THE DIRT

Georgia’s Pesticide Problem

Our environment, our bodies, and our future have a problem too.

A quick lesson on the presence of chemicals in our environment: even though it’s cold in the Arctic, too cold for crops and definitely too cold for mosquitoes, scientists are still finding the insecticide DDT in the fatty tissues of penguins there. The substance has been banned in the United States and most of the developing world since the 1970s, but it’s prone to drift and, as a persistent organic pollutant, it breaks down very slowly. So chemicals introduced into the environment decades ago find their way into glacier water, then in the fatty tissue of wildlife hundreds of miles away from the initial applications.

Agricultural pests cause very real problems for growers, and chemical pesticides are one method of curtailing their impact. But a growing body of scientific evidence suggests that pesticides have dangerous long-term impacts on our health and environment.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

The Time for Silence Is Over
When it Comes to Pesticides, What Would Rachel Carson Do?

I can’t remember a time when I didn’t know who Rachel Carson was. In high school biology class, I made a paper-mache doll of Carson, complete with binoculars around her neck, and gave a presentation to my classmates about her stance against the pesticide dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, or DDT. (I was already well on my way to being a tree hugger.)

Carson showed unprecedented courage back in the 1950s, particularly as a woman. A beloved bestselling author, she was steadfast and used prose, science, and measured reason to raise a warning flag while being vilified by the chemical industry. She remains my hero. Without her, who knows how long it would have taken us to ban DDT’s widespread use, or whether we even would have?

Last September was the 50th anniversary of the publication of Silent Spring. It’s a surprise that such a technical book was No. 1 on America’s bestseller list for many weeks. But the allegory of the fictional town, absent of bird song, was powerful, and struck a chord with a public increasingly suspicious of chemical use.

I believe that if Carson were alive today she would be agitated at the chemical wash that is so prevalent in modern agriculture. She would not shun the occasional use of a targeted chemical here or there, but would be a vocal opponent against the indiscriminate use that has become all too common.

While pesticides are used for everything from seed coating to field spraying to storage, the greatest harm may come from the systemic use of a variety of chemicals, not a single toxin. It is the same mentality that leads us to use prescription drugs for treating preventable illnesses, instead of committing to the hard work of prevention. Why work on keeping Humpty Dumpy on the wall when there is so much money to be made from putting him back together?

When one chemical becomes ineffective against weeds and pests, research is directed to come up with a new one. That is where the money is. Cover cropping, crop rotation, composting, and companion planting doesn’t feed Wall Street’s bottom line. As a country, we don’t like to talk about pesticides or confront their potential impacts on the environment and our own health. We put too much faith in a government that’s stretched too thin to guarantee our safety. We adopt a “see no evil” attitude. That suits the agricultural industry just fine. It is difficult to pinpoint links between environmental exposure and our medical diagnoses in the eyes of the courts, regulators, and other institutions, so the commercial industry can continue to bypass the precautionary principle.

The good food community is suffering from its own “silent spring.” We aren’t vocal opponents against chemicals in our food, land, and waterways. We freak out over GMOs and laud “local,” but meanwhile crop dusters fly unattended across the American landscape. But we can’t root for change if we are uneducated.

While our food community is suffering from its own ignorance, we are often responsible for it. The “local” food movement has a lot of potential impacts on the environment, but it can become too focused on the bottom line. For example, we need to understand that organophosphates are how neonicotinoids are a probable cause of the colony collapses of bees, which are so crucial to pollinating our nation’s crops.

We literally cannot live with the status quo. As a country, we don’t like to talk about pesticides or confront their potential impacts on the environment and our own health.

The 2014-2015 Local Food Guide is coming!

