This Farm is Healing the Planet.

Industrial ag takes a toll on our state, but organics can rejuvenate Georgia.

The corn you are looking at has not been genetically modified. It’s certified organic, grown at Riverview Farms in Ranger, and it’s used to feed the heritage Berkshire hogs that Charlotte and Wes Swancy raise.

No synthetic fertilizers or dangerous pesticides were used to grow it. These inputs inflict significant damage on the soil, water, air, and communities in which they are used; their absence here is partly why this corn is so important.

By its very nature, agriculture impacts the environment, but some farms wreak more havoc than others. Certified Organic and Certified Naturally Grown farms actually protect—even rejuvenate!—the environment.

At a time when Monsanto, Syngenta, Dow, and other manufacturers of the most harmful pesticides and fertilizers in use are claiming to be practitioners of “sustainable agriculture,” it’s time we take a look at the way eating and growing fresh, pure food
Global Warning?

Using the farm to combat climate change.

A recent issue of National Geographic focused on climate change and showed a graphic depicting the globe redrawn to show what rising seas would do to our banks, shores, and coastlines in the year 2100. Tifton and Statesboro are beachfront communities. Another map revealed the desertification that would stretch across our continent. I got a jolt glancing through it; the graphics and photographs were both captivating and shocking. The new and improved port of Savannah would be deep indeed.

Some of the grimmer prognostications about agriculture in the next decade or two include droughts, floods, decreased crop yields due to higher temperatures, higher rates of soil vaporization, and increases in fungal and bacterial diseases and insect pests.

Farmers are dealing with the first inklings of these trends here and now, and if they continue—and scientists and agriculture researchers expect them to—the price of food on our plates will rise much faster than global temperatures.

Want more science? According to a Georgia Tech report, “climate change has the potential to decrease the availability of water resources due to probable changes in rainfall distribution.” Most climate models and studies consistently forecast more storms, or, as the scientists prefer, “heavy precipitation events.”

Another study, by the American Security Project, estimates that temperatures in Georgia could rise by 4.5 degrees F in winter and 5.4 degrees F in summer, accompanied by a five percent increase in annual precipitation.

One thing we can do to address climate change is champion organic agriculture louder than ever. The agricultural and industrial practices that go into growing and harvesting food create 83 percent of greenhouse emissions.

Growers who’ve embraced organic farming practices are more prepared for the types of changes Georgia is likely to see, especially when it comes to efficient water use and erosion control.

In addition to being more buffered from climate change’s impact, it turns out that organic farms also mitigate the severity of change. Natural agriculture systems, rich and alive with microbes, bacteria, fungus, nematodes, humus, and roots, soak up carbon dioxide and keep it from wreaking havoc in the planet’s upper atmosphere.

Organic production practices utilize renewable resources, build soil fertility, and rely on biodiversity—all core tactics for addressing climate change through agriculture.

Our farmers are leading the way, and so are consumers who choose to eat local, organic food. That’s true teamwork on the supply and demand side.

Want to know something else you could do? Pass this article along to one of your friends or family members—someone who’s not part of the organic movement yet, but has the potential to be. Help us generate more demand for our farmer’s delicious and beneficial food.

Another thing you can do is mark your calendar for the Georgia Organics 2014 conference on Jekyll Island, a beautiful setting to remind us of the fragility of our environment and coastline and the critical importance of our work. The conference will be February 21-22, 2014, and our theme will focus on the environment—to build on our 2013 theme, it’s Farm Rx for the planet. We will honor our growers who have been farming with a light touch on the earth and focus on the production practices and community building that can lead the way in climate change mitigation.

In addition to Friday farm tours, Saturday workshops, and fresh seafood on the menu, we’ll also offer nature and coastal tours on Sunday so we can all take a needed break and get back to nature before getting back to work.

I hope you will join our community on the coast to renew our commitment to growing and eating green and being the change we wish to see. The sea beckons in more ways than one.

Alice
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

One thing we can do to address climate change is champion organic agriculture louder than ever.

Georgia Organics 200-A Ottley Dr. Atlanta, GA 30324 678.702.0400 info@georgiaorganics.org www.georgiaorganics.org
Here’s to Growing a Healthy Future

At Kaiser Permanente, we’re committed to helping you achieve total health—both inside and outside the exam room. As a nonprofit health plan, we’ve proudly invested in the total health of the communities we serve for over 25 years and counting. That’s why we’re a proud supporter of Georgia Organics.

kp.org/georgia

Kaiser Permanente is dedicated to providing affordable health coverage—and state-of-the-art care from our own, carefully selected doctors—in 29 convenient medical facilities throughout metro-Atlanta, and in Athens.

