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UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct. 18
A Tale of Two Chickens
Join Georgia Organics for a poultry discussion with Leah Garces, USA Director for World Compassion Farming, and Will Harris of White Oak Pastures. Learn the low-down on factory chicken farming in Georgia versus sustainable, pastured poultry operations. We’ll also get a quick update on Georgia Organics poultry policy work and discuss what we all can do to eat less meat to reduce our environmental footprint, while choosing sustainable meats. Atlanta-based Vutles will be providing artisanal grassfed delights and other dishes. P10.

Oct. 15 – Oct. 24
Food Day Georgia
Food Day (the Earth Day of food issues) will be celebrated with an “I Eat Real” social media campaign, and many events across the state. See details online at www.facebook.com/FoodDayGeorgia. P10

Shifting to a Smarter Food System

A 2nd-grader at an elementary school in one of Atlanta’s low-income neighborhoods held up a strawberry and eyed it with intense suspicion.

He bit into it slowly, cautiously, and his judgmental taste buds went to work.

Suddenly his young face bloomed and he popped the rest of the red berry into his mouth. When he finished chewing, he said, “I thought strawberry was that jelly stuff inside Pop-Tarts.”

It was his first real strawberry, harvested from a nearby farm for a Georgia Organics farm to school event.

Technically speaking, he has had real strawberry before. Kellogg’s Frosted Strawberry Pop-Tarts contain 10 percent real fruit.

The rest of the “strawberry-flavored goodness,” as Kellogg’s describes it, and the pastry that surrounds it is a mix of 43 other ingredients. Some are as harmless and simple as sugar. Many others are unpronounceable, and three additives are on several lists of harmful ingredients that should be avoided.

The plus side is that a 6-pack of Pop-Tarts, which includes 12 pastries, costs about $4. By any measure, paying $4 for six breakfasts is a good deal.

Continued on page 7
Letter from the Director

I’ve often thought that the “farm bill” should be called the “food bill.” This reframing might engage the public and encourage them to be more active in the debate. The reality is that the shape of the farm bill has been dictated by the powerful agricultural food lobby for the last 50 years. But now I’m thinking that calling it the “food bill” might not be such a good idea. Such a move could take the emphasis away from farms and put it even more in the hands of “food companies.”

Our food system is currently designed to profit, not farmers, but food industries. The 10 largest food companies account for more than half of all products on supermarket shelves. This power fills our grocery and convenient stores to the brim with processed food and segregates us from the farmers and the food they harvest. Farmers markets represent one of the best ways to reconnect our citizenry back with these farms, and real food that is fresh and wholesome. If more people shopped at farmers markets then we have the potential to improve our health and put our dollars directly in the pockets of the farmers who deserve our support.

A recent New York Times article talked about the growth of farmers market nationwide, and that in some areas, particularly smaller towns, there is now a glut of markets. Markets are “cannibalizing” each other’s customer base and farmers are being forced to sell at two to three markets just to make what they made 10 years ago. Once again the burden and risk was falling to the farmer. Nowhere in the article did it mention trying to increase the customer base.

In the next five years, that is exactly what Georgia Organics will be doing. Our new mission is to connect organic food from Georgia farms to Georgia families. Thanks to a grant from the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, Georgia Organics will reach beyond the customer base. We’re partnering with the University of Georgia and Fort Valley State University to produce a barrage of educational content that will transform the “For Farmers” section of our website into the premier educational resource for growers in the country, with training “How To” videos, podcasts, successful farm case studies, and farmer-generated articles.

We are also need to create a new army of farmers. A different grant, this one from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, is funding a three-year project to cultivate the next generation of sustainable and organic farmers and ranchers by providing concrete, innovative and impactful programs, and farmer to farmer mentoring.

Every emerging market struggles with the chicken and the egg quandary surrounding supply and demand. We’re tackling both. If you’ve been on the fence about joining Georgia Organics, today would be a great day. We need your active involvement to shift to a smarter food system.

Yours in organic foods and farms,
Alice Rolls
Executive Director

I Gave At The Office!

Do you work for the State of Georgia or federal government? If so, then you can designate a payroll deduction gift to Georgia Organics this fall through EarthShare Georgia. Just look for our code in your campaign brochure and help us connect organic food from Georgia farms to Georgia families.

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) – Code 39360
State of Georgia – Code 193036

Georgia Organics is one of 20 local groups supported through EarthShare and its more than 80 Georgia workplace partners. Don’t have an EarthShare campaign and want to start one at your business? Contact Alice Rolls (alice@georgiaorganics.org) to learn more.
Save the date and plan to join us Feb. 24-25 in Columbus for Georgia Organics’ 15th Annual Conference & Expo.

Our keynote speakers will be Will Allen, founder and CEO of Growing Power, Inc., a farm and community food center in Milwaukee, and Chef Michel Nischan, food policy advocate and founder of the non-profit Wholesome Wave.