This is the state’s leading consumer, restaurant, and institutional resource for finding food from local organic farms and the restaurants and businesses that support them here in Georgia. We’re debuting a new printed version and online interactive version this summer! Farms, businesses, and restaurants need to be members in good standing for inclusion. Get listed today! For more details, check out www.georgiaorganics.org/become-a-member-today/local-food-guide, or give Stephanie a holler at 678.702.0400.
GOALS SET AT 2013 FARM TO SCHOOL SUMMIT: Taste test with kale at the school • Start a school garden and bring local farmers to our school • Share information with my farming co-op to extend the movement in west Georgia • Purchase more local produce every day

**LEADERS WHO HAVE TAKEN THE PLEDGE**

- Appling County School System
- Atlanta Public Schools
- Baldwin County Schools
- Bleckley County School District
- Burke County Public Schools
- Carrollton City Schools
- City Schools of Decatur
- Clarke County School District
- Cobb County School District
- Colquitt County Schools
- Commerce City Schools
- Crisp County School System
- Dekalb County School District
- Fulton County Schools
- Grady County Schools
- Habersham County Schools
- Hall County Schools
- Harris County School District
- Hart County School System
- Jackson County School System
- Madison County School District
- Marion City Schools
- Morgan County School System
- Newton County Schools
- Pickens County Schools
- Rockdale County Public Schools
- Savannah-Chatham County Public School System
- Thomas County Schools
- Tift County Schools

**Colquitt County Schools**

Colquitt County Schools’ farm to school work was outstanding long before nutrition director Monika Griner took our 5 Million Meals pledge. Colquitt County is a longtime state leader in agriculture production, and Moultrie’s own Packer Produce is a distribution hub that processes and packages food from local farmers and sells it wholesale to local school systems. Credit is also due to people like Griner, who’s been at the helm of the school system’s nutrition department for a decade and has deepened relationships with local farmers and resources like the Colquitt County High School agriculture education department. Last year the school system’s Norman Park Elementary School participated in the Georgia Department of Agriculture’s Feed My School for a Week program, and for a week featured 75-100 percent Georgia-grown food. Colquitt County High School is also one of 38 pilot agriculture education programs incorporating farm to school in the state. Like so many in Colquitt County, Griner is proud of what her community has accomplished: a school system where students are eating—and growing—healthy, tasty food.

**5 MILLION MEALS SPOTLIGHT**

**Going Far, Together**

Jennifer Owens, Our Outgoing Advocacy Director, on Good Food’s Next Steps

I learned a lot in my time at Georgia Organics, the most important of which was a reminder of an African proverb—“If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” This is an exciting time for the food movement in Georgia. Farmers are meeting with school nutrition directors, the medical community is promoting farmers markets and chemical-free food, consumers are buying organic products. I truly believe policymakers stand ready to act to improve the regulatory conditions of small farm businesses, farmers markets and school food service. And we have a funnel of innovative, hardworking farmers and entrepreneurs who see a different way forward for food and agriculture in this country.

Now comes the heavy lifting. We need to be smart, strategic and engage in public policy. It’s easy to ignore the email asking you to reach out to your congressman or blow off that city council or county commission meeting. But we have gotten the ball this far down the field and we must finish the drill.

**COLLECTIVE IMPACT**

Wonderful regional food groups around the state are critical—the Savannah Local Food Policy Council, Macon Roots, Federation of Southern Coops, West GA Cooperative, Augusta Food Policy Council, Atlanta Local Food Initiative, Coastal Organic Growers, Urban Food Abundance Network, and Locally Grown chapters, to name just a few. These groups are ground zero for assessing current conditions and policies and have tremendous potential to serve as locally-based centers of power to push for policy changes. These groups must be fostered and supported.

**MOVE BEYOND THE CHOIR**

It can be uncomfortable, especially if you are the only one in the room with your viewpoint. But we have to be there. Be respectful and know that you will not change hearts and minds in one meeting. Keep showing up. Make food a part of the conversation wherever you can.

**THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR CAN NOT SINGLE-HANDEDLY CREATE LARGE-SCALE SOCIAL CHANGE**

Now can one cause. Collaboration is critical—it’s going to take environmentalists, farmers, public health professionals, entrepreneurs, planners, policymakers, chefs, moms, and on and on. This is the strength of and opportunity for the good food movement in Georgia. If we want to go far, we must go together.