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The Jekyll Island Convention Center

SCHEDULED SPEAKERS
Chuck Leavell, founder of The Mother Nature Network and pianist for The Rolling Stones
Ken Cook, President of Environmental Working Group

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Above: Participants used their senses to explore broccoli in a breakout session on using the garden as an educational tool. Clockwise from top left: Commissioner Bobby Cagle of Bright From the Start; Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning; Chef Holly Chute, Executive Chef, Georgia Governor’s Mansion; Commissioner Brenda Fitzgerald, M.D., of the Georgia Department of Public Health; Diane Harris from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Farm to School Advisory team.

FARM TO PRESCHOOL SUMMIT

Good Food Into the Mouths of Babes

Over 150 people gathered in Atlanta on September 14 to attend the nation’s first statewide Farm to Preschool Summit. The Summit attracted child care center directors, teachers, nutrition staff, parents, and community members from across the state and introduced them to this innovative movement to introduce fresh, local fruits and vegetables to children during their most formative years.

Farm to Preschool engages young children in food and garden education, and incorporates fresh, locally grown food into school meals and snacks. It includes the full spectrum of child care delivery, and is a natural extension of the Farm to School movement for grades K-12, which has a strong and growing presence in Georgia and across the United States.

The Farm to Preschool Summit was an exciting new partnership between Georgia Organics, the Georgia Department of Public Health, and Bright from the Start; Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. The leaders of these three groups and the Governor’s Georgia SHAPE initiative all addressed attendees and encouraged them to do what they can to address the childhood obesity crisis—what Public Health Commissioner Brenda Fitzgerald, MD called “the greatest medical problem and the greatest medical opportunity in the state.”

The day began with “Farm to Preschool 101” from Diane Harris of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Farm to School Advisory team, followed by a keynote address by Colleen Matts, the Farm to Institution Specialist at Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems, who has been engaged in local food procurement in preschools for several years.

Participants then attended several breakout sessions including Cooking with Kids, Building Gardens for Preschoolers, Getting the Family Involved, and Farm to Plate: Finding, Buying, and Using Local Food in Childcare Centers. Lunch included comments by Commissioner Fitzgerald and Commissioner Bobby Cagle (Dept. of Early Care and Learning). Participants finished their day with more educational sessions and networking with one another.

For more information about Farm to Preschool, including how you can get involved, visit georgiaorganics.org/farmtopreschool.

Celebrate Farm to School Month this October with Lettuce Try It! This state-wide campaign is an effort to get kids across Georgia to eat (and fall in love with!) fresh, local lettuce. After signing up, schools receive resources like “How to Host a Lettuce Taste Test,” a regional list of farmers from whom to buy lettuce, and lesson plans involving lettuce for everyone from preschoolers to high schoolers. Find out more at georgiaorganics.org/lettucetryit
We’ve got a slew of new Farm to Preschool videos!
Check these out at georgiaorganics.org/farmtopreschool

What is Farm to Preschool? An overview of what makes up Farm to Preschool programs and why they’re important.

Local Food Procurement for Preschools
Learn how to bring local farm products into early care and learning environments to use in meals or snacks.

Building a Garden for Preschoolers
Edible gardens for young children are mostly like other gardens, but there are a few special considerations to keep in mind when building one.

Using the Garden as an Educational Tool
Gardens are a GREAT place to engage preschoolers in hands-on learning experiences.

Cooking with Preschoolers
Involving young children in food preparation encourages them to try new foods!

Seasonal Snacks for Preschoolers
Learn four recipes to make at different times of the year using produce that is in season in Georgia.

Faces from our Facebook
So this is kind of cool: Relinda Walker of Walker Farms Organic Produce and Mike Smith of Longwood Plantation both grew up in Screven County, then went off to college and high-powered jobs, then moved back to Screven County and now lead the good food economy 10 miles from each other. But long before that, they were classmates and neighbors in the local paper. Lookin’ good, guys!

www.facebook.com/GeorgiaOrganics

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In The Field

Conventional Ag’s Chemical Dependence

Based on trends over the last decade, it’s difficult to tell whether the end game of biotechnology is to help farmers or to have more products to sell. While persistent weeds are possibly the single greatest obstacle to successful production in the South, the past has shown that Mother Nature is more clever than human beings and silver bullets quickly need reloading.

