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**DEAR ORGANIC GARDENERS,**

[http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue\\_65/dear\\_gardeners.asp](http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue_65/dear_gardeners.asp)

As the year winds down and we head into the holidays we'd like to thank all of you for making 2007 a record year for organic seeds. Everywhere we look, the organic gardening and farming movement is picking up steam and real change is happening. From edible schoolyards and burgeoning farmers markets, to thriving urban farms and community supported agriculture, people like you are helping to shape a new awareness around food, gardening, farming and community.

Our 2008 catalog, with its focus on urban agriculture, is hot off the presses and on its way to gardeners everywhere. In it you'll find over 70 new seed and live plant varieties among a rich diversity of nearly 700 varieties of open-pollinated certified organic herb, flower, and vegetable seeds. Among its pages you'll also find gardening tools, books and apparel, as well as profiles of seed growers and leading organic chefs. If you are not on our mailing list and would like to receive the catalog, please click [here](#).

For this issue of the Cutting Edge, Steve Peters has taken the time to outline the new offerings that will be available for 2008. While he's not tipping his hand (you'll have to wait until the catalog arrives and the website is updated on December 26th to get variety names), he gives a good overview of the exciting new offerings that will be available soon. We've also got a short piece from Research Farm Associate Wade Collins comparing two methods of brewing compost tea, and I've included profiles of Nora Pouillon, and Paul Kahan, two of the featured chefs in this year's catalog. You can also catch up with the activity at the farm and learn about a host of exciting events from the sustainability movement.

Enjoy your holidays and think of us as you begin to plan for the coming gardening season. May it be your finest.  
Scott Vlaun  
Editor

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**CHEF PROFILES: NORA POUILLON AND PAUL KAHAN  
BY SCOTT VLAUN**

[http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue\\_65/chefprofiles.asp](http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue_65/chefprofiles.asp)

The movement toward sustainable organic agriculture has many facets. Seed producers, market farmers, backyard gardeners, farmers market organizers, community supported agriculture (CSA) growers, food cooperatives and natural food markets are all joining forces to bring eco-sanity to our food supply. Often overlooked in this movement are some of America's leading chefs and restaurateurs who have worked hard to promote organic and local food. Over the years, Seeds of Change has worked with some of the country's foremost chefs to give

us feedback on our varieties, and enlighten us to new ways to enjoy the fruits of our labor. Culinary artists like Jesse Cool, Joseph Reid, and Deborah Madison have been profiled on the pages of our catalog and continue to inspire our work.

This year we are pleased to profile Nora Pouillon and Paul Kahan, two pioneering chefs (and organic gardeners), who are supporting their local farmers, sourcing organically grown ingredients, and revolutionizing the way restaurants can be part of a local food economy while creating some of the finest cuisine on the planet.

### **Nora Pouillon, Restaurant Nora, Washington, D.C.**

Nora Pouillon is one of the world's pioneering organically focused chefs. Her restaurant, a Washington, D.C. institution, has been sourcing organic ingredients and working with local farmers for over 25 years to create a unique seasonal dining experience based on sustainably produced or harvested meat and fish, and fresh locally grown produce. Nora can often be seen harvesting fresh herbs from the small garden outside the restaurant or tasting the latest products at Washington, D.C.'s farmers markets.

### **Paul Kahan, Blackbird Restaurant, Chicago**

If you shop at Chicago's Organic Farmers Market on any Wednesday or Saturday during the growing season you're likely to run into Paul Kahan, executive chef of Chicago's Blackbird Restaurant, visiting with local farmers and purchasing fresh locally produced ingredients. Over the last ten years Paul has built Blackbird into one of the city's hottest restaurants by focusing on clean fresh flavors and highly seasonal cuisine. Besides growing a number of Blackbird's signature ingredients, such as Lacinato kale and Sylvetta arugula, in his own backyard garden, Paul is deeply committed to supporting local, sustainably managed farms.

### **A Short Conversation with Paul Kahan**

Scott Vlaun: It seems like Blackbird is the gold standard for seasonal restaurants in the area. How did you get here and what's your philosophy behind the restaurant?