Owens is now the Director of Development & Outreach at the Georgia Budget & Policy Institute.

Jennifer Owens, Our Outgoing Advocacy Director, on Good Food’s Next Steps

- Going Far, Together
- The Dirt Spring 2013

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**On March 5, State School Superintendent Dr. John Barge, Commissioner of Agriculture Gary Black, and Georgia Organics Board President Rushid Hari honored Georgia school districts for taking the 5 Million Meals Challenge and pledging to serve more local food in their cafeterias. Honored districts are listed above, and the pledge is open until May 25!**

**Students in Adrienne Smith’s horticulture class at Colquitt County High School taste test salad made of organic lettuce and spinach they grew themselves, as well as caprese sticks including basil they also grew.**

**THE DIRT SPRING 2013 GEORGIAORGANICS.ORG**
Support our Capacity Campaign

Conference-goers opened their hearts and wallets at this year’s Farmers Feast. Why? Because they know that now is a critical juncture for the good food movement. Georgia Organics launched its first ever capacity campaign at the feast, and we were touched by the envelopes with $2, as well as $4,000, adding up to $738,000 in generous contributions that night. It all counts towards our three-year campaign goal to raise $1.1 million to improve our effectiveness.

For 15 years, Georgia Organics has fought for higher standards for our farms and food and reconnected the pathways from farm to fork. There has never been a better time to make significant progress in growing new growers, expanding farm to school, and influencing consumers to eat local, organic food produced here in Georgia. This has put a lot of pressure on our small but mighty organization. To date, the support of people like you has helped us reach $738,000 towards our three-year campaign goal.

By supporting this campaign, you allow us to build our internal capacity so we can take a more aggressive stance in pursuing our shared goals. There’s amazing potential to strengthen our impact, and this campaign will give us the boost we critically need to work towards our vision that all Georgians eat organic food from local farms, transforming our health, our environment, and our economy.

Please give online by going to www.georgiaorganics.org and clicking “Join/Donate.” Select “Make a Donation” from the drop-down menu and write “Capacity Campaign” in the special notes field. For further information and to participate in our Capacity Campaign please contact Sandy Layton, sandy@georgiaorganics.org.

“I support Georgia Organics because I believe everyone, every single Georgian, should know where their food comes from. Once people are connected to their food, they will choose healthy, toxic-free food. Georgia Organics exists to help people make these connections so that organic farmers can thrive.”

—MATT GOVE, CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER, PIEDMONT HOSPITAL

2013 LAND STEWARD OF THE YEAR

Lynn Pugh

Long known as “The Grower Who Grows Growers,” organic farmer and educator Lynn Pugh was awarded the 2013 Georgia Organics Land Steward of the Year Award at our 16th annual conference.

As Broad River Pastures’ Cathy Payne said in her introduction, “for over 10 years, Lynn has been a living example of the heart and soul of organic agriculture.” In 2001, after teaching high school and college, she founded Cane Creek Farm in Forsyth County. For over 13 seasons, Pugh’s hands-on, intensive farming and gardening class has trained 155 people in the fundamentals of organic growing, and many graduates have gone on to start their own operations. The Land Steward of the Year Award was created by Georgia Organics to honor an individual or individuals who have contributed greatly towards the organic agriculture movement in Georgia.

2013 BARBARA PETIT POLLINATOR AWARD

Helen Dubose

Henry County resident and longtime farmer Helen Dubose has blazed trails for over nine decades, and at our conference this year she was awarded the 2013 Barbara Petit Pollinator Award. The first female African American in the nation to graduate with an agriculture degree (and two subsequent Master’s degrees in agriculture and agriculture economics), she has lived for 32 years on Healing Acres, her 12-acre blueberry farm in McDonough. The farm and Dubose have served as an epicenter of African American agriculture. The farm and Dubose have served as an epicenter of African American agriculture. The farm and Dubose have served as an epicenter of African American agriculture.