Allen is the leader of the growing urban agriculture movement, which seeks to reshape metropolitan areas into centers of food production and cooperative communities. He is the paragon of “Blight into broccoli,” a reclamation philosophy surrounding urban agriculture.

Allen, son of a sharecropper, former professional basketball player, ex-corporate sales leader, and now farmer, promotes the belief that all people, regardless of their economic circumstances, should have access to fresh, safe, affordable, and nutritious foods at all times. He’s a philosopher farmer, and upholds the powers of compost and community.

In 2008, Will was named a John D. and Katherine T. McArthur Foundation Fellow and was awarded a prestigious foundation “genius grant” for his work – only the second farmer ever to be so honored. In May 2010, Time magazine named Will to the Time 100 World’s Most Influential People.

Nischan is owner and founder of Dressing Room, his homegrown restaurant in Westport, CT, and CEO and president of Wholesome Wave, which is dedicated to nourishing neighborhoods by supporting increased production and access to healthy, fresh, and affordable locally grown food for the well-being of all. Using private funds, Wholesome Wave creates chapters in multiple states to double the value of food stamps, officially known as SNAP benefits (EBT), WIC FMNP Coupons and WIC Senior Nutrition Coupons spent at participating partner markets and farm stands across the country. Basically, Wholesome Wave leverages existing government food nutrition programs to encourage shopping at local farmers markets, by creating an incentive; every EBT or WIC dollar spent at a WWG partner market becomes two dollars.

A proponent of sustainable farming, local and regional food systems, and heritage recipes, Nischan has long been a leader in the movement to honor local, pure, simple, and delicious cooking. Nischan’s restaurant is a community gathering place, with a philosophy: “We believe that the food we grow and cook in the place that we call home defines who we are.”

To get the scoop on Growing Power and Wholesome Wave, and to hear the incredible stories that Nischan and Allen will share, come to the conference. Registration will open in December.

And while you’re at the conference you may as well attend a farm tour, a workshop, sit in on an incredible diversity of education sessions, and the best networking and confluence of the local food movement’s inspirational community.

In 2012 we are partnering with the Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network, due to Columbus’ proximity to the Alabama border. ASAN is helping identify presenters and tour opportunities in Alabama and is promoting the conference to their community.

We are fortunate to once again welcome Advocate level sponsor Whole Foods Market. Contact Sandy Layton at sandy@georgiaorganics.org if you would like to sponsor or exhibit at the Georgia Organics Conference.

By The Numbers: State of the State
Remembering Two Passionate Friends of Sustainable Food

Liam Rattray and Marco Fonseca were dedicated and enthusiastic members of the good food movement. The entire community of sustainable agriculture mourns Rattray and Fonseca, who passed this summer.

Honoring Liam Rattray

Liam Rattray was a rising star in sustainable agriculture. Born in London, Rattray became an American citizen in the Spring of 2011. He graduated from Georgia Tech Summa Cum Laude, and had just received a $50,000 grant for a renewable-energy project at Truly Living Well Natural Urban Farm.

He served as the legislative aide for Georgia Organics during the most recent legislative session, was a member of the Atlanta Local Food Initiative, and was a past manager of the East Atlanta Village Farmers Market. He also started a university community supported agriculture program with two dozen local Georgia farmers, and chaired the Georgia Institute of Technology Sustainable Food Committee.

Jonathan Tescher, Georgia Organics farmer services coordinator, offers this remembrance: “Liam forged his own path. He lived happy and free and was one of the most intelligent persons I’ve come to know. Most impressive was the diverse disciplines in which he could apply his brilliance. He had just finished a policy research project mapping urban agriculture related zoning codes for 10 metro Atlanta counties. He could go from that to sitting in lab space at the Georgia Tech Research Institute developing new mushroom cultivars that performed better on coffee grounds, making use of an untapped waste stream.

“Liam may no longer be in the physical form, but he will be with us for the rest of our lives. I want us to honor Liam by making his hopes and dreams a part of our own. In 50 years, let’s look back at what we’ve accomplished and feel that Liam would be proud.”

Honoring Marco Fonseca

A native of La Lima, Honduras, Marco was born in the middle of a banana plantation on June 27, 1947. He was a UGA Cooperative Extension Agent, researcher, educator, and a Georgia Organics board member of four years.

The fourth child of 11 children, Marco was the first to graduate with a university degree. Born into extreme poverty in Central America, he used his first paycheck to buy his family’s first home, which is their home still today.

Despite his humble start, Marco graduated from Cornell University with an undergraduate degree in agriculture and earned a Master’s in Horticulture from UC Davis.

Through the Peace Corps, he met his wife Terry and spent many years working with volunteers in Honduras. He also worked several years with Honduras Outreach promoting sustainable agriculture in rural areas. He was happiest teaching people about gardening, the joys of pruning, and the unending benefits of composting.

He was a “glass half-full” individual with a generous heart and giving spirit.

