

Midwest Winter Production Conference 2021

We're making lemons into lemonade. The Midwest Winter Production Conference will be on-line this year. It will take place via Zoom every Tuesday evening in February from 6:30 to 8 pm (February 2, 9, 16, and 23). Registration is required (and FREE) and available at <http://www.webbcityfarmersmarket.com/training>.

Like everyone else, the organizing committee, made up of representatives of the Webb City Farmers Market, University of Missouri Extension, and Lincoln University Co-operative Extension had to completely rethink the conference. Instead of the usual in-person presentations by experts and farmers, the conference will consist of four videos, each exploring the winter production practices of a successful year-round farm in Southwest Missouri. Extension specialists have spent the fall and winter visiting these four farms once a month to record how the farmers are pursuing and implementing winter production, what challenges arise, and what practices are put into place. Each video will be followed by a live question and answer period during which participants can interact with the farmer featured and the Extension specialist that worked with the farm. (photo above—winter produce selection at the stand of Millsap Farm)



While we are disappointed to lose the networking that takes place at an in-person conference, we think that this conference will have some important pluses – it's free, participants do not have to travel and pay lodging costs, nor spend two solid days away from the farm. Southwest Missouri has exceptional year-round producers willing to share their insights and our Extension partners have become proficient at creating videos and operating on-line during the COVID crisis.



Registration includes all four nights, but participants may choose to attend one or all evenings as their interest and schedule dictate:

Tuesday, February 2 – The Yang Family Vegetable

Farm, near Rocky Comfort, Missouri, uses conventional farming practices. Fue Yang (left) managed the market's Year-Round Growing Edu-

cation Center which was located on the Yang Farm for three years. The farm sells at the Farmers Market of the Ozarks and at the Webb City Farmers Market. This video includes a segment on aphid control by Dr. Clement Akotsen-Mensah, Lincoln University State Extension Specialist - Integrated Pest Management. Nahshon Bishop with Lincoln is the Extension lead for this presentation.

Tuesday, February 9 – Box Turtle Farm, near Mt. Vernon, is a certified organic farm specializing in greens production wholesaled to restaurants and grocery stores. Farmer Jason Hirtz (right) is participating in the market's essential oils research project to determine if various organic oils, like lavender, orange, and peppermint, are effective in controlling pests in high tunnels. Extension lead David Middleton of Lincoln will report on the project during the video.





Tuesday, February 16 – OakWoods Farm, near Granby, Missouri, is a human-scale diversified farm using organic practices and growing in three high tunnels with no electricity or supplemental heat, as well as growing field crops. Owners Karen and Doug Scott sell at the Empire Market and the Webb City Farmers Market, as well as on-line and through a CSA. Karen (left) is well known for her greens, heirloom tomatoes, and peppers, as well as herbs and microgreens. The video will include a segment on lettuce drop by Dr. Jaimin Patel, Assistant Professor of Plant Pathology at Lincoln University. Extension leads are Patrick Byers and Robert Balek of the University of Missouri.

Tuesday, February 23 – Millsap Farms – a 20-acre diversified farm, near Springfield, Missouri operated by Curtis (right) and Sarah Millsap, along with their nine children, farm manager Kimby Decker, and several apprentices. Currently, the Millsaps grow 2 acres of flowers and vegetables annually, with 25,000 sq ft protected under plastic, including a 1,600 sq ft Chinese solar greenhouse and a 6,000 sq ft minimally heated greenhouse. They use organic practices, and offer their produce for sale through a year-round, 185 member CSA, the Farmers Market of the Ozarks, and restaurant sales. This video will include a segment focused on the Millsap's cold storage facility. The Extension lead is Kelly McGowan of the University of Missouri.



The Midwest Winter Production Conference is underwritten by the Missouri Department of Agriculture through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. It is co-sponsored by the Webb City Farmers Market, Lincoln University Co-operative Extension, and University of Missouri Extension.

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