



2023 Business of Farming Conference



photo by Camilla Calnan Photography

February 11, 2023 | A-B Tech, Asheville



**Local Food
Strong Farms
Healthy Communities**

306 W. Haywood St., Asheville, NC 28801
828-236-1282 | asapconnections.org

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Welcome to the 20th annual Business of Farming Conference.

Farming can be a lonely profession—days spent in the field not speaking to anyone, problems you have to figure out on your own. For many of you, that may be exactly what draws you to this work. For others, you get your weekly fill of human connection at farmers markets or working with a farm crew. But there aren't a lot of opportunities to connect with other farmers across the region.

We hear from farmers that one of the aspects you value most in the Business of Farming Conference is the opportunity to come together. You appreciate networking with buyers, with ag and small business resource providers, and especially with other farmers. According to one piece of feedback, "The conference was very inspiring—more than anything due to connecting with farmers. Hell, lunch was as good as any of the meetings. I suggest finding even more creative ways for farmers to meet each other."

Of course we encourage you to take advantage of all the resources and expertise available at the conference today. Attend workshops on financial and risk planning, explore evolving market opportunities, and discover new tools. Take advantage of one-on-one consulting sessions with experts in a variety of specialized fields. Reach potential new buyers, including chefs, grocers, and distributors, in the Grower-Buyer Meeting. Visit the Exhibitor Hall to find products and services to help you grow your farm business.

But also, take some time to connect with this community you are a part of. Sit down at a table with a farmer you don't know yet and ask what brings them to this work. Find out if their current challenges are ones you're facing as well—or have before. Or maybe just share a good laugh over something only a farmer could understand.

Beyond educational resources and marketing support, ASAP helps to connect you with a broader network and community of farmers. We do this by bringing people together for events like this conference and other workshops throughout the year. We facilitate working groups to connect over common needs and experiences, like new and beginning farmers, farmers recovering from flooding or other climate-related disaster, and managers of farmers markets seeking best practices for structure operations. We ask for your input, perspective, and stories through evaluations, surveys, interviews, videos, and photos, so that we can create responsive programs and share back the multifaceted story of farming in the Southern Appalachian region.

Thank you for being here today. We value connecting with all of you and look forward to learning, sharing, and supporting local food, strong farms, and healthy communities together.

Molly Nicholie



About ASAP

ASAP (Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in Asheville and serving the Southern Appalachian region. ASAP's mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food. Over the last two decades, ASAP has created a model that connects consumers to local farmers and builds the community relationships essential to changing our food system.

How You Can Help

Do you value the Business of Farming Conference and other training opportunities for farmers? Do you believe in ASAP's work to help family farms thrive and reconnect people with their food? Please support ASAP with a financial contribution! Annual giving helps provide resources to farmers, make connections, and increase access to local food in our communities.

Pick up a donation envelope at the ASAP table. Take another for a friend. Or make a gift online at asapconnections.org.

Questions about giving? Contact Nora Scheff, nscheff@asapconnections.org or 828-236-1282.

Thank you for your support. We can't do it without you!

Buy Packaging Materials

Using Appalachian Grown™ packaging and branding informs your customers that what they are buying is certified local. Available for purchase today in the conference center lobby.



Cost Share Funds

ASAP, through support from the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission, has funds available for Appalachian Grown™ certified farms in North Carolina to promote their farm and products in 2023. These funds can be used for design and production of labels, packaging, or promotional materials featuring the Appalachian Grown logo.

Applications for Appalachian Grown Cost Share are currently being accepted. Applications are approved on a rolling basis until funds run out. Find out more and apply at asapconnections.org.

Farmer Toolkit

Find additional resources for farm business planning and marketing in ASAP's Farmer Toolkit. Look for print and flash drive versions of the Toolkit with your registration materials or find it online at asapconnections.org.

Connect with Us Online

asapconnections.org provides resources for farms, food businesses, and the public

appalachiangrown.org is our online *Local Food Guide* and wholesale directory

growing-minds.org provides farm to school resources, lessons plans, activities, and local food recipes

Get Social with Us!

Share your conference experience! Tag us @[@asapconnections](https://twitter.com/asapconnections) and #[#businessoffarming](https://twitter.com/businessoffarming).



Conference Schedule:

- 7:30–8:30** Registration and Breakfast
- 8:30–9:00** Welcome from Mary Walsh, Swamp Rabbit Cafe & Grocery
- 9:15–10:45** Block 1 Workshops
- 11:00–12:30** Block 2 Workshops
- 12:30–2:15** Lunch
- 2:30–4:00** Block 3 Workshops

Workshop Schedule:

Workshops are filled on a first-come, first-seated basis. Room capacity is limited. If you arrive at a workshop and seats are not available, please find an alternate workshop to attend.