At Georgia Organics, we’re looking forward to a busy and productive season as we well. With the momentum of another great conference behind us, we’ll be rolling out an array of workshops, farm tours, and events over the next several months. Our 2013 mentoring program will display the remarkable intelligence and diversity of new and beginning farmers in the state. And through our media outlets and new blogs, we’ll continue to share resources on important issues to Georgia farmers.

But Georgia Organics can only do so much. The farming community in Georgia must also grow itself. Through co-ops, Locally Grown networks, and certification groups, we must continue to be each other’s solace and succor throughout the year. Farmers should take advantage of each other’s expertise and of the many on-farm educational activities increasingly being held by Georgia’s agricultural innovators.

The sun is out. Good yields and high prices are surely ahead.

Farmer Services Coordinator Donn Cooper, our man in the field.

The cold, wet winter dragged on about as long as anyone can stand. While spring’s arrival will receive a hearty welcome, many farmers are frantically catching up in preparation for the big market season. Around the state, heavy, consistent rains have pushed back field work, and late-season frosts have made transplants and early crops a dicey proposition. (Not to mention, these chilly, raw days have aggravated a nasty cold that seems to have struck farmers from Hall to Wilkinson counties.) But that will all soon be behind us.

For the farmers and eaters of Georgia’s good food, this is the happy time, when all the exciting possibilities of the movement are growing in our minds: The zeal-ous countdown for local tomatoes begins with a little warm sunshine. We’re already dreaming of the community and progress that will be forged over fresh fried okra and squash casserole this summer.

At Georgia Organics, we’re looking forward to a busy and productive season as well. With the momentum of another great conference behind us, we’ll be rolling out an array of workshops, farm tours, and events over the next several months. Our 2013 mentoring program will display the remarkable intelligence and diversity of new and beginning farmers in the state. And through our media outlets and new blogs, we’ll continue to share resources on important issues to Georgia farmers.

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The sun is out. Good yields and high prices are surely ahead.
WHaT WE KnoW

So far, one of the biggest agricultural stories of 2013 is the decline of bee hives around the world. Pollination by bees and other insects accounts for about $200 billion of agricultural production every year; pollinators are responsible for 70 percent of the crops humans consume.1

For years, it was normal for beekeepers to lose 5 to 10 percent of their hives per year. But in 2007, that percentage jumped to 30 percent. And last year, commercial beekeepers reported that they lost 40 to 50 percent of their hives.

There is no smoking gun, but beekeepers and some researchers now think they finally have a culprit: a powerful new class of pesticides known as neonicotinoids. From a March in The New York Times article: What's on Georgia's Top Crops? 


3 The herbicide atrazine is classified as a carcinogen and is a possible carcinogen and water contaminant, as well as an endocrine disruptor. It was discontinued in 2001.

4 Chlorpyrifos is a volatile chemical that becomes airborne and is prone to drift. "PANNA is calling on the EPA to suspend its use." According to the USDA Pesticide Data Program, chlorpyrifos was found in at least 80 foods, including corn, and is a possible carcinogen and water contaminant, according to a 2007 EPA report it’s the second most-used pesticide in U.S. agriculture.

5 Beyond Pesticides’ “EPA Publishes Human Health Benchmarks for Pesticides in Water,” April 18, 2012.

6 President’s Cancer Panel, women exposed to DDT before puberty are five times more likely to develop breast cancer in middle age.2 A 2011 study found that certain organochlorine pesticides, including DDT, are found in 99–100 percent of pregnant women.4 They’ve been linked to various cancers and neurological damage, among other acute and chronic harms.

Carcinogens  A substance capable of causing cancer in living tissue.  Endocrine Disruptors  Chemicals that interfere with the systems that produce hormones in the body.  Neurotoxins  A substance that damages the nervous system and/or brain, usually by killing neurons.  Developmental/ Reproductive Toxins  Chemicals that are believed to interfere with fetal or child development, or male fertility.  Pollinator Toxins  Chemicals that kill pollinators, bees and butterflies.

CONtINued frOm COver

WHAT’S ON GEORGIA’S TOP CROPS?

