

Speaker Bios

Paul & Sandy Arnold, Pleasant Valley Farm, Argyle, New York Over the past 20 years, Paul and Sandy have built Pleasant Valley Farm to be a thriving fruit and vegetable farm. Over 40 varieties of fruit and vegetable crops are grown with organic methods on 7 acres of land. They own 60 acres and rent 120 acres. Their produce is sold at area farmers' markets and to a few restaurants. Sixteen years ago they reached their goal of having the farm provide all their income. New endeavors include supplying winter markets by producing greens in two high tunnels and storing many crops in a state-of-the-art root cellar. They have installed radiant-heated rolling benches in their polycarbonate greenhouse and also a 10kW photovoltaic-solar system that generates about 50% of electricity used. They attribute successful farming to good farm management, including detailed (but simple) record-keeping, season extension, soil management, trying new things, and treating the farm as a business.

David Colson, New Leaf Farm, Durham, Maine New Leaf Farm was established in 1982 with the purpose of growing and marketing vegetables, herbs, and fruit organically while developing and teaching a sustainable agricultural system. The farm has been marketing organic produce since 1983 and is currently tilling 10 acres. Of those 10 acres, 4 are in vegetable, herb, and fruit production, and 6 are in soil-building rotations and grain crops. The remaining cleared land is in hay. The farm direct markets 30 varieties of vegetables and 18 culinary herbs to specialty restaurants and organic food stores, starting in early May with salad greens and continuing through November with storage crops. While they do utilize two farm tractors for tillage, cultivation, and transplanting, a large amount of weeding and all harvesting is done by hand (the majority of an intern's work). The farm uses a solar heated greenhouse to start transplants and five plastic greenhouses to grow tomatoes, peppers, & early salad greens.

continued inside

About the Conference

How do you know you are making money? Which record-keeping systems might work best to get and keep you organized? How much does it cost you to grow a crop and what should you charge? How do you determine when to plant and if you need any soil amendments? What farm-related questions would you like answered? You are invited to join us for two days of presentations and group discussions by many highly experienced and successful vegetable farmers that will share answers these questions and more. Come and enjoy great food in the company of friends old and new, in a lively and engaging learning environment. This workshop is designed for intermediate to advanced level farmers with farms of any size farm, and for all types of farming systems (conventional, organic, sustainable, etc.).

Visit our webpage www.nofavt.org for our brochure, program updates, and directions. Or contact NOFA Vermont at 802-434-4122 or info@nofavt.org.

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Growers Association



Answering Questions on the Farm: Conducting Research, Maintaining Records, Evaluating Production Practices



A Two-Day Farmer-to-Farmer Workshop for Vegetable Farmers

January 5 & 6, 2009
Hulbert Outdoor Center
Fairlee, Vermont

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 37
Richmond, VT

NOFA Vermont
PO Box 697
Richmond, VT 05477



Address Service Requested

Registration Form

Participants MUST pre-register by December 23rd. Space is limited. Registration is \$120/person and includes an informative conference binder, refreshments and snacks, meals during the conference, and a quad occupancy room.

Name(1): _____

Name(2): _____

Farm: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ (\$120/person)

Please make checks payable to NOFA Vermont and mail to:
NOFA Vermont, PO Box 697, Richmond, VT 05477

Conference Logistics

Are there people you'd like to share a room with?

Please indicate preference: Vegetarian ___ Meat ___

Do you have any special access needs? _____

Farming Information

How many years have you farmed? _____

How many acres do you have in production? _____

What crops do you grow? _____

Using the back of this registration sheet, please provide brief answers to the following questions to help our workshop presenters meet your learning goals.

What have been your biggest challenges to record keeping on your farm that you would like to overcome?
What farm specific information are you in most need of to farm more efficiently?
List any specific questions you have on a particular crop of interest.

Conference Agenda

Day 1: Monday, January 5

8-9	Registration with coffee and snacks
9-9:30	Welcome with Vern Grubinger, UVM Extension, and brief farmer introductions
9:30-11:20	Paul & Sandy Arnold present their farming systems overview & 20 minute discussion
11:20-12:35	David Colson presents his farming systems overview
12:35-1:35	Lunch
1:35-1:55	David Colson discussion on his farming systems
1:55-3:45	Dan Kaplan presents his farming systems overview & 20 minute discussion
3:45-5	Vermont Farmer Panel on Recordkeeping: Methods, data collection, and software for production and marketing with Jane Sorensen & Richard Wiswall
5-6	Dinner
6-9	Free time for further discussion

Day 2: Tuesday, January 6

7-8	Breakfast
8-9	How Do I Know What to Plant? Paul & Sandy Arnold, David Colson, and Dan Kaplan.
9-9:15	Discussion

Conference Agenda continued

Day 2: Tuesday, January 6, continued

9:15-10:15	How Do I Know What it Will Cost Me to Grow Something and What to Charge? Paul & Sandy Arnold, David Colson, and Dan Kaplan.
10:15-10:30	Discussion
10:45-11:45	How Do I Keep Track of Soil Fertility and Decide What Amendments I Need, if Any? Paul & Sandy Arnold, David Colson, and Dan Kaplan.
11:45-12	Discussion
12-1	Lunch
1-2	Conducting Research to Get Information Specific to Your Farm, Solve Problems, and Make Money Paul & Sandy Arnold, David Colson, and Dan Kaplan.
2-2:45	Small Groups: Top on-farm research questions
2:45-3:30	Farmers Present and Share Research Questions
3:30-4	Conference Evaluations and Break
4-5	Funding Farm Specific Research: Vern Grubinger, UVM Extension; Wendy Sue Harper, NOFA Vermont; Hank Bissell, VV&BGA; Carol Delaney, NE SARE
5	Finish

Speaker Bios continued

Dan Kaplan, Brookfield Farm, South Amherst, Massachusetts Brookfield Farm is a 100-acre mixed farm operation with 30 acres in vegetable/soft fruit production, a small livestock operation (beef cattle and pigs), pasture, hay, compost production, and a woodlot. All of the produce of the farm is grown for the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project, which sells 530 shares on a yearly basis. The farm is owned by the nonprofit Biodynamic Farmland Conservation Trust, managed along biodynamic and organic lines, and economically self-sustaining by relying solely on CSA share sales for income. Dan has been working in sustainable agriculture since 1987 when he graduated from Tufts University with the all-important Ag degree—a Bachelors in Chinese History. Since then he has apprenticed with and assistant managed several farms in New England, California, and Europe before becoming the farm manager of Brookfield Farm in 1995

Jane Sorensen, River Berry Farm, Fairfax, VT Jane Sorensen and David Marchant operate a diversified vegetable and small fruit farm. They cultivate 50 acres of crops and have laying hens. Their markets include both wholesale, via Deep Root Organic Coop, and direct, at their farm stand and pick-your-own operations. They use a simple and accurate system on Quickbooks-Pro to track labor by crops and sales by crops and customers.

Richard Wiswall, Cate Farm, Plainfield, VT Richard Wiswall and Sally Colman grow certified organic plants and produce for markets in central Vermont and for Deep Root Organic Coop. They have 22 acres under cultivation and operate 7 greenhouses. The farm greenhouses, tractors, and cars run on biodiesel made from waste vegetable oil. Their recordkeeping system tracks the costs to grow each vegetable & which crops make a profit.