Paul Kahan: When I started 10 years ago with Blackbird a lot of people claimed they were seasonal, supported local agriculture, claimed they were sustainable. I think the movement has grown in leaps and bounds and a lot more people are now. I made a huge effort to be the most seasonal restaurant in Chicago and that has been the sole driving force for the restaurant. Today my pastry chef got fresh persimmons, pomegranates, pears and apples. So everything on the dessert menu will be changing in the next two weeks to reflect stuff that's in season. It's hard to keep up with it all the time, but that's what this restaurant is all about. It's about focusing on clean flavors, and it's also about fun. We have kind of a light approach to things. We don't take ourselves too seriously.

SV: Do you seek out specific varieties of produce, like a certain variety of tomato or a specific kale that you might ask a farmer to grow for you?

PK: Well you know, I've been a huge fan of this Lacinato kale for many years. We cook it down really, really slow with a lot of bacon and shallots and it gets almost caramely and meaty. It's phenomenal. I guess I just get into a rut of things that I really love and can grow in this little garden and really bring a lot into the restaurant. I brought in two big garbage bags stuffed with kale this year early on in the season and this will keep going. I really need to find more stuff that can carry me through the colder months.

SV: There are some great cold hardy greens, especially the mustards. Things like tatsoi you can literally harvest from under the snow. There's a new variety in the Seeds of Change catalog this year called Maruba Santoh that

you could try. We've grown it a couple of times this year and really love it. It's fast growing with big leaves, a wide crunchy mid-rib and mild mustard flavor. I bet you could do some amazing things with it. (For more on cold-hardy varieties, see "Extend the Season, Increase Your Harvest" in eNewsletter #51)

When you're looking for ingredients, do you seek out local producers?

PK: Big time!

SV: Do you shop at farmers' markets?

PK: I shop at the Organic Market every Wednesday and Saturday when that's going on. And I have a ton of farmers that just bring us products. We buy from Home Grown Wisconsin, which is an organic coop, and from Growing Power, which is a city farm here in Chicago. From them we buy watercress, land cress...a ton of stuff over the course of the year, baby mustard greens...you name it. There are maybe eight or nine farms we buy from on a regular basis.

There's a farm cooperative near Normal, Illinois that was started by a woman named Terra Brockman. Her brother has a farm called Henry's Farm and only sells at the Evanston Farmers' Market. Their group is called The Land Connection. They have a great group of organic farmers and we're trying to make it feasible for them to bring stuff into Chicago. It's a really diverse group of farmers, including some Mennonites. We buy pigs from Wettstein Farms and all kinds of stuff from Henry's Farm. We did a big benefit for them at the restaurant a couple of years ago to enable them to buy their first parcel of land to keep this thing going. Their idea is to give land to farmers who want to farm it but can't afford it anymore. And they're fighting gentrification in their area. They've been pretty successful. We've worked with them extensively over the years. For that dinner we went out to their farm and slaughtered fifty ducks with them and picked all kinds of produce.

I think that the hallmark of Blackbird is that we try to run the restaurant in a way that is sustainable for the environment but is also sustainable for our suppliers and our employees.

SV: That's great! I know you're busy. Thanks for taking the time to talk with us.

Scott Vlaun  
Editor

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## **DISCOVER DIVERSITY IN YOUR GARDEN**

**BY STEVE PETERS**

[http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue\\_65/discover.asp](http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue_65/discover.asp)

One of the greatest joys of gardening is to discover something new! No matter how knowledgeable or experienced we may be in the garden, there will always be wonderful surprises waiting for us if we are open to them.

This year Seeds of Change has added about 70 seed and plant varieties to our already extensive list—our largest number of new introductions ever. Many of these are variations of crop types that we already offer, but many others are brand new crops for Seeds of Change. Some of these new introductions are easy to grow, while others may present unique challenges. In either case, we hope you enjoy these interesting offerings to excite your taste buds, provide color and beauty, and add to the vibrancy and health of your garden. Here is a summary of the new offerings with their outstanding qualities. Let's celebrate nature's gift of bio-diversity!