Marco had been a part of the UGA Cooperative Extension family for 20 years. After serving as a county agent, Marco became the State Master Gardener Program coordinator. In this role he was responsible for managing the training of UGA’s Master Gardener volunteers. He assisted county extension agents in support of their Master Gardener programs, promoted horticultural education, and encouraged the appreciation and protection of the environment. His office was on the Griffin Campus and Griffin became his home.

Marco is survived by his wife of 40 years, Terry, his eldest daughter Carolyn, his middle child Susan and son-in-law Bruce, his son Michael and daughter-in-law Amy, his grandchildren Isabella and Evan, his 90 year-old mother Trinidad, and his siblings Edgardo, Agusto, Hortencia, Rogelio, Miriam, Henry, Aminta, Armando, and Deysi.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to fund a student scholarship in his honor. Donations can be made to “The UGA Foundation” for Marco T. Fonseca Scholarship Fund, UGA Griffin Campus Business Office, 1109 Experiment Street, Griffin GA 30223.

Donations may be made online at https://www.externalaffairs.uga.edu/os/simple?account=30728930&name=Georgia+Master+Gardeners+Scholarship+Fund.
Program Grad Sees Urban Ag Reshaping Cities

The Georgia Organics Urban Agriculture Training Program is successful because of its flexibility. In addition to its monthly in-depth workshops that cover Horticulture 101, soil fertility, pest management, tools, compost, marketing, and more, participants may visit 15 urban agriculture sites such as farms, education centers, community gardens, and food banks.

The aim of the training is to cultivate urban farmers and gardeners to build healthy, vibrant local food communities. Georgia Organics is looking for at least one of the two following motivations from applicants: The first is for those who want to grow/raise food as a business, for supplemental income, or as training for future employment. The second is to increase access of fruits and vegetables in underserved communities.

Below is a Q&A with Bilal Sarwari, who was in the program from February 2010 until November 2010. His commitment and experience demonstrate the growing interest in urban agriculture and the ability of the program to offer a tailored experience for each participant.

**What was your ag experience before entering the program?**

I’ve been gardening with my dad since I was four, but really got into the idea of sustainable agriculture after I read Animal, Vegetable, Miracle by Barbara Kingsolver. She has been my favorite author for several years and inspired me by detailing her struggle with trying to grow the majority of her family’s food. Her biology background is echoed through her writing and has resonated with me in all of her books. During my undergrad, I helped coordinate several educational garden plots throughout campus. The challenges of maintaining separate plots really taught me to become a resourceful person when it comes to urban gardening.

**Why did you apply?**

I applied because I wanted to refine my knowledge of urban agriculture. The program was appealing because it was spread out over several months, gave me a sense of purpose after graduation and was set on a very manageable schedule (since I was serving at Watershed, then later Floataway Cafe, at the time). The range of topics that the program covered was what really convinced me to apply. It covered almost every aspect of urban farming that I could thing of, and about five more that I didn’t even realize were important.

**What’s the single most important thing you learned from the training and site visits?**

The single most important thing I learned was that there is no one “right” way to farm in an urban setting. This program gave us the tools to approach a site and utilize innovative techniques to build soil quality and eventually create a productive garden (or farm). A focus on the social, economic and environmental principles of urban gardening is my one consistent guide when dealing with any site.

**What are your future plans in urban ag?**

I hope to eventually get my masters (possibly PhD) in environmental public health. I’d like to become more involved in Atlanta’s growth by helping to create a solid infrastructure of urban agriculture. We will inevitably be forced to adopt a food system that will source our produce from a much closer range. Diminishing reserves of easily-accessed oil will simply make our current system impossible to sustain. If we start farming within city bounds and get people used to the idea of seasonal foods, we’ll be off to a healthy start. My dream is that agriculture will be taught to children and that produce availability will eventually become secondhand knowledge. What I want for the U.S., and especially Atlanta, is an extremely “food-educated” public. I want everyone to grow their own tomatoes. I want people to plant garlic as a landscape border instead of pansies. Atlanta is primed for this idea. Our buildings are far apart with huge stretches of land in between. I imagine office workers adopting small plots near their jobs in the city and helping to maintain a collaborative city-wide farm. The government will provide support and people will come to expect a small responsibility for growing their own food.

**Is there anything else you’d like to add?**

Currently, I’ve started to consult a few companies on urban agriculture. The resources are there, but people sometimes need a bit of guidance to figure out where to get started. My main job is being the gardener at Empire State South, a restaurant in Atlanta owned by Hugh Acheson and whose Executive Chef is Ryan Smith. I manage about eight plots of land around Midtown and have also collaborated with the Piedmont Park Seed to Market Garden. In return for my help in their garden, the’ve given me space to grow specialty produce for the restaurant. All of the plots are within walking distance from each other, and the chefs are always thrilled with the freshness of the herbs and produce I bring in (since I usually harvest a few hours before dinner service). I work closely with Chef Ryan to come up with innovative uses for local plants and edible flowers. He’s extremely knowledgeable and is a big believer of using every part of the plant. My collaboration with him has expanded my gardening knowledge a great deal in the few short months I’ve been working for the restaurant. I’m also about to start a small (.5 acre) farm in my friend’s backyard in Decatur where I currently compost all of the kitchen’s scraps and our coffee shop’s grounds. I’m currently looking to compost for other restaurants in the Decatur area. By Spring of 2012, I would like the farm to be a free educational resource for elementary school kids.

