



# Carolina Farm Stewardship Association STEWARDSHIP NEWS

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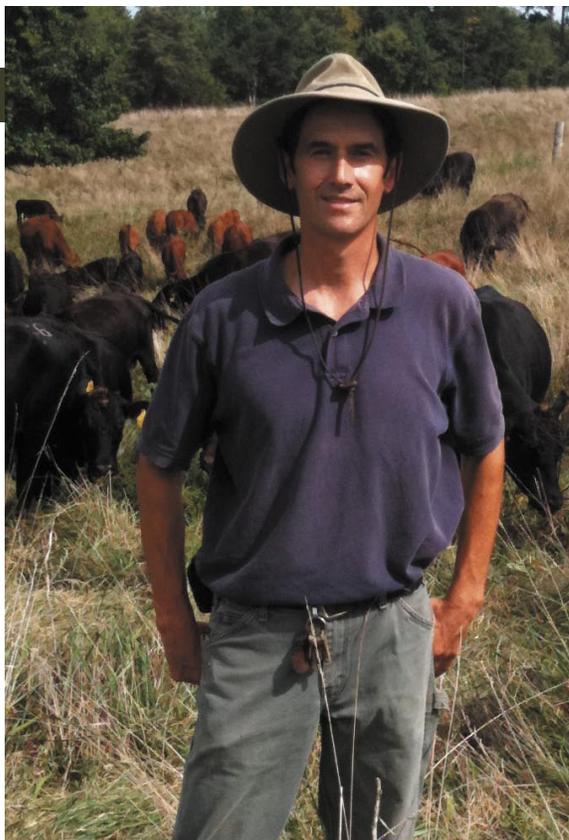
## Farm Profile:

### Walters Unlimited

by Jared Cates, CFSA intern

A refreshingly cool August breeze whistled by as I pulled up to Walters Unlimited at Carls-Beth Farm in Efland, North Carolina. It was the day before Hurricane Irene arrived, and despite the wind, the view of the farm was incredibly serene: rusty red and sleek black cattle happily grazing on rolling green pastures set between the wooded hills that surround this 400-acre farm. Owner Roland Walters met me at his front workshop, which currently doubles as the farm store, and we took a stroll through his fields. Our first stop was his most recent addition to the farm - the catfish pond. There, large fish began surfacing to feed as Roland threw out pellets and told me about his family business and his path to sustainable farming.

Started in 1957 by his parents, Carl and Elizabeth Walters, the original Carls-Beth Farm was a conventional dairy farm with about 300 cows. As a child, Roland spent many hours working for his father. He painfully remembers moving manure off of the cement dairy lot into manure spreaders and retaining ponds. After high school, Roland went on to college at NC State where he earned a Bachelors of Science degree in Animal Science. It was during one of his dairy classes that he began to consider the possibility of using a rotational, grass-fed



Roland Walters of Walters Unlimited at Carls-Beth Farm raises pasture-based beef cattle. photo by Jared Cates

approach at the dairy farm. Much to his frustration, however, both his professors and his father told him that the idea could never work.

After graduating in 1990, Roland returned to the farm and worked for a little more than four years before moving to Michigan and eventually Virginia. Staying true to his dairy roots, Roland worked as a dairy cattle nutrition specialist; something he still does part-time. His dad sold the dairy cattle in 1998 and turned to beef cattle. When his father became ill in 2004, Roland and his wife, Stacey,

-Continued on page 9 -

## The Tool Shed:

### Tools for the Farm

by Daniel Parson, Parson Produce

Ever since I started growing produce in 1998, I have collected equipment; from my first hoe purchased that year to the Sprinter van I bought this year to get my crops to market. I still use lots of equipment that I used on that first farm, and every year I discover something new and indispensable. I've worked at several different places, each with their own set of equipment, and this is my third year at Parson Produce in Clinton.

My rule of thumb on equipment is that it should have more than one specialized use, must be well designed and built, and has to fit into the farm budget. Someone once told me to get the best equipment you can afford, which I think is good advice. Here I'll go through some of our key farm equipment from planting to sale: seeders and flats, ground preparation, cultivation and trellis, harvest, post-harvest, and marketing.

### Greenhouse and Seeding

Most vegetables start from seed, either in the greenhouse or by direct seeding. We do most of ours from transplants, so having the right flats is a necessity. We use Winstrip trays for a few reasons: reusable (some of mine are 15 years old), superior design, and convenient filling. The square plugs coupled with a slit down the side prevent root encircling by directing roots downward to the open bottom, which allows for air pruning of the roots.

We save time by using an inexpensive

-Continued on page 10 -

## In this Issue:

Local Foods Feast pg. 3 Ask the Experts pg. 4 Perennial Vegetables pg. 7 Fall Squash pg. 8

>>> Sustainable Agriculture Conference Registration Form pg. 5 (Register NOW and Save!)

## CAROLINA FARM STEWARDSHIP ASSOCIATION (CFSA)

CFSA is a membership-based organization of more than 2,300 farmers, processors, gardeners, businesses and individuals in North and South Carolina. CFSA's mission is to advocate, educate and build connections to create sustainable food systems centered on local and organic agriculture.