## **Additional varieties of crops already offered**

1. Fresh Snap Bush Beans (4): one yellow and three green pod varieties; all with exceptional tenderness; high uniformity; slender pods; long harvest period
2. Beet (1): golden roots
3. Carrot (1): bright yellow roots
4. Chard (1): deep orange stalks
5. Collard (1): very robust; old favorite from the South
6. Flour Corn (1): venerable, traditional Native American variety
7. Eggplant (1): small, slender, uniform fruit
8. Garlic (1): hardneck type with good storage; very large cloves; distinctive, lavender color
9. Leek (1): extremely winter-hardy; uniform shanks
10. Lettuce (10): wide diversity of shapes, colors and sizes - oak leaf, romaine, batavian, red leaf, butterhead, looseleaf-types
11. Okra (1): superb selection of tender pods from Louisiana
12. Onion (2): classic, yellow short-day type and white, long-day storage type
13. Chile Pepper (2): Anaheim types from the New Mexico Chile Institute
14. Quinoa (1): unusual, brilliant-colored leaves and seed heads
15. Radish (3): two varieties with unusual colors - pink and purple; one red variety with very uniform color and shape
16. Rutabaga (1): bright yellow flesh; vigorous and disease resistant
17. Squash (3): two summer squash with novel shapes and colors; one winter squash that is particularly uniform and productive
18. Tomato (2): highly flavorful heirlooms
19. Chicory (1): unique; dandelion-leaf type
20. Garden Cress (1): vigorous; uniform strain
21. Endive (2): different leaf shapes
22. Radicchio (2): superior uniformity of head shape and color
23. Basil (1): consistent purple leaf color
24. Chives (1): highly vigorous; thick-leaved
25. Thyme (1): greater winter hardiness
26. Tobacco (1): traditional, Native American, ceremonial type; more cold hardy
27. Flax (1): drought-tolerant; perennial wildflower
28. Campanula (1): drought-tolerant biennial; long bloom period
29. Marigold (1): new variety; brilliant double maroon and orange flower petals
30. Safflower (1): spineless stems; great cut and dried flower

## **New crops never before offered by Seeds of Change**

1. Globe Artichoke (1): highly adaptable cultivar produces fruit in first year, so it can be grown in climates with cold winters
2. Asparagus (3): first organic asparagus crowns (roots) offered on the market; green and purple varieties
3. Upland Cress (1): different species than standard garden cress; more cold hardy; more pungent with shiny leaves
4. Groundcherry (1): tomato-like fruits with intense, sweet flavor
5. Maruba Santoh (1): related to Chinese cabbage with broad, succulent white stalks
6. Pumpkin-On-A-Stick (1): ornamental eggplant; for fresh or dry bouquets
7. Stevia (1): natural sweetener; suitable for children and diabetics
8. Strawberries (6): first organic strawberry crowns offered on the market; everbearing and June-bearing varieties

9. Sweet Pea (1): old favorite cottage garden plant; fragrant scarlet, purple, rose, white, and cream blossoms
10. Yarrow (1): ornamental perennial with diversity of colors; cut and dried flower

Our website will be updated with all of our New Introductions on December 26th when our 2008 catalog is due in homes across the country. If you're not on our mailing list and would like to subscribe to our free catalog, click here. [http://www.seedsofchange.com/garden\\_center/catalog\\_request.asp](http://www.seedsofchange.com/garden_center/catalog_request.asp)

Steve Peters  
Seeds of Change Commercial Seed Manager

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## **USING COMPOST TEA IN YOUR GARDEN BY WADE COLLINS**

[http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue\\_65/composttea.asp](http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue_65/composttea.asp)

Compost tea can be a quick and inexpensive way to give your garden a helping hand during your growing season. Maintaining proper attention to ingredients and hygiene while “brewing” compost tea will ensure the maximum positive effect, while preventing potential bacterial contamination. Properly brewed tea can help you and your family to grow the healthiest gardens possible.

Well-brewed compost tea produces a microbe-rich solution with the dual purpose of increasing disease resistance and maximizing nutrient uptake. Compost teas confer a measure of disease resistance to a plant by allowing “good” bacteria to out-compete pathogenic organisms on a plant’s surface, while they can aid nutrient uptake in the root zone by increasing those populations of microorganisms known to provide this function for the plant.