Workshop descriptions Pages 6-7

Speaker biographies Pages 8-10



Locally Sourced Breakfast from **Red Fiddle Vittles**

Room	Block 1 9:15-10:45		Block 2 11:00-12:30		Block 3 2:30-4:00
Workshop Room 103	Determining Your Market Mix	BREAK 10:45-11:00	Investing in Your Farm Business	LUNCH 12:30-2:15	---
Workshop Room 106	Cooperative and Collaborative Approaches in Farming		Intro to Land Access		Farm Fresh for Health
Workshop Room 107	Resources for New and Beginning Farmers		Cultivate Your Brand: Why It's Important and Where to Start		Niche Meats: Pricing for Profitability
Workshop Room 108	Legal Tools for Protecting Your Farm		Farm Resiliency		Communicating Your Farm Identity and Values
Workshop Room 201	Planning for Long-term Farm Success		Building Blocks: How to Start Your Farm Business		Keeping Up with Inflation



Lunchtime Opportunities

Locally Sourced Lunch from **Farm Burger**

12:30-2:15 in the Conference Center

Grower-Buyer Meetings Pages 14-15

One-to-One Sessions Page 7

- Ask a Lawyer
- Business Coaching
- Production Planning 101
- Land Access

Exhibitor Gallery (in Lobby) Page 5



Farmers Market Summit

9:15–12:00 Conference Center Room B

12:00–1:00 Lunch Break

1:00–2:15 Workshop Room 201

The Summit is open to pre-registered attendees only.

The morning session, focuses on sharing resources available to markets in 2023 and how ASAP can best provide support. The afternoon session will include a market-to-market roundtable exchange and a focused discussion on regulations, permits, and inspections.

Exhibitor Gallery:

Visit with exhibitors in the conference center lobby.

A-B Tech Small Business Center provides business development resources at no cost, including confidential counseling and programs.

Asheville Tool Library is a volunteer-powered, membership-based nonprofit that shares its tools and resources and offers educational opportunities to the community of WNC.

Carolina Farm Credit is a member-owned financial cooperative offering loans for farms, homes, rural living, and much more.

Carolina Farm Stewardship Association provides technical assistance to members on farm food safety (GAPS), organic certification, high tunnel production, conservation planning, and market access.

Cedar Grove Law serves farmers, land stewards, landowners, small businesses, agritourism and agribusinesses professionals, artisans, makers, and authors with business formation, business planning, agritourism and agribusiness contracts, contract negotiation, land use planning, business disputes, and brand development.

Clean Water Lab provides water and food safety testing to the WNC area. We are state certified for bacteriological and nitrates analysis to help farmer's meet their GAP compliance.

Critical Services Microgrid Group of WNC promotes the adoption of farm-based agrivoltaics (elevated solar photovoltaic power systems over cultivated fields) in Western North Carolina, to increase local energy and economic security.

Dirtcraft Living Soils is WNC's own craft soil blender serving organic farmers and gardeners through the Southeast. We specialize performance potting soils that are peat-free, sustainably sourced and Certified Organic.

Impact Health serves as the Network Lead for NC Medicaid managed care Healthy Opportunity Pilot. Our work is intended to increase access to social services that meet social health needs for NC Medicaid managed care members.

Johnson Insurance Services specializes in providing insurance and risk management services to farmers and the agricultural industry.

Mountain BizWorks is a U.S. Treasury certified nonprofit community development financial institution (CDFI). For over 30 years, Mountain BizWorks has been making business loans ranging from \$1,000 to \$500,000 to small businesses in Western North Carolina who may find it difficult to secure funding from banks and other traditional sources.

NC FarmLink is a program of NC State Extension that helps connect farmers and landowners.

North Carolina Agricultural Mediation Program provides free mediation services for farmers involved in disputes. We also provide Family Farm Succession Planning Training and Credit Counseling.

North Carolina Ginseng Association advocates for forest-grown organic ginseng.

Organic Growers School is the premier provider of practical and affordable organic education in the Southern Appalachians, building a vibrant food and farming community by boosting the success of organic home growers and farmers.

Southern SARE is a USDA-funded program that provides grant opportunities to farmers, researchers, and ag community leaders to conduct research and education projects in areas of sustainable agriculture.

USDA Farm Service Agency administers federal farm programs including farm ownership/operating loans; microloans (\$50K and less); youth loans; conservation work; emergency and disaster assistance; Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, Farm Storage Facility Loans; and others.

Ward and Smith, P.A., handles legal matters with attentive intelligence by attorneys and staff who work together to build meaningful relationships with our clients. We do this by being knowledgeable in more than 30 practice areas, striving for efficient results, and effectively using technology.

Western Women Business Center is a program of Carolina Small Business Center, a statewide nonprofit community development financial institution with a mission to foster economic development in the state of North Carolina.

WNC Farmers Market is the premier destination for buying and selling the region's best agriculture products directly from farmers and food producers to household and wholesale customers in an environment that celebrates the region's diverse culture, food, and heritage.

Workshop Descriptions

Block 1

9:15–10:45

Determining Your Market Mix

Workshop Room 103

Having diversified market outlets can help a farm business weather changing marketing dynamics. However, keeping up with varied schedules, product demands, market requirements, volumes, and personalities is certainly a challenge. This workshop will explore strategies for determining the best market mix for your farm, juggling a variety of market outlets, and how to create and maintain efficiencies for increased profitability.

