

NORTHERN MICHIGAN SMALL FARM CONFERENCE

The Largest Gathering of Small Farmers in Michigan!

January 26 & 27, 2018 at the Grand Traverse Resort in Acme





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In addition to our generous sponsors, we also thank the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development, as well as the United States Department of Agriculture—Risk Management Agency for additional funding support to put on the Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference

TWO-DAY SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Farm School - Preconference Tracks

Friday, January 26th (see page 7 for details)

8:30 am	Registration opens
9:15 to 10:45 am	Farm School: concurrent session 1
10:00 am	Trade Show opens
10:45 to 11:00 am	Refreshment + networking break
11:00 am to 12:30 pm	Farm School: concurrent session 2
12:30 to 1:45 pm	Lunch + Trade Show
1:45 to 3:15 pm	Farm School: concurrent session 3
3:15 to 3:30 pm	Refreshment + networking break
3:30 to 5:00 pm	Farm School: concurrent session 4

Cocktails, Keynote + Reception

5:00 to 7:00 pm	Opening Night Cocktails + Networking in the Trade Show
6:30 pm	Doors open for Keynote
7:00 pm	Trade Show closes
7:00 pm	Keynote: Richard Wiswall (see page 8 for details)
8:30 pm	Friday Festivities: live music and social dancing

Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference

Saturday, January 27th (see pages 10-13 for session information)

7:30 am	Registration opens
8:30 am	Trade show opens
8:30 to 9:45 am	NMSFC: concurrent session 1
9:45 to 10:30 am	Refreshment + Trade Show + Seed Lounge
10:30 to 11:45 am	NMSFC: concurrent session 2
11:45 am to 1:30 pm	Lunch + Trade Show + Seed Lounge
1:30 to 2:45 pm	NMSFC: concurrent session 3
2:45 to 3:30 pm	Refreshment + Trade Show + Seed Lounge
3:30 to 4:45 pm	NMSFC: concurrent session 4 + evaluations (4:45 to 5:00)
5:30 pm	Trade show closes, conference concludes



Early Bird Registration open now! Prices increase after December 15, 2017.
Final registration deadline is January 19, 2018. On-Site Registration will be charged an additional fee and does not guarantee lunch availability. **Sorry, no refunds on any tickets.**

**REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.SMALLFARMCONFERENCE.COM
QUESTIONS? (231) 994-3944 OR NMSFC@CROSSHATCH.ORG**



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sustainability by advancing food systems rooted
in local regions and centered on food that is
healthy, green, fair and affordable.



Agricultural Workshops



Corporate and Community Education (CCE) provides workshops for small/ independent farmers in lower northern Michigan.

CCE brings workshops, conferences, as well as innovative learning opportunities, created from input of farmers/producers.

Please call 231-348-6613 or email CCEfaq@ncmich.edu for more information or to register for any program.

FARM SCHOOL

Friday, January 26 from 9:15 am to 5:00 pm at the Grand Traverse Resort

♦ **LEAN FARMING: Production Methods for the Efficient Farm** **Ben Hartman** | *Author of Lean Farming (bio page 18)*

9:15 to 10:45 am | Session 1: The Lean Farm | An introduction to the lean system and how you can apply it on your farm. This session will cover concepts like muda, kanbans, heijunka, and kaizen and show examples of how they are applied on our small-scale vegetable farm to cut out waste and increase profits with less work.

11:00 am to 12:30 pm | Session 2: Lean Vegetable Growing | Focusing on applying lean ideas on your farm to grow seven profitable crops: tomatoes, peppers, baby greens, carrots, turnips, beets, and kale. **(Lunch follows this session)**

1:45 to 3:15 pm | Session 3: Lean Business Management | How to use lean concepts to keep records quickly, manage employees, price your food, decide what to grow, set metrics for your farm, and more.

3:30 to 5:00 pm | Session 4: Tools and Infrastructure, Leaned Up | Overview of the tools and supplies Ben finds most useful, as well discussing the eight pieces of infrastructure every farm should have.

♦ **AGROFORESTRY: Designing Perennial Polycultures** **Dave Jacke** | *Author of Edible Forest Gardens Vol I + II (bio page 19)*

9:15 am to 5:00 pm | Designing Perennial Polycultures | All four sessions develop the same topic | (Lunch from 12:30 to 1:45 pm) Mimicking natural ecosystems in our agriculture promises the regeneration of healthy ecological functions while meeting our food and other material needs. How do we create healthy edible ecosystems? Conscious ecological design provides the key. With clear scientific theory and practical design processes we can combine plants into effective guilds and polycultures. When we do so, beneficial ecosystem properties emerge: minimal competition, maximum cooperation, additive yielding, and reduced work and outside inputs. This multi-faceted day-long workshop explores the essential ecological theories and design processes behind guild and polyculture design. We'll review some science, explore some examples, and analyze and design some plant polycultures.