There are two schools of thought regarding compost tea preparation. The first “school,” often referred to as the “European” method, is a decidedly low-tech affair. Here, mature compost is steeped in a loosely covered container of water for several days and stirred briefly by hand, once per day. The undiluted liquid is then applied to a plant’s leaves and base to allow penetration of the root zone. The second “school” is a bit more technological in its approach. In the “American” method, mature compost is brewed in a container of water that is actively and forcefully aerated for a shorter duration (12 to 24 hours) and is often paired with an additional nutrient-rich additive capable of encouraging the rapid development of certain beneficial microbial populations.

Advocates of the American approach believe the constant aeration of the compost material increases aerobic activity while suppressing the development of pathogenic organisms. Recent studies, however, have shown that there is no inherent benefit to this method when it comes to protecting the tea against harmful bacterial contamination. On the contrary, it is the use of additives in the brewing process—especially molasses-based products—which creates the greatest opportunity for E. Coli, and other troublesome microbes, to flourish.

Whichever method you choose for your compost tea preparation, there are certain steps you can take to ensure that the resulting liquid is of the highest quality possible. In 2004, the National Organic Standards Board issued the Compost Tea Task Force Report; in it, they made various recommendations towards a best-practices approach to tea preparation. Included in those recommendations were the following:

- Use only high quality, potable water as a brewing medium.
- Sanitize all compost tea making equipment prior to each use.
- Use only mature, fully composted organic material in your preparations.
- Avoid the use of additives, or catalysts in your teas, but if you do use them, apply to food crops a full 90–120 days before harvest.

- Do not use compost tea for edible sprouts.
- It's also a good idea to brew your tea inside in a controlled environment. This makes contamination from outside sources, such as birds, animals and insects less likely.

For more information on compost tea, see eNewsletter Issue #57  
[http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue\\_57/compost\\_tea.asp](http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue_57/compost_tea.asp)

For Information on Foliar Feeding, see eNewsletter Issue #20  
[http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue\\_20/issue\\_20.asp#GardenHelp](http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue_20/issue_20.asp#GardenHelp)

A 10 gallon Compost Tea Maker and Tea Catalyst is available from the Garden Tools section of our website.  
[http://www.seedsofchange.com/garden\\_center/product\\_details.asp?item\\_no=PS17224&UID=](http://www.seedsofchange.com/garden_center/product_details.asp?item_no=PS17224&UID=)

Wade Collins  
Seeds of Change Research Farm Associate

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## **FARM REPORT: DECEMBER 2007**

### **BY WADE COLLINS**

[http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue\\_65/farmreport.asp](http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue_65/farmreport.asp)

It's December at the Seeds of Change farm, and there are two inches of fresh snow on the ground from last night's storm. It's an odd feeling to be here in the high desert of northern New Mexico surrounded by water. But so much of life here is about contrasts that I guess it shouldn't be all that surprising. Drought and monsoon, verdant bosques and arid plains, red and green (chile sauce, that is) all come together to create a distinctiveness that never allows you to forget that you are here, in this place, and not anywhere else in the world.

The fields outside are in sharp contrast as well; gone are the lush rows of acequia-fed fruits and vegetables, replaced as they are now with the quiet slumber of life in winter—beds of white sheltering dormant crops of vetch and rye... waiting, just like the rest of us, for the tumult of spring.

This is not to say that all life here at the farm is snugly tucked in for the season. December is a bustling time for us here for seed cleaning. Our shelves and drying tables are fairly full of the fruits of our seed growers' labors this past year. Tim Franklins' Green Hubbard Squash and Bill Reynolds' Satsuki Madori Cucumber seeds are both getting a final chance to air out before putting them through the various processes of our increasingly state-of-the-art Seed Conditioning lab. Meanwhile, Emigdio Ballon's exquisite, bio-dynamically grown, Sonoran Gold tepary beans sit in cloth bags, freshly cleaned, awaiting delivery to our seed packing and storage facility in Santa Fe. The air inside the offices, punctuated by the percussive sounds of machines at work, busily separating and sorting the good from the bad, the wheat from the chaff, is infused with the occasional smells of aromatic herbs such as carrot, coriander and oregano as those seeds get put through their paces.