Since glyphosate-resistant pigweed was first found in Georgia in 2004, biotech companies have been scrambling to come up with a new genetically modified cotton that could manage the “superweed,” whose seed-packed panicles wave smugly over the fields of South Georgia. Glyphosate, known commercially as Roundup, was once a silver bullet for conventional growers trying to control weeds that robbed nutrients from the soil. But an overuse of the chemical herbicide led to unintended natural selection. One particular species of pigweed, which developed a genetic mutation with glyphosate resistance, was left standing: Palmer amaranth.

For the biotech industry the new answer to control Palmer amaranth, which has spread from 500 acres in Macon County to over two million across the state, is essentially more of the same. Monsanto’s new proprietary cotton promises a triple-stacked package of herbicide tolerance—glyphosate, dicamba and glufosinate. To be clear, that’s three times as many chemicals and potentially three times as many inputs for farmers to buy.

Using more chemicals to solve chemically induced problems evokes the old saw about doing the same thing over and over amounting to insanity. In no other aspect of American life is chemical dependence acceptable. We should hold agriculture to the same standard.

Helping Farms Meet Schools in Albany

This summer Georgia Organics’ Farm to School and Farmers Services programs began a long-term collaboration to empower small, socially disadvantaged farmers in Southwest Georgia. Working with the Southwest Georgia Project for Community Education (SWGAP) in Albany, we coordinated two workshops for local, limited-resource farmers covering romaine lettuce, broccoli, and spinach production, which are new crops to these farmers’ normal production plans.

On June 26, Farmer Services Coordinator Donn Cooper and Ryan Graycheck of Greyfield Garden led another hands-on workshop for farmers about how to grow romaine lettuce, spinach, and broccoli. They chose these specific crops because the Dougherty County School System has expressed demand for all three, and they’re cool season crops that grow well in Georgia.

The Dougherty County School System purchases, on average, 200,000 lbs. of romaine lettuce annually. Blaine Allen, School Nutrition Director for Dougherty County School System, wants his cafeterias to source 20 percent of the fruits and vegetables they serve from within 100 miles of the county.

We’re excited to continue this series of workshops with SWGAP to ensure that this active and important community of long-overlooked farmers in rural Georgia are equipped for success. This crucial outreach and education would not have been possible without support from the USDA-NIFA Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Program (which has been cut from current version of the Farm Bill).
ONE FAMILY, ONE FARM, FIVE GENERATIONS, 145 YEARS
A FULL CIRCLE RETURN TO SUSTAINABLE STEWARDSHIP AND HUMANE STOCKMANSHIP

Available at Whole Foods Market, Publix Supermarkets and online
www.whiteoakpastures.com
Continued from page 1

using organic practices truly protects Mother Nature.

Agriculture is the No. 1 source of all non-point source pollution in Georgia. (Non-point source pollution is pollution that doesn’t come from a single source.) This is mainly through fertilizer run off, which can cause algal blooms, which in turn depletes oxygen from the rest of the aquatic environment. (See “Dead Zone” breakout box on the next page.)

Conventional agriculture is responsible for about 33 percent of all greenhouse gas production in the world. By avoiding synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, organic farms are decreasing their carbon footprint by a minimum of 83 percent. This percentage is the portion of agriculture’s fossil fuel use that is tied to the use and manufacture of synthetic fertilizers (which are particularly energy-intensive to make) and pesticides.

The silver lining is this: if done right, agriculture could help solve climate change instead of making the problem worse.

Healthy farms use processes already perfected by the natural world to promote growth in their fields. At Riverview Farms, the Swancys use organic methods to control pests, nurture healthy soil, and ensure that their pigs are healthy and happy.

“In every aspect we have the land’s best interest at heart,” says Charlotte. “When we are growing the grain for the pigs, we think about how to keep that sustainable, how to not dig too much, not dig at the wrong times, and pay attention to the weather. With the pigs, we have to make sure they don’t dig up the land and destroy the environment. But we also have to make sure they have a humane environment themselves, so that can be a crazy balance.”

Crop rotation is a go-to method that can have two dramatic advantages on a farm: it adds vital nutrients to the soil and fights off pests.