### CFSA Main Office

Mail: P.O. Box 448, Pittsboro, NC 27312

Physical: 15 Hillsboro Street, Pittsboro, NC 27312

Phone: 919-542-2402, Fax: 919-542-7401

Website: [www.carolinafarmstewards.org](http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org)

Email: [info@carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:info@carolinafarmstewards.org)

### CFSA Staff

Executive Director: Roland McReynolds

Bookkeeping & Membership Services: Cheryl Ripperton Rettie

Grants Manager: Laura Wurts

Development Director: Alice Alexander

Program Manager: Fred Broadwell

Upstate SC & Western Piedmont Regional Coordinator:

Diana Vossbrinck

Organics Initiative Coordinator: Karen McSwain

Organic Grains Program Coordinator: Jennifer Lapidus

Sustainable Food NC, Coalition Director: Shivaugn Rayl

Cultivate Piedmont Program Manager: Adrienne Outcalt

Communications Coordinator: Amy Armbruster

Saving Our Seed Coordinator: Cricket Rakita

CFSA Interns: Jared Cates and Matt Ballard

### CFSA Board Officers

Barbara Lawrence, President

Randy Talley, Vice President

Frachele Scott, Treasurer

Amy Griner Stafford, Secretary

### CFSA Listservs

To subscribe to a listserv, email Cheryl:

[cheryl@carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:cheryl@carolinafarmstewards.org)

[high-country@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:high-country@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org)

[triad@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:triad@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org)

[mountains@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:mountains@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org)

[cfsasouthcarolina@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:cfsasouthcarolina@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org)

[triangle@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:triangle@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org)

[cfsa\\_charlotte\\_region@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:cfsa_charlotte_region@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org)

[coastal@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:coastal@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org)

[livestock@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:livestock@lists.carolinafarmstewards.org)

### Newsletter Information

Send articles, queries, cartoons, recipes, corrections, etc. to [amy@carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:amy@carolinafarmstewards.org). The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily shared by the editor or the CFSA Board. CFSA does not endorse any product or service advertised.

### Advertising Rates

Contact Amy at [amy@carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:amy@carolinafarmstewards.org)

### Connect with CFSA

Become a fan on our Facebook page ([facebook.com/carolinafarmstewards](http://facebook.com/carolinafarmstewards)), follow us on Twitter [@carolinafarms](https://twitter.com/carolinafarms), or check out our blog at [carolinafarmstewardsblog.org](http://carolinafarmstewardsblog.org).

## From the Director

### Sustainable Ag Conference Sets Stage for Our Farm Bill Push

Next year, Congress will likely pass a new farm bill. There is no policy subject that captures the attention of the sustainable ag community more than the farm bill: In a recent survey, a whopping 74% of CFSA members named it as a top policy priority, more than GMO pollution or food safety regulations. The CFSA board has identified the farm bill as one of our main policy priorities, and we are beginning the work now of developing strategies, building partnerships and mobilizing grassroots support to have an impact on this monumental bill.

The legislative process around the farm bill is extraordinarily complicated, and large scale agribusiness has dominated it for fifty years. Big business has used the farm bill effectively to increase its power and wealth at the expense of farmers, while using those same farmers as the face of its lobbying blitzes. Giant meat packers, grain brokers, food manufacturers, chemical makers, and produce handlers all credit the farm bill with ensuring America's 'safe and abundant food supply.' The reality is that the farm bill is unhealthy for consumers and uneconomical for farmers. At its worst, the farm bill is legislation by large corporations, for large corporations.

But the farm bill is not completely pernicious. The largest portion of farm bill funding—84 percent in 2011—is for nutrition assistance for the poor. The farm bill provides the single largest pool of investment funds for protecting soil and water quality in the country. It provides a safety net for farmers in face of weather disasters. In short, it establishes in federal policy some of the most important goals of sustainable agriculture: providing food security for all Americans, providing income security for the hard-working group of American small businesspeople we know as farmers, and protecting the resources that will allow future generations to do the same.



Roland McReynolds, Executive Director

Anyone with a serious interest in influencing this massive legislation should take the time to understand more about how farm bill programs work. The Rural Advancement Foundation International has published some very informative, easy-to-understand materials on the farm bill's policy framework. The second chapter of Michael Pollan's book, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, has an excellent description of how the original goals of the first New Deal farm bills have been corrupted over time.

We'll be putting the farm bill on center stage at this year's Sustainable Agriculture Conference, with a Saturday lunch panel featuring sustainable ag leaders from across the nation.

The 2008 bill actually included many wins for organic farming and local food. We have a chance to build on that success in 2012. As we have seen over the last several years with issues like food safety and the National Animal Identification System, the movement for local organic agriculture can be hugely influential, even in the face of corporate money.