♦ **LOCAL SALES 2.0: Beyond The Farmers Market** **Sponsored by Taste the Local Difference and Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities**

9:15 to 10:45 am | Session 1: CSA Wellness Programs | Ready to expand your CSA program? This session will outline the growing work in CSA worksite drop-offs throughout the state. Presenters will discuss how these drop-offs are changing the landscape for typical CSA shares, the process of matchmaking farms to employers, the impact on farm viability, reducing barriers for employee participation, and the potential for insurance policy change to offset costs. *[Rob Hanel w/TentCraft, Andrea Romeyn w/Providence Organic Farm, Tricia Phelps w/Taste the Local Difference, Diane Conners w/Groundwork]*

11:00 am to 12:30 pm | Session 2: Feeding the Masses: Value Added Producers | Focusing on large volume wholesale markets, including sales to value-added producers, and farm-to-institution sales, this session will go over feeding the masses. Presenters will outline first steps and the farm requirements for large volume and contract sales, while sharing their experience and best practices for farms interested in this type of sales market. *[Kelly Lively w/Cherry Capital Foods, Grant Fletcher w/Bronson, David Klingenberg w/The Brinery, Jeremy Moghtader & Alex Bryan w/University of Michigan]* **(Lunch follows this session)**

1:45 to 3:15 pm | Session 3: From Field to Fork: Cultivating Relationships to Grow Your Bottom Line | This session will go over the importance of building relationships with chefs by highlighting two different and successful farmer/chef partnerships. The presenters will explain how their relationships started, what makes them work together so effectively, and why the synergy between farmer and chef is critical (to good food and good business). *[Hannah Rose Weber w/Land Loom, Molly & Dion Stepanski w/Presque Isle Farm, Eric Patterson w/The Fresh Palate, Simon Joseph w/Roaming Harvest]*

3:30 to 5:00 pm | Session 4: Grocery Connection: Packaging and Marketing | This session will cover the process that growers need to go through in order to get their produce and other value-added items into markets and grocery stores. We will discuss working with a designer for packaging, connecting with store managers, and other important info to consider to expand your reach as a local farmer. *[Maria Panone w/Grain Train Natural Foods, Anne Morningstar w/Bear Creek Organic Farm, David Coveyou w/Coveyou Scenic Farm, Eldon Homer & Chris Jacobs w/Oryana Community Co-op]*

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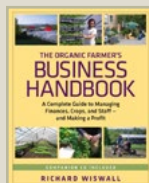
FRIDAY NIGHT KEYNOTE



Richard Wiswall

*Farming Smarter, Not Harder:
Good Business Practices are
Essential to a Farm's Success*

Author of the Organic
Farmer's Business Handbook



Farming offers fundamental satisfaction from producing food, working outdoors, being one's own boss, and working intimately with nature. But unfortunately, many farmers avoid learning about the business end of farming; because of this, they often work harder than they need to, or quit farming altogether because of frustrating—and often avoidable—losses. Richard will share his story of how he came to tackle the fear of the business side of farming, and share how it can be very rewarding.

Opening reception with cash bar — 5:00 pm in the Trade Show

Keynote — Doors at 6:30 pm, Welcome at 7:00 pm in the Michigan Ballroom

\$15 in advance; \$20 at the door. Space is limited.



www.reverbNation.com/hardydamramblers

Free Friday Night Festivities!

8:30 pm — traditional dancing and music from
The Hardy Dam Ramblers

This reunited act goes back a long way! Come hear some blistering fiddle tunes from before the bluegrass era. Al Thayer, Erik White, Tom Sutherland and Garrison Lewis.

Everyone is welcome, no charge!

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CERTIFIED LOCAL FOODS LUNCH

Taste the Local Difference is excited to announce that the Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference and Farm School are Certified Local Food Events. This means that at least 70% of the food comes from the State of Michigan, with 40% coming from within 125 miles of the event. Not bad for January.

TRADE SHOW HOURS & INFORMATION

New this year! Trade Show expanded to two days!

Friday from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm

Saturday from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm

The Trade Show is included in the ticket for conference attendees. The Trade Show is open to the public after 1:30pm on both Friday and Saturday, for \$5 tickets, sold on-site only.

Space for vendors is still available. To become an exhibitor, contact Taylor at (231) 994-3944 or by email at taylor@eventsnorth.com.



“Humankind has not woven the web of life.
We are but one thread within it.
Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.
All things are bound together.
All things connect.”