“If you plant the same thing in the same spot year after year after year, the crops are going to deplete the soil, and through crop rotation the next crop will pull some different nutrients from the soil that are useful for the next crop,” Charlotte says. “Not to mention bugs will go, ‘You’ve had tomatoes here [in the same field for a while]. I’m going to come back next year and eat those tomatoes.’ You’ll start to have crop

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THE HEALTHY FARM: A VISION FOR U.S. AGRICULTURE

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Source: Union of Concerned Scientists
Once you start spraying for pests, you always will have pests.
—Charlotte Swancy, Riverview Farms

The agricultural and industrial practices that go into growing and harvesting food create 83% of ag’s greenhouse emissions.

Birdemic

The Atlanta Audubon Society’s report, “Georgia’s Vanishing Treasures: Why are Some of Georgia’s Birds Disappearing,” cites “large-scale, mechanized clean farms” as one of the main reasons we have seen drastic reductions over the past 40 years in the populations of the following:

- Northern Bobwhite: 90%
- Grasshopper Sparrow: 89%
- Eastern Meadowlark: 82%
- Field Sparrow: 69%
- Loggerhead Shrike: 68%
- Brown Thrasher: 35%
- Ruffed Grouse: 54%
Help preserve our heritage (animals)

So what are heritage animals? According to Broad River Pasture’s Cathy Payne, they’re animal breeds that “were traditionally raised by farmers before the advent of massive-scale industrial farming. They’re raised to thrive in particular regions and using particular farming styles.” Their genetic resources make them ideal for the regions they’ve adapted to; Payne likens them to heirloom vegetables.

Practicality is one reason why Payne gravitates towards heritage breeds. They thrive without as much oversight, and need fewer inputs because they’re more adept at foraging off the land.

Heritage breeds are much less susceptible to medical problems that plague more common types of animals. For instance, Gulf Coast sheep are more resistant to hoof fungal infections such as foot scald or hoof rot, a common problem in moist, warm environments like what Georgia has recently experienced. “We’ve gotten through this wet, hot summer and we don’t have a single limping sheep in the flock,” Payne says.

So why have heritage breeds like the Gulf Coast sheep become so rare? Blame the bottom line. “These are smaller sheep, and therefore not as productive as far as the meat end of it goes,” Payne says. “Back in the ‘50s or ‘60s, when de-worming medications were invented, people said ‘Well, we don’t need to keep these hearty, small sheep, we can get these big improved breeds and make more money.’” But as more and more flocks of other sheep breeds develop resistance to worm medications and require expensive care for hoof rot, revitalizing a breed that resists both takes on a new importance.

One Farmer Beard of the Week

This glorious beard belongs to Michael Shively, a Whole Foods Market store team leader in Atlanta who farms what his wife refers to as a “monstrous backyard farmish area.”

How would you characterize your beard?

My beard is completely functional. It is there because it grows. It keeps my face warm, camouflages me in the winter, and catches excess BBQ sauce in the summer.

What is your beard care regimen?

I treat my beard like a cover crop. I mow it in the early summer and then let it grow again to provide the skin with protection. I do shampoo and condition it for pest control.

Do you know a great farmer beard? We want to hear about it! Holler at brooke@georgiaorganics.org.

Talking with: David George Haskell

Haskell is the author of “The Forest Unseen: A Year’s Watch in Nature.”

Full disclosure: The following interview is completely skewed and was conducted with sincere reverence and admiration.

Your book is a wake up call to inspire people to reconnect with nature. Why do you think that’s important?

If there is a “call” embedded within it, it is a call to realize what a remarkable and complex world we’re part of. Humans are just as much part of nature as any other species, so it is not possible for us to be disconnected from nature – every breath, every bite is an ecological connection. What we’ve lost, in part, is an awareness of this reality.

More and more Americans are joining what we call the local food movement. Do you have any theories about what’s fueling this?

I have no theories, just opinions. One is that people seek out good local food when they finally wake up to what their taste buds are telling them. Why eat blah when you can experience wow? The media and publishing world’s increased attention to the downsides of the industrial food system is also a motivator for many people. Once you know how factory farms work, understand the injustices of the migrant labor system, and become aware of the drugs and poisons in the food supply, opening your mouth to the processed extrusions of the industrial food system is an unattractive proposition.

HOW’D YOU NAME THAT FARM?