Nathan Vannette of Growing Green Family Farm and Howard Berk of Ellijay Mushrooms

Cooperative and Collaborative Approaches in Farming

Workshop Room 106

Small farms can benefit from working together in various ways to increase farming income and efficiency. This session will describe the continuum of farm-to-farm collaboration from simple handshake agreements to formal cooperatives and how they can improve profitability. This can include cost savings from shared purchasing, increased sales through access to markets, or even value-added products.

Thomas Beckett and Kelly Liddington of Carolina Common Enterprises, Delia Jovel of Tierra Fertil Coop

Resources for New and Beginning Farmers

Workshop Room 107

Give your business a firm foundation by tapping into the wide range of resources available to small farms in the Southern Appalachian region. Get an overview of programs offered by agricultural support agencies and learn how to access capital, business planning tools, guidance on risk management, and more. Hear farmer perspectives on what has been the most useful in starting and growing their own farms.

Elna Snyder of Three Rock Farm and David Smiley of ASAP

Legal Tools for Protecting Your Farm

Workshop Room 108

Join three attorneys from Ward and Smith, P.A., for an interactive session as they walk through real-life legal issues affecting today's farmers. The information provided during this session will assist you in identifying and mitigating the risks farmers face on a daily basis. Topics we will cover include business formation, labor and employment, litigation (how to avoid it and what to do if you cannot resolve a dispute), the legal nuances of farming on leased land, and estate planning/succession planning issues.

Bill Durr, Zac Lamb, and Avery Locklear of Ward and Smith, P.A.

Planning for Long-term Farm Success

Workshop Room 201

The farm business is finding success, but how is the farmer doing? This workshop will explore strategies that farmers have utilized to keep themselves enthusiastic about their work, improve quality of life, support their family, take a vacation, and begin planning for the later stages of their farm career.

Gabriele Marewski of Mountain BizWorks, Michael Rayburn of Rayburn Farms, Nicole Coston of Bearwallow Valley Farms, and Sharon Dubuc of Black Thorn Farm and Kitchen

Block 2

11:00-12:30

Investing in Your Farm Business

Workshop Room 103

New farm businesses are often barebones operations. As your farm grows, when is the right time to invest in hiring employees, purchase time-saving equipment, build infrastructure, or pay for professional services? What are your options for accessing capital, from loans to grants? This workshop will connect you with resources and give you the tools to assess your long-term financial plan.

Shiloh Avery and Jason Roehrig of Tumbling Shoals Farm, Roxanne Reed and Janice Wright of Farm School on Wheels

Intro to Land Access

Workshop Room 106

Land access: It's an issue for new and seasoned farmers alike. Find out which organizations, resources, and options are available to your farm business as you look to expand your farming operation. Get advice on what questions you should be asking yourself, as well as your potential land leaser/seller.

Stephen Bishop of NC FarmLink, Andrew Branan of NC Cooperative Extension, and Alyssa and Salvador Moreno of Moreno Family Farm

Cultivate Your Brand: Why It's Important and Where to Start

Workshop Room 107

Whether you are selling direct to consumers or through wholesale accounts, a strong farm brand is critical. In this workshop, learn more about the key elements of an effective brand and hear from a farm that has gone through a rebranding. Think deliberately about your branding needs, work through exercises to flesh out ideas and questions, and start to make a plan for your branding strategy.

Daniel Bryant of Smallholding Farm, Eric Goldstein of EGD Agency, and Kat Houghton of The Forest Farmacy

Farm Resiliency

Workshop Room 108

Many local farms have been adversely impacted by weather events (floods, droughts, changing weather patterns, etc.)

with increasing frequency. As we move forward as a farming community, what can we do to be more climate resilient? Learn from the experiences of farms and ag resource providers who have personally navigated weather extremes, and identify resources and strategies for preparing for and recovering from the impact of adverse weather.

Danielle Hutchison of TendWell Farm and Craig Mauney of NC Cooperative Extension

Building Blocks: How to Start Your Farm Business

Workshop Room 201

This session will help new and early-stage farmers assemble the building blocks necessary to launch a strong business with an easy-to-use checklist, business planning templates, and a resource guide. Ask key questions to determine what kind of operation you want to run and how to set yourself up for success. Explore options for getting started and moving forward on financing, insurance, accounting, and more.

Gabriele Marewski of Mountain BizWorks and Robert Russell of Mount Gilead Farm

Lunchtime Opportunities

12:30-2:15

Grower-Buyer Meetings

These brief meetings allow both grower and buyer to make a quick introduction and evaluate whether there is potential for a working relationship. See pages 14-15 for a list of buyers and buying requirements.

1:1 Session: Ask a Lawyer

Local attorneys from Ward and Smith, P.A., will share legal information and address general questions regarding legal rights, requirements, and restrictions as it relates to your agribusiness. Disclaimer: In the absence of an attorney-client relationship, attorneys will not be able to provide legal advice.