You will want to be in Durham, NC at SAC this year to be a part of this next, momentous grassroots campaign. I look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roland', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

## SC New & Beginning Farmer Program Seeks Farmer Mentors

Twenty-four aspiring farmers recently graduated from the South Carolina New & Beginning Farmer's first year program. Graduates made presentations of their business plans, with visions ranging from a non-profit urban farm to an incubator farm with plans to train war veterans in a second career. We congratulate all CFSA members among the graduates!

The second year of the SCNBF Program begins in October. Forty-seven applicants have been offered acceptance. Once again, the program will include internship programs for participants, facilitated by CFSA and Lowcountry Local First.

> Any members interested in being a mentor farm for 2012 are encouraged to contact Diana Vossbrinck at [diana@carolinafarmstewards.org](mailto:diana@carolinafarmstewards.org) for more information. An application will be available by the end of the year.

## Cobblestone Farmers Market Voted Favorite Market

The Cobblestone Farmers Market has been running every Tuesday from 10am to 1pm, providing the residents of Winston-Salem with local, sustainable produce all summer. We are proud to be voted favorite Farmers Market in this year's 2011 Smitty's Notes, and a runner up for best Farmers Market in this year's Winston-Salem Journal Reader's Choice poll!

## Cultivate Piedmont Seasonal Cooking Classes Teach Healthy Choices

We are proud to report that via a partnership with Cancer Service's Body and Soul Program and Triad Community Kitchen, we have been offering outreach on local, seasonal food through cooking classes. The Body and Soul program uses a network of African-American churches to perform outreach on cancer prevention via healthy lifestyle choices. We have been able to offer classes focused on cooking using local, sustainably-raised, fresh food to this community! We held our first class on June 30, and due to its success, another is scheduled for fall. Additional classes being offered to the wider Triad community are also in the planning stages so stay tuned!

## Eastern Triangle Farm Tour Showcases Sustainable Farms

This year's Eastern Triangle Farm Tour was our biggest yet with 25 farms in all, including 5 new farms! Thousands of visitors enjoyed a day at the farm. These tours are where lots of people have their "aha" experience about making a stronger commitment to sustainable foods and farms. We love helping that happen. This year, the tour featured several urban farms and gardens, cute baby farm animals, meat, egg and fiber production, veggie and fruit growing, cut flowers and ornamentals, mushrooms, and honey.

Another great attraction this year: Bob Davis, an enthusiastic and knowledgeable chicken expert, gave presentations about how to raise urban chickens.

Thank you to our tour co-sponsor, Whole Foods Market, and for the farmers and volunteers who made this year's tour such a huge success!

>For photos of the tour, visit us on Facebook at [facebook.com/carolinafarmstewards](https://www.facebook.com/carolinafarmstewards) and "Like" us while you're there!

## CFSA Receives Golden LEAF Grant

This grant will fund eight Social Media for Farmers workshops across North Carolina. These workshops will teach farmers to expand markets and increase sales by using Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The grant will also fund exciting upgrades to CFSA's online local food finder that will enhance the online presence of farmers and allow more customers to find their products. The new food guide will allow farmers to add photos, videos, and social media feed to their farm profiles.

> The first Social Media for Farmers workshop will be held on Nov. 11th at the Sustainable Ag Conference!



Don't miss the incredible Joan Dye Gussow at the Local Foods Feast at the Sustainable Ag Conference, Friday Nov. 11 in Durham!  
*photo by Susan Frieman*

## Join Us at the Local Foods Feast and Joan Dye Gussow Keynote

This mouthwatering meal made with only the best in-season, sustainably grown ingredients supplied by local farms is one of the highlights of the Sustainable Agriculture Conference. Our keynote is world-renowned local

- continued on page 11 -

26<sup>th</sup> annual  
**SUSTAINABLE  
AGRICULTURE  
CONFERENCE**  
Nov. 11-13, 2011 | Durham, NC  
*Local & Organic:  
Together We Are Growing!*  
hosted by  
carolina farm  
stewardship association  
For details and to register:  
[carolinafarmstewards.org](http://carolinafarmstewards.org)

# ASK THE EXPERTS

This season, CFSA asks about cover crops, winter veggies and livestock plans for the winter season

## What cover crops should I be putting down in the fall?

ROB BOWERS: There are few things as important as cover crops in terms of improving our soils' health and vitality. There are six attributes of cover cropping that we think about: 1) Nitrogen Source 2) Organic Matter 3) Erosion Fighter 4) Subsoil Loosener 5) Weed Fighter and 6) Pest Fighter. On our farm, adding organic matter to the soil and providing a source of Nitrogen are usually the priorities.

For fall-planted covers, we have had the best overall results in the Triangle region with a combination of rye and hairy vetch incorporated at a 2:1 ratio.

TOM ELMORE - We use organic rye grain. We have crops on most of our land until late fall and rye is the only cover we have found that will germinate reliably at that time of year in the mountains. If we had more land, we would add a legume during a fallow rotation.

