

ASAP's 16th Annual Business of Farming Conference

**AB Tech Conference Center
Asheville, NC**

Saturday, February 23, 2019, 8 am-4 pm

Spend the day learning and networking with farmers from across the region, and gain tools and strategies for improving your farm business. The Business of Farming Conference features business, marketing, and planning workshops led by regional professionals and innovative farmers, a Grower-Buyer Meeting, individual consulting, exhibitor hall, and locally sourced meals.

Act Now: Early Bird Registration Ends February 1

Early bird registration is \$75 per person, or \$125 for two farm partners. Standard registration is \$95 per person, or \$165 for two farm partners starting February 2.

Register at asapconnections.org or call 828-236-1282.



Farmers Market Summit *

New this year, the conference will feature a morning summit to bring together farmers market managers and leaders to network and share ideas with other markets from across the region. Conference and summit registration for market leadership is free upon completion of a brief survey. Contact Mike McCreary at mike@asapconnections.org or 828-236-1282 to learn more and register.

Support for this conference is provided in part by:



Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project
306 West Haywood Street, Suite 200
Asheville, NC 28801

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Asap
Local Food
Strong Farms
Healthy Communities



2019 Business of Farming Conference

February 23, 2019 | AB Tech, Asheville

Conference Workshops

Save when you register with a farm partner



Workshop Block 1

Farmers Market Summit (Part 1) ✨

Join your fellow managers and market leaders to share questions, information, insights, and best practices. The summit will be the first step of a networking initiative designed to bring together the experience and expertise of market managers in forming an ongoing learning community. There will also be an interactive presentation on effective market promotions, increasing sales, and forming community partnerships.

Navigating Farm Programs, Resources, and Support

With a wide range of resources and support available for new and beginning farmers, it is often difficult to know where to start. This workshop is designed to offer an overview of regulatory and planning pieces to consider in building a farm business. Join agricultural and small business professionals to learn about the variety of programs and resources available to farms in our region and where to go for additional support.

Legal Tools for Protecting Your Farm

Attorneys from Ward and Smith, P.A., will offer insight on legal topics of interest to North Carolina agribusinesses, including entity formation, estate planning, and labor/employment. Learn about the legal tools available to protect your farm through this interactive session.

Farm Business Planning Strategies

Together we will look at your farm business or idea from an aerial perspective. Join farmers who have been through the process to examine key areas of business planning, including locating and retaining good staff, research and development, and new market expansion and growth. This will be a great opportunity to set goals for 2019.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Options and Opportunities

This workshop provides an overview of CSA challenges and strategies. A panel of established CSA farmers will offer information and insights on CSA program options, promotions, and coordination. Workshop participants will be encouraged to ask questions and share challenges. Note: content is designed to focus on coordination and promotion rather than on growing or production topics.

Introduction to Niche Meats

Join NC Choices' Technical Coordinator, Lee Menius, to learn more about the challenges and opportunities of niche meat production. The discussion will include an overview of the market for small to large producers, how to develop a pricing strategy, tips for working with processors, and helpful resources.

Workshop Block 2

Farmers Market Summit (Part 2) ✨

The second block of the Farmers Market Summit will look at how to promote your farmers market. Learn how to attract more customers and increase your market sales through effective marketing, outreach, promotion, and social media strategies. This session will cover specific examples based on practical marketing and promotional efforts. Attention will be given to options that are simple, direct, and low-cost.

Taxes for Farmers

Navigating tax decisions can be a daunting process for small diversified farmers. In this session, participants will have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with state and federal tax documents and explore options for specific agricultural tax scenarios. We will discuss how equipment, depreciation, labor, losses, and income should be reflected in basic tax documents, including Form 1040 and the Schedules A (deductions), C (business gain or loss), and F (farm income). This workshop will offer something for everyone, from beginner to experienced farmers.

Developing Your Farm Brand

Your brand is the voice of your farm story. Discuss how to develop or expand the elements of your brand (farm name, mission, tagline, and logo) to effectively communicate the values and story you want to share with your customers. Through discussion and group exercises begin making a plan to move forward with your branding strategy.

Selling to Restaurants

Selling to restaurants can be a great opportunity to diversify your farm business, but it can also be a huge commitment of time and energy. Learn from three farms with a depth of experience in selling to restaurants, and gain strategies for building and maintaining restaurant sales and relationships. Walk away better prepared to meet with buyers during the lunchtime Grower-Buyer Meeting.

Photography Composition and Techniques

It is true that a picture is worth a thousand words. We live in a visual world and composing photographs that engage your audience is critical in sharing your farm story. This workshop offers the opportunity to learn basic composition tools and tricks that will take your brand's photography to the next level (even with just your cell phone).

Farm Business Financials

Financial success in business rarely comes by accident. This session focuses on basic financial planning and analysis techniques that are vital in creating profitability for your farm enterprises. Featuring methods in place at Bluebird Farm as examples, this session will also look at important financial information you can glean through determining your cost structure, evaluating revenue streams, and creating break-even analysis.

Workshop Block 3

Hosting Events and Dinners on Your Farm

Interested in diversifying your farm income by hosting special events or on-farm dinners, but want to know if the time and investment is worth your efforts? Hear from local farmers and an agritourism insurance professional about what to consider when exploring this type of farm venture, and what resources are available to guide your decisions.

Direct Marketing Strategies: Connecting with Your Customer Base

Whether you are a new farm trying to be noticed or a more established producer looking to expand your customer base, targeted marketing strategies will make better use of your time and money. Join this workshop to learn more about engaging customers and learn practical steps to creating and implementing a marketing plan.

Register at asapconnections.org or call 828-236-1282.

Financial Recordkeeping

Whether you are just getting started or looking to improve your existing systems, this session will look at recordkeeping through the lens of both a grower and buyer. Designed to offer collaborative insight in structuring recordkeeping and accounting, this session will share recordkeeping practices that serve as a guide for planning.

Social Media Marketing

Gain practical tools for growing your social media presence without getting overwhelmed or spending a penny. Learn how to maximize your time on social media to effectively share your products and story and turn followers into farm fans and customers. Learn simple tricks for improving your storytelling, customer engagement, and imagery. This workshop is designed for farmers who already have a basic understanding of using social media.

Sell More! Improving Sales at Your Farmers Market

How can you improve your sales at market? This workshop will share best practices for selling at farmers markets and offer practical tips, recommendations, and resources for increasing sales. Content will focus on three key elements of sales: presentation, information, and invitation.

Networking and Lunchtime Sessions

Ask a Lawyer

Attorneys from Ward and Smith, P.A. will be on hand to answer questions on a variety of agribusiness topics in an informal setting.

Farm Apprenticeships 101

Are you considering hiring an apprentice or intern? Have you hired apprentices or interns before and have specific questions? Get individual support for how to hire, manage, house, and pay apprentices or interns to increase the productivity and profitability of your farm.

Social Media Support

Whether you are just getting started with social media or looking to improve your current online marketing strategy, take advantage of individual support from regional communications professionals to answer your basic and advanced social media questions.

Tackle Your Taxes

For questions not covered in the tax workshop, or those specific to your farm, take this opportunity to meet with a registered tax preparer to discuss how to document your income, losses, labor, equipment, and more on your 2018 tax return. Bring your advanced tax forms and questions to get help navigating your agribusiness taxes.

Exhibitor Hall

Browse valuable regional resources and services to support your farm business.



Local Breakfast and Lunch will be provided by our main sponsors:

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