



**GROWERS • MAKERS • FOOD SYSTEM LEADERS
BRINGING TOGETHER EVERYONE
WORKING WITH LOCAL FOOD**

**FRIDAY, SEPT 5 – SATURDAY, SEPT 6
THE VINES 4-H CENTER | LITTLE ROCK, AR**

U of A **DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE**
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

**LOCAL, REGIONAL
& SAFE FOODS**



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FRIDAY, SEPT 5

Note: unless otherwise indicated all events will be in Cabe Hall

- 1:00 p.m. **Registration**
- 1:30 p.m. **Welcome & Opening Remarks**
Dr. John Anderson and Sarah Bakker
- 1:45 p.m. **Setting the Table for Local Food**
Dr. Amanda Philyaw Perez
- 2:00 p.m. **SESSION 1: Farm Stop Model & National Network, Katie Barr**
- 2:45 p.m. **SESSION 2: Argus Farm Stop School: Overview, Business Structure, Handling, & Merchandising**
Argus Farm Stop
- 4:00 p.m. **Break**
- 4:15 p.m. **SESSION 3: Argus Farm Stop School: Inventory, Seasonal Product Mix, Farmer Relations & Communication, Argus Farm Stop**
- 5:15 p.m. **Break**
- 5:30 p.m. **Dinner and Opening Reception**
- 6:30 p.m. **Culinary Herbs with Margie Raimondo & Social | Garden**

SATURDAY, SEPT 6

- 7:30 a.m. **Registration & Light Breakfast**
- 8:30 a.m. **Welcome & Opening Remarks**
Dr. Shane Gadberry, Sarah Bakker and Dr. Amanda Philyaw Perez
- 8:40 a.m. **SESSION 1: The Farm Stop Model & Consignment Approach,**

Argus Farm Stop and Katie Barr

- 9:30 a.m. **SESSION 2: Farm Stops in Arkansas:
Local Models, Local Solutions, *Margie Raimondo***
- 9:45 a.m. **SESSION 3: From Inspiration to Action –
Identifying your Role in Arkansas’ Food System
*Facilitated Discussion***
- 10:30 a.m. **Break**
- 10:45 a.m. **SESSION 4: Growing Your Farm Stop:
Financial Forecasting, Funding, Marketing,
and Engagement, *Argus Farm Stop***
- 11:45 a.m. **SESSION 5: The Vendor Perspective Panel
*Dan Spatz, Healthy Flavors; Robin Ralston, Ralston Family
Farm; Dan York, York Pecan Company; and Loretta Smith,
Farindale Farms***
- 12:30 p.m. **Lunch | Dining Room**
- 1:45 p.m. **Startup Infrastructure Breakout**
BUSINESS TRACK
**Navigating Business Basics for Local
Food Entrepreneurs | Clover Room**
 - *Ashley Murguiau – Arkansas Small Business
and Technology Development Center*
 - *Phillip Adams – Forge Community Loan Fund*
 - *Katie Barr – How to Start a Farm Stop***AGGREGATION TRACK**
**Tracking What Matters: Inventory Tools
& Tricks | Room 7**
 - *Argus Farm Stop*
- 2:30 p.m. **Regulatory Grounding Breakout**
BUSINESS TRACK
**Value-Added Cases & Places: Rules, Resources,
and Real-World Scenarios | Clover Room**
 - *Dr. Sungil Ferreira*
 - *Dr. Renee Threlfall*

- *David Hill*

AGGREGATION TRACK

Keep It Cool: Postharvest Handling & Transport Logistics | Room 7

- *Dr. Amanda Philyaw Perez*
- *Sarah Bakker*
- *Nena Hammer, Spring Creek Food Hub*

3:30 p.m. **Break**

3:45 p.m. **SESSION 6: Beyond the Market – Diversifying Your Local Food Business**
Sandy DeCoursey, St. Joseph's Farm; Kent Krause, Ferndale Market; Megan Renihan, Nature's Market and RV Park; Lauren Castleberry, Berkeley Farms; Ekko Barnhill, Barnhill Orchards

4:30 p.m. **SESSION 7: Filling the Gaps – Seasonality, Sourcing, & Supporting Local Vendors & Growers**
Katy Elliot, Arkansas Local Food Network; Brandon Gordon, Five Acre Farms

5:00 p.m. **Network or Association Development & Closing**
Amanda Perez and Sarah Bakker

5:30 p.m. **Conference Concludes**



Phillip Adams is the Executive Director of FORGE, a nonprofit, mission-driven organization providing access to affordable capital and business development services to small businesses and nonprofit organizations that are financially viable but otherwise have difficulty obtaining loan capital from banks and other conventional lenders.