The farm chickens, now comfortably housed in their winter quarters, are busy too, producing about a dozen eggs a day for us with rich, deep orange yolks, setting them quite apart from the pale, seemingly anemic yellow of their supermarket-contracted cousins.

At this time of the year, we at Seeds of Change know that you all are probably busy as well. This is a time for family and friends, a time of reflection and anticipation. Here's hoping each one of you takes the time to savor the fondest memories of those you love, and enjoys the best that this holiday season has to offer.

Wade Collins

## **NEWS & VIEWS**

[http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue\\_65/news.asp](http://www.seedsofchange.com/enewsletter/issue_65/news.asp)

Northeast Organic Farming Association

Organic Landcare Program

Dates: Course offered three times throughout January and February

Locations: Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island

[www.organiclandcare.net](http://www.organiclandcare.net)

Growing public awareness of pesticide use hazards and new legislation mandating least toxic and non-toxic alternatives are fueling a new market opportunity for professionals with knowledge of organic land care. This 30-hour course for professionals will provide the education needed for an understanding of organic land care design and maintenance. The curriculum is based on NOFA's Standards for Organic Land Care. At the end of the course attendees will be able to incorporate methods and materials that respect natural ecology and the long-term health of the environment.

An optional exam will be given at the conclusion of the course. Those who pass the exam can become NOFA Accredited Organic Land Care Professionals. A list of these professionals and their services is widely distributed throughout the region in NOFA's Guide to Organic Land Care and on its website. Annual reaccreditation is granted based on continued demonstration of competence in organic land care.

17th Annual Practical Tools and

Solutions for Sustaining Family Farms Conference

Dates: January 16–19, 2008

Location: Galt House Hotel and Suites, Louisville, Kentucky

[www.ssawg.org](http://www.ssawg.org)

The conference will have a wide variety of sessions on sustainable agriculture topics, including: direct marketing through CSAs, farmers' markets, and online; vegetable and flower production; eggs, goat, rabbit and beef production; business practices; federal farm policies and farm programs; community food systems; and more. Eight sessions will run concurrently throughout the two-day conference. To help make it easier for attendees to choose among the selection of sessions, one session from each time slot is being offered at another time on the program as well.

Oregon Tilth's 33rd Annual Conference

Dates: January 18-19, 2008

Location: Salem Conference Center, Salem, Oregon

[www.tilth.org](http://www.tilth.org)

Organic integrity is a concern that many share. This year's conference will offer a rich variety of topics relevant to anyone involved with food systems, organic agriculture and livestock, sustainability, advocacy, and many other issues. It is also an opportunity for consumers and the general public to learn about sustainable agriculture and organic food production. They have planned topical symposia and roundtable discussions, practical workshops, and an engaging roster of speakers. Enjoy an organic wine tasting, gourmet meals prepared with local, organic ingredients, and the company of others involved in sustainable and organic agriculture.

Food Safety for Organic Production and

### Handling of Fresh Produce Conference

Dates: January 21-23, 2008

Location: Asilomar Conference Center,  
Pacific Grove, California

[www.ccof.org](http://www.ccof.org)

Food safety is top of mind in the wake of recent outbreaks, recalls and regulatory action surrounding fresh produce. These developments have stirred up spirited debate as to what actions are most appropriate to minimize food safety risks now that produce is a focus of the national food safety discussion.

Growers, industry and research professionals have collaborated to create a two-day course on the topic of Food Safety for Organic Production and Handling of Fresh Produce, with content customized specifically to address the needs and concerns of organic growers and handlers.

### Ecological Farming Conference, Root Values:

Connecting Ecology, Community and the Land

Dates: January 23-26, 2008

Location: Pacific Grove, California

[www.eco-farm.org](http://www.eco-farm.org)

This annual four-day winter forum is the world's foremost sustainable agriculture conference. "Eco-Farm" features prominent keynote speakers and more than 50 workshops on the latest advances in agricultural production, marketing, research, and important issues. It provides a unique opportunity to exchange vital information with people from around the world while renewing your spirit at historic Asilomar on California's magnificent Monterey coast.