You can follow Sarwari on Twitter @HipsterGardener.

The deadline to apply for the Urban Ag Training Program is Nov. 14. To apply or learn more about the program, visit http://www.georgiaorganics.org/farmers/urbanagtraining.aspx
Georgia Organics 2012 Farm Bill Platform

Georgia Organics is pleased to present our 2012 Farm Bill policy platform below.

Over the next year, Georgia Organics will be providing members with updates on these issues, and interfacing with congressional staffers to promote this policy agenda. We encourage you to use these talking points and help us drive the conversation for a better Farm Bill in 2012!

In line with the strategic objectives, developed from member input, Georgia Organics wants the 2012 Farm Bill to:

**Georgia Organics Envisions a Farm Bill That:**

- **Empowers the Development of Local Food System Infrastructure;**
- **Expands Organic Agriculture;**
- **Increases the Amount of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (specialty crops) Produced;**
- **Emboldens Farm to Institution Programs;**
- **Minimizes Environmental Consequences that are a By-Product of Modern Day Agriculture and;**
- **Establishes Equitable Access to Good Food for All. No Exceptions.**

**Reinvigorate** local and regional agricultural economies and food systems by improving processing and distribution channels and to strengthen existing and new market opportunities for small and mid-sized farms.

Georgia Fact: Infrastructure would empower the development of regional food hubs, support farm to school programs, and bolster value-added production. This is a key strategy to reinvigorate Georgia’s local food system which has all but lost its historic local food infrastructure.

**Strengthen** the role of organic agriculture by providing funding for competitive organic research, organic data collection and price reporting; funding for enforcement of the national organic standards and certification cost-share assistance; crop insurance reform, and make working lands conservation programs accessible to organic farmers and ranchers.

Georgia Fact: Georgia ranks 30 out of 50 states in terms of organic production, with 0.1% of our total farmland under organic production. Yet agriculture is the state’s number one industry and the fastest growing sector of the food economy, growing 8% in 2010.

**Increase** the amount of fruits and vegetables grown in Georgia through increased funding for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.

Georgia Fact: Of the $20 billion spent annually on food, nearly $16 billion is going to out of state farmers. In 2011, Georgia was awarded $1.1 million in specialty crop funds.

**Include** a robust and well-funded Conservation Title to support working lands conservation programs, conservation easement and farmland preservation programs, sustainable agriculture, and organic transition assistance. Ensure these funds are equitably accessible and distributed to farmers using practices that minimize environmental pollution.

Georgia Fact: In 2010, the Conservation Stewardship Program and Environmental Quality Incentive Program alone impacted half a million acres in Georgia.

- **Support** the entry and development of beginning farmers and ranchers through significant investment in innovative programs that facilitate access to land, credit, insurance, technical assistance and markets.

Georgia Fact: The average age of a Georgia farmer is 58. We need to invest in the next generation of farmers who will grow food for an exploding population.

- **Increase** research and extension efforts to foster organic and sustainable agriculture systems, economic viability for small and mid-sized farmers and ranchers, public breeding initiatives for regionally adapted cultivars, and sustainable economic and community development.

Georgia Fact: In 2010, Georgia was home to 86 Sustainable Agriculture Research & Extension projects alone, bringing over $3 million in critical research support to our communities to further sustainable agriculture research.

- **Re-align** current production subsidies to programs that reward farmers and ranchers for the multiple and ongoing environmental and climate benefits delivered by their farming systems and practices.

Georgia Fact: Since 1995, Georgia has received more than $4 billion in commodity subsidies, compared to a mere $442 million in conservation support.

- **Connect** farmers with community development opportunities that increase access to farmers markets, CSAs and other local, healthy food enterprises for low income families.

Georgia Fact: Studies indicate direct links between healthy food choices to income. Georgia Organics believes in good food for all and is a proud host of the Wholesome Wave Georgia project which increases the buying power of recipients on food assistance at farmers markets to empower more equitable access to healthy food.
Shifting to a Smarter Food System Continued from cover

The Pop-Tart is just one example of the accomplishments of modern industry, a food system capable of manufacturing cheap, affordable food.

Generally, the food system refers to the growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, distributing, and marketing of food. It also includes the input products, things like chemical fertilizers, insecticides, cardboard cereal boxes, Big Gulp cups and straws, and the wax grocery store apples are coated with.