ROBB PRICHARD - I offer a Fall and Spring CSA, so Summer is my down time--and the establishment of a summer cover/green manure is most important in my garden. I like sesame for long term and buckwheat for short-term summer cover crops. Also, this Spring I experimented with icicle radish interplanted in my squash row, and let it go through its life cycle. It drew lots of pollinators during the growing season, and then the decayed roots helped to break up the soil in the fall.

In the fall, I like to use oats, crimson clover, and vetch for a basic overwinter cover. Oats are easier to winterkill so I prefer that to rye.

## What is your favorite fall/winter vegetable to grow?

JASON OATIS: We love to grow dai-

kon! It makes for a great cover crop that will break up hard pan soil with its giant taproot. They also leave behind a significant amount of organic matter if left in the soil to decompose. It doesn't have many pest or disease



Kate with her Nubian dairy goats at Humbug Farm. photo by Dave Darr

issues here, and its delicious!

We direct-sow the seeds from late-August through mid-October in successions, using row covers for the later successions. In the high tunnel, we grow them through the winter.

## What do you do during your slow season (winter)?

KATE SHIRLEY - Winter is a great time to catch up on trade magazines, looking for new ideas to try out. This is also time when I look through my notes and reflect on the year. If things went right/easier, I want to repeat that. If things went wrong, what can I do about it? This is also a good time to update my website and update pa-

perwork on my livestock so I'm ready for next year. Receipts are gathered up to prepare for tax time. I also use this time to write down my goals and new plans for the upcoming year.

ELAINA KENYON - 1) Plan next year's calendar of farm-related events and enter them into a 12-month hardbound calendar and/or calendar on the computer. This is also a great time to update your website, blog or Facebook page with these same events.

2) Review your livestock management practices and individual production and sales records to plan for next year's goals, purchases and livestock to process/sell/keep and retain offspring. 3) Make a list of all those small equipment repairs and maintenance tasks that can be done inside and get started.

> Learn more from our experts at the Sustainable Ag Conference! Rob will be teaching workshops on Commercial Fruit Production and Permaculture. Kate and Elaina are teaching a workshop called, "Grow Your Own Sweater: Raising Goats and Sheep for Fiber." And, folks on the Sustainable

Fruit and Vegetable Production tour will visit Jason's farm.

### OUR EXPERT FARMERS:

**Rob Bowers – Whitted Bowers Farm in Pittsboro, NC**

**Tom Elmore of Thatchmore Farm in Leicester, NC**

**Robb Prichard has a small CSA in Wilmington, NC**

**Jason Oatis of Edible Earthscapes in Moncure, NC**

**Kate Shirley of Humbug Farm in Holly Springs, NC**

**Elaina Kenyon of Avillion Farm in Efland, NC**

# 26<sup>th</sup> annual SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE

November 11–13, 2011  
Durham, NC

hosted by  
carolina farm  
stewardship association

## 3 Ways to Register

1. [carolinafarmstewards.org](http://carolinafarmstewards.org)  
↳ Members, to receive your member rate discount, you must log in to the Members-Only Page!
2. Call the CFSA office at (919) 542 – 2402
3. Return your completed registration form & payment to CFSA, PO Box 448, Pittsboro, NC 27312

### Join CFSA now and receive the member rate!

The membership pays for itself.

Not yet a CFSA member and want to take advantage of these great savings? Add a membership to your registration form or become a member online and then register for the conference! You'll save money on the conference and get all the great benefits of a CFSA membership to boot!

### Work Exchange?

Visit [www.carolinafarmstewards.org/sac11\\_support.shtml#workexchange](http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/sac11_support.shtml#workexchange) for all the details on how to trade work before, during or after the conference for up to \$70 off the cost of registration.

### Extension Agent, NRDC, CEFS?

You must register with Carol Moore (NC) at [carolmoore27@gmail.com](mailto:carolmoore27@gmail.com) or Geoff Zehnder (SC) at [zehnder@clermson.edu](mailto:zehnder@clermson.edu) to receive a scholarship to attend the conference and pre-conference activities designed especially for you.

## Conference Registration Form

Don't miss the farm and food event of the year! Register now for the best conference rates!

This year participants receive complimentary light breakfast and coffee and a Saturday afternoon local foods reception. **Friday's lunch, Friday's Local Food Feast & Keynote and Saturday's lunch are only available as separate ticket items.** Saturday dinner is on your own to explore the amazing local food scene. Let's support local places!

