

## Beginning Farmer Track at the 2012 NOFA Summer Conference

The Beginning Farmer Workshop Track highlights workshops in a range of technical topics. The presenters of these workshops aim to provide insight about the logistics, investments, planning and strategy needed for incorporating the given technical topic into a farming enterprise. While not a requirement for beginning farmers or recipients of beginning farmer scholarships, this group may find the highlighted workshops to be particularly useful. You can also learn about many other topics related to organic agriculture and ecological sustainability.

Find a complete listing of over 200 exciting workshops on organic farming, gardening and land care, draft animal-power, homesteading, nutrition, food politics, activism, and much, much more at this web page: [http://www.nofasummerconference.org/pdfs/2012\\_workshops.pdf](http://www.nofasummerconference.org/pdfs/2012_workshops.pdf)

The conference features presenters from all over the Northeast, 100 [exhibitors](#), workshops and activities for teens and children, an afternoon fair with farm animals, live music and dances, an auction, and an ALL-LOCAL dinner. Stay on campus in the dorms or camp in a tent under the stars.

**Keynote Speakers:** Friday, August 10, 7:30pm - **Chellie Pingree**, organic farmer and Member of Congress from Maine promoting local food. And Saturday, August 11, 7:00pm - **Jeffrey Smith**, world-renowned expert & activist on health risks of GMO Foods.

### [Register Now Online!](#)

\*\*\* Registrations received before July 10, 2012 get a \$20 discount.

#### **FRIDAY, AUGUST 10, 2:00-3:30 PM**

##### 4) Cooperative Farm Labor Structures **BF Track** All Levels

Campus Center 917

**Ryan Karb:** Farmer and Co-founder of Many Hands Farm Corps.

I'll discuss common mistakes/problems that occur on small farms regarding labor practices and creative solutions to overcome them. Borrowing heavily from the Conservation Corps Model, Many Hands Farm Corps addresses many small farm labor issues and will be used as an example of ideas that can be proliferated. [More info.](#)

##### 10) Introduction to Soil Fertility **BF & ND Track** Beginner

Campus Center 804-08

**David Forster:** Soil fertility and crop consultant.

I will be teaching the basics of soil fertility, including the physical, mineral, and biological components of soil. I'll cover clay, organic matter, cation exchange capacity, reading soil tests, microbes contribution to soil fertility, and the role of organic matter for nutrient storage, carbon sequestration, and plant growth.



## FRIDAY, AUGUST 10, 4-5:30 PM

### 27) Growing Winter Greens **BF & SE Track** *Intermediate*

Campus Center 174-76

**Nancy Hanson:** Manager of the Hampshire College CSA since 1999.

I will explain the basics of growing salad greens for harvest during winter, based on my experiences growing in unheated hoopouses. Topics covered will include hoopouse structures, crop selection, scheduling, and growing techniques.

### 30) Nature as Mentor: Raising Pigs in the Woods **BF Track** *Intermediate*

Campus Center 903

**Craig Haney:** Livestock manager at Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture since opening in 2004.

Understanding the nature of pigs should dictate how we manage the swineherd. Using nature as mentor, we'll focus on the biology of the pig while covering the practical management of rearing pigs for meat. Through handling, herd health, feeding, breeding, farrowing and harvest, the nature of the pig will be emphasized.

### 34) Protecting Your Working Body: Self care & Ergonomics for Farmers **BF Track** *All Levels*

Campus Center 911-15

**Lydia Irons:** Licensed Massage Therapist, working with farmers, gardeners, carpenters, and mechanics.

Participants will learn anatomy, good body mechanics and injury prevention as they relate to the specific physical challenges of farm work. We will cover the five movement categories that dominate farm work and specific ways to prepare, maintain, and restore the body for each. Lots of time for Q&A. Handouts provided.

### 38) Starting a CSA **BF & CSA Track** *Beginner*

Campus Center 804-08

**Carolyn Llewellyn:** Helped found two successful CSAs, and now works as farm educator.

This workshop will help you consider all of the various details that can determine the success of a start-up veggie CSA, from land and growing to marketing, distribution, labor, administration, and more. Many handouts are supplied to cover these issues as well as crop planning and further resources.

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 8-9:30 AM

### 51) CSA Financial Management **BF & CSA Track** *Advanced*

Campus Center 163C

**Dan Kaplan:** Manager of Brookfield Farm, a 525-member CSA, since 1994.

Overview of how I create budgets, track payments, make financial reports, plan for infrastructure improvement, and analyze financial health. Includes descriptions and pictures of documents I use.

### 54) Farm-built Wireless Greenhouse Monitor **BF and SE Track** *All Levels*

Campus Center 917

**Benjamin Shute:** Farmer at Hearty Roots Community Farm, blogger for [www.farmhack.net](http://www.farmhack.net).



**Louis Thiery:** Electrical and software engineer.

Get hands-on experience with a new farm-built tool that can alert farmers to greenhouse temperatures via text message. This tool is made using easily obtained parts with straightforward assembly. We will build one in the workshop, go over parts sources, and practice setting the tool up. [More info.](#)

63) Starting a Farm – Mine and Yours **BF Track All Levels**

Campus Center 165-69

**Elizabeth Henderson:** CSA Farmer for 22 years & author of "Sharing the Harvest."

Having started three farms myself, I'll share stories and photos of my beginnings and help participants think through resources you need – physical, financial, and mental – to start a farm, or expand a garden into a commercial enterprise. I stress substituting creativity for loans or a trust fund and point to many resources.

