



Organic Intensives

Saturday, January 8, 2022

We invite you to join us on Saturday, January 8th 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 2022 our presenters will be a mix of local experts, farmers, and producers in three topic areas:

Organic Mushroom Cultivation and Management

This session will detail how to produce mushrooms as a valuable addition to any production system. It will begin with basic information about the biology and physiology of mushrooms and proceed through production methods that can be used on a small scale or ramped up for increased production. The methods detailed will be compliant with NOP standards for organic mushroom production. Organic compliant management of pests and problems will also be covered. In the final portion of the session, attendees will then have the opportunity to build mushroom growing kits to take home with them. Our board member Shara LaFave and Brian McShane of Detroit Mushroom Company will present this session together.

The Farm Ecosystem: Managing for Pollinators, Beneficials, and Pests

Good bugs, bad bugs. If only it were that simple. How do we achieve “balance” in the ecosystem of our farms and gardens? In this session attendees will hear a variety of perspectives for how to manage the farm to encourage beneficials and minimize pests. The day will begin with a discussion of managing the soil to encourage a balanced ecosystem with Joe Scrimger. After a short break, native bee researcher Rebecca Tonietto will share her expertise on establishing a thriving pollinator habitat and Debbie Jackson of Monarch Watch, will demonstrate the Monarch life cycle. After lunch, a panel of local farmers will share their successes and failures from experience on their own farms. A final round table discussion will invite both participants and presenters to reflect on what they have heard throughout the day and share what they bring to the table.

In-Row Weed Control Strategies: Fine Tuning Equipment . . . The Details for Success

Weed control is a continuing problem for all farmers and gardeners regardless of scale or methods used. In recent years there have been advances in equipment used for control of in row weeds. For this session, Daniel Brainard will present research, evaluations, and effectiveness of torsion tine weeders, spinners/spiders, and various cultivators. Fred Woodcock and Darvin Evon of Chaffin Farms will share their experiences using these pieces of equipment as well as weed zappers, rotary hoes, and other physical methods of control including planting timing, irrigation, and crop populations. A third part will include 2 or 3 additional farmers who will also discuss their experiences using varied methods for weed control in their particular situations. The session will conclude with a round table discussion allowing participants the opportunity to ask and discuss specific questions in small groups and then with the entire group of attendees and presenters.

The event will take place on Saturday, January 8th, 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 <http://www.moffa.net/oi-2022.html>, or if you don't have internet access, give us a call at 248-262-6826 or write us at the address below.