



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

Working Cows Dairy

5539 North State Hwy 103 – Slocomb, AL
Thursday, October 29, 2015

Event Schedule:

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| 12:30-1:00pm | Registration |
| 1:00-1:35pm | Welcome, overview, introductions |
| 1:40-2:30pm | Roundtable discussion (session I) |
| 2:30-3:05pm | Short break + Lightning talks
<i>During the break we will enjoy Working Cows Dairy milk and cookies made with Working Cows organic butter.</i> |
| | <i>Lightning talks are brief (1-2 minutes) "elevator pitches" to inform the entire group about relevant projects, programs, resources, etc. If you have something to share, step up to the mic! Now is also a good time to propose a roundtable discussion topic for one of the "Your Suggestion" tables, if you so choose.</i> |
| 3:10-3:55pm | Roundtable discussion (session II)
<i>10-minute break</i> |
| 4:05-4:50pm | Roundtable discussion (session III)
<i>10-minute break</i> |
| 5:00-6:00pm | Farm tour
<i>15-minute break</i> |
| 6:15-7:15pm | Dinner, evaluations, and wrap-up |

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 (1:40-2:30pm):

- Table 1) **Building Strong Farm-to-Restaurant (and Farm-to-Caterer) Relationships** – *Hear from chefs, caterers, and farmers about what to do – and what NOT to do – to initiate and sustain strong, mutually beneficial purchasing relationships. – Joe Whaley (Dothan Country Club) and Kelsey Barnard (KBC Catering Co)*
- Table 2) **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. – Mike Mullen (Choctawhatchee Riverkeeper) and Phillip Carter (ACES)*
- Table 3) **Medicinal Herbs** – *Learn about natural "farmaceutical" alternatives that promote holistic health, which you can grow or forage for yourself. – Tracy Byrd*

Session II (3:10-3:55pm):

- Table 1) **Value Added Products and Cottage Foods** – *Discuss opportunities to turn your raw products into jams/jellies, cosmetics, and other "value-added products" – in order to increase your profit margin, preserve them for sale during the off-season, to gain access to a niche market, or just for the fun of it. Learn about the latest regulations governing the sale of "cottage foods" and how to operate in compliance with them. – Bridgette Bannon (ACES) and Teresa Foster*
- Table 2) **Organic Certification** – *Learn more about the on-farm practices, recordkeeping, and application paperwork required to become certified organic, why you should (or shouldn't) pursue certification, and cost-share programs available to help lower the financial barriers to certification. – Rinske de Jong (Working Cows Dairy)*
- Table 3) **High Tunnel Production** – *Growing in a high tunnel (or hoop house, or tunnel house – a passively heated shelter for season extension) presents unique challenges and opportunities, when compared to growing in the field. Learn more about those challenges and opportunities, including crop selection, pest and disease management, and irrigation, as well as high tunnel construction and cost-share opportunities. – Russell and Jewell Bean (Tuskegee University) and Neil Kelly (ACES)*
- Table 4) **Your suggestion*** (see above for explanation)

This Forum made possible by the generous support of:



Session III (4:00-4:50):

- Table 1) **Beekeeping** – *The basics of keeping bees, for honey, pollination services, or just for the pleasure of it. Touch on various methods and approaches to beekeeping, benefits and challenges, and what supplies and knowledge you'll need for each. Also learn about opportunities for youth to learn beekeeping!* -- Ros Horton (Horton Farm) and Phillip Carter (ACES)
- Table 2) **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 (NRCS)
- Table 3) **Growing (and Sustaining) Strong Community Gardens** – *It takes a village to raise a community garden. Whether you want to start a community garden, 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 community gardens locally and statewide.* – Anne Randle (Tuskegee Extension) and Michael Jackson (Aunt Katie's Community Garden / Dubois Institute for Entrepreneurship)
- Table 4) **Your suggestion*** (see page 2 for explanation)

Check out the exhibit tables!

First South Farm Credit
Tuskegee University
Sierra Club – Alabama Chapter
ACES Commercial Horticulture Program



Additional Notes:

Gender pronouns on nametags:

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.

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.