Full Program*	Member	Non-member	# of People	Total Cost	Member	Non-member	
	Register by 10/18				Register by 11/5		
WORKSHOPS ONLY (meals sold separately)							
Friday to Sunday Registration*	\$195	\$245		\$	\$245	\$295	
Students and Apprentices*	\$145	N/A		\$	\$195	N/A	
<b>Conference Meals &amp; Conference a la Carte</b>							
Friday Lunch	\$15	\$15		\$	\$20	\$20	
Friday Local Food Feast & Keynote	\$35	\$40		\$	\$45	\$50	
Saturday Lunch & Panel	\$17	\$17		\$	\$22	\$22	
Saturday Workshops w/ Breakfast & Reception	\$150	\$200		\$	\$200	\$250	
Sunday Workshops w/ Breakfast	\$60	\$85		\$	\$85	\$110	
<b>Friday Pre-conference Activities</b> in addition to Conference Packages ✓: WITH LUNCH A-D: ALL-DAY MORN: MORNING AFT: AFTERNOON							
Sustainable Fruit & Vegetable Production Tour ✓	A-D	\$35	\$40		\$	\$40	\$45
Sustainable Livestock & Farm Animals Tour ✓	A-D	\$35	\$40		\$	\$40	\$45
Durham Foodie Tour	AFT	\$30	\$35		\$	\$35	\$40
Magical Chatham Places Tour	AFT	\$30	\$35		\$	\$35	\$40
Beginning Farmer VIP Tour	AFT	\$10	\$10		\$	\$20	\$20
Organic Certification ✓	A-D	\$40	\$45		\$	\$45	\$50
Mob Grazing at Braeburn Farm w/ Greg Judy ✓	A-D	\$90	\$100		\$	\$100	\$110
<b>NEW</b> Social Media for Farmers ✓	A-D	\$15	\$15		\$	\$20	\$20
Community Gardens at Leigh Farm w/ Chuck Marsh	MORN	\$30	\$35		\$	\$35	\$40
Basic Organic Growing w/ Tony Kleese	MORN	\$35	\$40		\$	\$40	\$45
School Lunch Forum	MORN	\$30	\$35		\$	\$35	\$40
Commercial Mushroom Production w/ Tradd Cotter	AFT	\$35	\$40		\$	\$40	\$45
Advanced Organic Growing w/ Ken Dawson	AFT	\$35	\$40		\$	\$40	\$45
Permaculture Design Studio w/ Will Hooker	AFT	\$35	\$40		\$	\$40	\$45
Organic Livestock Health w/ Guy Jodarski	AFT	\$35	\$40		\$	\$40	\$45
Food Security and Farm Policy w/ Jerry Dewitt & Aaron Newton	AFT	\$30	\$35		\$	\$35	\$40
<b>NEW</b> Cheesemaking with Fleming Pfann	AFT	\$40	\$50		\$	\$45	\$55
<b>NEW</b> Cooking Natural, Seasonal and Local	AFT	\$35	\$45		\$	\$40	\$50
<b>Join CFSA Today!</b> You'll receive the member rate NOW so the membership pays for itself!!							
Individual CFSA Membership		\$25			\$		
Business CFSA Membership		\$50			\$		
Conference Scholarship Donation		\$20 (Suggested Donation)			\$		
<b>TOTAL \$</b>							

\*Full program registration includes exhibit hall, coffee/light breakfast each day and a local foods reception on Saturday afternoon; **all other meals are sold separately.** Packages do not include Friday Pre-Conference activities.

**CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE**

# 26<sup>th</sup> annual SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE

November 11–13, 2011  
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## Conference Registration Form CONTINUED

If more than one person is attending, please use initials to indicate your individual choices in the chart on the reverse. Please feel free to make copies or attach another sheet to register multiple people.

### Attendee Information

Names \_\_\_\_\_

Farm/Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Fax/Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

We will email your receipt.

### Payment Options

- Check to CFSA enclosed  
 Visa/Master Card/American Express/Discover

### Cancellations

There is a \$10 charge to process all registration cancellations, however you may designate an alternate attendee at no charge. Full refunds are given for cancellations received before October 14, 2011. Partial refunds will be given between October 14 and November 4, 2011. Cancellations received after November 4 will not be refunded.

### Credit Card Information

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ CVV/ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address \_\_\_\_\_

If different from address above.

### Meeting Space and Accommodation Information

This year's Sustainable Ag. Conference is in fabulous foodie Durham, NC at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel. **Register by 10/18/11 for the \$89/night group rate.** To register for a hotel room, call 800-325-3535 or 919-941-5050 and ask for the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association rate. There are several other hotels nearby.

Joan Dye Gussow KEYNOTE SPEAKER .....

*"Once in a while, I think I've had an original thought, and then I look around and realize Joan said it first."*

- Michael Pollan

Joan Dye Gussow is known as the "matriarch of the local food movement," and is the author of the seminal, *This Organic Life*, and more recently, *Growing Older: A Chronicle of Death, Life and Vegetables*.

# You won't want to miss this year's conference!

Featuring the most renowned and engaging voices in sustainable farming today!

**Richard Wiswall**, farmer and author of *The Organic Farmer's Business Handbook*

**Ellen Polishuk**, compost and farm operations expert

**Ross Conrad**, professional beekeeper

**Greg Judy**, the authority on mob grazing

**Will Hooker**, permaculture specialist

**Brian Snyder**, farm policy expert

**C. Lee Calhoun**, author of *Old Southern Apples*

AND Mushroom genius, **Tradd Cotter**; Organic Valley's vet, **Guy Jodarski**; Expert farmer, **Ken Dawson**, on organic produce; **Jim Riddle** on organic certification; and James Beard winner, **Andrea Reusing!**

..... **PLUS Networking, Tours, Amazing Local Food, and so much more!** .....