- Chief Seattle, 1854

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SMALL FARM CONFERENCE SESSIONS

SESSION ONE — 8:30 TO 9:45 AM — SATURDAY

Building a Sustainable Seed Community In this workshop we will discuss the importance of seed saving and community seed sharing. Learn about maintaining genetic diversity, preserving history and regional adaptation, as well as basic and intermediate seed saving techniques. <i>Ben Cohen Small House Farm</i>	Native American Herbal Medicinals We will explore herbal plants and their medicinal uses for pain relief and dry skin relief. We will cover a brief history of Herbal Lodge, speak of our personal and customer experiences with herbs, and close the session out with a question and answer session. <i>Nathan Wright Herbal Lodge</i>
Composting to Balance Economic and Environmental Sustainability Composting expert Brad Morgan will share how you can build and maintain a good composting program that follows the state requirements for temperatures and turning times to maximize your farm's natural resources. <i>Brad Morgan Morgan Composting Inc.</i>	Pork Production Panel Learn about the various options in running a thriving pork business including AI, heritage breeds, options in off-farm processing and small to mid-size options. <i>Aaron Bower, Andre Kitscher, Ben McMurray, and Ryan Romeyn</i>
Finding and Acquiring Farmland We'll discuss why choosing farmland with good soils, infrastructure, and a healthy market for your products is a great first step when starting or scaling up your farm. <i>Katie Brandt MSU Student Organic Farm</i>	Sustainable Management of Your Woodlot We'll discuss best practices, like connecting with local foresters to inventory your woodlot, deciding on management goals, and creating a forest management plan that will help your family manage your property to its fullest potential. This session will also cover other potential income options for your woodlot and property tax programs specific to forest land. <i>Kama Ross + Joshua Shields District Foresters</i>
Flower Farming: Season Extension and Crated Lily Production This session will discuss what flowers to plant early on for hoop house production, as well as fall starts for spring. Succession lily production grown in bulb crates in a greenhouse will also be covered. <i>Shailah + Rowan Bunce Rock River Farm</i>	Veggies and Vows: How to Run a Farm Business with Your Life Partner and Still Really Like Each Other How do you strike a good work/life rhythm for your family when you and your spouse are both full time farmers? And how do you run a demanding business together without neglecting domestic, romantic, and relational needs? Fred and Michele Monroe discuss how to get through the season (mostly) happily and (mostly) sanely when your farm partner is also your life partner, followed by a round table discussion of the topic. <i>Fred + Michele Monroe Monroe Family Organics</i>
How to Help Pollinators Join Kay Charter to learn what we can do on our own property to aid our native pollinators, even if we only have a small tract of land. <i>Kay Charter Saving Birds Thru Habitat</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After this session: refreshment and networking break, 9:45 to 10:30 am• Session 2 begins at 10:30 am• Speaker bios start on page 16
Mind Your Business Be a highly effective manager, learn the macro and micro tools of financials, and benefit from some quick tips for success. <i>Richard Wiswall Cate Farm</i>	

Session topics and times are subject to change without notice. Please see the final conference program for any corrections or amendments.

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SMALL FARM CONFERENCE SESSIONS

SESSION TWO — 10:30 TO 11:45 AM — SATURDAY

Becoming and Leaving Strawberry As Bernie Ware prepares to leave strawberry, Ryan Romeyn is learning to be strawberry. Learn the basics of strawberry culture and why local organic strawberries are an essential ingredient of resilient communities. <i>Bernie Ware + Ryan Romeyn</i>	Protecting Your Personal and Farm Assets from Legal Predators This session will discuss cost-effective legal methods for protecting personal assets from farm liabilities and farm assets from personal liabilities. Emphasis will be on addressing potential basis for legal liability, creditor claims, divorce, and ways to mitigate or eliminate the risks. <i>Michael Fraleigh Fraleigh Law</i>
Coppice Agroforestry: Resprout Silviculture for the 21st Century This workshop will cover coppicing basics, like: What is coppicing? How does it work? What coppice systems might we use? How can we establish them? How does coppicing affect ecosystem functions? <i>Dave Jacke Edible Forest Gardens</i>	Ranching Exotic Livestock We breed high-quality Tibetan Yak and Suri Alpacas for ranch or for table. Learn how ranching exotic animals is profitable, healthy for the consumer, and beneficial for the environment. <i>Chris Butz Gills Pier Ranch</i>
Early Season Extension and Harvest/Post Harvest Handling of Flowers September will discuss the techniques they use to grow flowers earlier and later into the season. Key flower varieties will also be covered. Michelle will help to demystify the harvest and post harvest techniques for many flower varieties. This will include harvest stage, post harvest treatment and storage. <i>Michelle Shackelford + September Dykema</i>	Sizing Up Your Farm: A Discussion of Equipment, Infrastructure, Costs and Strategy for Different Types of Vegetable Farms The workshop will look at common equipment and infrastructure investments and systems approaches to make different types of vegetable farms work. Will look at market and cash flow considerations if possible. Designed for beginning and newer field based vegetable production farmers. <i>Tom Cary</i>
Growing and Marketing Sensational Salad Mixes Go to the next level with salad mixes in this session on crop planning, harvesting, and economics of salad. Abbey Palmer and Allison Stawara, from the MSU North Farm, will outline an approach to make salad mixes a significant component of a farm's crop plan. Walk through the options and planting schedules for producing farm-specific custom blends, how to incorporate additional components, like flowers and herbs, compare Salanova and baby leaf, and see our return-on-investment for a quick cut greens harvester. <i>Abbey Palmer + Allison Stawara</i>	Weed Management for Small Scale Diversified Vegetable Operations In this workshop, learn about the MSU Student Organic Farm's weed management plan and determine which organic methods may work best for your own operation. Mechanical techniques and hand cultivation, cover crops, stale seed beds, and more will be covered. This session will also go over tools for annual and perennial weeds in direct-seeded and transplanted vegetable crops. <i>Sarah Geurkink + Denae Friedheim</i>
Organic Certification - Where to Start? Vicki will present from the technical side of organic certification and Julie will share her practical experiences of various ways to transition a fruit orchard. We will cover transitioning a newly acquired orchard that had been abandoned, moving from conventional to organic, and starting fresh with new plantings in a certifiable field. <i>Vicki Morrone + Julie Studier</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After this session: lunch and Trade Show, noon to 1:30 pm• Session 3 begins at 1:30 pm• Speaker bios start on page 16