1:1 Session: Business Coaching

Bring your business questions, challenges, or ideas to a session with Mountain BizWorks and we'll apply our seasoned experience to point you in the right direction.

1:1 Session: Production Planning 101

In need of crop planning support? NC Cooperative Extension Area Specialized Agent Craig Mauney can brainstorm ideas with you.

1:1 Session: Land Access

Connect with NC FarmLink about resources for seeking farmland in North Carolina and get guidance on negotiating land tenure arrangements, farm stewardship, and farm transition.

Block 3

2:30-4:00

Farm Fresh for Health

Workshop Room 106

From health insurers to medical professionals, knowledge of the impact food has on disease prevention and management has grown. Learn how to align your farm with these efforts and better understand market opportunities in the health landscape. This workshop will touch on produce prescription programs, workplace wellness initiatives, engaging medical practitioners, identifying community partners, and more.

Nicole Coston of Bearwallow Valley Farms, Sonya Jones of Caja Solidaria, and Molly Nicholie of ASAP

Niche Meats: Pricing for Profitability

Workshop Room 107

Niche meat production has its own specific considerations when it comes to pricing and rising costs. Join NC Choices in this workshop for a comprehensive look at pricing for profitability, navigating processing, and successful strategies for marketing and consumer communication.

Aaron Bradley of Colfax Creek Farm and Lee Menius of NC Choices

Communicating Your Farm Identity and Values

Workshop Room 108

For many farms, the value of your farm product extends well beyond a price sheet. But is this value understood by your customers and market outlets? Whether it's your production practices, niche products, or farm identity itself, this workshop will explore ways that farmers have used storytelling, recipes, sampling, and other approaches to communicate the farm values that set them apart.

Chloe Moore of Southside Community Farm and Jake Puckett of Crow Fly Farms

Keeping Up with Inflation

Workshop Room 201

Considering the rising costs of inputs, how do you price your product accordingly? How do you best communicate pricing to your customers, and understand their willingness to pay? This session will look at key financial tools for analyzing your numbers: profit and loss statements, balance sheets, and production projections. Note that this session will be primarily focused on produce. See the Niche Meats: Pricing for Profitability workshop for meat focus.

Gabriele Marewski and Janelle Tatum of Mountain BizWorks

Speaker Biographies

Shiloh Avery has owned and operated the Certified Organic, diversified vegetable operation Tumbling Shoals Farm in Wilkes County since 2008 with her husband Jason Roehrig. They sell their vegetables at several local farmers markets and through a 250-member fully customized CSA.

Thomas Beckett is Executive Director of Carolina Common Enterprise, North Carolina's cooperative development center. He is a licensed attorney and holds an MBA. Mr. Beckett serves on the board of Shared Capital Cooperative, a CDFI co-op lender. He is a co-founder of the Cooperative Professionals Guild, a professional association for accountants and attorneys that work in the solidarity economy.

Howard Berk is the co-founder of Ellijay Mushrooms, a unique mushroom farm located in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains in Ellijay, Georgia. It has been said that you are the happiness you eat, and we believe that wholeheartedly at Ellijay Mushrooms. Our belief is in stewardship of land, growing community, and putting our energy into furthering sustainability, diversity, and inclusivity.



Stephen Bishop is the Western Director of NC FarmLink, a statewide program of NC State Extension. He has over a decade of experience working with farmers and landowners on farmland preservation and conservation issues. Through NC FarmLink, he helps beginning and expanding farmers who are seeking land connect with farmers needing a successor or new landowners needing a farmer.

Aaron Bradley is the co-owner of Colfax Creek Farm in Bostic, NC. Together with his wife, Nicole, they produce grassfed beef, pastured pork, and pastured poultry to provide both retail and wholesale products for area markets. Aaron is a fifth-generation farmer with a passion for inspiring, educating, and learning with others.

Robert Andrew Branan, J.D., is an Assistant Extension Professor with the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at NC State University. He has worked primarily with farmers and landowners for two decades as a private attorney and educator. Resources from his NC Cooperative Extension program, Farm Law for Producers and Landowners, can be found at farmlaw.ces.ncsu.edu.

Daniel Bryant co-owns Smallholding Farm with Ellie Goldstein in Morganton, NC. They use minimal-to-no-till and organic practices in effort to build and nourish living soil. Smallholding sells year round via local farmers markets, several wholesale accounts, and a spring and summer CSA. With help from ASAP this past year, Smallholding was able to put time and resources into their marketing and branding strategies to grow the business and present in an authentic and creative way.

Nicole Coston is a registered dietitian-nutritionist and owner/operator of Bearwallow Valley Farms. After three years overseeing a multi-farm CSA, Nicole now farms a forty-acre plot of family land for retail and wholesale. Bearwallow specializes in watermelon, garlic, onions, winter squash, and apples for wholesale in Hendersonville, NC.

