



2026

ARKANSAS VEGETABLE GROWERS CONFERENCE PROGRAM

February 19-20, 2026

U of A System Division of Agriculture State Extension Office
2301 South University Ave
Little Rock, AR 72204



8:00 AM - 2:15 PM | Thursday, February 19

Auditorium/Breezeway

Classrooms 1-3

7:30 AM-
8:00 AM

Vendor Set-Up

8:00 AM-
9:00 AM

Registration, Breakfast & Visit with Vendors

9:00 AM-
9:15 AM

Welcome

Dr. John Anderson
U of A System Division of Agriculture

Dr. Obadiah Njue
University of Arkansas Pine Bluff

9:15 AM-
10:00 AM

Vegetable Production in Arkansas

John Gavin
U of A System Division of Agriculture (retired)

10:00 AM-
10:30 AM

Managing Weeds in Vegetable Crops

Dr. Matt Bertucci
U of A System Division of Agriculture

10:30 AM-
10:50 AM

Break & Visit with Vendors

10:50 AM-
11:50 AM

Experienced Grower Panel

Jojo Thomas
WSBZ Farm

Kyle Manning
Fat Rabbit Farms

Shawn Peebles
Peebles Organic Farm

11:50 AM-
12:00 PM

Guest Speaker

Secretary Wes Ward
Secretary of Agriculture for the State of Arkansas

12:00 PM-
1:00 PM

Lunch & Visit with Vendors

1:00 PM-
1:30 PM

Building and Managing Soil Health

Dr. Henry English
University of Arkansas Pine Bluff

1:30 PM-
2:15 PM

Disease and Pest Identification & Management

Dr. Aaron Cato
U of A System Division of Agriculture

2:15 PM - 5:00 PM | Thursday, February 19

Auditorium/Breezeway

Classrooms 1-3

2:15 PM-2:45 PM	<p>Transitioning to Organic Production Heather Friedrich <i>Center for Arkansas Farms and Food</i></p>	
2:45 PM-3:15 PM	<p>Vegetable Production in High Tunnels Taunya Ernst <i>U of A System Division of Agriculture</i></p>	
3:15 PM-3:30 PM	<p>Break & Visit with Vendors</p>	
3:30 PM-4:00 PM	<p>Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) & Vegetable Production Iris Cole-Crosby <i>University of Arkansas Pine Bluff</i></p>	
4:00 PM-5:00 PM	<p>Afternoon Demonstrations <i>(Attendees will select one)</i></p>	
4:00 PM-5:00 PM	<p>Drip Irrigation 101: Parts, Pieces, and Proper Design Taunya Ernst <i>U of A System Division of Agriculture</i> Keilah Barney <i>U of A System Division of Agriculture</i></p>	<p>Post-Harvest Packing Shed Demonstration: Washing, Cleaning, Sanitizing & Product Flow Dr. Amanda Perez <i>U of A System Division of Agriculture</i></p>
5:00 PM	<p>End of Day</p>	

Visit our vendors throughout the conference!



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Sustainable Agriculture
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FARM CREDIT

**ARKANSAS
HORTICULTURE
SOCIETY**

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Friday, February 20

Auditorium/Breezeway

Classrooms 1-3

8:00 AM-
8:50 AM

Registration & Visit with Vendors

8:50 AM-
9:00 AM

Welcome
Dr. Shane Gadberry
U of A System Division of Agriculture

9:00 AM-
9:30 AM

FSA Numbers, Loans and Crop Insurance
Stephen Walker
University of Arkansas Pine Bluff

9:30 AM-
10:00 AM

Heirs Property: Land, Health and Wealth
Karen Lee
University of Arkansas Pine Bluff

10:00 AM-
10:15 AM

Break & Visit with Vendors

10:15 AM-
11:15 AM

Grower Resource Panel
Dr. Amanda McWhirt
U of A System Division of Agriculture
Lizzy Herrera
AR Sustainable Agriculture Research Education
Heather Friedrich
Center for Arkansas Farms and Food
Kandi Williams
University of Arkansas Pine Bluff Small Farms Program
SeRena Hill
U of A System Division of Agriculture
Travis Caudle
Natural Resources Conservation Service

11:15 AM-
11:45 AM

Arkansas Agriculture Laws and Regulations
Rusty Rumley
National Agricultural Law Center

11:45 AM-
12:00 PM

Closing Remarks
Conference Planning Committee

12:00 PM

End of Conference
(to-go lunches provided)

12:00 PM-
1:00 PM

Vendor Take Down



Scan the QR Code to Complete Our Survey!

Your feedback is important in helping us plan for future conferences.