



THE DIRT

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FARMER PROSPERITY



HEALTHY SOIL

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

How do these principles benefit our community?

2022 Impact by the numbers P.5










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You make our impact possible. Thank you!

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- Springs Public Schools Georgia – Harvest Academy
- W.C. Bradley Farms
- Wholesome Wave Georgia

Thank you to all of our Members, funders, and partners for your participation and support!

Current as of March 1, 2023.



Contact: Emmy Carter, Fundraising Manager at emmy@georgiaorganics.org

Join or donate at: bit.ly/supportgo

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Farmers and Friends,

We have rounded the bend from our very successful 2023 Annual Conference in February – the first in three years! While we had anticipated a smaller crowd, we were thrilled to convene nearly 500 people from Georgia and across the South! Everyone – the farmers, advocates, chefs, business and nonprofit partners, volunteers, and supporters – seemed to relish this reunion based on the numerous Cheshire cat grins on display.

We had an array of amazing speakers and exhibitors, an awesome art deco Farmers Feast and Awards Ceremony, and an unforgettable keynote from “Mama K” Karen Washington, who moved many of us to tears.

It is always a surreal period after Conference. We are exhausted but inspired as we sprint into our “regularly scheduled” goals and objectives for the year. But before we do that, we want to stop and thank you for being part of this incredible local and organic farm and food movement. Take a look at the enclosed 2022 Impact Report. Each statistic and dollar highlighted is more than a number – it represents an action taken and an investment toward a future rooted in soil health, farmer prosperity, and resilient communities. None of this can happen unless people share these values and want to create positive change together.

A perfect example of this is the recent disaster relief response for Winter Storm Elliott. In just two months, our community contributed \$230,000 to The Farmer Fund to support farmers devastated by December’s deep freeze. We want to thank all of our donors and funders, as well as our partners – Food Well Alliance, Wholesome Wave Georgia, Common Market, Community Farmers Markets, and The Conservation Fund, who collaborated to raise funds and awareness on behalf of so many farmers.



Georgia Organics President & CEO Alice Rolls with keynote speaker Karen Washington, and Brennan and Gwendolyn Washington from Phoenix Gardens during the 2023 Georgia Organics Conference. Photo by Jenna Shea Photojournalism

We are not slowing down – 2023 promises to be even more fruitful! To grow the pipeline of new farmers, we just launched a new Farmer Apprenticeship Program with six new apprentices who will be mentored by experienced organic farmers and paid to learn and practice regenerative farming. We have launched our third cohort of Farmer Accelerator farmers, all ten who will receive cash investments and 16 months of personalized consulting and support. And finally, we are kicking off a second year of Family Farm Share in Southeast Georgia to provide families with low-cost, weekly farm fresh food boxes through early care center partners.

Again, thank you for caring. Your support is making a huge difference for our farmers and our greater food community. If I learned anything at Conference this year, it’s that our spirit and tenacity are all we need to keep changing the tide of food and agriculture in this country.

In gratitude,

Alice Rolls
President & CEO



P.S. - Want more good news? ATTACK IS BACK!

Join us on Sunday, July 30 for the 12th annual Attack of the Killer Tomato Festival – a high-energy food and beverage tasting with over 35 of the Southeast’s top chefs and bartenders!

GEORGIA ORGANICS TEAM

ALICE ROLLS (SHE/HER)
PRESIDENT & CEO

EMMY CARTER (SHE/THEY)
FUNDRAISING MANAGER

AIN CHIKÉ (SHE/THEY/SHAWTY)
FARMER SERVICES COORDINATOR

LAUREN COX (SHE/HER)
DIRECTOR OF FARMER SERVICES

MEG DARNELL (SHE/HER)
FARMER SERVICES COORDINATOR

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EVENTS MANAGER

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PEG BUMGARDNER (SHE/HER)
ACCOUNTING CONTRACTOR

ANA MARIA PÁRAMO (SHE/HER)
GRAPHIC DESIGN CONTRACTOR

Annual Awards



Land Steward Award

Created in 1997, this award recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to Georgia's organic agriculture movement. Land Steward award winners represent the farmer, ag. professional, or researcher with significant commitments to the tenets of organic agriculture, inc. soil fertility, biodiversity, on-farm recycling, and water quality.

Pollinator Award

Created in 2009, the Barbara Petit Pollinator Award is named after Georgia Organics' President from 2003-2009, Barbara Petit. Petit passed away in 2015, but her legacy of service, leadership, and community advocacy lives on through this award.



Roast & Toast Annual Awards Celebration recognizing Land Steward Award winners Juan Carlos Díaz-Pérez (2022) with Chris Jackson (2021) and Pollinator Award winners Robby Astrove (2022) and Brennan and Gwendolyn Washington (2021). Photos by Jenna Shea Photojournalism.

Farmer Champion Awards

Farmer Champion Awards recognize the culinary professionals who go above and beyond to demonstrate their commitment to local procurement from Georgia farmers.