Since its founding in 1988, FORGE has served entrepreneurs throughout the Ozarks and the state of Arkansas with technical assistance, business development training, and microlending, working primarily with low-income individuals and services tailored to those communities.



Dr. John Anderson is the Director of the Cooperative Extension Service of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture. Anderson has worked as an agricultural economist in both academic and industry positions and previously served as faculty and head of the Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness Department. He holds a bachelor's degree in agribusiness from College of the

Ozarks, a master's degree in agriculture from Arkansas State University, and a doctorate in agricultural economics from Oklahoma State University. As director, he oversees the extension service land-grant outreach mission across all 75 counties in Arkansas.



Argus Farm Stop was started in 2014 by Kathy Sample & Bill Brinkerhoff as an experiment to see if a new model of the traditional farmers market would work, both for farmers and consumers. Having subscribed to Community Support Agriculture for years, they have enjoyed locally grown food and were interested in a way to increase the economic prosperity of smaller farms. They believe a

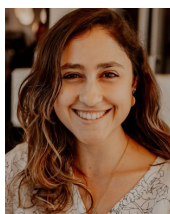
re-envisioned retail connection between small farms and consumers is the key to growing local food systems. After 10+ years, they are as enthusiastic about this model as ever – realizing how powerful it can be both economically and socially.



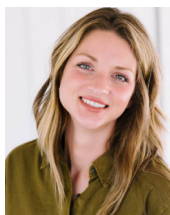
Sarah Bakker is the Local Food Program Lead with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture State Extension Office and a graduate student at the Clinton School of Public Service. Before transitioning into extension, she spent over a decade working on farms,

including managing the 3-acre organic market garden at Heifer Ranch. She now partners with farmers, food businesses, and community organizations to strengthen Arkansas's local food system, with a focus on produce safety, post-harvest infrastructure, and market development.

Ekko Barnhill is the Sales & Marketing Supervisor at Barnhill Orchards, a veteran-owned, family-run operation established in 1980 by retired Air Force Lt. Col. Bob Barnhill and family. Nestled in the Sandhills of Lonoke County, Barnhill Orchards is one of central Arkansas' top producing quality fruit and vegetable suppliers to local customers, community neighbors, restaurants, and schools!



Kathryn Barr is an organic farmer, researcher, consultant, and local food systems advocate. She received a master's degree in behavioral psychology and regional food systems planning at the University of Michigan's School for Environment and Sustainability. She wrote the book, *How to Start a Farm Stop*, and published her research on how farm stops strengthen local and regional food systems in the *Journal for Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*. She currently works as an Associate at SupplyChange LLC, a firm dedicated to enhancing sustainable value chains across the U.S, specifically for underserved growers within institutional markets. She is a member of the Leadership Circle of the North American Food Systems Network, an Advisory Board member for Forum for the Future's Growing our Future Initiative, and is currently working on developing a National Farm Stop Network to support existing and aspiring farm stop owners. Her work has been featured by *Modern Farmer*, *Food Tank*, and *Resilience*.



Berkeley Farms owners Lauren and Tyler Castleberry started Berkeley Farm in Greenbrier, Arkansas from a few raised garden beds and a handful of dairy goats in 2016. What started as an interest in growing their own food and living a simpler and more sustainable lifestyle quickly grew to a community-based farming experience and farm store that offers local produce, artisanal products, and farmer essentials gathered on-farm and local partners.



Sandy DeCoursey is Executive Director of St. Joseph Center of Arkansas, a non-profit farmstead that began in 2008. Sandy was a founding member of the Arkansas Agritourism Association and has helped grow this industry around the state including multiple operations at SJCA. In 2015, SJ Farm Stand was created and now partners with over 60 farms and vendors. A decade later, the SJ Farmers Market, a project of the Growing Urban Farmers program, was launched. Sandy is a grant writer and has secured funding from multiple government and private sources to help develop infrastructure on the farm.



