VOICE OF THE FARMER

ORGANIC FOR ALL

Organic for All *has developed a participatory, in-depth educational experience for underserved, small-scale farmers and the communities they support.*

Our program promotes the indigenous knowledge and voices of farmers by respecting their unique culture and rich historic connections to the land. We assert that the inclusion of all farmers is critical for the growth of agroecology-organic farming practices, with wholistic benefits to our farmlands, environments and food sovereignty systems— all essential elements of the health and wellbeing of our farming communities.

Organic for All offers a range of capacity building programs dedicated to using a systems-approach centered around building community, growing healthy people, and truthfully sustaining our nation's economic equality. This newly implemented training and education project is designed to build capacity within underserved farming communities to increase opportunities for offering a path to organic farming systems and certification.

Voice of the Farmer is our report on **Organic For All** participatory learning sessions to support strengthening capacity with all farmers.

WELCOME TO

SEED SAVING TO PROMOTE SMALL FARM RESILIENCY, CULTURE AND LOCAL FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

In the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic and crisis, two hands-on learning sessions were held in Virginia on Earth Day.

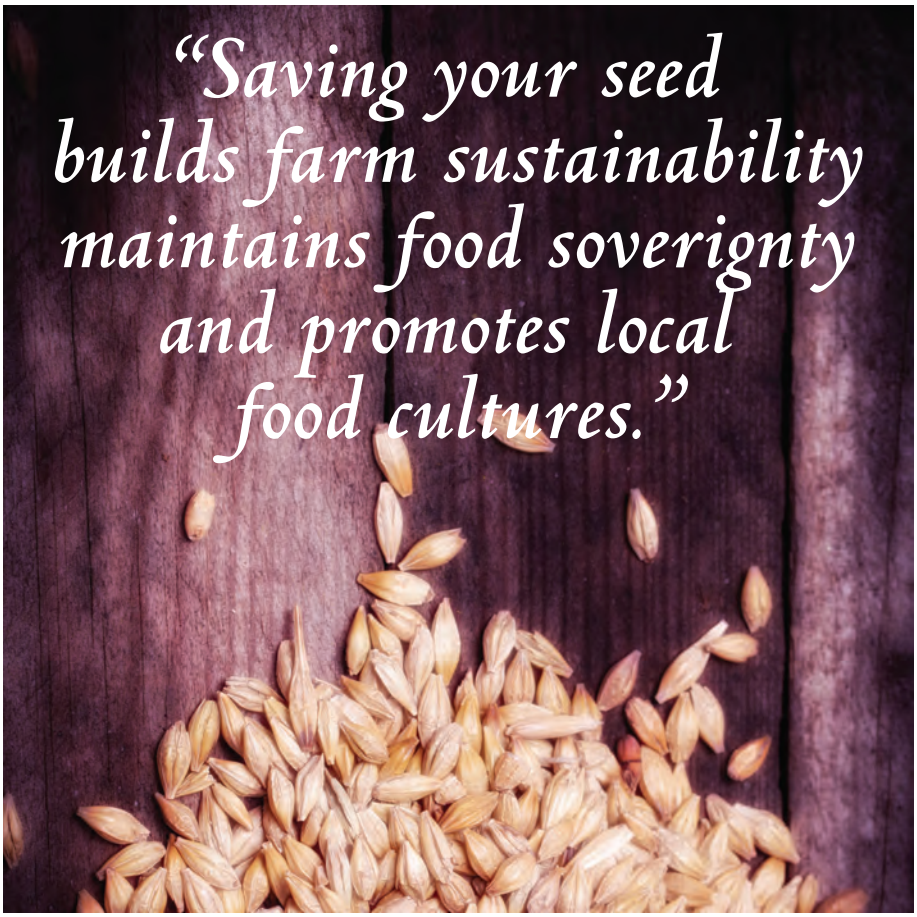
After several months of planning, the first workshop focused on farmer-led dialogues and hands-on demonstrations of seed saving techniques. This 5-hour Organic Seed Saving learning session was held at Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, a certified organic farm in Mineral Springs. Virginia.

Southern Exposure houses a worker-run cooperative led by Ira Wallace, a black indigenous organic gardener and seed saver, educator, author, Ira is the essential intellectual and physical energy behind the seed exchange.

Southern Exposure Seed Exchange is one of the country's best known and most respected sources for heirloom and open-pollinated seeds. It provides farmers and gardeners in the organic community with 800 varieties of vegetables, flowers, grain, herbs, and cover crop seeds.

VOICE OF THE FARMER

Ira Wallace is a seed saver, an educator, and the essential intellectual and physical energy behind Southern Exposure Seed Exchange, one of the country's best known and most respected sources for heirloom and open-pollinated seeds. She is the founder of the Heritage Harvest Festival, held each fall at Monticello and presents at sustainable agriculture conferences across the region. Ira is also the author of *The Timber Press Guide to Vegetable Gardening in the Southeast.*



Ira has been training underserved farmers on the importance of saving their seeds in order to build small farm sustainability, maintain food sovereignty, promote local food cultures, add resilience to their crops, and reduce their dependency on purchased seed.

Organic for All is honored to have Ira lead our first workshop.

Farmers, gardeners, and interested members of the community alike came out to meet Ira to learn organic seed saving strategies and techniques. This capacity building session provided hands-on demonstrations on seed saving and a farm tour focused on the relevance of seed saving as a strategy to promote organic farm sustainability. The session also provided discussion time for discussing the success of the organic seed business and opportunities for organic farmers to further engage with Southern Exposure Seed Exchange.

www.southernexposure.com

ORGANIC FOR ALL

We invite you to work with us to create healthy pathways around healing our food, environment, and community through Indigenous, Agroecology-Organic farming systems practices and their benefits for all communities.

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For more information, visit our website: **www.uacus.com**