



Organic Intensives

Saturday, January 12, 2019

We invite you to join us on Saturday, January 12th for a one-day in-depth learning experience. Organic Intensives are an opportunity to acquire practical, detailed information over the course of a day with fellow Michigan farmers and gardeners. For 2019 we have invited individuals who are recognized experts and practitioners in one of four topic areas:

Healthy Organic Livestock

Matt Shane, organic sheep farmer and MSUE livestock educator will discuss organic monitoring and treatment to maintain a pastured flock of small ruminants in optimum health in an organic system. Karry Trickey, NRCS district conservationist, will cover soil, soil biology, and pasture management techniques for rotational grazing. Join other livestock producers to learn more about grassland and ruminant management for health.

Organic Mushroom Cultivation

Learn how to grow gourmet mushrooms from mushroom scientist Chris Wright and long-time mushroom grower Michael Levine. Adding mushrooms to your diversified farm or backyard garden can be rewarding both financially and nutritionally. Chris and Mike will share their expertise and teach how to inexpensively grow oyster, shiitake, morel and other lucrative, high demand fungi. Presentations will include a brief overview of fungal biology and then focus on cultivating mushrooms via log, straw and mushroom bed production systems. The program will include hands-on demonstrations.

Technology in Organic Field Crops

Today's organic field crops such as corn, soybeans, dry beans, soft wheat and other small grains bring a premium and growing the best crop possible is in the best interest of the organic farmer. This OI introduces the producers to basics in precision planting, camera guidance cultivation, and advanced weed management. These tools are helping organic farmers get their crop off to a better start, cultivate to closer tolerances and allows them to do better field work. Although these tools may have to go on the wish list, organic growers should make themselves aware of the newest technology.

Advanced Organic Soil Management

We all manage soil, and we all strive to improve it year by year. But often our efforts amount to a scattershot approach, addressing one aspect in one year, and switching gears the next without evaluating the effectiveness of our interventions, or continuing to monitor the state of the soil or the health of the crop. Soil health is measured multiple ways: fertility testing, mineral testing, biological assays and plant productivity. Understanding how to interpret these results and put them to use to improve soil health and plant health is critical to sustainable success. Dan Kittredge of the Bionutrient Food Association will entertain attendees for the day on soil testing interpretation and strategies to improve, maintain and monitor soil health, with an underlying message of improving food quality.

The event will take place on Saturday, January 6th, at the Plant and Soil Sciences Building on the MSU campus in East Lansing. The day begins with registration at 8:00; sessions begin at 9:00 and end at 5:00. The registration fee includes six hours of learning, lunch, and comprehensive printed materials. For more information, please visit www.moffa.net/OI-2019.html, or if you don't have internet access, give us a call at 248-262-6826 or write us at the address below.