### The 27th Annual Guelph Organic Conference

Dates: January 24-27, 2008

Location: Guelph University Centre, Guelph, Ontario

[www.guelphorganicconf.ca](http://www.guelphorganicconf.ca)

Highlighting - 'The Business of Organics' which shows successful Canadian organic businesses and co-ops striving for TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE: economic, social and environmental sustainability

### 7th annual Texas Conference

On Organic Production Systems

Dates: February 1-3, 2008

Location: College Station, Texas

[www.tofga.org](http://www.tofga.org)

The 8th annual conference facilitated by the Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association ([www.tofga.org](http://www.tofga.org)) brings together the latest production systems for Texas and the South. Hear from the farmers, ranchers, consultants, organizers, chefs and national leaders that are making a difference in the local food revolution. Learn the latest in organic growing and sustainable agriculture, tour local farms, eat local food, enjoy a movie screening, trade show and return home inspired by others on how to successfully bring local food to your community.

### Ready to Grow: Sharing the Sustainable Story (PASA's 17th Annual Farming for the Future Conference)

Dates: February 7-9, 2008

Location: State College, Pennsylvania

[www.pasafarming.org](http://www.pasafarming.org)

The theme for the 2008 Farming for the Future conference, Ready To Grow: Sharing the Sustainable Story was developed by PASA's all volunteer conference planning committee. Keynote speakers include environmental activist Diane Wilson, author of "An Unreasonable Woman: A True Story of Shrimpers, Politicos, Polluters and the Fight for Seadrift, Texas" and Mark McAfee, an internationally recognized raw milk production pioneer and advocate. The conference theme and keynote speakers have been selected to emphasize the tremendous determination and perseverance it takes to succeed in creating a more sustainable world.

In addition to over 80 workshops and ten pre-conference tracks, the conference features locally-grown, organic meals, a 78-vendor tradeshow, arts and music, and programming for youth and kids.

#### Northern Plains Sustainable Ag 29th Annual Winter Conference

Dates: February 8-9, 2008

Location: Seven Seas, Mandan North Dakota

[www.npsas.org](http://www.npsas.org)

John Doran, Professor Emeritus at the University of Nebraska and Fred L. Kirschenmann, Distinguished Fellow for the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University will be the keynote speakers.

Professor Doran will focus on "Soil Health: Sustaining Earth & Its People" while Fred Kirschenmann will address the question, "Is There A Future for Beginning Farmers?" Workshops will feature information on live-stock, bread making, estate planning, pesticides, organic no-till, local foods, junkyard wars and more.

#### United States Composting Council Conference and Exhibition

Dates: February 9-12, 2008

Location: Oakland, California

[www.compostingcouncil.org](http://www.compostingcouncil.org)

Looking for the latest information on composting, odor control, marketing, research and evaluation? In need of the latest composting equipment and technologies? The USCC Annual Conference & Trade Show has the answers. Through the USCC's six pre-conference workshops & training seminars and educational sessions presented under six conference tracks you will have the opportunity to attend the most comprehensive composting seminar program available.

Join hundreds of fellow compost managers, operators, regulators, researchers, government officials, engineers and consultants from throughout the country at the USCC Annual Conference, to engage in a focused, three-day series of workshops, training courses, educational and technical sessions and seminars covering composting and compost marketing practices, new technologies and compost applications, policies, public outreach, program financing, and regulations. An outstanding program is planned with a diversity of sessions offered. Critical issues to be addressed at the conference affect all composters and those affiliated with the industry.

#### Fundamentals of Organic Seed Production Short Course

Dates: February 13, 2008

Location: Salem Conference Center, Salem, Oregon

[www.seedalliance.org](http://www.seedalliance.org)

- Funded by Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, the Short Course will address two major areas:
- Fundamentals of seed production for organic professionals and farmers interested in learning how to grow specialty seed
-

Fundamentals of organic production for seed professionals and farmers interested in learning how to grow organically

The Organic Seed Production Guide and the Guidebook on Organic Principles and Practices will be provided to all workshop participants.