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SMALL FARM CONFERENCE SESSIONS

SESSION THREE — 1:30 TO 2:45 PM — SATURDAY

Assessing the Feasibility of Organic Grain Production in the U.P.	A Natural Hands On Approach to Cattle Handling (the sequel)
We'll take a look at two organic grain variety trials that were established with different rates of underseeding to better understand different variety yield and weed control, reviewing the research conducted and results gained. This analysis will include determining the cost of production specific to the Upper Peninsula region. <i>Monica Jean + Chris Kapp</i>	Last year at the NMSFC, we explored the concept of Natural Handling and putting content to the notion of Humane protocol. In depth study will include calf development nursing on biological mother, how natural handling techniques create the finest finished beef animal on grass, the story of a fertile cow, and a closer look at intentional grazing systems. We'll also cover more taming techniques, working with young bulls, mineral supplements and never having pink eye, hoof rot, milk fever, or other issues, and a no-worming-ever-protocol. <i>Mike and Stefani Schulte Narrow Gate Farm</i>
Carrot Production on the Small Farm	Targeting Tillage for Improved Soil Health and Crop Performance
This session will take a detailed look at carrot production for retail/wholesale markets on the small farm. Participants will walk through a year of production, looking at equipment/tools, scheduling, post harvest handling, and cultivation techniques. <i>Collin Thompson MSU North Farm</i>	In this session, we'll discuss our ongoing project that engages farmer learning communities from three regions of Michigan in participatory soil and crop monitoring for collaborative development of hyper-local tillage recommendations. <i>James DeDecker + Seig Snapp MSU</i>
Cost of Production - Farm Budgets Made Simple	Tell Your Story and Make Money Doing It
Longtime organic farmer Richard Wiswall will demystify production costs for various farm ventures and show which ones are actually making money or not. This group working session will simplify and enlighten the process of determining profitability for any of your farm endeavors. Beginning and seasoned farmers alike will benefit, and share in some eye opening results. <i>Richard Wiswall Cate Farm</i>	In this workshop, you'll learn how to connect with the right people, stay ahead on social and how to effectively tell your unique story. <i>Kalin Sheick Stems & Sprigs/Sweetwater Lavender Farm</i>
Food Safety 101	USDA Rural Development Grants
The goal of this session is to provide a background to what a food safety system is and why it is important to your business and to any one particular food sector. We will discuss minimum government standards for most food producers, third party food safety audits and schemes, finally GFS schemes and the introduction of food quality. <i>Mark Baker Cherry Central</i>	Are you a producer of a raw commodity? Have you wondered how to get grant funds for your value-added project? Do you want to increase your revenues and customer base? We have a couple of grant programs to go over with you. In this session, we will discuss the application process and eligibility requirements and provide you with tips on writing a grant proposal. You'll also meet some of the local organizations that can help with this process. Also in this session: the Rural Energy for America Program. Have you been contemplating a solar project on your farm? Or do you have energy efficiency improvements you are considering for your business? We will be going over the types of projects and eligibility requirements for this program as well. <i>Bobbie Morrison + Natalie Garr USDA Rural Development</i>
Gardening Like the Forest: From Delicious Plants to Edible Ecosystems	
Edible forest gardens mimic the structure and function of natural forests and grow food, fuel, fiber, fodder, fertilizers, farmaceuticals, and fun. We can meet our own needs and regenerate healthy ecosystems at the same time! <i>Dave Jacke Edible Forest Gardens</i>	

• After this session: networking break, 2:45 to 3:30 pm • Session 4 begins at 3:30 pm

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SMALL FARM CONFERENCE SESSIONS