# Tasty Perennial Vegetables

by Frank Hyman

I've enjoyed the ritual of planting a crop, tending it and then pulling it out at the end of the season. But more than once, I've wished that those tomatoes, beans and cukes could somehow come back each year all on their own. Be honest now. Haven't you wished that at least once yourself?

Well, it'll probably never happen with tomatoes, beans and cukes, but for many gardeners it can happen with sorrel, rhubarb and 'chokes. I'm talking about perennial vegetables, some of which you may already be growing: asparagus, artichokes, sunchokes, rhubarb and sorrel just for starters.

What defines a perennial vegetable? For one, we're not talking about perennials like brambles, fruit trees and grape vines, from which we harvest the fruiting part of the plant. With perennial vegetables, we harvest and eat the flower buds (artichoke), stalks (rhubarb), leaves (sorrel), shoots (asparagus) or roots (sunchokes).

And second, unlike annual vegetables, perennial vegetables come back from winter dormancy to grow, multiply and be harvested each year. Perennial vegetables have more advantages than just the time saved on re-planting beds:

- 1) They're generally more drought hardy.
- 2) They reduce soil erosion.
- 3) Perennial vegetables can also be mixed in beds of perennial ornamentals in the garden.
- 4) And for those of us trying to make a living from our fields, many of these plants are high-dollar at the farmer's markets and better restaurants.

I've grown a number of perennial vegetables—here are 5 that I've grown on sunny sites that you might want to try.

## Asparagus

Asparagus tastes best if you caramelize the sugars with a few minutes on the grill or under the broiler. They can



also be lightly steamed or sautéed or eat them raw. Eliminate the chewy bottom end by bending till it snaps off before cooking.

## Artichoke

Harvest artichoke flower buds before they open and steam them for 45 minutes. Peel off the scales, dunk them in melted butter and scrape the fleshy inside off with your teeth. The inner scales are almost entirely edible and after you edit out the partially formed petals the heart is entirely edible and scrumptious.

## Sunchokes

Harvest the roots in fall, winter or early spring and use them as you would carrots or potatoes. Ignore recipes that call for peeling them as it's hard to do and unnecessary. Just roast them with other root vegetables that have been cut into 1" chunks, coated in oil, salt and pepper, set at 375 degrees for about 45 minutes (and turned after about 20 minutes) or steam and mash them with potatoes. They are edible raw in salads but can make some people gassy. Forewarned is forearmed. The upside is that the inulin that sweetens them is a boon to diabetics.

## Rhubarb

Rhubarb leaves and roots are poisonous, so it has few pests. Only the stalks and the flower bud are safe to eat. Traditionally the stalks go with strawberry pies to add some tartness. The stalks are also nice roasted with lamb and other meats.

*Asparagus can be productive for up to 15 years with the right care.*

*photo contributed by Frank Hyman*

## Sorrel

Sorrel flavors a salad of other milder greens and cooks down to a lovely sauce for fish. I like a few leaves with my lettuce or spinach on meat sandwiches.

There are many other perennial vegetables that could be a good fit for your table, garden and farm: Giant Solomon's Seal, Ostrich fern, Egyptian walking onion and lovage are a few others I am growing. And sea kale, ramps, potato onions, nopale cactus, saltbush, Good King Henry, skirret, groundnut, native water lotus, bamboo, New Zealand spinach and camass bulbs are a few others I am game to try. Grow a few of these crops and soon you'll become the local expert on perennial vegetables. Yes, the field is that wide open. 🌱

*Garden coach Frank Hyman has a BS in Horticulture from NCSU and has been a CFSA member since the mid 80's. He's been an organic farmer, an IPM scout and has owned Cottage Garden Landscaping in Durham, NC since 1992.*

This story is condensed from Frank's article in *Hobby Farm Home* magazine, which has donated 40 copies of that issue for attendees of Frank's class on Growing Perennial Vegetables at the Sustainable Ag Conference. A vendor has also donated bulbs of Egyptian walking onions for class attendees.

> Learn more about Frank at [frankhyman.com](http://frankhyman.com).



# Local Flavors

Deliciously versatile, fall squash can be roasted, grilled, steamed or baked into pies. Here's the scoop on how to transform one of our favorite varieties into hearty fall fare.

## The Fall Squash Garden

by Jamie DeMent, Coon Rock Farms and partner in Zely & Ritz and Piedmont

This is a busy time of year at Coon Rock Farm. Summer crops of tomatoes and melons are fading and we're looking ahead to winter greens and roots. If we're not careful, clearing up and planning ahead, we could miss some of my favorite vegetables – fall squash! We are just starting to harvest fall squash and pumpkins – of all varieties.

My partner, Richard, and I are suckers for a pretty picture in a seed catalogue and that is evident walking through our squash garden. We're growing acorns, butternuts, red kuri, cushaw, Long Island cheese, blue hubbard, sweet dumpling and so many more. Thankfully, these squash are great storage varieties so we'll be able to enjoy them for months to come.