What is Farmer Champion?

The Georgia Organics Farmer Champion campaign brings together local farmers and culinary professionals to increase sustainable and organic purchasing from Georgia producers.



Georgia Organics 2023 Annual Award Winners

**LAND STEWARD
AWARD**

20
23

**Mary Rigdon of
Decimal Place Farm**

**BARBARA PETIT
POLLINATOR AWARD**

20
23

**Bobby Wilson of Metro
Atlanta Urban Farm &
Fred Conrad of Food Well Alliance**

We were thrilled to recognize these incredible folks at the Farmers Feast during the 2023 Georgia Organics Conference & Expo on Friday, Feb 17!



Check out our blog and e-newsletter, The Dirt for winner spotlights. thedirt.georgiaorganics.org

Right Conference attendees enjoy a meal prepared by Avalon Catering at the 2023 Farmers Feast and Annual Awards at the historic Muse Theatre. Fred Conrad (bottom left), Bobby Wilson (bottom middle), and Mary Rigdon (bottom right) accept their awards. Photos by Jenna Shea Photojournalism.



2022 Farmer Champion Awards

Top 3 Organic Spend: Little Bear, Talat Market, Miller Union

Top 3 Local Spend: Little Bear, Evergreen Butcher and Baker, The Deer and The Dove

2022 Community Award: Farm Burger





Georgia Organics 2022 Impact Report

Our impact is made possible by your support! Join or donate at bit.ly/supportgo

2022 marked the launch of our latest five-year Strategic Plan, aligning our work with four goal areas: Farmer Prosperity, Resilient Local Food Movement, Impact Capital, and Strong G.O.

These themes serve as guideposts for 2022 metrics from our current programs and initiatives: Farmer Services, Family Farm Share, Farmer Champion, Farm to School, and Farmer Advocacy.

Farmer Prosperity

Fostering farmer prosperity through one-on-one long-term support, farmer field days, webinars, technical assistance, organic cost-share, and strategic capital investment like our Farmer Accelerator, Apprenticeship, and Kaiser Bridge healthcare programs.

Farmer Services

For monthly news & resources from Farmer Services, subscribe to Grower News bit.ly/growernews

2021-2022 Farmer Accelerator Cohort:

10

10 Georgia farms participated

\$86k

\$86,600 in total infrastructure investments in 46 projects

11%

Farmers reported an almost 11% average increase in annual farm income

83%

83% of farmers cite physical, mental, and time-saving benefits

2023 Accelerator Cohort: 45 farms applied; 7 farms selected

Cooperative Purchasing

Farmer members saved an estimated **\$4,100** on harvest containers, post-harvest totes, and Winstrip trays by participating in Farmer Services' Cooperative Purchasing.

Kaiser Bridge Health Insurance

5 returning and 8 new farmers enrolled in health insurance; **87%** of participating farmers identify as BIPOC. Healthcare cost savings for participating farmers: **\$78,000**.

Farmer Education

10 Farmer Field Days, workshops, webinars, and Accelerator events with over 130 attendees.

Explore Farmer Membership at georgiaorganics.org/membership

Resilient Local Food Movement

Farm to School



Our nationally-recognized Farm to School and Farm to Early Care programs work daily to expand the engagement of children with local, healthy food in their cafeterias and classrooms.

700k **October Farm to School Month: Spinach to Win It!**
engaged over 700,000 Georgia students

400 **The Week of the Child** in partnership with University of West Georgia, we connected with and provided educational kits to over 400 families.

600 **Farmers Market Connections**
Over 600 Columbus-area students participated in farm tours, farmer markets, and agriculture lessons.

Family Farm Share

Waycross Family Farm Share Pilot

For 24 weeks, Family Farm share supplied 123 families a low-cost share of fresh food featuring produce, eggs, bread and value-added items sourced from 12 Waycross area producers.

Waycross sessions resume in 2023 with grant-funded expansion to follow.

Key local partners:



Farmer Champion

Bringing together bakeries, butcheries, cafes, restaurants, and (new in '22!) early care & education centers to increase sustainable and organic purchasing from Georgia producers.

\$163k

With 4 weeks of invoices from 2022 Farmer Champion establishments, Georgia Organics verified over \$163,000 was spent with local farmers

Second annual Farmer Champion Week
26 Farmer Champions sold over 1,600 dishes spotlighting locally-sourced okra and peppers.

Farmer & Buyer Mixer
17 individuals from 9 different Georgia businesses attended; 76% of attendees identified as BIPOC, womxn, and/or LGBTQIA+ folks.

Farmer Champion Ambassadors
21 chefs and farmers recruited, 29% of Farmer Champion Ambassadors identify as BIPOC, womxn, and/or LGBTQIA+ folks.

To learn more about this work and other Community Collaboration initiatives, sign up for our e-newsletter, **The Dirt**, at bit.ly/thedirtsignup



Advocacy

Georgia Organics' Farmer Advocacy work officially launched in 2022.

