

Urban and Small Farms Conference Schedule

Monday March 1st

9:00 AM Microfarming – These topics are for all levels of experience

- Fruits for Small Acreage – Brent Black, Utah State University
- Using Cover Crops to Improve Soil Health – Dan Drost, Utah State University
- Using Compost to Improve Soil Health – Melanie Stock, Utah State University
- Growing More in Less Space – The Urban Farm Demonstration Garden – Sheriden Hansen, Utah State University
- Tools for Small Acreage – Cody Zesiger, Utah State University
- Introduction to Aquaponics – Taylor Waymen, USU Botanical Center

1:00 PM Soils – These topics are for all levels of experience

2:30 PM Water – These topics are for all levels of experience

Tuesday March 2nd

9:00 AM Fruits – These topics and speakers will assume a high level of experience in these areas.

1:00 PM Cut Flowers – This is our third annual session dedicated to cut flower production in Utah. This year, we will cover the following topics: findings from USU cut flower research trials, calculating the economics of a cut flower farm, a farmer's guide to selling at market and through CSAs, perspectives on the local cut flower movement and updates from the Utah Cut Flower Farm Association, and a step-by-step procedure for classifying your soil at home.

Wednesday March 3rd

9:00 AM Vegetables – These topics and speakers will assume a high level of experience in these areas.

1:00 PM Direct Marketing in the COVID Era and Financial Evaluation of New Markets – This session will include information on innovations in direct-to-consumer sales as well as evaluating the profit potential of new markets. It is for all levels of experience.

4:00 PM Networking with Utah's Own – This will be a more informal session with opportunities to network. More details will be coming.

Thursday March 4th

9:00 AM Small Animals – These topics are for all levels of experience

- Small Ruminants
 - Dealing with Common Sheep Parasites – Chad Page, Utah State University
 - Growing Wool in Your Backyard – Heather Pearce, American Sheep Industry Wool Consultant
- Chickens – Ben Scow, Utah State University

1:00 PM Farm Stress and Mental Health Training – Did you know that the most important asset to your farm or ranch is YOU? This online workshop will focus on recognizing and managing stress and mental health. Participants will be given key instruction, resources, and training from USU Extension professionals.

2:30 PM Innovations and Tools for Your Local Food Market: Farmers Markets, Farm Stands, Farm Stores, and CSAs – TBA

Session Descriptions & Presenter Biographies:

Fruits for Small Acreage: The Annual Meeting of the Utah Berry Growers Association

Dr. Brent Black is Professor and Extension Fruit Specialist at Utah State University. He holds a B.S. degree in Plant and Soil Science from Utah State University, an M.S. degree in Horticulture from Michigan State University, and a Ph.D. in Plant Physiology from Oregon State University. Prior to joining USU in 2005, Dr. Black was a research scientist with the USDA Agriculture Research Service in Beltsville, Maryland for 6 years, where he studied production systems for strawberry and blueberry. His current research interests are in precision orchard management, and strategies for extending the production season of berry crops.

Using Cover Crops to Improve Soil Health: TBA

Dan Drost grew up on a small, diversified farm in western Michigan. He graduated from Michigan State University with a BS and MS degrees in Horticulture. In 1983, he moved to New Zealand to teach Horticulture. He returned to the US to pursue his PhD in 1987 which was awarded in 1991 from Cornell University in Vegetable Crops and Plant Physiology. He arrived at Utah State University in January 1992 to work as the Extension Vegetable Specialist for Utah. Dan is interested in small farm production systems, organic agriculture (helped get USU's Organic Program going), focuses on the creation of efficient farm systems, and how intensive land-use management impacts the productivity and economic activities of vegetable farms.

Using Compost to Improve Soil Health: This is our third annual session dedicated to cut flower production in Utah! This year, we will cover the following topics: findings from USU cut flower research trials, record keeping for calculating the economics of a cut flower farm, a farmer's guide to selling at market and through CSAs, perspectives on the local cut flower movement and updates from the Utah Cut Flower Farm Association, and a step-by-step procedure for classifying your soil at home.

Dr. Melanie Stock is an Assistant Professor / Extension Urban & Small Farms Specialist in the Plants, Soils, and Climate Department at USU. As a soil scientist, her research targets improving cut flower production in the Intermountain West, small farm resource use efficiency – particularly soil fertility and water management, and urban soil contamination.

Growing More in Less Space – The Urban Farm Demonstration Garden: The Microfarm Track of the Urban and Small Farms Conference is aimed to teach basic principles that can be built on to create successful urban and small-scale farms on roughly 2-acres or less. Topics include soil health, alternative crops, ideas for small equipment implementation, and non-traditional growing techniques.

Sheriden Hansen is an Assistant Professor of Horticulture with USU Extension in Davis County, Utah. Sheriden started as a nurse, receiving a BS in nursing from the University of Utah in 2002. After many years working as an operating room RN, she decided to pursue her passion in horticulture. Sheriden graduated from Utah State University with a BS in Plant Science (Summa Cum Laude) in 2015 and a MS in Plant Science with an emphasis in fruit production in 2017.

Tools for Small Acreage: TBA

Cody Zesiger, Utah State University

Introduction to Aquaponics: TBA

Taylor Waymen is a Hydroculture Technician at USU Botanical Center in Kaysville. Taylor is currently implementing USDA grant to create four Hydroculture demonstration systems in Kaysville (two Hydroponic, two Aquaponic), has an MBA from University of Colorado, and BS in Computer Science from BYU.

Dealing with Common Sheep Parasites: Common sheep parasites and management strategies to deal with them.

Chad Page, Utah State University

Growing Wool in Your Backyard: Sheep can provide a variety of resources including wool. Learn about growing quality wool on a small scale as well as options for using the wool yourself or using it to generate additional income.

Heather Pearce, American Sheep Industry Wool Consultant

Chickens: TBA

Ben Scow, Utah State University