R² Farm

As told by Todd McCain

My kids names are Ryan and Rachel (hence the R). And my wife teaches middle school math (hence the square).
Meet the Staff! We’ve grown! The new faces are circled.

Michael Wall
Program Director

Emily Rose
Farm to School Assistant

Erin Croom
Farm to School Director

Donn Cooper
Farmer Services Coordinator

Sandy Layton
Development Director

Brooke Hattfield
Communications Coordinator

Suzanne Girdner
Conference Coordinator

Alice Rolls
Executive Director

Kate Schrum
Development Coordinator

What was your previous job?
Associate Director of Capital Gifts at Agnes Scott College

What inspired you to do the work you are doing today?
My late grandfather (who was a rancher/cattleman), my Dad (who is the best development officer I’ve ever met and a former FFA member), and my mom...homemaker, cook and environmental champion since (long) before it was cool!

What do you want to accomplish for Georgia’s farmers?
I want farmers, CEOs, students, teachers, shoppers, and parents all sitting at the same table talking about how delicious their food is thanks to the people who grew it.

What would your DJ name be?
DJ Say What?

Andrew Ladd
Director of Operations

What was your previous job?
State Utility Program Coordinator for the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority

What inspired you to do the work you are doing today?
My daughter, Lily

What would your DJ name be?
The Blond Blizzard

Anika White
Administrative Assistant

What was your previous job?
Education & Training Assistant at Given Imaging, Inc.

What inspired you to do the work you are doing today?
My passion for good food, and my desire to make sure everyonе has access to it.

What do you want to accomplish for Georgia’s farmers?
Connect them with Georgia restaurant owners and food purveyors so more ingredients are sourced locally.

What would your DJ name be?
DJ Jazzy Chef

Grow the Good Food Movement with the Seeds & Soil Society

The Seeds & Soil Society of Georgia Organics represents members who have made a deep commitment to support the work of our organization. Society members’ crucial investment allows us to flourish. In supporting the mission and programs of Georgia Organics, they are helping change the state of food in Georgia and impacting the lives of countless farmers, students, gardeners, and eaters.

With our eyes focused on meeting the evolving challenges of our work, we want you to consider joining the Seeds & Soil Society of Georgia Organics. Your personal contribution to this keystone membership program will bolster our work in your community to increase the number of organic farms, the number of children participating in farm to school programs, and the number of Georgians eating organically grown, local food.

We invite you to become a Seeds & Soil Society member today with an annual gift of $1,000. Your investment in Georgia Organics will strengthen our ability to fulfill our ongoing mission to make Good Food For All a reality in a healthier, more sustainable Georgia.

For further information, contact Sandy Layton at (678) 702-0400 or sandy@georgiaorganics.org

“We believe in the importance of the vision and mission of Georgia Organics.”
— Robert and Suzy Currey

Watch & Learn with Field Trip Videos!

We call them Field Trips because we are taking YOU to the field to learn about successful farm production practices that can help you and your operation prosper. The series, produced by Anthony-Masterson, the award-winning team behind “Grow! The Movie,” is a great resource for farmers of all skill levels. Some of the best organic farmers in Georgia talk about topics like fall direct seeding in hoop houses, microgreen production, and best practices for packing CSA boxes.

Watch them at georgiaorganics.org/for-farmers
**JCT. KITCHEN’S ATTACK OF THE KILLER TOMATO FESTIVAL!**

On July 21, some of the south’s best chefs, farmers, and mixologists teamed up at JCT. Kitchen to raise money for Georgia Organics and show Atlanta a mighty fine afternoon. Each featured chef was paired with a local farmer to create a tomato dish for attendees to sample, while the featured mixologists stirred up their own signature tomato cocktails. The festivities also featured The Spazmatics and local chef band Five Bone Rack. Festival goers and high-profile judges—Garden & Gun Deputy Editor Dave Mezz, James Beard Award-winning authors Matt and Ted Lee, Food & Wine Associate Food Editor Daniel Gritzer and Esquire restaurant features writer John Mariani—voted for their favorite dishes and beverages:

**JUDGE’S WINNERS**

**Best Tasting Dish:** Stuffed cherry tomatoes served on a bed of tomato rice, Asha Gomez of Cardamom Hill & Watsonia Farms

**Best Tasting Drink:** “Heirloom Reviver” (paQui Tequila, tomato water infused with Thai basil and culantro, lime & agave), Stuart White of Miller Union, Love is Love Farm at Gaia Gardens, Rise ‘N Shine Organic Farm, Serenbe Farms & Woodland Gardens