Our chef partners at Zely & Ritz in Raleigh and Piedmont in Durham turn fall squash into gorgeous creative dishes – from pumpkin lasagna and red kuri soup to Long Island "cheesecake." I tend toward more simple dishes at home. These recipes are easy and great for a crowd – from hungry farm hands to big family meals. 🍂

> Learn more from Jamie at the Sustainable Ag. Conference! The Durham Urban Foodie Tour will stop by Piedmont, her award-winning farm-to-fork restaurant, and the Sustainable Livestock and Farm Animals Tour will visit Coon Rock Farm.

### Stuffed Acorn Squash

- 3 medium acorn squash
- 1 lb pork sausage with extra sage
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- 1 small diced onion
- 2 cups grated asiago cheese
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- 1 cup broth (chicken or pork)
- 1 stick unsalted melted butter

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Brown sausage, onion and minced garlic in skillet.

Stir in broth, 1 cup of cheese and bread crumbs.

Cut squash into halves and remove seeds.

Boil the squash, cut portion facing down in an inch of boiling water for 5 minutes.

Remove and brush inside with melted butter.

Fill the centers of the partially cooked squash with the stuffing mixture.

Cover and bake for about an hour -- until squash is fork-tender.

While baking, brush with butter occasionally to keep squash moist.

Remove lid and add rest of grated cheese to the tops of squash for the last 5 minutes of baking for a crusty cheesy top!

Let rest on counter for a few minutes before serving.

Both recipes by Jaime DeMent.

### Grilled Acorn Squash

- 2 medium acorn squash
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- 2 tbs. dried oregano
- 1 tbs. crushed red pepper
- 4 tbs. olive oil
- 2 tbs. balsamic vinegar
- salt and pepper to taste

Slice squash crossways into 1/2 inch slices. Remove seeds.

Drizzle slices with olive oil, vinegar and spices. Let marinate on counter up to one hour.

Grill on hot grill or sear in hot skillet until fork tender (usually 5 to 10 minutes per side, depending on how hot your grill is).

Serve hot as a side dish or main dish meat substitute or chill and dice for a salad ingredient.

*Editor's Note: Why do we love acorn squash? You don't need to peel it (the skin is edible)!*

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## Walters Unlimited at Carls-Beth Farms...(continued from cover)



began driving down to NC three days a week to help out and keep the farm operational. As more and more time was spent back in Efland, Roland found that his thoughts constantly revolved around the farm. "Once it was always on my mind, I knew what we needed to do."

After taking over operations on the farm, Roland decided to remain true to his beliefs about pasture-raised ruminants and pursued rotational grazing. However, Roland's aversion to manure spreading was not the only reason he wanted to move away from cattle lots; as a young man he had also seen the physical effect that crowded cement lots had on animals. He learned that if a cow got sick, you took it out of the lot and let it pasture graze for two or three days, and then it would normally become healthy again. He firmly believed that if this was beneficial to a sick animal, then pasture grazing could only further enhance healthy animals, as well as function as a preventative measure against illness. Roland states, "It all goes back to the mental mindset of the animals; happier animals do better."

Roland pastures his animals in a system similar to those used by mob-grazing champions Greg Judy and Joel Salatin. Large concentrations of animals are restricted to graze a small area, usually for a very short period of time. In Roland's case, around 100 head of cattle are allowed to graze on 1/2 acre per day. Nearly everything in that small area is either eaten or trampled, including weeds and less

palatable grasses. This system allows more of the total biomass grown to either be eaten or recycled back into the soil. Plus, manure gets distributed very evenly and is trampled into the soil, improving soil fertility.

Roland began wholesaling his grass-fed beef through Hogan's Farm in Chapel Hill and another farm in the eastern part of the state. The combination of the 2007 drought and the fact that wholesaling was not enough business led to a change in plan, and he began selling at the Hillsborough Farmers Market and the Elon Farmers Market. After a 50% herd reduction due to the 2007 drought, he also realized that he needed to diversify his products to remain sustainable and in business. Currently, Walters Unlimited has quite a menagerie: 100 head of beef cattle, 1,200 meat chickens, 225 laying hens, 50 Kiko goats, around 2,000 catfish (when the pond is fully stocked) and small herds of Dorper Lambs and hybrid hogs, mostly Duroc and Hampshire crosses. The farm also just added a large brooder barn (lots of room for those baby chicks!) and they are currently in the process of building greenhouses on about 3 acres of land that has been set aside for biodynamic vegetable production. The farm is pesticide free and has not used non-organic sprays in the past five years.

Now that Roland has a varied offering of products, his next project is changing the way that he sells his meat. At present, he has a small trailer full of basic freezers that is used to sell goods on-farm and at market. He has

*About 100 cattle graze just half an acre at a time at Walters Unlimited.*

*photo by Jared Cates*

plans in the next couple of years to replace his small workshop store and trailer with a new on-farm store with walk-in coolers and freezers. His goal is to coordinate with other local food producers so that he can sell a little bit of everything at his store to the local community. Roland's overall ambition is to move away from farmers markets, and sell more to individuals, on-farm and possibly through CSA's and restaurants. In fact, The Wooden Nickel, a favorite Hillsborough watering hole and restaurant, started buying all of their ground beef, catfish, eggs and goat meat from Walters Unlimited around three years ago; the local, grass-fed burger instantly became a big hit!

