



# SOUTHEAST

## TRANSITION TO ORGANIC PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

### CULTIVATE & CONNECT: AN EVENING OF INSIGHT & FLAVOR FOR LOCAL FARMERS

Cultivate & Connect was held at Alchemy Farms and Plants, LLC nestled in Artisans Cove, Alabama. It brought together farmers, agricultural organizations, and SE TOPP partners for an evening focused on advancing sustainable farming, expanding organic opportunities, and strengthening regional networks. The program opened with remarks from Florida Organic Growers emphasizing the importance of collaboration and innovation in local agriculture.

A significant portion of the event was dedicated to hands-on learning through a guided farm tour led by Marguerite McClintock of Alchemy Farms and Plants, LLC. Participants visited three demonstration stations: high tunnel production for season extension, the role of honeybees in pollination, and composting techniques to improve soil health. These demonstrations provided practical insights that farmers could apply directly to their operations.



The evening continued with a series of resource round tables featuring experts from across the Southeast. Representatives from the Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network, Food Bank of North Alabama, Georgia Organic Peanut Association, and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives shared guidance on accessing support programs, entering new markets, and exploring crop opportunities, including organic peanuts. Additional discussion was led by Florida Organic Growers on transitioning to organic production and accessing SE TOPP mentorship and resources.

Florida Organic Growers also facilitated discussions on transitioning to organic production, outlining certification requirements, cost-share opportunities, and technical support available through the Southeast Transition to Organic Partnership Program (SE TOPP). Farmers were encouraged to take advantage of mentorship, peer learning, and one-on-one assistance to help reduce barriers and increase confidence throughout the transition process.

The event provided practical tools, new production strategies, and deeper regional connections. Attendees gained insights into organic farming, market access, and the many support systems available for growers throughout the Southeast. Overall, Cultivate & Connect successfully fostered meaningful dialogue, delivered actionable knowledge, and strengthened the network of farmers and agricultural advocates committed to sustainable and organic production in the region.



The event concluded with final reflections and an extended farm-to-table grazing and networking session. This allowed attendees to build relationships, taste local foods, and exchange ideas in an informal setting. Overall, Cultivate & Connect successfully fostered meaningful dialogue, delivered actionable knowledge, and strengthened the network of farmers and agricultural advocates committed to sustainable and organic production in the region.

#### Learn More:

[www.organictransition.org/region/southeast](http://www.organictransition.org/region/southeast)



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