Sharon Dubuc of Black Thorn Farm and Kitchen is a shepherd and chef stewarding a cove of mountain land with her family in Big Sandy Mush, NC. Together they tend a flock of wool sheep well suited to their steep mountain pastures. They also cultivate orchard trees, focusing on persimmon and pawpaw, and host guests at their farmstay rentals. They utilize the meat and fruit they grow, along with neighboring farmer's harvests, to prepare meals for their guests, giving them an opportunity to taste the flavors of the mountains.

Bill Durr is a litigation attorney with Ward and Smith, P.A. He has extensive experience in the courtroom, having tried cases before both state and federal courts. His practice focuses on civil litigation, with an emphasis on complex disputes in agribusiness, business, and construction. Bill also advises clients ranging from livestock, poultry, and vegetable producers and processors on a myriad of agribusiness and agritourism matters. Other areas of his litigation practice include insurance coverage disputes, personal injury, and representation of professional athletes and other high-net-worth individuals in a variety of family law matters.

Eric Goldstein is the founder and creative director of EGD Agency in Atlanta. His clients have included Google, Atlanta Botanical Garden, Georgia Pacific, Emory University, Cochon555—and Smallholding Farm in Morganton, NC, which is co-owned by his daughter, Ellie Goldstein.

Kat Houghton is a psychologist and farmer. She was raised on a hill farm in Scotland and has returned to the farm life in WNC with her life partner Chris Parker. They grow mushrooms and host transformational events. Kat co-founded and for 11 years ran a health tech company and now brings that business and marketing experience to The Forest Farmacy.

Danielle Hutchison is a first-generation farmer that co-owns and operates TendWell Farm, located in Old Fort, NC. She grows and distributes over 150 acres of high-quality, Certified Organic produce to grocery stores throughout the Southeast and beyond.

Sonya Jones is the Executive Director and founder of Caja Solidaria, a community-based nonprofit working in healthy food access. Sonya was a professor of public health for 19 years. She has a PhD from University of North Carolina in Nutrition and a B.A. in Latin American Studies.

Delia Jovel is from El Salvador. Since 2016 she has been involved in different nonprofit initiatives oriented to support the immigrant hispanic community. In 2020 Delia created in her own community, Abundancia, a culturally appropriate food distribution, as well as Tierra Fértil Coop, a Hispanic-worker-owned farm cooperative in Henderson County, NC. She has a strong commitment to develop mutual aid efforts and grassroots, immigrant-led initiatives.

Zac Lamb is a trusts and estates attorney with Ward and Smith, P.A. He is certified by the North Carolina State Bar as a Board Certified Specialist in Estate Planning and Probate Law. He counsels individuals on their estate plans and helps them put in place the legal documents to achieve those plans (such as Last Wills, Trust Agreements, Durable Powers of Attorney, Health Care Powers of Attorney and HIPAA Authorizations). Zac also advises fiduciaries, such as estate Executors and Trustees, on administrative matters. Zac's practice also involves assisting closely-held business owners in various transactional matters and business succession planning. He regularly advises clients on a broad range of business law matters, including the formation of new business and investment entities, stock purchase/sale transactions, asset purchase/sale transactions, and contract drafting and negotiation.

Kelly Liddington is the Cooperative Developer for Carolina Common Enterprise. He has a broad cross-section of training and experience in teaching, training and developing projects that perform beyond expectations. He has nearly 30 years of experience in cooperative extension in Virginia and North Carolina. As part of that work, he was involved in the development of two successful community organizations.

Avery Locklear is a labor and employment attorney with Ward and Smith, P.A. She has a diverse practice that focuses on labor and employment law. She helps businesses of all sizes, as well as individual employers and human resources professionals. Avery is committed to finding practical, efficient solutions to the challenges that employers face every day. Avery is a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of Law. While attending, she was highly involved on campus, serving as President of Women in Law, Vice President of both Carolina Law Ambassador and Law Students Against Sexual Domestic Violence, working as an Innocence Project case manager, and completing more than 100 hours of pro bono service.

Gabriele Marewski has over 35 years of agricultural experience and is passionate about supporting beginning agripreneurs through her one-on-one coaching. She works with Mountain BizWorks in the Western North Carolina region. Her website is *Farm4Business.com*.

Craig Mauney has worked as an Extension agent for the NC Cooperative Extension for over 25 years. He is presently the Extension Area Specialized Agent in commercial vegetable and fruit production in the 39 westernmost counties of North Carolina. He graduated from Berea College in Kentucky with a B.S. degree in agriculture and has experience in all aspects of commercial vegetable and fruit production, home gardening, and landscape design. His special interests are woodland botanicals and unusual edibles like pawpaw. He grew up in the mountains of Western North Carolina in Cherokee County where he had a small sustainable farm for many years. He now has a small forest farm, Shady Hollow Farm, in Zirconia, NC.