It runs on fossil fuels, which are used to manufacture chemical fertilizers, and the processing, transporting, and packaging of food products.

The food system is about industry and efficiency, which are two endeavors American businesses mastered long ago.

For instance, efficiencies are so great that farmers receive an average of only 11.6 cents for every dollar spent on food at a traditional grocery store, according to the U.S.D.A. The rest of that dollar went to processing, packaging, transportation, distribution, retail trade, and food service, which includes any place that prepares meals, snacks, and beverages for immediate consumption.

Most crops are grown to be shipped someplace else. Most consumers eat food grown someplace else, even though the land around them is suited for their food needs. Food is commodity that is shipped and traded.

Here’s a local example. The average Georgian eats about 30 pounds of fresh lettuce per year - that’s about 285 million pounds - yet the state grows less than 245,000 pounds per year. That gap is enormous, and could be a huge economic gain for many farmers.

The food system’s emphasis on high calorie processed foods also has health consequences. The youngest Americans are part of the first generation in history that are expected to have a shorter life span than their parents, mainly because of food related chronic diseases, according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Over the past year, Georgia Organics has undertaken an extensive planning process, including in-depth discussions with community leaders, members and other stakeholders on the organization’s past, present, and future.

The final product, a 5-year Strategic Plan, brings a fundamental shift to Georgia Organics that addresses components of the food system in a totally new way.

Georgia Organics has a new mission statement: We connect organic food from Georgia farms to Georgia families. A new vision: All Georgians eat organic food from local farms, transforming our health, our environment, and our economy.

We’ve established these indicators, which will allow us to quantify the success of our efforts over the next five years.

• Increase the number of organic and sustainable farmers in rural and urban areas.
• Increase the number of children participating in farm to school programs.
• Increase the number of Georgians eating organically grown, local food.

We also have a new set of core values that function as a moral compass for the organization; see them at www.georgiaorganics.org/syearplan.aspx.

“Historically, we solely focused on farmer education, and this will remain the backbone of the organization,” says Georgia Organics Executive Director Alice Rolls. “However, we’ve realized, at the encouragement of our farm members, that we have to look at the food system in new ways. We can’t help farmers without political power and consumer awareness, so that’s where we are headed.”

One example of this new focus is our advocacy work on behalf of independent farmers who want to raise pastured poultry. Head to our website, click on “Take Action” on the top bar, and then “Pastured Poultry” on the blue column on the left side of the page for the latest updates.

We’re also making sure that you’re educated and active on the most important piece of legislation affecting food and agriculture, the Farm Bill.

On pages 8 and 9, you’ll find a visual representation by systems illustrator Nat Slaughter of the food system that shows its impacts on your health, the environment, and the economy.

FOOD DAY .ORG OCTOBER 24, 2011

One easy way you can help grow the Good Food movement is to spread the news about the value of local food through a celebration on Oct. 24 called Food Day, which is the Earth Day of important food issues. In Georgia we are organizing an “I Eat Real” campaign for Food Day, which will have its own Facebook page (www.facebook.com/FoodDayGeorgia) where you can post your “I Eat Real” photos (it’s a fill in the blank display, so you can showcase your favorite real foods.)

Our Farm to School Program is some of our most challenging and rewarding work. Parents are asking for farm to school programs, for the sake of their children’s health.

There are now 159 schools in the state that have some element of a farm to school program in place. Each of those schools represents another chance for a student to sink their teeth into their first strawberry.

Finally, Advocacy Director Jennifer Owens will lead a Farm Bill campaign (see page 6) that will give you the opportunity to engage our elected officials and support a more localized food system. We won’t be able to impact change without your help.

“I genuinely believe there is an appetite for change among leaders and an historic opportunity for change is just within reach. We are not a lone voice any more,” says Owens. “The first lady of Georgia didn’t take a meeting with us just to be nice. She grew up on a farm, she is a mom, she was a teacher, and she has a fantastic advocate as a chef of more local and organic food in the Governor’s mansion. Most importantly, she recognizes this is a huge issue facing Georgia, and she wants to be a part of the solution.”
SHIFTING TO A SMARTER FOOD SYSTEM

PESTICIDES

THE AVERAGE CHILD CONSUMES 5 SERVINGS OF PESTICIDE RESIDUE DAILY

CONVENTIONAL PRODUCE AND TOXINS

- Apples
- Grapes
- Celery
- Bell Peppers
- Strawberries
- Potatoes
- Peaches
- Blueberries
- Spinach
- Lettuce
- Nectarines
- Leafy Greens

EATING 6 SERVINGS FROM THIS LIST EXPOSES YOU TO 14 DIFFERENT PESTICIDES A DAY

BUY ORGANIC TO AVOID PESTICIDES

INDUSTRIAL FOOD SYSTEM

FOSSIL FUEL : CALORIE RATIO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<td>10:1</td>
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PRODUCES 34% OF USA GREENHOUSE GASES ANNUALLY
USES 20% OF THE TOTAL ENERGY USED IN THE USA

1.5 TRILLION TONS UNSUSTAINABLE

IMPACT OF YOUR FOOD PURCHASES

GEORGIANS SPEND $20 BILLION ON FOOD ANNUALLY

OF THIS $20 BILLION, $4 BILLION STAYS IN GA

$16 BILLION LEAVES GA

ONLY 20% STAYS IN OUR GA ECONOMY

CONSUMER SPENDING THAT STAYS IN GA

WHY?