Taken from whatsonmyfood.org, a project of the Pesticide Action Network that cross-references data from EPA and other authoritative listings.

In this special report, we explore the science available on pesticides, as well as what we do and don’t know about their use in Georgia. It can be easy to think that pesticides don’t affect us. We hope that a better understanding of this issue will lead to healthy choices for our bodies, environment, and communities.


Though data on pesticide use in the state is spotty — more on that later — some of what we do know is cause for concern. Georgia used over 15,000 pounds of the aforementioned chlorpyrifos on conventional peaches that year, according to 2009 data from the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS).

The EPA has set environmental thresholds for many of these pesticides, but it does not address “the effects of chemical mixtures, synergistic effects, and health effects associated with consistent low-dose exposure.” 1 The most EPA regulations, released in 2012, do not account for inert ingredients.

The herbicide atrazine is classified as a carcinogen and is a possible carcinogen and water contaminant, as well as dozens of independent studies. Chlorpyrifos is a volatile chemical that becomes airborne and is prone to drift. "PANNA is calling on the EPA to suspend its use." According to the USDA Pesticide Data Program, chlorpyrifos was found in at least 80 foods, including corn, and is a possible carcinogen and water contaminant, according to a 2007 EPA report it’s the second most-used pesticide in U.S. agriculture.2

5 "Impact of Prenatal Chlorpyrifos Exposure on Neurodevelopment in the First 3 Years of Life Among Inner-City Children,” American Academy of Pediatrics, 2006.


7 "Aldehyde dehydrogenase inhibition as a pathogenic mechanism in Parkinson disease,” Proceedings of Neurologists at the University of California, Los Angeles found a link between Parkinson’s disease and exposure to a fungicide called benomyl, which was used for decades on a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, and nuts before being discontinued in 2007.7

• That same report says there is “robust evidence” that pesticides are associated with cancer, especially leukemia and brain tumors, lower IQ, autism, attention deficit disorder, and hyperactivity.

• Neurologists at the University of California, Los Angeles found a link between Parkinson’s disease and exposure to a fungicide called benomyl, which was used for decades on a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, and nuts before being discontinued in 2007.7


Pesticide data available on the NASS database is limited, and federal reporting is scattered, so we don’t know the true scale of what is used in Georgia. (The only state in the country with a comprehensive pesticide-use reporting program is California, which requires that all monthly agricultural pesticide use be reported to county agricultural commissioners since 1990.)

There is no recorded information about applications of many of the pesticides listed in the NASS database. Instead, the majority of columns contain (D), which stands for “Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.”

The EPA and Georgia’s Department of Agriculture (GDA) register and license pesticides, but Kelly Products, the firm that assists the GDA with pesticide data tracking, only tracks what products are registered for sale within the state. Though some states require pesticide sales information, Georgia does not, so there is no definite way to gauge which pesticides are purchased and used on our crops.

Pesticide manufacturers claim that in the correct quantities their products are safe for humans and the environment. And even though we’re still discovering the full long-term impact of these chemicals, emerging science suggests that they affect everything from our bodies to our environment to the soil that provides livelihoods for farmers across the state. “It’s soil versus chemicals,” says Georgia Organics Executive Director Alice Rolls, “Whereas a sustainable farmer might spend years building up her soil, in conventional agricultural chemicals are applied before pests even show up. By definition, pesticides are applied prevention, and that prevention has a price.”

“A hungry pest can decimate a farm’s bottom line,” says Georgia Organics’ Jay Feldman. “Obviously farmers don’t apply chemicals to replace the use of hazardous pesticides with ecologically sound and socially sustainable farming methods that are now known, and we must devote our ingenuity and resources to developing others.”

So he basically told us 50 years ago that we really needed to work on alternatives, and while she didn’t use the word organic per se, what she describes, in terms of attention to complex biological systems, goes directly to the point,” Feldman said.

Growing food organically and supporting farms that do is also a part of the solution. In a March 2008 report called “Simplifying the Pesticide Risk Equation: The Organic Option,” the Organic Center reported that if all fruits and vegetables in the country were grown organically, then the risks of dietary exposure to pesticides would be reduced by 97 percent.