SESSION FOUR — 3:30 TO 4:45 PM — SATURDAY

Farm Mechanizations	Extending the Growing Season in Northern Michigan
Learn the tools of the trade for greater farming efficiency. Cultivation tools to maximize weed control, tools to speed the harvest, and packhouse tools for quicker and easier processing will all be covered. Cost/benefit analysis will show how long it will take for a new tool to pay for itself. Greenhouse innovations will be highlighted as well. <i>Richard Wiswall Cate Farm</i>	This session will cover the “off-season” growing opportunities and challenges of fresh greens in northern Michigan in both unheated and heated production spaces. Winter growing can require significant financial and labor investments; this session will help you determine if it’s right for you. <i>Anne Morningstar Bear Creek Organic Farm</i>
Farmer Yoga: Supportive Practices for Working Bodies	Farmer to Farmer Discussion Groups
A healthy farmer is a happy farmer. Learn about the toll that farm work can take on the body and how yoga can help by increasing internal awareness, alleviating pain, reducing stress, and encouraging focus in this hands-on workshop. <i>Janae Ernst</i>	The conference features four discussion groups to help facilitate learning and sharing with fellow farmers. Chairs will be arranged in a circle so that participants will be the “presenters” and will be able to address each other with questions, recommendations or information to share.
Get the Most From Your Soil Amendments by Building Beneficial Biology	Farmer to Farmer: On Farm Butchering
This workshop is designed for those who wish to attract beneficial organisms to their growing operation. This directly relates to soil management, using specific amendments and farm practices to develop an environment suitable for beneficial microorganisms. Learn what weaknesses open the door to pest and disease problems, and how to set the stage for a beneficial majority. <i>Joe Scrimger BioSystems</i>	<i>Facilitated by Ellie + Matt Evans Pitchfork Farm</i>
	Farmer to Farmer: Farmer to Farmer Access
	<i>Facilitated by Laura Rigan + Sharron May</i>
	Farmer to Farmer: New Co-operative Models
	<i>Facilitated by Evan Smith Alden Services</i>
	Farmer to Farmer: Seed and Rootstock Varieties for Our Region
	<i>Facilitated by Brenin Wertz-Roth</i>

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Final registration deadline is January 19, 2018.

4:45 to 5:00 pm - please take time to fill out our new digital evaluations. Paper evaluations are available as well, if needed.

VOLUNTEERS—THANK YOU!

We are so grateful to the many hands that bring this conference together each year. Scores of volunteers work hard to make this conference seamless, joyful and welcoming. We thank you.

Volunteers receive a reimbursement of \$55 for one volunteer session of 3 hours. Volunteers can work multiple shifts to receive reimbursement up to the value of tickets purchased. **There’s still time to join the amazing volunteer crew!** To volunteer at the conference, or at Farm School, contact jenharris@crosshatch.org or call (231) 622-5252.

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YOUNGSTERS AND LITTLE ONES

Three great options for youth and children:

1. Cub House Daycare - *ages 6 months to 8 years*

Your precious ones are safe at Grand Traverse Resort's daycare provider, with staff that are CPR and First Aid certified, and lead teachers with degrees in early childhood development. Cub House hours are from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. The cost is deeply discounted for conference attendees at \$20/child. You can send a brown bag lunch along, or pick your child up to take them to conference lunch (included in cost).

This service is only available on Saturday. Space is limited and advance registration is required. We are unable to accept on-site registrations.

2. Human Nature School - *ages 6 to 12 years*

Human Nature School offers outdoor, hands-on youth programming during the conference [**Saturday only**]. The day will be spent playing games, hearing stories, exploring natural mysteries, building shelters and following their passions. Dress children for outdoor play. Cost is \$30/child and includes lunch.

Space is limited—advance registration is encouraged.

3. Bring 'em with - *up to 12 years old are free!*

If your kids are able to sit through a workshop session without being disruptive, please bring them along. Children 12 years old and younger are free to attend the conference unless they require daycare.

Youth tickets for ages 13 to 17 are available for \$20.

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[HUMAN NATURE SCHOOL.org](http://HumanNatureSchool.org)

info@HumanNatureSchool.org

NEW FOR 2018 • CROSSHATCH PRESENTS

FIELD SCHOOL

SAME GREAT CLASSES • HELD ON THE FARM

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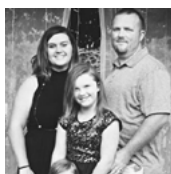
Back-to-back educational workshops during a full day on the farm, including mushroom production, woodlot management, fruit tree grafting, wash-pack efficiency, seed saving, herbs and tinctures, cidering and much more. Field Schools also include one-on-one consulting with farm experts, as well as a local food lunch and a post-workshop social networking hour.



\$45 early-bird • \$55 regular • \$65 on-site
\$125 for all three

For more information email jenharris@crosshatch.org,
visit www.crosshatch.org, or call (231) 622-5252

SESSION PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES



Mark Baker

Cherry Central

Mark Baker studied public health and food safety at TUI and MSU, earning a Master's

Degree in Health Science. After being a food inspector in the US Army, he proceeded to work in the food industry providing technical expertise to companies. Passionate about food, public health, and science made being a food scientist a natural fit. He currently is the Director of Technical Services for a large food company and owns a local food consulting company. He also enjoys working in public service and is a Park Commissioner for East Bay Township.