#### 5th Organic Seed Growers Conference

Dates: February 14-15, 2008

Location: Salem Conference Center, Salem, Oregon

[www.seedalliance.org](http://www.seedalliance.org)

The Organic Seed Growers Conference, hosted by Organic Seed Alliance with partnership from Oregon State University and Washington State University, is the largest meeting of seed professionals engaged in organic seed production, research, and plant breeding in the United States. This event brings together producers, university Extension and researchers, seed industry professionals, and food industry participants from across the country.

#### Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference hosted by Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES)

Dates: February 21-23, 2008

Location: LaCrosse, Wisconsin

[www.mosesorganic.org](http://www.mosesorganic.org)

With 130 exhibitors and over 60 workshops, the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference is an extraordinary, farmer-centered event. This gathering is the largest organic farming conference in the U.S. and is celebrated as one of the foremost educational and networking events in the organic farming community. This year, MOSES is offering the Midwest Organic Research Symposium in conjunction with the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference. This symposium runs concurrently with the Conference.

#### Planning Your Organic Garden

Dates: February 23, 2008

Location: Angelic Organics Learning Center,  
Caledonia, Illinois

[www.csalearningcenter.org](http://www.csalearningcenter.org)

Lift the winter blues in this workshop on designing an organically managed home vegetable garden. Learn about various methods for building soil, plus planning for space needs and crop rotation. This workshop is especially suited for beginning gardeners, or those ready to convert to non-chemical techniques. Bring your dreams for this year's garden, and leave with a garden map and planting calendar. Share a potluck lunch.

#### Georgia Organics Annual Conference

Dates: February 28-March 1, 2008

Location: Dalton, Georgia

[www.georgiaorganics.org](http://www.georgiaorganics.org)

Keynote speaker George Siemon, CEO of the nation's largest organic dairy cooperative, Organic Valley, promises to inspire with the wit and wisdom gleaned from his career weaving family farms together into cooperative marketing strongholds.

Highlights include:

- More farm tours and educational sessions - featuring nationally recognized speakers on sustainable farming,

food systems, and traditional foods;

- Organic Banquet showcasing the best local foods prepared by the onsite banquet team in partnership with Chef Cathy Conway of Avalon Catering;
- A concurrent session track sponsored by the Slow Food Atlanta convivium;
- Expanded trade show featuring sustainable and organic product exhibitors from around the nation;
- Farm-to-School activity demonstration track doing double-duty as the Conference Children's Program

This, the largest sustainable agriculture event in Georgia, is attended by over 600 farmers, educators, chefs, food distributors, market managers, local food system advocates, and foodies from Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama and beyond.

Reclaiming Our Healthy Future:

Political Change to Protect the Next Generation

Dates: March 14-16, 2008

Location: University of California, Berkeley, California

[www.beyondpesticides.org](http://www.beyondpesticides.org)

Announcing an exciting national gathering of pesticide experts and activists: Reclaiming Our Healthy Future: Political Change to Protect the Next Generation is convened by Beyond Pesticides, Californians for Pesticide Reform (CPR) and Pesticide Action Network North America.

Session topics include: Children's Health, Farmworker Justice, Healthy and Just Food Systems, the Politics of Pesticides and much more. Keynote speakers include Arturo Rodriquez, president of United Farm Workers of America, and Tyrone Hayes, professor of Integrative Biology at the University of California, Berkeley. Also, Actress Kaiulani Lee will perform A Sense of Wonder, her one-woman play based on the life and works of Rachel Carson.

New American Farm Conference:

Advancing the Frontier of Sustainable Agriculture

Dates: March 25-27, 2008

Location: Kansas City, Missouri

[www.sare.org](http://www.sare.org)

Never before has the American public cared more about how and where its food is produced. New, lucrative markets are opening up: "natural", "organic", "local." People are growing more concerned about the quality of our nation's natural resources—and the communities they sustain.

More and more farmers and ranchers are turning to sustainable agriculture to boost profits, protect the land, air and water, and continue a rewarding way of life.

Learn more about how sustainable farming is rapidly changing the face of American agriculture. The New American Farm conference is a gathering for farmers, ranchers, educators, researchers, students, advocates and the curious consumer. Meet others who share a passion for quality agriculture.

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Letters should include your full name and location and may be edited for purposes of clarity and space.

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