**FAN FAVORITES**

**Best Tasting Dish:** “Caprese” Ice Cream, Chris Hall of Local Three, Riverview Farms

**Best Tasting Drink:** “Farmer’s Revenge” (Farmer’s Botanical Small Batch Organic Gin infused with raspberries, Domaine de Canton, dill, heirloom tomatoes, lemon, black pepper & basil seeds), Eduardo Guzman of JCT Kitchen & Bar + The Optimist, Dillwood Farms

**CAPITOL STEPS**

On July 3, Georgia Organics Program Director Michael Wall and Farmer Services Coordinator Donn Cooper met with U.S. Rep. David Scott in Jonesboro. They thanked him for supporting legislation that supports agricultural conservation practices.

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**Clayton, June 29**

The fine folks at Ladybug Farms hosted a workshop covering innovations in organic farming. Farmer Services Coordinator Donn Cooper gave an overview on genetically modified crops, specifically addressing the way GMOs have introduced a monopoly in the seed industry that affects farmers and consumers, as well as food sovereignty.

**Atlanta, Sept. 13**

Thirty preschool teachers, directors, and nutrition staff attended an in-depth, hands-on workshop on all things Farm to Preschool at Truly Living Well’s Wheat Street Garden. They learned recipes, sorted seeds, planted lettuce, and harvested produce for their own lunch!

**Americus, June 19**

Farmer Services Coordinator Donn Cooper coordinated a workshop at Koinonia Farm on biological pecan production, a holistic system that incorporates mixed livestock species with encouraging the right fungal, bacterial, and protozoan communities in the soil. Betsy Ross from Sustainable Growth Texas, pictured above with Brennan Prendergast of Koinonia Farm, led the workshop.

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Follow us on Twitter for gems like these: @georgiaorganics Lolly Beck-Pancer on farmers markets: “A strong
As the organic agriculture industry continues to grow, cooperative extension agents and USDA employees are fielding more and more questions about it. This workshop at Fort Valley State University, “Sustainable Organic Methods in Small-Scale Production of Food Crops,” was a training session for these folks, and covered basic questions like “What does organic mean?” as well as more specific content. Georgia Organics’ Farmer Services Coordinator Donn Cooper talked about the economics and business models of small, sustainable farms. The workshop was sponsored by Southern SARE, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and UGA’s Cooperative Extension service.

Helen, June 21 Georgia Organics presented about organic certification and other certification options, like Certified Naturally Grown, on the second day of the Georgia Small Farms Conference, which was sponsored by Broad River Soil and Water Conservation District.

Tifton, June 27 Farmer Services coordinator Donn Cooper coordinated this Southern SARE-sponsored organic grain workshop at UGA’s Tifton campus, which brought together researchers from North Carolina State University, the University of Georgia, the USDA, and Auburn University as well as farmers like Al Clark and Charlotte Swancy of Riverview Farms, who were on a panel together.

Columbia, S.C., August 14 Farmer Services Coordinator Donn Cooper attended the SARE Farm Internship and Incubator Workshop, which focused on improving farmer support programs in the region.

**District-Wide Farm to School Trainings**

The beginning of the 2013 school year meant farm to school trainings in Georgia school districts. Thanks to some help from our chef friends, ALL the school nutrition staff in Fulton County, Gwinnett County, Dougherty County, Habersham County, and Commerce City Schools learned about using fresh, local food in school meals, how to lead a taste test, and more.

**Around the State**

**Albany, July 29**

Georgia Organics and the Southwest Georgia Project teamed up to host a farm to school training for the entire Dougherty County School Nutrition Staff. Pictured are, from left: SWGAP’s Da’iyyah Salaam, who has successfully helped the school system to identify and purchase local cabbage for the 2013-14 school year (!!!), farmer Ruby Davis of Ruby’s Garden, and Chef Asata Reid, who led a knife skills lesson and demonstrated a delicious cabbage recipe for everyone to taste. The workshop was sponsored by Action for Healthy Kids.

**Savannah, June 5**

Georgia Organics’ Farmer Services coordinator Donn Cooper talked about organic certification at a field day for veterans and underserved producers sponsored by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

**Lakemont, June 11**

School nutrition directors from eight counties in northeast Georgia gathered to learn from one of their peers about how to build farm to school programs. Paige Holland, of Habersham County, has been working very closely with her community to develop farm to school there. Other counties represented were Rabun, Towns, Banks, Hall, Hart, Jackson, and Madison.