25¢ GROcery STORE

$1 FARMER’S MARKET


SOURCE: MICHAEL POLLAN’S 2009 “ATLANTA SUN FOOD AGENDA” KEYNOTE ADDRESS, AND THE RODALE INSTITUTE.

SOURCES: THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE, SUSTAINABLE SEATTLE, U.S.D.A. NATIONAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE, GEORGIA DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE, AND GEORGIA ORGANICS.
CONSOMER WOULD CUT 90% 
THEIR PESTICIDE EXPOSURE RIDING THE DIRTY DOZEN FROM THIS LIST INSTEAD!

THE CLEAN DOZEN

ORGANIC CONSUMPTION AND ITS HEALTH IMPACT

ONIONS MANGOES
SWEET CORN EGGPLANT
CABBAGE CANTALOupe
AVOCADO MUSHROOMS
ASPARAGUS WATERMELON
SWEET PEAS GRAPEFRUIT

ORGANIC MILK

HAS MORE

ANTI-OXIDANTS
OMEGA-3s
ANTICARCINOGENS
VITAMINS

ORGANIC TOMATOES

HAVE

89 TIMES MORE ANTIOXIDANTS THAN NON-ORGANIC TOMATOES

734 BILLION TONS OF ABSORPTION OF CO2

1 ACRE OF ORGANIC FARM LAND

ABSORBS 1.75 TONS OF CO2 PER YEAR

2.7 CARS

117 CARS

700% INCREASE IN FARMS MARKETS BETWEEN 2004 AND 2010

ORGANIC PRODUCERS INCREASED 220% FROM 2009 TO 2010

ORGANIC ACRES INCREASED 892% FROM 2009 TO 2010

GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES

CONVENTIONAL COMMODITY FARMS

$4.1 BILLION IN GA SINCE 1995

ORGANIC FARMS

$2.2 MILLION IN GA SINCE 2009, THE PROGRAM’S FIRST YEAR

GEORGIA’S LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM

WE ARE GROWING!
Georgia Organics Fall Events

Important Note: Unless otherwise noted, go to www.georgiaorganics.org and click “Events” for ticket and RSVP information.

Party at Ponce
Oct. 1, 7 p.m. – 11 p.m., Atlanta
A Kickoff for Ponce City Market, the future transformation of the old Sears building, to benefit Georgia Organics and the Atlanta Beltline with the Indigo Girls, Shawn Mullins, and Francine Reed. To purchase tickets go to www.empiretickets.com.

Farm to School for Elementary School Teachers
Oct. 4, 8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m., Atlanta
This hands-on, full-day workshop will teach elementary school educators the best practices for incorporating food, farms, and nutrition education across the curriculum to improve student achievement, promote love of fresh fruits and veggies, and foster an understanding of where food comes from.

Georgia Organics Member Night at Farm Burger, Atlanta
Oct. 4, 5 p.m.–9 p.m., Atlanta
Come and eat at Farm Burger's new location in Buckhead and 5% of the proceeds will go to Georgia Organics that night. Additionally, members will receive a coupon (upon arrival) for a free appetizer just for being you! Not a member? You can join in advance or on site.

A Tale of Two Chickens: A Georgia Organics Meat and Greet
Oct. 18, 6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., Atlanta
Join Georgia Organics for a poultry discussion with Leah Garces, USA Director for World Compassion Farming, and Will Harris of White Oak Pastures. We'll get an update on Georgia Organics’ poultry policy and conservation service have cost shared on the farm and eating sweet grasses. Learn about how the farm operates and the practices that the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service have cost shared on the farm and what is available to farms through their programs. This event is free and includes lunch.

The Big Grill – A Midtown Block Party
Oct. 21, Atlanta
Chill with Taste of Atlantás Bill Grill Block Party in Tech Square, benefitting Georgia Organics. Fire-up the weekend with renowned chefs, including Food Network’s Aaron Sanchez and Atlantás own Kevin Rathbun, for a festive 10th anniversary celebration – complete with birthday cake, live music, cold beer and the best bites in the city. For more information, visit www.tasteatlanta.com.