Katy Elliot is the Board Chair of the Arkansas Local Food Network (ALFN) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to fostering a thriving local food system in Arkansas whose mission centers on connecting Arkansas to resilient farms and businesses to grow the local economy through its year-round online farmers' market, connecting consumers to locally grown and raised products, including fresh produce, meats, eggs, and more, as well as locally made goods from small businesses. ALFN also collaborates with programs like Green Groceries to enhance access to local food for underserved communities. The network supports farm viability through direct marketing, offers micro-loans to smallholder farmers, and promotes food justice by striving to make nutritious and delicious food accessible to all members of the community.



Dr. Sungil Ferreria holds a PhD in Food Engineering and Science. His areas of technical expertise include biomass production, processing and bioprocessing engineering, hydrocolloids application, emulsification, drying, encapsulation, ingredients optimization, process optimization, scale-up, sustainability, atomization, plant and alternative proteins, analytical food chemistry and product development.

Dr. Ferreria serves as the Process Authority for acidified and low-acid canned foods in Arkansas, providing regulatory and technical guidance to food processors. He is also a certified trainer for the Better Process Control School, educating industry professionals on thermal processing, container integrity, and food safety regulations in compliance with FDA and USDA standards.



Dr. Shane Gadberry is a professor and extension specialist with the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture. His education and demonstration efforts have focused on improving the profitability and sustainability of Arkansas beef cattle production systems by applying research based nutritional management and husbandry practices. Key statewide programs included the Arkansas Beef Improvement Program, Steer Feedout Analysis, Market Survey Analysis, BeefIQ, 300 Days Grazing, Winter Feed Workshops, Arkansas Beef Industry Assessment, and most recently the Natural State Preconditioned Calf Program. Shane also works with research faculty and experiment stations to conduct applied research in supplementation and grazing management.

Brandon Gordon started 5 Acre Farms back in 2009 and now grows produce using no-till methods on just under 2 acres in Pleasant Plains, AR. They market their produce primarily through wholesale channels like The Root Cafe in Little Rock.



Nena Hammer, with a diverse background in local food-based organizations, has served as an AR GardenCorps member, owned and operated a farm-to-table restaurant, and managed livestock and garden operations at Cobblestone Farms in Fayetteville, AR. Her passion for food has fueled both the beginning of her own farm and her commitment to supporting other farmers.

As Interim Executive Director at Spring Creek Food Hub, she is working to streamline operations and build strong connections with local farms to help cultivate a resilient local food network and put more fresh, local food on tables across Arkansas.



David Hill brings over 25 years of food processing experience in the poultry and baking industry. He joined the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture in January 2022 where he works closely with the Share Grounds program and Dr. Amanda Perez. David also contributes to the Produce Safety program and provides support across various other projects.



Kent Krause, along with his wife Michelle, are the owners and operators of Krause House Farms and the Ferndale Market, both located in Ferndale, Arkansas. Krause House Farms raised seasonal produce like heirloom tomatoes, herbs, lettuce mix and cut flowers. Ferndale Market is the retail arm of Krause House Farms and also offers fresh produce, meats, dairy, baked goods and prepared meals focusing on locally raised and manufactured products from around the state.



Casey Miller has worked with Argus Farm Stop since 2014. After spending nearly 20 years working in human resources for higher education, nonprofits, and private industry, Casey is happy to have made a home with Argus where she melds her people and organizational skills with her love of vegetables. Energized by the tangible impact on Ann Arbor's local food economy, she does what she can to help Argus thrive. In her current role as External Training Manager, she does her best to stoke the fires of the farm stop movement nationally and, sometimes, internationally. In her free time, she can be found pushing the boundaries of what can be grown in her tiny yard, or relaxing with her partner and son. She would love nothing more than to hear about your farm stop aspirations.



Ashley Murguia is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and is the Startup Specialist with ASBTDC, where she aims to assist entrepreneurs reach their business goals. Being bilingual, she also aims to break through language barriers and extend these services to all communities. Ashley has been with ASBTDC in July 2024 and she comes with experience in the Supply chain and Logistics industry, working with warehouses and freight for about 6 years.



