

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Back to Your Roots: A Sustainable Agriculture Masters Series To Be Held at Louisiana Tech University

CAMPTI, Louisiana (January 15, 2019) – Campti Field of Dreams will host Back to Your Roots: A Sustainable Agriculture Masters Series March 7 through 9, 2019, at Reese Hall on the Louisiana Tech University campus and other locations in the Ruston, Louisiana, area.

This 3-day conference has much to offer those in all phases and interests of gardening and sustainable farming. The theme of Food Leading Change covers topics ranging from edible landscaping, beekeeping, and pasture management, to season extension using high tunnels and other appropriate technology. Online registration is open and space is limited. To register, visit [www.camptifieldofdreams.org](http://www.camptifieldofdreams.org).

A pre-conference North Louisiana Farm Tour features a diverse group of farming operations. Sagdrina Jalal, Executive Director at the Georgia Farmers Market Association, will provide the keynote address at the welcome reception on Thursday evening. Friday evening there will be a Farm-to-Table dinner at Ruston Farmers Market designed and prepared by Chef Tootie Morrison of Shreveport, Louisiana. The keynote to follow will be Tracey Weaver, founder and executive director of urban university.

The 2019 Masters Series will cover topics ranging from companion planting to market analysis, designing a grazing plan and lean market gardening. It features:

- Steve Gabriel, an ecologist, forest farmer, and educator living in the Finger Lakes Region of New York
- Darby Simpson, a full-time farmer in broilers, turkeys, hogs and beef
- Ben Hartman, owner/operator of Clay Bottom Farm in Goshen, Indiana, where he makes a living growing and selling specialty crops on less than one acre
- Lisa Mason Ziegler, a cut-flower farmer, author and speaker on organic cut-flower gardening.

Dr. Paul Jackson, Associate Professor of Plant Science at Louisiana Tech University; Dr. Laura Sims, Assistant Professor of Forest Health at Louisiana Tech University; Marc Pastorek, horticulturist; Michael Book, owner/operator of Michael's Mayhaw's; and Grant Estrade, farmer/owner, Local Cooling Farm, will teach other featured sessions.

Panels on buyers and sellers perspectives, the advantages of a statewide farmers market association, season extension using high tunnels, applications of drone technology, and more will make this a diverse gathering of technical experts, practitioners, and current and future farmers.

## Who We Are

Founded in 2001, Campti Field of Dreams is a Louisiana nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting persistent poverty by growing food, farmers, and the fabric of our rural communities. We collaborate with local, state and federal partners to fight persistent poverty through sustainable entrepreneurship and creative placemaking initiatives.

## What We Do

Campti Field of Dreams operates the Campti Historic Museum, a museum celebrating the rich cultural heritage on Campti and the surrounding community, and Tallawah Farm, a 25-acre sustainable agriculture demonstration farm. Campti Field of Dreams also conducts outreach for the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Each year the nonprofit hosts:

- 1) Twelve parish-wide outreach meetings throughout the State of Louisiana to share information on technical and financial assistance programs available through the United States Department of Agriculture, with emphasis on the Farm Bill and focus on parishes facing persistent poverty.
- 2) Back To Your Roots Conference: A Sustainable Agriculture Master Series (March 7-9)
- 3) An Art & Agriculture Festival (June 22)
- 4) A Two-week Youth Agripreneurship Summer Class (Tentative Date: June 10 – June 22, 2019)

Weekly during the season, Tallawah Farm participates in the Ruston Farmers Market and operates the Campti Marketplace. The Museum also facilitates a quilting group, art classes and hosts Campti Community Development Center's Seniors Program. For more information, visit [www.camptifieldofdreams.org](http://www.camptifieldofdreams.org).

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