**Fort Valley, June 20**

As the organic agriculture industry continues to grow, cooperative extension agents and USDA employees are fielding more and more questions about it. This workshop at Fort Valley State University, “Sustainable Organic Methods in Small-Scale Production of Food Crops,” was a training session for these folks, and covered basic questions like “What does organic mean?” as well as more specific content. Georgia Organics’ Farmer Services Coordinator Donn Cooper talked about the economics and business models of small, sustainable farms. The workshop was sponsored by Southern SARE, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and UGA’s Cooperative Extension service.

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Adams-Briscoe Seed Company
“The ABC’s of Buying Seed”
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Events Calendar
For more events, check out the calendar on our website: georgiaorganics.org/goevents/

OCT. 20 Certified Naturally Grown Farm Tour and Potluck, Ball Ground. Amestoy Farm will be the site for this event, and Ben Amestoy will be on hand to show folks around the farm he purchased a little over a year ago. Come meet fellow growers, and please bring a chair and a dish to share. 2-5 p.m. RSVP to Michele Gillman at michelegillman@att.net.

OCT. 26 Beginner Beekeeping Short Course, McDonough Most beekeepers are in it for the honey, although others maintain colonies of bees to pollinate crops, or for the beeswax, propolis, pollen, or royal jelly. The Henry County Beekeepers Club will host this course. To print out the registration application, go to our website. Public Safety Building Community Room, 116 Zack Hinton Parkway South, McDonough. $25. 8 a.m., (770) 473-5434, www.henrycountybeekeepers.org

NOV. 1 Wiregrass Farmers Market Mixer, Tifton A lively evening at the market, featuring local food, seasonal beer, bingo, and live music. Come celebrate the end of another great market season! 6 p.m.-9ish, $10 in advance, $12 door. Wiregrass Farmers Market, Georgia Museum of Agriculture, 1392 Whiddon Mill Rd., Tifton, GA 31793

NOV. 9 Growing Herbs for the Home Medicine Chest Propagate health supporting go-to herbs, focusing on plants easiest to grow in our climate.

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NOV. 24 Cultivating Shiitake Mushrooms 5th Kingdom Mushrooms is back & ready to help you inoculate mushroom logs for a spring harvest.

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NOV. 2 Learn Crop Rotation with Lynn Pugh, Cumming The purpose of rotations will be discussed and a fairly simple process explained for coming up with a rotation to suit your needs. Examples from the farm will be used and the class concluded with a lunch of farm produce. Email Lynn at lynn@canecreekfarm.net. 9 a.m.-1 p.m., $50. Cane Creek Farm, 5110 Jekyll Road Cumming, 30040.

NOV. 8-10 Tour de Farm, Americus Cafe Campesino has a fantastic weekend of food, farms, cycling, and fun scheduled! This year’s Tour de Farm will feature tours at White Oak Pastures, Richland Rum, President Jimmy Carter’s Boyhood Farm (a National Park Service site), Koinonia Farm, and Cafe Campesino. Saturday’s ride is 60 miles of countryside cycling with several food stops along the way and an annual barbecue festival waiting at the end of the day in Richland. Transportation options for low-intensity cyclists will also be an option. Discounted rates at local hotels will be available to riders who are interested in spending Sunday night in Americus. $130, tdf2013.eventbrite.com

NOV. 9-10 Growing Farm Profits, Chattanooga Join seasoned farmers Ellen Poli-shuk and Jim Munsch for a two-day intensive training on making smart decisions to improve your farm profits. This training, geared toward diversified horticultural producers, will help you understand factors that impact profitability, and will walk you through steps for improving farm profits. Training is free, but pre-registration is required. Optional lunch is $10 per person. Snacks will be provided, and each participant will receive farmer-friendly resource tools. For more information, contact Andrea Jaeger at Crabtree Farms at ajaeger@crabtreefarms.org or call (423) 493-9155 ext 13.

FEB. 21-22 17th Annual Georgia Organics Conference, Jekyll Island Our theme, “Green Acres: Saving the Planet One Bite at a Time,” will focus on the environment. We’re excited to cross-pollinate with Florida Certified Organic Growers & Consumers and welcome farmers, experts, and advocates from our neighbor state to strengthen the good food movement in the South.

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