Brian Bates

Bear Creek Organic Farm

Brian Bates owns and operates Bear Creek Organic Farm in Petoskey, Michigan with his wife

Anne Morningstar. Brian is passionate about small farm finances, making a living doing what you love, and savvy marketing. With no secrets, a lot of ideas, and some serious elbow-grease, Bear Creek has gone from \$0 to \$300k on 1.5 acres in less than four years.

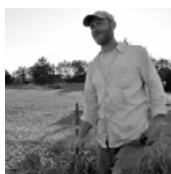


Katie Brandt

MSU Student Organic Farm

Katie Brandt is the Educational Programs Manager at the MSU Student Organic Farm. She

teaches the Organic Farmer Training Program, helps organize Farmer Field School and grows veggies at the SOF's year-round CSA. Katie has worked at many farms throughout Michigan and spent over a decade farming at Groundswell Farm in Zeeland, MI.



Aaron Brower

Bluestem Farm

Along with his family, Aaron Brower owns Bluestem Farm, a diversified organic farm

that offers build your own CSA memberships, community events, and food outreach programs. Learn more at www.bluestemfarm.net.



Alex Bryan

University of Michigan

Sustainable Food Program

Alex Bryan re-joined his alma mater in fall 2016 as the UM

Sustainable Food Program Manager. UMSFP is a student-led umbrella organization bringing together student efforts to build a sustainable food system on campus. Alex is the founding board president of National Young Farmers Coalition, serves on the board of Michigan Food and Farming Systems, and helped found the food policy council of mid-Michigan.



Shailah and Rowan Bunce

River Rock Farm

Shailah and Rowan Bunce have been farming for ten years in Michigan's Upper

Peninsula. They have been slowly incorporating specialty cut flowers for the past five years, now growing 2 acres of specialty cut flowers annuals and perennials. They grow 6,000 lilies in a season, harvesting 600 per month May through October.



Chris Butz

Gill's Pier Ranch

Chris and his wife Angie live on Gill's Pier Ranch with their five children. Both recovering

attorneys, they honestly didn't see themselves running an exotic livestock operation 20 years ago when they got married. However, Chris has always had a love of animals and their training, and part of the reason for their relocation over 10 years ago was to live a slower, healthier and family-focused lifestyle. Chris received his undergraduate degree in Zoology with a concentration in Ecology from Michigan State.



Tom Cary

Formerly MSU Student

Organic Farm

After working for 13 years working in non-profit

environmental and local food systems work, Tom began experimenting with farming around 2006 running a small CSA, and raising meat and laying chickens. In 2009, Tom had the chance to become a farmer at Groundswell Community Farm, with his now wife Katie Brandt. They ran the farm until 2016; it is now in transition to new ownership. ►

Early-bird registration deadline is December 15th. Final registration deadline is January 19, 2018.

SESSION PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

(Tom Cary cont'd) Tom's background includes a love of the natural world, a BS in Chemistry, world travel and a Masters degree focused on local food systems. Tom recently ended three years work in Beginning Farmer education through the MSU Student Organic Farm. He is now a full-time dad and husband.



Kay Charter

Saving Birds Thru Habitat

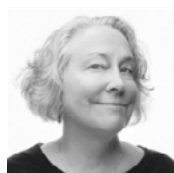
Twenty-five years ago, Kay and Jim Charter purchased a 47-acre tract of mixed habitat in Leelanau County where they established a safe haven for the feathered jewels they love. In the summer of 2001, Kay founded *Saving Birds Thru Habitat*. An award winning writer, Kay has presented programs to governments, libraries, colleges, and other groups across the country. In 2007, she presented a seminar to a standing room only crowd at the Zoological Society of San Diego's Center for Conservation and Research for Endangered Species.



Ben Cohen

Small House Farm

Ben Cohen is the owner of Small House Farm, a sustainable homestead project in Sanford, Michigan, where he is an heirloom seed activist and educator. Ben travels the Midwest sharing his passion for seed saving while also sharing seeds with everyone that he meets! He has helped to open nearly two dozen seed libraries in his home state of Michigan and has grown seed crops commercially for Baker Creek Heirloom Seed Company, the Rare Vegetable Seed Consortium and Annie's Heirloom Seeds.



Diane Conners

Groundwork Center for

Resilient Communities

Diane Conners is Senior Policy Specialist at Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities. She launched the organization's work connecting schools and the health and wellness sectors to the positive benefits of locally grown food. An award-winning journalist, she writes about the crossroads between health, community and a local food economy, catalyzes ideas such as CSA Workplace Wellness initiatives through conference speakers and networking, and works on policy initiatives.



David Coveyou

Coveyou Scenic Farm

David Coveyou is the owner and operator of 142-year-old Coveyou Scenic Farm in Petoskey where he grows certified organic vegetables with his wife and four children. His farm business and engineering backgrounds are part of his passions.