Lee Menius is an NC State University Animal Science graduate and has worked in the local food scene for over 20 years. Menius owned and operated Wild Turkey Farms in China Grove, NC, providing pasture-raised meats direct to consumers and restaurants since its founding in 1998. In 2016, Lee opened Carolina Craft Butchery, an NCDA-inspected butcher shop, with his wife, Domisty Menius. Lee has worked with Cooperative Extension, Rowan Soil & Water Conservation District, NC Farm School, and NC Choices, where his work has focused on educational projects and working with farmers and processors to develop effective and profitable systems. Throughout his career, Lee has led numerous workshops and producer training on topics such as business planning, processing, and outdoor swine production.

Chloe Moore is a Black, queer, landless farmer and educator. She works as farm manager of Southside Community Farm, co-manager of Shiloh Community Garden, and co-creator of Liberation Tools.

Alyssa and Salvador Moreno own Moreno Family Farm, a small family farm dedicated to preserving our land for generations to come. We look forward to educating our local community on how to grow their own food and also teach them about the produce we are growing.

Speaker Biographies

Molly Nicholie is Executive Director of ASAP. Her experience includes almost two decades working with educators, farmers, buyers, and communities to build local food system connections, and as a former farmer herself. Molly leads the strategic direction and partnerships of the organization, as well as supporting programming across the region.

Jake Puckett is the owner of Crow Fly Farms, a holistically managed regenerative farm in the foothills of Western North Carolina. Improving the environment through the use of animals is at the heart of what they do. Their cattle and sheep are 100-percent grassfed and finished and their forest-raised hogs are fed an entirely organic diet, resulting in nutrient-dense meat of the highest quality. He is also an Accredited Professional with the Savory Institute and the lead Ecological Monitor for the Robinia Institute.

Michael Rayburn with his wife Lauren founded Rayburn Farms in 2014 in Barnardsville, NC. Since then they have been producing herbs and spices for Southern Appalachian food makers as well as their own products. Michael is very passionate about thinking outside the confines of what growers are expected to be both socially and economically and how growers can create their own pathways in life.

Roxanne Reed with Farm School on Wheels has more than 26 years of small business, entrepreneurship, access to capital, and economic development experience. There are three things we do at Farm School on Wheels: (1) teach, (2) advise, and (3) develop agricultural entrepreneurs. Let us help you to build and understand your farm as a business.

Jason Roehrig has owned and operated the Certified Organic, diversified vegetable operation Tumbling Shoals Farm in Wilkes County since 2008 with his wife Shiloh Avery. They sell their vegetables at several local farmers markets and through a 250-member fully customized CSA.

Robert Russell is several years into his second career as a goat farmer, restorationist (buildings and land), and cheesemaker. The French Broad Creamery is located on Mount Gilead Farm in Leicester, NC, a family farm that produces goat cheese, cajeta (an unbelievably tasty goat milk caramel sauce), and magical experiences cuddling and bottle-feeding baby goats.

David Smiley is the Local Food Campaign Program Manager for ASAP. His focus lies in assisting farmers with marketing and branding efforts, connecting buyers with local product, and providing technical support to farmers markets. He helps to implement various aspects of the Appalachian Grown program, oversees *Local Food Guide* maintenance and updates, and assists with event coordination for the Business of Farming Conference, Grower-Buyer Meetings, and other relevant workshops and trainings.

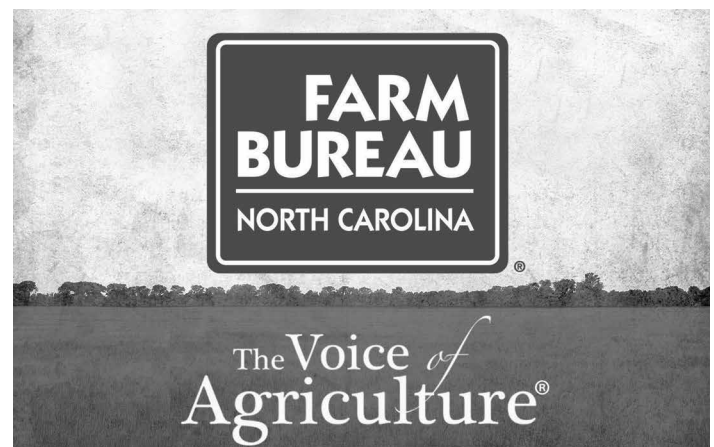
Elina “Eli” Snyder has worked in agricultural production, research, education, and Extension since 2005. She worked as an Extension agent for seven years in Pennsylvania and North Carolina. She holds an M.S. in Agronomy from Penn State University. In 2020, after a long search for her own land to farm, she founded Three Rock Farm in Todd, NC, where she grows berries, asparagus, annual vegetables, and medicinal herbs.

Janelle Tatum offers over 25 years in business management and financial control having built her own company, EcoFriendly Foods (VA) and recently been CEO of Mother Earth Food here in Asheville, NC. She has been called a “viable and solid business force” and is passionate about creative problem solving and teaching adaptability having navigated tremendous growth as well as business downturns. She has 18 years of farming experience and passion for supporting ag businesses. Janelle is excited to help entrepreneurs thrive with good business practices while forging new frontiers.