Currently, Roland is looking for land to rent so that he can expand his hog and cattle operations. As I began making my way back to my car and Roland finished storm preparations, he concluded, "There's always something different, something that we can do different. Depending on the demand and the market, who knows what will be next?" 🐾

*Jared Cates, a native of Chapel Hill, is working on a Master's degree at the UNC School of Social Work.*

**> Visit the farm on the Sustainable Livestock tour at the Sustainable Ag Conference!**

**> Learn more about Walters Unlimited at Carls-Beth Farm at [waltersunlimited.com](http://waltersunlimited.com).**

## Tools for the Farm...

(continued from cover)

vibrating hand seeder for greenhouse plantings. This simple seeder is just right for us because we can seed a wide variety of crops without changing anything, and there is no need to buy a different plate for each seed and flat size. Direct seeding from arugula to beans is all done with an Earthway precision seeder. For transplanting, we use a dibble for smaller plants and a right-hand trowel for larger plants.

### Ground Preparation

At the moment, I'm farming about 3 acres using two BCS walking tractors, an antique Farmall, and a small borrowed John Deere. My typical approach is to flail mow a cover crop with the 14HP diesel BCS, till the residue in with the 5' John Deere tiller, and finish with a second tillage two weeks after the first.

Once the field is prepared, I make beds with the furrower on the BCS or four discs mounted under the 1949 Farmall cub. The infinite adjustment on the cub allows me to set the outer discs lower for a better bed. On planting day, we spread organic fertilizer by hand on the beds and finish them with a shallow till using the 10HP gas machine.

### Cultivation and Trellis

Most of our cultivation is done by hand. We space our rows 10 inches apart on the beds (marketing them with the seeder's row market attachment) to accommodate our Swiss wheel hoe's blade. Our plants are spaced at least 10 inches apart in the row to allow the collinear hoe to pass easily. A few people can weed a quarter acre in a morning if the rows are spaced properly. One day, the Farmall will be used for cultivation, but we haven't used it yet.

In addition to cultivation, some crops need trellising. We use cattle fencing bent into a circle as our tomato cages. These are supported by a row of T-posts and electric fence wire. Our pea trellis is a light plastic fencing that hangs from a wire supported by T-posts.

### Harvest and Post-Harvest

Once you've grown the crop, you



One of Daniel Parson's trusty tractors.  
photo by Daniel Parson

have to get it picked in a timely fashion. At some point, the plants have to be cut, and for that we use the serrated Victorinox knife and sheath or the lettuce knife from Johnny's Selected Seeds. Felco makes perhaps the best pruner in the world, but they don't come cheap. Earth Tools in Kentucky sells a Bahco pruner for about a quarter of the cost. It is lightweight plastic, but heavy enough to cut anything we grow.

Our harvest bins are various sizes of Rubbermaid Roughneck bins (10, 14, 17 gallon). I've used a heavier type with a hinged lid that I like a lot better, but the ones we use are about half the cost and are easy to find locally.

### Marketing

We sell directly to the public through CSA and farmers markets, and to local chefs. One of the challenges is getting to market, and we solved that this year with a used Sprinter van. The purchase price is relatively high, but it has a fuel-efficient diesel engine that should run for years and years. Once we are at the market, our three-tiered stand helps customers

see our products, and our colorful table cloths help us stand out. 

> Daniel will share more great tips on farm equipment in his workshop at the Sustainable Ag Conference in November!

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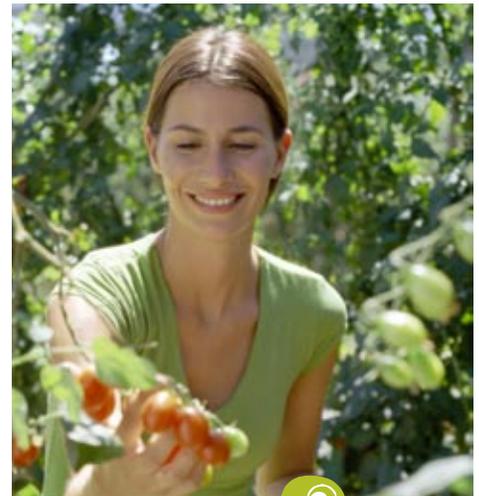
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**Association News...**  
*(continued from page 3)*

food advocate and best-selling author of *This Organic Life*, Joan Dye Gussow. A passionate supporter of organic, local food and small, family farms, Joan has spent a lifetime championing the idea that locally-grown food eaten in season makes sense -- economically, ecologically, and gastronomically. Joan has not made a presentation of this kind in over 3 years; don't miss out on this rare opportunity to hear from a living legend!

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