September Dykema

September's Herbs and Produce

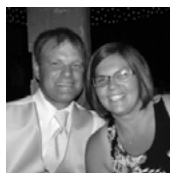
September Dykema is the Owner and Operator of September's Herbs and Produce LLC, providing local and sustainably grown flowers for our wholesale clients in the West Michigan area. September's Herbs and Produce LLC specializes in early season floral products for florists, wedding/event planners and local grocery stores.



Janae Ernst

Janae Ernst is a yoga teacher, scientist, and small farm volunteer. She received her 100-hour certification from

Amazing Yoga in Costa Rica and her 200-hour certification from Prairie Yoga in Lisle, IL. She served as a mentor in the teacher training program at Prairie for three years, broadening her scope and knowledge. Her personal areas of interest within yoga include biomechanics, safe practices for aging populations, and yoga for chronic pain. Outside of yoga, she holds Bachelor's degrees in Pure Mathematics and Applied Physics, and a Master's degree in Physics from Northern Illinois University.



Ellie and Matt Evans

Pitchfork Farm

Matt and Ellie Evans operate Pitchfork Farms in Petoskey, where they live with their four children. Their farm started a few years ago with raw milk herd-shares but in the last two years has expanded to include pastured, non-gmo chicken and eggs. This year they processed approximately 1300 chickens together on the farm. They have continued to expand the farm and will open next year as a u-pick farm offering strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, and saskatoons.

SESSION PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

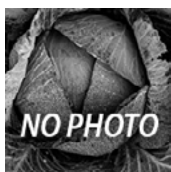


Grant Fletcher

Bronson Healthcare Group

Grant has been a leader with Bronson Healthcare Group for 10 years, overseeing food

and nutrition services, retail operations, athletic clubs, sustainability, and employee wellness. As a leader at Bronson Healthcare Group, Fletcher has been a champion of the organizations local sourcing initiative, leading the Food and Nutrition Department in their charge to source 60% of food supplies from local and regional growers and producers. At present, Bronson Methodist Hospital sources better than 40% of its food from more 50+ local vendors, infusing over \$1,000,000 into the Kalamazoo and Southwest Michigan economies.



Michael Fraleigh

Fraleigh Law

Michael Fraleigh specializes in Farm Business Planning, Estate and Trust Planning, and Asset

Protection. Michael grew up on a fourth generation family farm and has a unique understanding of the financial and legal issues facing farmers and ranchers and the need to protect their families from legal predators. He draws on more than 33 years' experience to provide his clients with solutions that ensure their business goals are achieved while protecting the health and well-being of their families.



Denae Friedham

MSU Student Organic Farm

Denae received her Bachelor's degree in Biology and Sociology in 2005. After a three year

stint in Public Health research, Denae discovered a different side of preventive medicine—food production. In 2011 Denae started Foodshed Farm, a sustainable agriculture business that specialized in growing seedlings for local farmers, specialty produce for local restaurants, CSA, and farmers' market customers, and consulting with other small scale growers. After four years of running Foodshed, she came to the Student Organic Farm as the Production Manager in 2015. She became the Farm Manager in 2016 and is now the Interim Director.



Natalie Garr

USDA Rural Development

Natalie Garr is a Business Programs Technician for USDA

Rural Development. She has been

with the agency for over three years, working out of the East Lansing state office. She has assisted with a variety of Federal loans and grants, specializing in the Renewable Energy for America Program and the Value-Added Producer Grant.



Sarah Geurkink

MSU Student Organic Farm

After studying Business and International Development in college, Sarah intended to spend

just one season as a farmworker at Groundswell Community Farm in Zeeland, Michigan. She stayed on as a manager of Groundswell for two more years, at which point she decided pursue a career in farming. In 2013, Sarah became the manager of the University of Washington Student Farm in Seattle. Earlier this year Sarah, joined the MSU Student Organic Farm as the Production Manager, managing the farm's growing systems, wholesale accounts, and crew members.



Rob Hanel

"People Manager" at TentCraft

Rob is manager at TentCraft which is a manufacturer of custom U.S. made marketing

and promotional tents located in Traverse City, MI. His professional career has been spent mostly in Human Resources focused on Recruiting and Employee Engagement at some of the most discerning outdoor retail brands in the world. These opportunities allowed him the pleasure of living in many places. In 2016, he moved home with his now wife to start their own family; there is no where else in the world they would rather be to do that.



Ben Hartman

MSU Extension

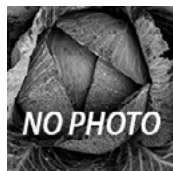
Ben Hartman is the author of *The Lean Farm*, winner of the prestigious Shingo Award, and

The Lean Farm Guide to Growing Vegetables, published in 2017. He and his wife Rachel Hershberger own ▶

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SESSION PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

(Tom Cary cont'd) and operate Clay Bottom Farm in Goshen, Indiana, where they make their living on less than one acre growing and selling specialty produce to restaurants, at a farmers market, and through two multi-farm CSAs. Hartman was appointed to the 2017 Grist 50, a list of emerging green leaders in the United States.



