



Field Notes

Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture E-Newsletter

E-Field Notes
August 2022

If you've ever considered starting a **pastured poultry** enterprise - or are just looking for ways to fine-tune an existing one - you might be interested in a **new free online course**.

USDA is offering **help paying for organic certification** through two different programs, but some parts are **first-come, first-serve**, and the **deadline is coming up**.

Monarch butterflies are now officially endangered, according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature - but the species still **lacks legal protection** under U.S. law. Find out **how you can help monarchs** until that changes.

If you find these updates and resources useful, you can help us out as well: [donate to the Kerr Center](#) to support our work. If you already have, [thank you!](#)

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Free Online Pastured Poultry Course

Are you interested in **starting a [pastured poultry operation](#)**, but not sure where to begin? Or maybe you are running pastured poultry already, but looking for ways to **improve your efficiency**?

Either way, a **new, free online course** could help. "**[Beginning Pastured Poultry](#)**," from the Food Animal Concerns Trust, combines four **webinars** from the organization's library with an **outline, supporting materials, and links to additional resources**.

The course is free, although registration is required. **Students can begin at any time, and work at their own pace.**

Topics covered include **how to start a pastured poultry operation, mobile housing options, protection from predators, heritage breeds, nutrition, and more.**

Learn more about "**[Beginning Pastured Poultry](#)**" on the **[FACT website](#)**.



USDA Cost Share for Organic Certification

Funds to help pay transitioning and certified organic farms' costs associated with [organic certification](#) are available from two USDA programs - both with **signup deadlines at the end of October**.

The [Organic Certification Cost Share Program \(OCCSP\)](#) provides cost share assistance to producers who are obtaining or renewing organic certification. It covers up to 50% of certification costs, with a \$500 cap, per year.

The [Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program \(OTECP\)](#) was created more recently, as part of USDA's [Pandemic Assistance for Producers program](#). OTECP covers a wider range of expenses, including:

- **certification costs** (25%, maximum \$250)
- for transitioning producers, fees for **pre-certification inspections and development of an [organic system plan](#)**, as well as other eligible expenses (75%, maximum \$750)
- **registration fees** for educational events, such as **workshops and conferences** (75%, maximum \$200)
- **[soil testing](#)** (75%, maximum \$100)

Applications to both OCCSP and OTECP are due by October 31, 2022. (OCCSP funds are awarded first-come, first-serve, so there is a strong incentive to **apply early**.) Applications to both programs are made through the [local Farm Service Agency \(FSA\) office](#), with one-on-one assistance available at 877-508-8364.

More information is available on the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's [blog](#).



Monarch Butterfly Now Endangered, But Still Not Protected

Last month the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) [added the monarch butterfly \(*Danaus plexippus*\), as "Endangered," to its global Red List of Threatened Species](#). However, this still does not translate into legal protection for the species in the United States.



In the U.S., the federal Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) determines which species are considered endangered. The agency most recently considered the monarch's status in December 2020.

At that time, **FWS determined that threatened or endangered status for monarchs under the Endangered Species Act was "warranted, but precluded by higher priority actions."** In other words, the monarch qualifies for endangered status, but there were enough other species in even worse shape that the agency decided to postpone designating the monarch as endangered.

FWS is continuing annual monitoring of monarch populations, and will consider the species for endangered status again in 2024.

While the [IUCN and FWS may disagree for the moment](#) over the monarchs' endangered status, both organizations - as well as many other conservation groups - agree that **there is much that can be done to improve the species' odds of survival, regardless of its legal status**. These include

- [planting milkweed](#) and other [native flowering plants](#),
- [reducing the use of harmful insecticides](#), especially [neonicotinoids](#),
- participating in [citizen science monitoring](#) efforts, and
- **protecting monarchs' habitat**, both along the migratory routes and in its overwintering grounds in Mexico.

Late Summer Events: Canning, SARE PDP, Fall Gardening, Composting, Monarchs....

Upcoming OSU workshops and classes in Oklahoma City cover all phases of home food production, from **gardening** (Sept. 1), to **pressure canning** (Aug. 29) and **water bath canning** (Sept. 7), to **marketing** (Sept. 2), and even **composting** the leftovers (Sept. 14).

Applications to Southern SARE's Professional Development Program (PDP) are due Aug. 31.

Don't miss the **Monarchs on the Mountain** festival, Sept. 17 in Tulsa.

The Kerr Center's **final tour date of the year** is Sept. 13, by appointment only. [Come visit us!](#)

Full details on these and other sustainable agriculture learning opportunities, as always, can be found on the Kerr Center's online [events calendar](#).

AUG 29 Mon	Pressure Canning Workshop @ Oklahoma City (OSU Extension Conference Center) + Aug 29 @ 5:00 pm – 8:30 pm
AUG 31 Wed	Southern SARE Professional Development Program (PDP) Grant Applications (deadline) + Aug 31 @ 11:00 am
	1890 Institution Teaching, Research and Extension Capacity Building Grants (CBG) Program (application deadline) + Aug 31 @ 4:00 pm
SEP 1 Thu	Home Grown Gardening @ Oklahoma City Tickets + Sep 1 @ 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
	Composting and Food Waste Reduction (CFWR) Pilot Project (application deadline) + Sep 1 @ 10:59 pm
SEP 2 Fri	Beginning Farmer Market Gardening School: Marketing @ Oklahoma City (Oklahoma County Extension Office) + Sep 2 @ 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
SEP 7 Wed	Water Bath Canning Workshop @ Oklahoma City (Oklahoma County OSU Extension Center) + Sep 7 @ 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
SEP 13 Tue	BY APPOINTMENT ONLY: Tour the Kerr Center @ Kerr Center + Sep 13 @ 9:00 am
SEP 14 Wed	Oklahoma County Master Composter Training @ Oklahoma City (OSU Extension Center) + Sep 14 @ 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
SEP 17 Sat	Monarchs on the Mountain – Migration Celebration @ Tulsa (Turkey Mountain Urban Wilderness Area) + Sep 17 @ 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Don't forget that you can also use our online calendar to **keep yourself and your friends up to date** on these and other upcoming events, including our tours:

- **Subscribe to our feed** and receive **updates to your personal calendar** as they are made.
- **Share events on the calendar** via a number of **different social media sites**, including Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest.

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