We have to encourage responsible policy in addition to making healthy choices for our own families. Sign up for the Beyond Pesticides and PANNA alerts. Support anti-GMO measures. As Feldman noted, “genetically engineered crops are wholly dependent on increasing herbicide use.” Share this article with a friend.

There is reason for hope. The last few years have seen an unprecedented increase in consumers who want clean food for their families and communities, as well as farmers who want to grow that food.

“Biodiversity, crop rotation, cover crops, and healthy soil are all necessary for good yields,” she said. “But in certain circumstances, they are not sufficient and growers need tools to deal with outbreaks. This is becoming ever more apparent as we seemingly get a new invasive species that has no natural predators or controls every ever more apparent as we seemingly get a new invasive species that has no natural predators or controls every...
Support Our Efforts! Become a member of Georgia Organics today!

2013 CONFERENCE

With more than 1,300 attendees, the 16th Annual Georgia Organics Conference and Expo united the two communities most responsible for the health of Georgians—growers who farm organically and healthcare practitioners— in what was the largest conference in our history. The conference culminated with a keynote from CNN’s Dr. Sanjay Gupta, who recognized the importance of uniting good food and good farms. “We’ve eaten our way into a problem, we can eat our way out of it,” he said to a standing-room-only crowd.

2013 FARM TO SCHOOL SUMMIT

Amakiasa Ford-Howe of Truly Living Well leads a Summit session. The 4th annual Georgia Farm to School Summit inspired 260 participants representing a third of Georgia’s school districts to grow their farm to school programs! Over two days, school nutrition staff, teachers, parents, farmers, and more attended 16 educational sessions, four field trips, and one amazing keynote address from FoodCorps’s Debra Eschmeyer.

FARM SUPPLY UPDATE

This winter’s farm supply order from Seven Springs Farm helped 38 farmers save almost $4,000. Over 38,000 pounds of products, or over 900 items, were delivered to Athens and Atlanta.

CAPACITY CAMPAIGN

The Georgia Organics Capacity Campaign has received $738,000 towards our three-year campaign goal of $1.1 million. For more about the campaign, see page 6.

MEMBERSHIP

Current membership is up to 1,790, a 14% increase since our last update and a 55% increase in membership compared to the same time in 2011. Also, 6,644 people participated in the Organic Gardening magazine promotion campaign at the end of 2012.

Atlanta, Jan. 28

At an Atlanta Public Schools Farm to School Food Encouragement meeting with School Nutrition Director Dr. Marilyn Hughes, parents came to hear how APS sources their food.

Robertat, March 6

On March 6, Georgia Organics trekked to Greenway Farms in Roberta for a meeting of the minds regarding making pastured-poultry processing a reality in Georgia. Many thanks to Kerry and Robin Dunaway for sharing their insight—and for their brilliance, community engagement, and good farming practices. There are some great ideas about making central Georgia—and Crawford County—a poultry hub in the future.

Tifton & Fort Valley, Jan. 8 & 10

In January, our Farm to School program began partnering with Ag Education teachers in central and south Georgia, leading two workshops on incorporating farm to school principles into agriculture education curriculum. Pilot programs at 23 schools will serve as models for the regions, and 15 pilot schools in north Georgia began incorporating farm to school a couple years ago.

Reidsville, Jan. 26

The Southeast Local Food Conference was an information-packed weekend for organic gardeners, modern homesteaders, sustainable farmers, and do-it-yourselfers in south Georgia. Passionate people shared the secrets to kefir, ginger, curing meat, rainbow-colored carrots, growing loofah sponges, solar powering your farm, and so much more.

Sparta, March 23

Jenny Lavon, one of the foremost experts in organic fruit production and an authority on muscadines in Georgia, led a hands-on workshop on successful fruit tree pruning and grafting. The workshop took place on the beautiful grounds of Elm Street Gardens in historic downtown Sparta.