Dr. Amanda Philyaw Perez is an Associate Professor and Extension Specialist in Food Systems and Safety with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. With over 15 years of experience, she focuses on identifying barriers and advancing solutions to strengthen local and regional food systems and improve food safety practices. Dr. Perez leads the Local, Regional, and Safe Foods Team, providing guidance on farm and food manufacturing safety, regulatory

compliance, and technical assistance. She also serves as the Executive Director of the upcoming After the Harvest event, which highlights postharvest practices and food system resilience.



Margie Raimondo is an urban farmer, chef, and educator dedicated to connecting soil to soul through food, farming, and tradition. She is the founder of Urbana Farmstead, a teaching farm and kitchen in Little Rock, where she shares her expertise in sustainable agriculture, Sicilian cooking traditions, and the farm-to-table lifestyle. Drawing on her Sicilian roots and years of experience working with

local farmers and food entrepreneurs, Margie designs hands-on classes, preservation workshops, and culinary events that celebrate seasonal harvests while fostering resilient local food systems.

Her work bridges the gap between producers and consumers, demonstrating how farmers can reduce waste, increase revenue, and add more value to their crops through preservation, value-added products, and simple, market-ready recipes. At After the Harvest 2025, Margie will lead a cooking and preservation demonstration titled “From Garden to Jar – Turning Summer Herbs into Market-Ready Spice Blends.” This interactive session will highlight practical techniques for drying herbs, crafting signature spice blends, and exploring private-label opportunities for farmers’ markets and local food retail. Attendees will also enjoy tastings that showcase how preserved herbs can transform everyday foods into high-value products.



Robin Ralston is an entrepreneur and community advocate based in Atkins, Arkansas. She resides there with her husband, Tim, surrounded by their children and grandchildren, creating a close-knit family environment that is at the heart of her life and work.

As the managing partner of Ralston Family Farms LLC, Robin helps to oversee the daily operations of her family’s rice mill. Her role extends further as the general partner in Arkansas River Valley Farms, LP, where she and her family continue her family’s legacy of regenerative agriculture. Robin is passionate about her faith, her family, regenerative agriculture, and all things local.



Megan Renihan is manager of Nature's Market and RV Park, a unique venue in Batesville, Arkansas, featuring an on-site farm store. Nature's Market offers quality, local ingredients such as a handpicked selection of organic fruits and vegetables, preservative-free pantry staples, microgreens, and locally sourced meats and deli selections.



Loretta Smith is small-scale specialty crop farmer and owner of Farindale Farms and a professor at Arkansas Tech University. She holds a BS in Business and Behavioral Science from Erskine College, a MS from Clemson University in Industrial/Organizational Psychology, and a PhD. in Operations Management. Smith opened Farindale Farms in 2023 on reclaimed clear cut timber acreage where

she now grows fruits and vegetables to address food insecurity in South Central Arkansas.



Dan Spatz, Executive Director of Healthy Flavors Arkansas, a Conway-based farm dedicated to enhancing the nutritional value of food through sustainable agricultural practices and local economic relationships by cultivating a variety of produce including squash, peas, kale, and herbs. Healthy Flavors is particularly focused on their Farm to School program, which provides locally grown

vegetables and promotes scratch cooking in school cafeterias. Through their partnerships with schools and participation in initiatives like the USDA-funded C.H.E.F, Challenge Healthy Flavors is committed to connecting local food, culinary education, and community well-being.

Melissa Terry is a program assistant to the Arkansas Local, Regional and Safe Foods team within the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture and a graduate of the UA Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences, where she earned a Master's degree in Agricultural and Extension Education.



Dr. Renee Threlfall is an Associate Professor at the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture (UA System), Fayetteville. She has worked in the Food Science Department at the UA System for over 30 years.