Surveyed 128 farmers on their priorities in national and local agriculture policies and practices, in partnership with Listen4Good.

Hosted USDA Undersecretary Jennifer Moffitt for listening sessions with local farmers.

Organic Week 2022 (D.C.)

Engaged four lawmakers and/or staffers on organic priorities including Representatives Austin Scott, David Scott, and Rick Allen, and Senator Raphael Warnock.

Hosted, toured and interviewed two Georgia Commissioner of Agriculture candidates at Love is Love Cooperative Farm.



Impact Capital

\$215,000

Over \$215,000 invested directly in organic farmers and regional food systems with 50% of impact capital distributed in support of BIPOC-identifying farmers.

\$8,100 in infrastructure investment in cold chain and food safety equipment.

Strong G.O.

Defining organizational health through commitments to racial equity, community convening, and workplace wellness.

Over \$43,000 spent with BIPOC vendors and contractors.

Roast & Toast marked our first gathering in over two years with a hog roast and locally-sourced, Farmer Champion-prepared feast to celebrate Annual Awardees and Farmer Champions.

Other gatherings included a Cast Iron & Collards Society: Cocktails & Conversations member event, a Farmer Mixer and an extraordinary 25th Anniversary Dinner with Alice Waters.

In February 2023, we're thrilled for the return of our favorite gathering...Georgia Organics' Conference & Expo!

Top Accelerator farmers Whitney Jaye & Brandon Stephens (with their littlest farmer) of Sunbird Flowers. Photo by Kiyah C. Photography

Bottom Snapfinger Farm tour lead by farmer Rahul Anand during Roast & Toast. Photo by Jenna Moble Photojournalism.



**Our impact is made possible by your support!
Join or donate at bit.ly/supportgo**



Farmer Services

2022

Year in Review

Farmer Services Programming


- \$4.1K** in savings from one Cooperative Bulk Purchase (25 farms saved over 19%)
- \$86K** in strategic capital investment
- 121** Coaching hours
- 2** Accelerator networking events
- 60** farmers attended six Farmer Field Days across Georgia
- 1** Buyer/farmer tour for Farmer Champions
- 1** webinar featuring an all-female farming panel
- 13** Kaiser Bridge farmers received free healthcare for one year
- 5** team members now make up the Farmer Services team

Farmer Services Team

Lauren Cox
Ain Chike
Meg Darnell
Lydia Hsu
Kayla Williams



2023 On the Horizon

JANUARY	FEBRUARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerator Launch • Kaiser Bridge Health Insurance Enrollment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 Georgia Organics Conference (Perry, GA) • 1st Meeting of Georgia's Certified Organic Network (GCON) • Apprentice Program Meet and Greets
MARCH	APRIL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmer Member Cooperative Purchase • Farmer Fund Informational Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCON* virtual meet-up • Farmer Fund Preparedness Farm Visits • Accelerator Farm Visits
MAY	JUNE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmer Fund Preparedness Field Day • Apprentice Program begins! • 2024 Conference planning begins! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrative Pest Management Farmer Field Day • Apprenticeship Program continues

*Georgia's Certified Organic Network

Top Right Attendees of September Farmer Field Day at PolyCulture Production (@polycultureproduction) upstage tractor - KUBOTA LA463 Front End Loader. Photo by M.F. Espinoza

Programming for Farmer Members

Georgia Organics is focused on supporting farmers with more direct Farmer Services and continuing to build a portfolio of offerings that meet farmers where they're at.



tier 1

One-on-one long-term support

- Accelerator Program
- Apprenticeship Program
- Family Farm Share Program



tier 2

One-on-one short-term support

- Kaiser Bridge
- Organic Certification Technical Assistance



tier 3

General farmer member support

- Farmer Field Days + Good Food for Thought Webinars
- Cooperative Bulk Purchasing
- Organic Cost-share
- Emergency Farmer Fund



Subscribe to Grower News to get news and updates from Farmer Services programming bit.ly/growernews



Are you a GA farmer planning on becoming certified organic for the first time this year?

We will help pay for your inspection fees - 25% or up to \$250!

For our BIPOC farmers, we offer this year-over-year.

Email meg@georgiaorganics for reimbursement instructions

Resources

In addition to one-on-one support by our Georgia Organics Farmer Services staff, we have a plethora of educational resources for farmers on our Farmer Services website. From beginning to veteran farmers, livestock to fruit and veg, there's something for almost every type of farming operation. **Scan the QR code to view categories and dig in!**



Starting a Farm



Organic Certification



Crop Production



Livestock & Poultry Production



Profitability Toolkit



Marketing & Advertising



Business, Legal & Financial



Government Programs for Farmers




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ATTACK IS BAAAACK!

Attack of the Killer Tomato Festival (#AKTF) returns to Westside Provisions District on Sunday, July 30 from 1-4 p.m. for an annual celebration of the juiciest fruit in Georgia: tomatoes.

Tickets go on sale **Tuesday, April 18**

killertomatofest.com