IN THE FIELD

Around-the-State Update

January–April 2013

Bringing Together Sustainable Farmers, Modern Homesteaders, Organic Gardeners, and More: The 4th Annual Georgia Farm to School Summit

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Urban homesteading has never been more popular, and Atlanta is home to a new educational resource that will forge a community around this growing movement. Georgia Organics is proud to be the fiscal partner for The Homestead Atlanta, which offers affordable classes, convenient locations, and expert instructors to help students learn about everything from canning to permaculture. Upcoming classes include:

- **MAY 4:** The Home Dairy - Cheesemaking & Beyond (Part I)
- **MAY 11:** Rainwater Harvesting
- **MAY 12:** Chef’s Kitchen - Vinegar canning

Georgia Organics members get reduced rates for classes! WWW.THEHOMESTEADATL.COM

Did you know that you can support Georgia Organics in your company’s employee giving campaign? You can designate to Georgia Organics through EarthShare of Georgia and have a small donation taken out of your paycheck, which adds up to a significant contribution at the end of the year! Call Alice to enroll: 678.702.0400.

Events Calendar
For more information, visit www.georgiaorganics.org/events.

**MAY 2 This is Market, Decatur**
This annual celebration of the farmers markets and local chefs who make up Atlanta’s good food community is coming to Gaia Gardens. Miller Union’s Steven Satterfield will curate local food prepared by a team of the city’s best chefs. Admission is $35 for members and $45 for non-members. (This includes a year membership to Georgia Organics.) VIP tickets are $100 and include a special Happy Hour and a farm tour. For more information, go to www.xorbia.com/e/giao/thisismarket13.

**MAY 13 Starting A New Food Business in Georgia Workshop, Tifton**
University of Georgia Extension faculty from the Department of Food Science & Technology and the National Center for Home Food Preservation and representatives from the Georgia Department of Agriculture and FDA will address topics concerning the food product entrepreneur. The program will conclude with a panel discussion with experts and faculty answering your questions about the challenges in starting, running, and growing a food business in Georgia. Pre-registration is required by May 2. $150. For more information, email EF$@uga.edu.

**MAY 16 Canning Workshop, Statham**
This hands-on workshop at Lazy B Farm will teach you how to preserve your food using a water bath canner and a pressure canner. We’ll discuss the proper way to handle food before it’s canned, can some jam using seasonal fruits and can some soup with meat in the pressure canner. $35. To register, go to www.thelazybfarm.com/workshops/canning.

**MAY 19 Seed to Table Weekend, Little St. Simons Island**
Join executive chef and local organic farmer Matthew Raiford, Little St. Simons Island’s organic gardener Amy Schuster, celebrated author Sanma Ray, and Little St. Simons Island Naturalists for a three-day, two-night experience that will include cooking and gardening classes, a reading from “The Seed Underground” as well as led programs in kayaking, fishing, hiking, biking, bird watching, and learning about the conservation initiatives practiced on Little St. Simons Island. Cost is $399 per couple per night. To make reservations call (912) 638–7472.

**MAY 4 Implementation-Alternatives to Watering Your Garden:** Stewardship of a Priceless Resource, Decatur. Join Paul Morgan of the rainharvestcompany.com at the Wydle Center as he discusses the costs and logistics of implementing systems that will enable you to collect rain water, grey water, air conditioning condensate and/or ground water for outdoor use. Advanced registration required. $5 Wydle Center members, $10 non-members. To register, go to www.wydlecenter.org.

**JULY 21 JCT. Kitchen Attack Of The Killer Tomato Festival, Atlanta** Some of the South’s best chefs, farmers, and mixologists team up to benefit Georgia Organics. The festival will once again be held at JCT. Kitchen & Bar and will spread out over the pedestrian bridge that connects the two sides of Westside Provisions District to feature 35+ chefs, 14 mixologist participants, and 30+ farmers. The event will also include live music from The Spazmatics and local chef band Five Bone Rack. $55 for general public, $50 Georgia Organics members. Tickets purchased after July 1 are $70 for everyone.
Is your membership current? Check mailing label for your expiration date & renew today.

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