Organic Intensives

MOFFA ORGANIC INTENSIVES is a day-long, concentrated learning experience for farmers and serious gardeners. As participants in the plethora of Michigan conferences, as well as hosting our own conference for many years, we believed that if we could channel our resources into a day of intensive coverage of a limited number of specific topics, we could fill a need that was not currently being met. In addition, this would allow us, as a volunteer-run non-profit organization, to maximize our resources in a realistic manner.

MOFFA held its first Organic Intensives in March, 2015, and those who have attended since have found the sessions to be of greater than expected value. Thus, we will continue to offer to current and future farmers, as well as serious gardeners, an opportunity to focus intensely on subjects for which there is substantial interest and a desire to reach a level of deep understanding.

For 2027, MOFFA is working with a mix of local growers and experts from three topic areas:

- *Growing Without Plastics: Tools, Techniques, and Alternatives*
- *Growing and Marketing Food Grade Grains for Craft Beverages*
- *Permaculture and Food Forests: Making Permaculture Real*
- *From Soil to Harvest: Practical Tools for Healthier Soil and Better Crops*

Growing Without Plastics: Tools, Techniques, and Alternatives

How can small farms reduce plastic without sacrificing productivity? This track explores innovative approaches to propagation, mulching, cultivation, trellising, and post-harvest handling using natural, reusable, and locally available materials. Sessions will highlight practical techniques for growing and selling food with less plastic, while also considering how thoughtful farm systems can minimize waste, increase efficiency, and maximize value and profits with less work.

Ben Hartman, author of The Lean Farm, will also share practical strategies for applying lean farming principles to reduce waste, streamline farm operations, and create greater value with less effort.

Growing and Marketing Food Grade Grains for Craft Beverages

Explore sustainable grain production and marketing for Michigan's craft beverage industry. Designed for farmers entering the grain market and experienced organic and sustainable producers, this track offers practical guidance on regenerative growing practices, crop resilience, grain quality, and post-harvest handling and storage. Expert speakers will also explore market opportunities, strategies for strengthening local supply chains, and ways to promote the distinctive value of Michigan-grown craft beverage ingredients.

Permaculture and Food Forests: Making Permaculture Real

Explore how permaculture principles can move from ideas into practical, thriving food forests. This learning session introduces the basics of designing, planting, and caring for regenerative gardens and farms that work with nature.

From Soil to Harvest: Practical Tools for Healthier Soil and Better Crops

Join Dane Terrill of Crop Services International, Inc for a practical one-day introduction to soil health designed specifically for small farmers, market gardeners, homesteaders, and beginning growers. We'll explore the fascinating world beneath the soil surface—from beneficial microbes, minerals and carbon and the connection to healthy roots, nutrient cycling, and the connection to the above ground plants and productivity. Starting with the basics of soil testing, and more importantly how to understand and interpret the results; attendees will learn how to turn those numbers into practical management decisions. We'll also introduce different plant monitoring tools on how to use them as the "ultimate" scorecard in-season as tools for watching crop performance throughout the growing season. No advanced science degree required—just curiosity and a desire to grow better! Come learn how to connect what's happening in your soil with what you see in your plants, and leave with practical tools you can put to work immediately to build healthier soil, better-quality crops, and a more productive farm or garden.

2027 Keynote Speaker: George W. Bird

A Systems Approach to Organic Agriculture: With Special Reference to Community is designed to simultaneously address two 2027 Organic Intensive audiences. For individuals with limited backgrounds in organic agriculture, it uses a systems approach to provide a general overview of the nature and history of the topic. This includes the processes of organic matter decomposition and nutrient mineralization. For individuals with extensive experience, the presentation focuses on how bacteria, fungi and their associated microbes regulate soil biology and soil chemistry. The keynote also addresses information about the roles of organic farmers and community in relation to system profitability.

Date & Place

This year's Organic Intensives will be held on Saturday, January 9, 2027, at the Plant and Soil Sciences building at 1066 Bogue St. on the MSU campus in East Lansing.

Registration begins at 8:00 am. Sessions begin at 9:00 and last until 5:00, with a break for lunch in the conservatory, as well as short breaks during the morning and afternoon sessions.

The registration fee includes six hours of learning, an organic lunch and snacks, and comprehensive printed materials. The cost for the full day of Organic Intensives is $110 for MOFFA 2027 members and $140 for non-members.

Sponsorships

MOFFA welcomes organizations and allied trade companies that are able to support our educational initiatives and efforts to keep the cost of OI and other educational events as affordable as possible for participants. Please contact us.

Scholarships

Please contact us if you are would like to participate but are unable to pay the full registration cost, or if you are able to provide financial support for participants.

Scan to visit our website.

About MOFFA

The Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance was organized in 1992 as a nonprofit organization with the mission of promoting organic agriculture and the development and support of food systems that revitalize and sustain local communities. MOFFA was one of the first organizations in Michigan and in the nation to actively promote these principles.

MOFFA welcomes new members to join us and get involved in creating a better food system for Michigan. Our members include organic and other farmers, food coops, educators, environmentalists, food businesses, food and farm activists and concerned citizens throughout Michigan and elsewhere.

Each year MOFFA sponsors and/or exhibits at a number of major conferences and festivals in Michigan, which allows us to reach many more individuals with our limited resources. We also maintain a website, www.moffa.net, and a Facebook page, and publish a quarterly newsletter.

All of this activity is made possible by the contributions of our members. If you haven't joined for this year, we hope you will take a few minutes to lend your support.

MOFFA

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Michigan Organic food & farm Alliance
MOFFA EST. 1992



MOFFA Organic Intensives 2027

January 9, 2027
East Lansing, MI