Nathan Vannette is co-owner of Growing Green Family Farms in Anderson, SC, an urban farm plot in Greenville, SC, and a no-till, biodiverse farm in Travelers Rest, SC. Nathan has been managing farms for more than 13 years and enjoys targeting new markets for selling produce including CSAs, restaurants, farmers markets, and online. When Nathan is not in the dirt, he loves to play the piano, homestead with his wife, preserve the garden’s bounty, play board games, read about farming, and make puzzles.

Mary Walsh is the co-founder of the Swamp Rabbit Cafe and Grocery in Greenville, SC. The Swamp was founded in 2011 by two friends with the mission to buy, sell, and cook with local foods to support a just and sustainable food system. They partner with hundreds of local farmers and food makers to bring good food to our community.

Janice Wright serves as Project Coordinator with Farm School on Wheels. In her role, she works to implement programs and initiatives, as well as fundraising efforts. Janice strives for excellence in all that she does, and loves to encourage the potential in others.



Dear ASAP,

Explore Asheville is proud to support ASAP and its indispensable dedication to helping local farms thrive, creating demand for local foods that build healthy communities and support the rich agricultural and food experiences that make the Asheville area so special.

The impact of your mission is seen around every corner, bringing a taste of our region to residents and visitors, setting the table for memorable food and drink experiences through the collaboration you inspire.

As your efforts to sustain local farmers continues to shape our community, we are excited to support what comes next for you, our farmers and Foodtopia.

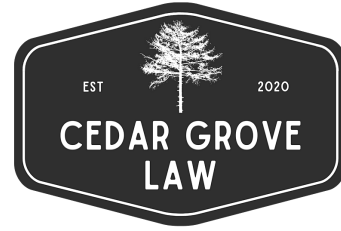
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Serving the Asheville community since 1984



Looking for an outlet to distribute your produce to the Asheville community? We're here to help!

At Mountain Food Products, we offer wholesale distribution to WNC restaurants, retail establishments, and more, as well as a seasonal multi-farm CSA program.

Interested in working with Mountain Food Products?
Contact Meghan Walsh 828-255-7630
local@mountainfoodproducts.com

Located in the WNC Farmer's Market
570 Brevard Road
Asheville, NC

A-B Tech's Small Business Center and Business Incubation Program



Supporting the business of farming through our programs and partners at A-B Tech Enka:

- Agribusiness
- Natural Product Development
- BioNetwork Test Kitchen
- NC BioNetwork Natural Products Lab
- Blue Ridge Food Ventures

For more information, visit: abtech.edu/SBC or call 828.398.7950





Designing the next big step for your small business

There's a lot involved in taking your business to the next level — from financing expansion and improving cash flow, to marketing services and transition planning. Find ideas and solutions you need to grow your business at wellsfargo.com/smallbusiness.

Grower-Buyer Meeting

12:30-2:15 pm

These brief meetings allow both grower and buyer to make a quick introduction and evaluate whether there is potential for a working relationship. Preview buyer information, desired products, and requirements in the chart below to determine buyers that you would like to meet.

Here are a few questions you might like to ask:

- *What are your specs for my product line? (size, packaging, ripeness, preferred cuts)*
- *What volume of my products might you be interested in purchasing?*
- *What is your preferred delivery schedule?*
- *How do you like to place orders? (phone call, text, email, etc.)*
- *How can I follow up on this meeting? When is the right time to connect again?*

Business	Location	About Our Business
Ayni51	<i>Asheville, NC</i>	We provide catering services and also do pop-ups.
The Biltmore Company	<i>Asheville, NC</i>	Full service resort with several restaurant options operating under different cuisine styles.
Equal Plates Project	<i>Asheville, NC</i>	A nonprofit that purchases from farmers and transforms their ingredients into delicious, scratch-made meals to share with those who need it most.
Food Experience	<i>Asheville, NC</i>	We are caterers and restaurant operators using mostly local and regional food to produce handmade, delicious, and healthy fare in a variety of styles.
Food Matters Market	<i>Brevard, NC Morganton, NC</i>	Two natural food stores with cafes.
Gospel Ice Cream	<i>Asheville, NC</i>	Small batch, made-from-scratch ice cream using all natural and local ingredients.
Holeman and Finch Public House	<i>Asheville, NC</i>	We select the freshest WNC ingredients from farmers and purveyors we trust. We prepare the best possible food served in the most honest way.
Ingles Market	<i>Southeast</i>	We stock a wide variety of local produce, grocery items, and meats.
Little Chango	<i>Asheville, NC</i>	Little Chango is a casual Hispanic kitchen cooking up mounted arepas and other Latin American-inspired dishes in the heart of Asheville's South Slope.
Mother Earth Food	<i>Asheville, NC</i>	We deliver local food to the community! We are a "farmers market" to your door, and we have an online marketplace to connect farmers and customers.
Mountain Food Products	<i>Asheville, NC</i>	We are a wholesale produce distribution company that services the greater Asheville area. We also offer a multi-farm CSA during the growing season.
Red Fiddle Vittles	<i>Asheville, NC</i>	Red Fiddle Vittles is a gourmet grocery and kitchen in South Asheville that provides event catering, private chef services, and packaged foods.
Sierra Nevada Brewing	<i>Mills River, NC</i>	Our taproom serves beers accompanied by artful, chef-driven food. We desire to support our local and regional farmers and grow relationships in our community.
Swamp Rabbit Cafe and Grocery	<i>Greenville, SC</i>	Our mission is to buy, sell, and cook with local food, supporting a sustainable food system.
Tastee Diner	<i>Asheville, NC</i>	Chef-driven historic diner with a twist.
TRACTOR Food and Farms	<i>Spruce Pine, NC</i>	We are a nonprofit food hub looking to purchase local produce.
Waynesville Inn and Golf Club	<i>Waynesville, NC</i>	Semi-private club and golf resort with multiple food and beverage outlets.
WNC Farm to Table	<i>Sylva, NC</i>	We are a local food hub based in Jackson County. We sell wholesale and retail and also work with food insecurity programs.