67) TOUR: Many Hands Farm Corps Farm: DIY Greenhouse Frame Construction **BF and SE Track All Levels**  
TOUR

**Ryan Karb:** Farmer and Co-founder of Many Hands Farm Corps.

I will demonstrate the materials needed and the process for constructing a greenhouse frame. Participants will be given hands on experience in constructing gothic arches from wood boards. DIRECTIONS: From UMass, head South on North Pleasant Street (0.6mi). At the Bank of America, go straight, continuing onto Triangle Street (0.6mi). Turn left on Main Street and continue onto Pelham Rd (1.2mi). Sign on left for Many Hands Farm Corp. TOTAL DRIVING TIME FROM UMass - 9 MINUTES. ADDRESS: 132 Pelham Rd, Amherst, MA. ARRANGE CARPOOLS, USING THE —TOUR RIDE BOARD. PLACED AT THE REGISTRATION TENT. [Link to google map directions here.](#)

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 10-11:30 AM

82) Farming Smarter, Not Harder: Planning for Profit (pt 1 of 2) **BF Track All Levels**

Campus Center 163C

**Richard Wiswall:** Consults and speaks on business of organic farming. Author, "The Organic Farmer's Business Handbook."

Many farmers avoid learning about the business end of farming. Because of this they often work harder than they need to, or quit farming altogether because of frustrating – and often avoidable – losses. This workshop will focus on the planning and analysis tools needed to run a profitable farm, in an easy, step-by-step format. [More info.](#)

88) Micro-dairying **BF Track All Levels**

Campus Center 905-09

**Sarah Fournier-Scanlon:** Loving the cows, recreating a farm in community.

Small-scale dairies with direct sales have the potential to fill a vital gap in local foodsheds. We will discuss affordable set-up and infrastructure for a certified dairy, marketing, creative financing, management economics, and the possibility for this to be a sustainable and regenerative farming business in community.

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1-2:30 PM



107) Cooperatives in Farming and the Food System **BF Track** *Beginner*

Campus Center 917

**Mary Hoyer:** works with the Cooperative Fund of New England.

**Adam Trott:** works at Collective Copies and the Valley Alliance of Worker Co-ops.

**Suzette Snow-Cobb:** General manager for Green Fields and McCuskers Markets.

We will explain three basic forms of co-ops--producer, consumer, and worker--and the roles they play in agriculture and the food system. We'll compare co-ops with other business forms, and provide information on support organizations for co-op start-ups and expansions as well as case studies of various co-ops.

108) Farmer-Friendly Enterprise Budgets Made Simple (pt 2 of 2) **BF Track** *All Levels*

Campus Center 163C

**Richard Wiswall:** Consults and speaks on business of organic farming. Author, "The Organic Farmer's Business Handbook."

Are you making a profit with your current sales prices? This group working session will simplify and enlighten the process of determining production costs for any of your farm endeavors, and show which ones are making money. Beginning and seasoned farmers alike will benefit, and share in some eye opening results.

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 12, 8-9:30 AM**

144) DIY Alternative Energy on the Farm **BF Track** *Intermediate*

Campus Center 174-76

**Bill MacKentley:** Longtime druid greenman and owner of St. Lawrence Nurseries.

This slideshow discusses how we set up photovoltaic, hot water, wind energy, and masonry heaters on our farm. Photos show construction of each separate system using inexpensive, home-built, do-it-yourself construction wherever possible. Emphasis will be on using necessary hardware while integrating innovative material to save money and build a better system.

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 12, 10-11:30 AM**

160) Create a Strategic Plan for Your Farm/Business **BF Track** *Intermediate*

Campus Center 805-09

**Jack Mastrianni:** Enthusiastic grower of organizations, people and plants.

Dreams and visions for your farm/business are wonderful but they are not enough. Don't let success be left up to chance. You will learn a proven approach and apply it. The takeaway is a skeleton strategic plan in your hand and the motivation to continue this essential work.

173) Soil: The Super Ecosystem of Ecosystems **BF & ND Track** *All Levels*

Campus Center Auditorium

**Jerry Brunetti:** Founder, Agri-Dynamics, a 33 year-old holistic agricultural service and supply company.





Soil Eco-Systems are an interwoven web of biochemistry, biology, plant diversity and native geology. When these legs of this stool are appropriately managed, soils become terrestrial coral reefs that allow plants to become protective and resistant to pests. This supra-organism is the benefactor of optimal nutrition for humans and livestock. [More info.](#)

## SUNDAY, AUGUST 12, 1-2:30 PM

183) Building & Managing Low-tech, Low-cost, Low-tunnels **BF & SE Track** All Levels  
Campus Center 917

**Dan Botkin:** Farmer, teacher and activist living in Gill, MA.

This workshop explores the fabrication and use of home-crafted, low-tunnel greenhouses for crop protection in the backyard garden or micro-farm. We'll compare various materials and building strategies including wire, wooden slats, PVC pipe and steel conduit. At the end of the workshop, we'll move as a group to the North end of the Campus Center for a pipe bending demonstration. [More info.](#)

201) Wholesale Vegetables at a Small Scale **BF Track** All Levels  
Campus Center 805-09

**Caroline Pam:** Grows high-quality specialty vegetables for restaurants, farmers' markets, and a CSA.

I will discuss how to successfully grow and sell local products to restaurants and other wholesale customers. From production to marketing, this workshop will cover variety selection, planting schedules and best harvest and washing practices, plus pricing, communication, and logistics.

