Key Resources for Organic Farmers

Compiled by Karen McSwain, Farm Services Director

This list is by no means an exhaustive list of the many great resources available for transitioning produce farmers, but is a good start for finding more information about organic production and certification.

THE CAROLINAS

- Carolina Farm Stewardship Association – [http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org](http://www.carolinafarmstewards.org)
  - Free organic certification consulting for qualifying producers.
  - NRCS EQIP-OI Program Assistance for district conservationists and producers.
  - Annual Sustainable Agriculture Conference: in Durham, NC or Greenville, SC.
  - Organic Commodities and Livestock Conference, Rocky Mount, NC.
  - Regional Farm Tours

- Clemson University
  - Sustainable Agriculture Program at Clemson University [http://www.clemson.edu/sustainableag/about.html](http://www.clemson.edu/sustainableag/about.html)
    - Offer many classes throughout the year on various organic production topics.
  - Department of Plant Industry – Organic Certification – [http://www.clemson.edu/organic](http://www.clemson.edu/organic)
    - Certifying agency for most organic producers in South Carolina, many in North Carolina. Website contains information about the certification process, fees, and applications.

  - Work with farmers, government agencies/officials, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and communities to support sustainable agriculture by addressing statewide policy and local planning and regulation issues, offering education and outreach to farmers, and supporting local food distribution and marketing through their GrowFood Carolina project.

- LowCountry Local First - [http://lowcountrylocalfirst.org](http://lowcountrylocalfirst.org)
  - Provide education and relationship building in order to promote the benefits of supporting local, independent businesses and farmers. Support local food systems by connecting local farms, producers, and apprentices to local restaurants and institutions.
• North Carolina State University  
    ▪ Website contains hundreds of publications, webinars, and videos on a wide variety of topics related to organic production. This WONDERFUL resource contains everything you need to know about organic production.  
    ▪ Contains a wealth of information about organic field crop production specific to the Carolinas, including the *North Carolina Grain production Guide*. Also has link to projects online newsletter and calendar of workshops related to organic grain production.  
  o NC Organic - [http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/fletcher/programs/ncorganic/](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/fletcher/programs/ncorganic/)  
    ▪ Provides links to a number of resources about organic production, certification, and marketing.

• Center for Environmental Farming Systems - [http://www.cefs.ncsu.edu/](http://www.cefs.ncsu.edu/)  
  o Contains numerous publications on organic production, links to resources, information on production research, and an events calendar.  
    ▪ Organic Production guide includes chapters on composting, cover crops, crop rotation, insect management, weed management and soil fertility.

• Growing Small Farms - [http://chatham.ces.ncsu.edu/growingsmallfarms/orgcertguide.html](http://chatham.ces.ncsu.edu/growingsmallfarms/orgcertguide.html)  
  o Contains a wealth of information and links to helpful resources, including many regarding organic certification.

  o Spring Conference, Asheville, NC.  
  o CRAFT Farmer Training Program  
  o Apprentice Link

• Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project - [http://www.asapconnections.org/](http://www.asapconnections.org/)  
  o Business of Farming Conference, Asheville, NC.  
  o Certified Appalachian Grown  
  o Resources for Beginning Farmers  
  o Information on farm to institutions/school programs

**SOUTHEAST**

• Florida Organic Growers (FOG) - [http://www.foginfo.org](http://www.foginfo.org)  
  o Supports and promotes organic and sustainable agriculture by educating consumers, farmers, future farmers (children & youth), businesses, policy makers and the general public.

• Georgia Organics - [http://www.georgiaorganics.org](http://www.georgiaorganics.org)  
  o Annual conference  
  o Farmer to Farmer mentoring, workshops and field days, farmer services consulting.
• Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SSAWG) - [http://www.ssawg.org](http://www.ssawg.org)
  o Annual conference
  o Many educational CD’s available for order from website on various topics including organic horticulture and marketing and organic vegetable production.

• Virginia Association for Biological Farming - [http://www.vabf.org](http://www.vabf.org)
  o Annual conference
  o Website includes an events list, news articles and a resource section with information sheets about sustainable and organic agriculture.

NATIONAL

• National Organic Program (NOP) - [http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/nop)
  o Information about organic standards, certification, and compliance and enforcement.

• National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service (ATTRA) - [https://attra.ncat.org](https://attra.ncat.org)
  o ATTRA publishes bulletins on a wide range of topics including organic vegetable, fruit, and agronomic crops; greenhouse production; sustainable soil, pest, weed, and crop disease management; composting, cover crops and conservation tillage in organic systems; and marketing and business management.

• Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) - [http://www.ofrf.org](http://www.ofrf.org)
  o Funds and provides report summaries for research projects on a wide range of organic production topics including fertility management, weed, pest and disease management, and organic farming systems.
  o Maintains up-to-date information on USDA programs related to organic.

• Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) - [http://www.sare.org](http://www.sare.org)
  o Learning Center - [http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center](http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center)
    ▪ Complete downloadable books and bulletins on sustainable and organic production including:
      4. **Manage Insects on Your Farm: a Guide to Ecological Strategies**
      5. **Transitioning to Organic Production**. (Bulletin).
    ▪ Offers online course in **Integrated Pest Management for Organic Crops**