Looking for more buyers?

In addition to our *Local Food Guide*, ASAP has an online *Wholesale Local Food Guide*, a farm to business trade directory. Search by product, region, or type of buyer to narrow down results. Listings offer information about purchasing volumes, distribution and packaging preferences, desired products, and preferred forms of contact. Visit appalachiangrown.org and click on the “wholesale” tab.

Are you listed in the Wholesale Guide?

Looking to connect with restaurants, grocers, and wholesalers/distributors? Make sure you are listed in the *Wholesale Local Food Guide*. This subsection of the *Local Food Guide* is updated through the same process as your online listing, and is used by buyers looking for farms able to supply wholesale accounts. When ASAP receives sourcing requests from restaurants and wholesale buyers, this helps us find potential sourcing matches.

Preferred Contact	Desired Products	Requirements
ayni51peruvianfood@gmail.com 828-335-1292 (text)	Mushrooms / Roots	Insurance
	Produce	\$1M liability coverage
madi@equalplatesproject.org 303-517-7983 (call or text)	Fruit / Veggies / Meat / Dairy	Insurance
tony.franco@myfoodexperience.com 828-713-6174 (call or text)	Meats: especially chicken / Veggies / Herbs / Fruits / Sometimes grains and breads	USDA certifications
jmc@foodmattersmarket.com or lb@foodmattersmarket.com, 828-885-3663 or 715-245-3764 (call), by appointment	Produce / Dairy / Grocery Items	\$1M liability coverage; will discuss growing practices and certifications
disco@gospelicecream.com 646-350-9100 (call or text)	Fruit / Spices / Herbs / Eggs / Dairy	
sinem@holeman-finch-avl.com or by appointment	Produce / Dairy / Poultry / Pork / Meat	
	Produce / Meat / Grocery Items	\$1M liability insurance, \$3M (warehouse), GAP certification
iris.casaarepa@gmail.com, luisjbetances@gmail.com, 787-349-1169 (text)	Snap Peas / Radish / Red Onion / Heirloom Tomatoes / Taro Root / Purple and White Sweet Potatoes / Yam / Yucca	
andrea@motherearthfood.com 828-767-5036 (call or text)	Anything, especially produce	Prefer sustainable and conscious growing practices, but don't require organic certifications
local@mountainfoodproducts.com 828-255-7630 (call or text)	Fruits / Vegetables	
info@redfiddlevittles.com	Produce / Beef / Specialty meats / Retail-ready products	Sustainable, regenerative, organic, non-GMO practices
jessie.massie@sierranevada.com	Produce / Herbs / Poultry / Grains / Lamb	Prefer organic practices, but do not require certification
justin@swamprabbitcafe.com	Produce	As clean as possible
828-335-5949 (text)	Everything	Sustainable practices
sierra@tractorfoodandfarms.com, 828-536-0126 (call), by appointment	Broccoli / Cantaloupe / Watermelons	Liability insurance; general food safety training
rkrieg@waynesvilleinnandgolf.com, 704-292-4926 (call or text), by appointment	Proteins / Fruits / Vegetables / Other	Humane, cage free, pastured, organic, and non-certified preferred; conventional negotiable
wncfarmtotable@gmail.com, (828) 331-1346 (text), by appointment	Vegetables / Fruits / Meats / Cheeses / Value-added products	Insurance is not immediately required but will be by end of 2023

Conference Notes:

You can use this space to record your thoughts while networking with exhibitors, Grower-Buyer Meetings, and 1:1 sessions.

Block 1 Workshop Notes:

Workshop Title

Block 2 Workshop Notes:

Workshop Title

Block 3 Workshop Notes:

Workshop Title



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Eat Local at the Business of Farming Conference



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The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture under award numbers 2020-38640-31521 (through the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program under subaward number LS21-347) and 2022-49400-38200 (through the Beginning Farmer Rancher Development Program under project accession number 1029295). The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service through grant number 21FMPPNC1066-00. USDA is an equal opportunity employer and service provider.