



SOUTHEAST

TRANSITION TO ORGANIC PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF FARMERS: LSU AGCENTER'S GROW LOUISIANA BEGINNING FARMER TRAINING PROGRAM

The Grow Louisiana Beginning Farmer Training Program, hosted by the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center through support from the Southeast Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP), provided a transformative experience for aspiring farmers across Louisiana in 2024. This year-long initiative was designed to equip new and beginning horticulture farmers with the skills, knowledge, and networks needed to thrive in agriculture. With 15 participants, the program featured ten comprehensive sessions—five in the spring and five in the fall—focusing on topics like soil management, organic vegetable production, grant writing, and business planning. Field trips to River Queen Greens in New Orleans and Fullness Organic Farm in Baton Rouge added hands-on learning opportunities, enabling participants to see successful farming practices in action.

What sets Grow Louisiana apart is its holistic approach to training. Participants are guided not only by experts in agricultural science but also by experienced farmers who share their insights and challenges.



Through workshops and farm tours, they gain practical knowledge in areas such as composting, crop rotation, and marketing strategies. During the fall sessions, one presenter shared a personal story about overcoming challenges with local markets in Louisiana and finding unexpected success in Arkansas, inspiring others in the cohort to think creatively about market opportunities.

The program also fostered a strong sense of community among participants, with many forming lasting connections and supporting one another in their farming journeys.

The program concluded with a heartfelt end-of-year session where participants shared their reflections and future plans. For many, it was an emotional moment, highlighting just how impactful the experience had been. One farmer even shed tears, expressing their appreciation for the program. By the end of the year, participants earned their certifications, and the positive feedback from participants signaled the program's success. With people already signed up and excited for the next cohort, the Grow Louisiana Beginning Farmer Training Program is poised to continue sowing the seeds for a vibrant and resilient agricultural future in the state.

Learn More:



www.organictransition.org/region/southeast



United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program
Transition to Organic Partnership Program