Family Crop Mob & Atlanta Farm to School Fair
Oct. 22, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. & 1 p.m.–4 p.m., Atlanta
Join other families weeding and seeding on a 1/2 acre farm at Coan Middle School, followed by the first of its kind a County turned City Fair. Free outdoor festival at Mother Matilda Beasley Park; live music, food, exhibitors, and educational workshops. www.welledsavannah.com

Food Day @ Forsyth Farmers Market
Oct. 22, 9 a.m.–11 a.m., Savannah
The Bring it Home educational event focuses on food literacy and the financial/health/community benefits of shopping at farmers’ markets that accept SNAP/EBT. For more info forsythfarmersmarket@gmail.com

Food Day at Emory
Oct. 24, 7 p.m.–10 p.m., Atlanta
There will be a screening of the “Greenhorns” documentary film, followed by a discussion in Food E U in the Dobbs University Center. This event is free, open to the public, and refreshments will be provided. http://map.emory.edu/

Parish Fall Farm To Table Celebration
Oct. 24, 6:30 p.m., Atlanta
Enjoy a meal on the Atlanta BeltLine under the stars while Chef Joe Schafer wows you with Georgia’s finest offerings paired with top notch wines. To purchase tickets please call Parish at 404-681-4434. Cost: $80 for members, $85 for nonmembers.

White Oak Pastures Field Day
Oct. 26, 8:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., Bluffton
White Oak Pastures raises grass-fed beef, pastured chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, guinea’s and sheep. Their animals are athletes, spending their entire lives roaming lush pastures and eating sweet grasses. Learn about how the farm operates and the practices that the USDA Natural Resource and Conservation Service have cost shared on the farm and what is available to farms through their programs. This event is free and includes lunch.

11th Annual Afternoon in the Country
Nov. 6, 1 p.m.–4 p.m., Palmetto
Chefs from Atlanta’s top restaurants, paired with Georgia’s top Organic Farms, and select eaters and retailers with fine wines under a festive big-top tent. To purchase tickets go to www.ideaitlanta.org. Cost: $95 for adults, $35 for ages 13-20, free for 12 and under. Proceeds Benefit Georgia Organics.

Sourcing & Selling of Local Meats into Food Service
Nov. 7, 11 a.m.–3 p.m., Kennesaw State University
Georgia Organics, Farm 255 and Farm Burger present a workshop connecting chefs and food service professionals with butchers and meat science professionals. Likewise, we aim to help small producers understand the language and needs of chefs.

“GROW!” Movie at Patagonia
Nov. 10, 7:15 p.m.–9 p.m., Atlanta
“GROW!” tells the story of Georgia’s new generation of young farmers. In their 50-minute documentary, filmmakers Christine Anthony and Owen Masterson explore these reasons, while tracking the progress of 20 farmers on 12 Georgia farms throughout a growing season. The filmmakers and Georgia Organics will be present to discuss the film and their efforts to grow the next generation of farmers. Free. Light bites provide by Chipotle.

Holiday Chef Demo and Book Signing with Virginia Willis
Nov. 18, 6 p.m., Atlanta
Join us with Virginia Willis in celebration of the holidays and the release of her new cookbook, “Basic to Brilliant, Y’all.” Virginia will provide a cooking demo and sampling followed by a book signing in the Georgia Organics kitchen. Get your holiday recipes and gifts in one stop. This event is free for members and $10 for nonmembers. RSVP required.

Growing Farm Profits
Dec. 3, Location TBD
Southern SSWA and Georgia Organics offer this full-day training targeted toward producers of field crops on how to price products for appropriate markets, how to track expenses, and how to calculate profitability for their farm enterprises. Cost: $15 for members, $20 for nonmembers.

Shiitake Mushroom Production
Dec. 3, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., Athens
In partnership with PLACE in Athens, Georgia Organics presents Daniel Parson conducting his very popular class on growing shiitake mushrooms on natural logs in the Southeast. The focus of this workshop will be a hands-on session on tree selection, felling and evaluation, and inoculating hardwood logs. Registration is limited, and includes lunch and an inoculated log to take home. Cost is $65 for Georgia Organics and PLACE members and $75 for non-members.

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GROWER EDUCATION & SERVICES

Georgia Organics received its largest grant ever, a three-year USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Grant for $608,361 in partnership with UGA and Fort Valley State University. The grant outcomes for the next three years will include: 300 hours of direct farmer to farmer mentoring; 60, three-to-five minute technical farm educational videos; 36 farmer podcasts from the annual conference; 30 producer written articles; 15 field days; six workshops; a layman’s guide to regulations for farmers; and four case studies on the viability of four different farm operations.

Georgia Organics organized its first pilot bulk order for farm inputs, such as cover crops and fertilizers, from 7 Springs Farm for September delivery and pick up. Twenty-four farm members participated in the first order. We will send out order information in January for the next planned delivery in February for the coming 2012 season.