Eldon Homer

Oryana Community Co-op

Bio pending; available soon at www.smallfarmconference.com



Dave Jacke

Edible Forest Gardens

Dave Jacke—primary author of the award-winning two-volume book *Edible Forest Gardens*—began studying ecology and design in the 1970s. Since 1984, his firm Dynamics Ecological Design has designed and built landscapes, homes, farms, and communities across the U.S. and overseas. An energetic and creative educator, he holds a B.A. in Environmental Studies with a Land Use Planning minor from Simon's Rock College and a M.A. in Landscape Design from the Conway School of Landscape Design. Dave is now working with co-author Mark Krawczyk on the forthcoming book *Coppice Agroforestry: Regenerative Silviculture for the 21st Century* while homesteading in Montague, MA.



Chris Jacobs

Oryana Community Co-op,

Produce Department Manager

Chris has been in the produce business for about 20 years.

He started delivering produce in Flagstaff, AZ and worked as a stocker and assistant manager in the produce department at Wild Oats in Oregon. Chris ended up moving to Elk Rapids to start a family and has been at Oryana Community Coop for the last 14 years as the produce manager.



Monica Jean

MSU Extension

Monica Jean, Field Crop

Educator for MSU Extension,

has experience conducting both on-farm and small plot research with field crops. Monica services the Delta County area and provides help to local farmers, providing the local farming community with scientific, unbiased information helping them improve their agronomic practices.



Christian Kapp

MSU Extension

For more than a decade,

Christian has been involved in grain research and outreach.

Duties have included plot design, site preparation, plot layout, planting, overall plot maintenance, data collection, harvesting, lab analysis, statistical summary, and report writing. Kapp delivers final research results and general small grain performance observations to growers and other stakeholders at conferences and field days.



Andre Kitscher

Peaceful Valley Farm

Andre is owner and grower

of Peaceful Valley Farm, a small, diverse, all natural farm

specializing in vegetables, meat, eggs, and honey. They strive to produce high quality fresh products using organic practices and non-GMO feed.



David Klingenberg

The Brinery

Founder and CFO (Chief

Fermenting Officer) of the

Brinery, David's life is a ballad

of land and sea. His love of fermentation began in the fertile fields of Southeastern Michigan's own Tantré Farm, where as a young man at the turn of the century (1999), he preserved an abundance of cabbage with his first batch of sauerkraut. Passing many years in Tantré furrows, while sailing between growing seasons, David eventually founded the Brinery in the summer of 2010. As a business owner, David embraces the connection between good health and fermentation, a sailor guiding his probiotic business ship though the seas and guts of others.



COMMUNITY CO-OP
SINCE 1973

SESSION PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

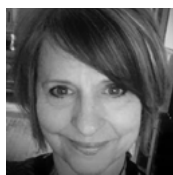


Kelly Lively

Cherry Capital Foods

Kelly Lively leads policy and outreach for Cherry Capital Foods, a food hub serving 40+ farms.

She developed CCF's farm to institution program, is lead organizer of the Michigan Apple Crunch, is a member of the Michigan Farm to Institution Advisory Committee, is actively involved in the newly formed Michigan Food Hub practitioners group, finding synergies between food hubs. She is also actively working to build the Michigan Group GAP Network for farmers and is a passionate activist on the intersection of climate change and agriculture.



Sharron May

The May Farm

Sharron May is a Benzie County business owner and farmer's wife with a passion

for bringing local food to the family dinner table as well as community decision tables. Sharron currently serves as Vice Chair of the NW Michigan Food and Farming Network and Taste the Local Difference's Farm To Resource Coordinator.

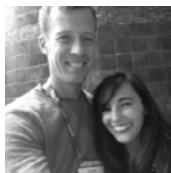


Ben McMurray

Hill Valley Farm

Ben McMurray, along with his wife Brittany, owns and operates a small farm and homestead

between Charlevoix and Petoskey. Though a majority of their modest fruit, vegetable, chicken and egg production is for friends and family, they are entering their third year of selling heritage breed pork shares. They come from the viewpoint of part-time producers and how best to optimize the limited time, capital and infrastructure at one's disposal.



Fred and Michele Monroe

Monroe Family Organics

Fred and Michele Monroe own and operate Monroe Family Organics, a diversified

organic vegetable farm in Alma, MI. Fred has been growing vegetables for nearly twenty years, and Michele joined him in their own farm operation after the birth of their first child. They have been farming together for seven years, during which time they've learned a lot about how to successfully run a farm, a family, a household, and a large CSA together without going crazy.



Jeremy Moghtader

*University of Michigan
Campus Farm*

Jeremy works with students, faculty and staff developing

the UM Campus Farm as a living learning laboratory for hands on food systems education and research, student leadership development, and year round food production for UM Dining. Prior to ▶

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