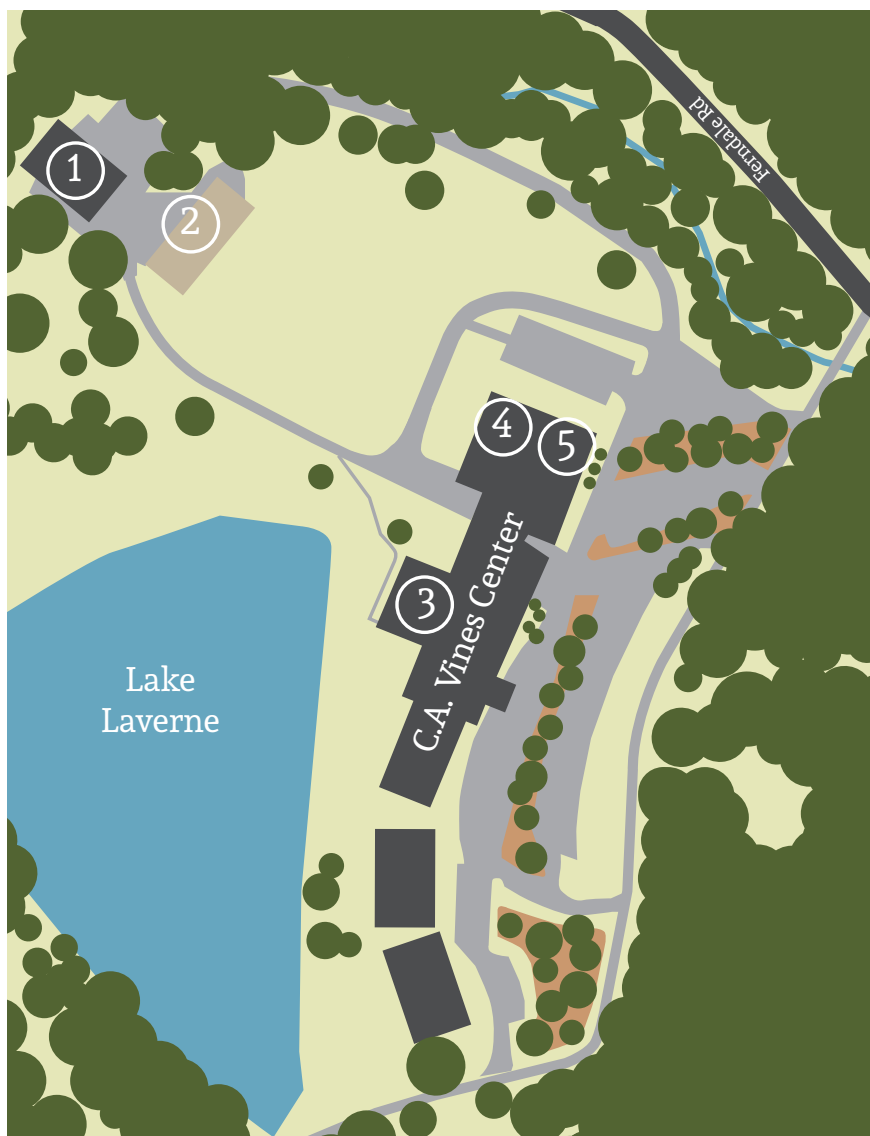
Dr. Threlfall's research and extension at the UA System

is focused on processing and postharvest storage of specialty crops (wine grapes, muscadine grapes, table grapes, blackberries, strawberries, peaches, etc.) and value-added processing of horticultural crops. She has over 50 refereed journal publications. She teaches an introduction enology and viticulture class, *Uncorked: Vines to Wines*, at the University of Arkansas each fall and teaches enology, viticulture and sensory topics for grape and wine production in other Food Science classes.

Dr. Threlfall is a member of the American Society of Enology and Viticulture (ASEV), ASEV-Eastern Section, American Wine Society, American Society for Horticultural Science, and North American Raspberry and Blackberry Association. Dr. Threlfall is on the Extension and Outreach Committee for the National Grape Research Alliance and is also a member of the Arkansas Association of Grape Growers and serves on the Arkansas Wine Producers Council. She is also the director of the Arkansas Quality Wine Program.



York Pecan Company is a family farm located in southwest Arkansas. Dan York grew up working alongside his father, Bill, who began the family's pecan journey in the 1950s by preserving native pecan trees. In 1999, Dan led the farm into shelling, allowing York Pecans to be enjoyed around the world.



- ① **Cabe Hall** ② **Garden** ③ **Dining Room**
④ **Clover Room** ⑤ **Room 7**

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