (session I)
10-minute break
- 4:15-5:05pm Roundtable discussion (session II)
15-minute break
- 5:20-6:10pm Roundtable discussion (session III)
Break
- 6:15-7:30pm Dinner, provided by The Noble South and The Pure Vegan
Wrap-up and reflections
If you haven't already completed your evaluation, please do so now!

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Gender pronouns on nametags: You are asked to please include your *gender pronouns* on your nametag, along with your name. What *are* gender pronouns, and how do you know what yours are? Ask yourself, how do people refer to you in the third person? More than likely, they use she / her / hers, or he / him / his. For example, "He invited me to visit him on his farm."

In English, as in many languages, we are typically taught that these are the only two sets of options. Many people, however, including many who identify as gender non-conforming / non-binary, use the pronouns they/them/theirs (in the singular), ze/hir/hirs, or others. For example "Pat invited me to visit them on their farm."

You can't assume someone's gender pronouns by looking at them. To embrace and practice this, we ask you to write your pronouns on your nametags, and use the pronouns people have written for themselves. We seek to make the space we share today as inclusive and welcoming to all folks, as possible. Pronouns are just a small part of that. Please, be kind and open and gentle with one another. Our differences are our strengths.

Roundtable Discussions: These informal discussions are meant to be engaging regardless of participants' prior knowledge about the topic. Facilitators have experience in their topic, and they will help keep the conversations going, but these are not lectures or presentations. **We are all experts, and we are all learning** – the roundtables are meant to recognize that, and to lift up ALL forms of expertise.

So **"take space, make space"** – if you're someone who normally dominates a conversation, be sure to leave room for others to speak, and do some good, active listening. If you tend to be quiet, speak up and share something – you may know just the answer someone's been looking for, or pose a question others never even realized they had.

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

Session I (3:15-4:05pm):

Table 1) **The What, Why, and How of Water**

Quality – *Everything from pathogens to toxic chemicals and more may be coming onto (or off of!) your farm via the water. Learn how to monitor what's in your water, how your findings might affect your farm, and what to do to be a good steward of the land and the water.* – *Casi Calloway (Mobile Baykeeper)*

Table 2) **Compost!** – *Composting turns a linear process (raw materials > final product) into a cycle that feeds itself, converting kitchen waste, garden waste, and animal waste into living, nutrient-rich black gold. Discuss different ways to start and maintain a healthy compost pile, including composting with worms (vermicompost).* – *Jessica Frank and Bryan Groza*

Table 3) **Food as Medicine, for Prevention and Treatment** – *Western medicine doesn't often devote a lot of attention to the ways that ailments are impacted – positively or negatively -- by our day-to-day digestive, physical, and spiritual*

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health. Discuss ways to tailor your eating to attain and sustain good health, and what plant-based medicinal resources you can grow or forage for yourself. – Gabrielle Wilson (Bishop State Community College)

Table 4) **Organic 101** – Discuss how to integrate organic methods into your farm or garden, and learn more about the certification process and whether it's right for you. – Jennifer Taylor (Florida A&M Univ Small Farm Center)

Table 5) **Worker-Owned Cooperatives** – Worker-owned cooperatives, as an alternative to sole proprietorships or other business structures, are built on democratic ideals and collective decisionmaking. They grant a group of people greater access collectively to what they could not access individually (like land or major equipment), and share risk collectively to minimize it individually. But starting and running a co-op effectively is an art -- learn here about the basics, the opportunities, and the pitfalls. – Majadi Baruti (Magic City Agriculture Project)

Session II (4:15-5:05pm):

Table 1) **Environmental (In)justice in the Bay Area** – Environmental injustice (along with environmental racism) is the concept that environmental hazards like pollution, waste, climate change, and resource extraction and mining, disproportionately impact low-wealth communities and communities of color. Learn about current threats to environmental justice in our area, and what you can do to combat them. – Ramsey Sprague and Joe Womack (Mobile Environmental Justice Action Coalition)

Table 2) **Backyard to Small-Farm Scale Chickens** – The basics of raising free-range hens, for home use or for profit. Discuss egg production, hatching and chicks, breeding, predator control, and more. – Leo Denton (Jubilee Promise)

Table 3) **Growing (and Sustaining) Strong School/Community Gardens** – It takes a village to raise a garden. Whether you want to start a garden in your school or community, get involved with an existing one, or keep the one you have, alive, share your successes and your lessons hardest learned. Also, discuss opportunities to network with other gardens locally and statewide. – Meghan Tanner (Bay Area Food Bank)

Table 4) **Building Strong Farm-to-Restaurant Relationships** – Many farmers are interested in selling their products to restaurants, and many chefs and restaurant managers are interested in supporting "farm to table" values... But somehow it's rarely as simple as it seems like it should be. Farmers and chefs alike, discuss what to do – and what NOT to do – to initiate and sustain strong, mutually beneficial purchasing relationships with one another. – Chris Rainosek (The Noble South)

Table 5) **The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and You** – The new Produce Rule from the FDA regulates the way farms must manage (and document) potential contamination sources including water and manure, domestic and wild animals, harvest and washing facilities, and farm workers themselves. Learn how this rule impacts you and your farm, and what steps you may need to take to ensure compliance. – Kristin Woods (Produce Safety Alliance / ACES)

Session III (5:20-6:10pm):

Table 1) **Cover Crops, Crop Rotation, and Soil Fertility** – Sustainable farming is all about working within the limits of the soil and the land, rather than maximizing production to the detriment of health and productivity. Learn about less chemical-intensive ways to return (and retain) nitrogen and other nutrients in your soils, season after season. – Kirk Iversen

Table 2) **Mushrooms** – Edible mushrooms grow in a wide variety of conditions; some are easily "domesticated" while others are better foraged. Learn how to incorporate which mushrooms into your farm or garden, for home use and/or for sale. – Gary Casper

Table 3) **Fermentation** – Fermented foods like sauerkraut, kimchi, kombucha, kefir, and more, preserve the life of produce, make nutrients more nutritionally available, and promote the growth of beneficial microbes in your gut. And many are easier to make than you would think! Learn the basics, share tips and challenges, and swap ideas for recipes! – David Klein, Jessica Frank, and Bryan Groza

Table 4) **Hydroponics and Aquaponics** – Both hydroponic and aquaponics systems involve raising plants in a non-soil growing medium. In hydroponic systems the farmer mix es the needed nutrients into the water that's fed through the growing medium, where in aquaponic systems, fish provide the nutrients in their waste, and

the plants filter the water for the fish. Learn about these alternative approaches to growing produce, what opportunities and challenges they provide, and how to start (or grow) your own operation. – Jeremy Pickens (ACES)

Table 5) **Access to Capital** – *There are many costshare programs, grants, low-cost loans, and other sources of capital that can help make it easier to attain the money necessary to start, grow, and sustain a sustainable farm. Learn about some of these opportunities, what types of projects or purchases they fund, whether you may be eligible, and what it takes to apply. – Alice Love (NRCS)*

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

Notes and New Contacts



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