Georgia Organics has been working in close partnership to connect USDA’s National Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) with organic farmers. Just over $700,000 was allocated from USDA’s Organic EQIP initiative, coordinated through NRCS, in the last funding cycle. Almost half went to wells and micro-irrigation with the majority of contracts from south Georgia. Georgia Organics will coordinate two more public field days this Fall with NRCS at Flatwoods Farm from south Georgia. Georgia Organics will coordinate two more public field days this Fall with NRCS at Flatwoods Farm in Elberton and White Oak Pastures in Bluffton as well as a final employee training in southwest Georgia.

ADVOCACY

Fifty people participated in an open conference call for farmers on the state of poultry processing and the organization’s efforts to date. Georgia Organics has finalized its core focus areas for the farm bill and will soon coordinate a series of member education and activation activities. A concise, one page directory of Georgia’s Congressional delegates and their contact information is now available online in the Take Action section of our website.

Relationship building has been taking place with the Georgia Farm Bureau, the Georgia Fruit & Vegetable Association, Governor Deal’s office, First Lady Sandra Deal, the Georgia Dept. of Economic Development, the lieutenant governor’s office, state legislators, and the Atlanta Regional Commission. In addition, meetings with the Dept. of Agriculture on poultry and organic agriculture continue.

Georgia Organics and the Atlanta Local Food Initiative helped draft farmers market legislation for the City of Atlanta. The legislation goes before the Atlanta City Council in August. Georgia Organics contracted Nichole Lupo and Erin Croom, our farm to school coordinator, had a baby boy on Sept. 6.

FARM TO SCHOOL

Erin Croom, our farm to school coordinator, had a baby boy in August. Georgia Organics contracted Nichole Lupo and Ashley Rouse, two farm to school veterans, to oversee our activities and grant coordination.

Rebecca Flack, our volunteer intern this summer, was instrumental in enhancing the Farm to School portion of the website and uploaded a new curriculum with three lesson units. This wonderful resource is already in active use.

On Aug. 18, Teri Hamlin hosted a Farm to School Meet and Greet that attracted Gordon County Schools Superintendent Bill McCown, 52 area farmers, 10 school nutrition staff, and two school board of education members, who all came to find out more about farm to school. Less than a week later we received word that Red Bud Elementary called Riverview Farms and will be serving their watermelons. (See photo.)

This Fall, teachers from two Atlanta Public Schools participate in a four-part workshop series hosted by Georgia Organics through a grant from the Atlanta Falcons’ Youth Foundation. Teachers will get hands-on assistance in the garden and kitchen classroom to develop and implement a three-lesson Farm to School portfolio. Georgia Organics is also working with Teri Hamlin of the Georgia Department of Education’s Agriculture Education program to support a pilot program for agriculture teachers in north Georgia, starting with a full-day workshop on Sept. 14 in Athens.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

MEDIA

Since June 2, Georgia Organics events and programs were covered in at least 25 media articles. Media coverage was included in outlets such as Online Athens, About.com, Bluffton Today, the Columbus Ledger-Inquirer, the Cherokee Tribune and an op-ed was printed in Creative Loafing by Communications Director Michael Wall on an EPA Investigator General report condemning state and federal oversight of chicken houses in Georgia.

WEBSITE

Thirteen original web articles have been posted online in the Newscenter. Between June 2 and Aug. 31, the Georgia Organics website received 17,707 unique visits and 88,079 page views. New visitors to the Georgia Organics spend an average of just under 3 minutes on the web site. Most of the content in the “For Schools” section of the website has been recently overhauled, and the new additions to the Advocacy section are already among the most visited pages of the entire website.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Georgia Organics Facebook page has about 8,000 fans and 5,558 active users each month.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fundraising

Georgia Organics received a $522,450 grant from the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation for the next two years to provide support for two of our key new strategic planning goals, a farmers market messaging campaign and advocacy work. The Wallace Genetic Foundation made a $25,000 grant, representing the 6th year in supporting Georgia Organics. Thanks!

Events

Many thanks to Ford Fry, owner and chef at JCT. Kitchen and No. 246 restaurants for once again being the “top tomato” in hosting the 3rd Annual JCT. Attack of the Killer Tomato Festival. The event was attended by 1,100 people and netted $36,000 for Georgia Organics.

Georgia Organics and the Atlanta Beltline will be beneficiaries of the Party on Ponce, a fabulous concert headlining the Indigo Girls, Shawn Mullins and Francine Reed at the old Sears building on Ponce de Leon on Oct. 1. Concentrics Restaurants will be hosting “A Taste of the Beltline” dinner benefitting Georgia Organics on Oct. 24.

Membership

Georgia Organics has 1,235 members and a new membership plan aimed at increasing that number to 1,500 by the end of 2012. Not a member? We need your voice. Please become a member and learn more at our member night at Farm Burger’s new location in Atlanta on Oct 4.

On Oct. 6, Mary & Wendell Riley and Robert & Suzy Currey will host a Seeds & Soil Society cocktail party in Atlanta. Chef Marc Taft with the Chicken and The Egg will be donating his talent and food for this major donor event.
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