



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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35th Annual Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York's 2017 Winter Conference Focuses on Diversity & Biodiversity

January 20-22 event also encompasses first-ever Northeast Organic Seed Conference

Farmington, NY—The 35th Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York's (NOFA-NY) celebrates its 2017 Winter Conference with the theme, ***Long Live the Farmer: Diversity & Biodiversity*** in Saratoga Springs, NY. From **January 20-22**, this year's bonus includes the first **Northeast Organic Seed Conference: *Owning Our Own Seed.***

"Each year our conference strives to inspire, inform, and provide an unparalleled opportunity for networking and for reciprocal reaching and learning," noted NOFA-NY Executive Director Andrianna Natsoulas. "Including the Seed Conference is a wonderful addition to an already dynamic line-up of more than 100 workshops in 17 different tracks."

Tying the two together is Keynote Speaker, the eminent **CR Lawn, founder of [Fedco Seeds](#)**. He will focus on creating an ethical, sustainable seed system and share strategies for overcoming obstacles. Many additional conference highlights include a seed swap, a special joint presentation by **award-winning chef Dan Barber of [Blue Hill at Stone Barns](#) and Cornell vegetable breeder [Michael Mazourek](#)** on chef-breeder collaboration, special half-day workshop intensives, a participatory on-farm horse-powered workshop, book signings, films, special discussion groups, and social activities.

Numerous workshops and discussion groups will delve into **what farmer diversity looks like in 2017**, including a "Dismantling Racism" workshop led by Keith McHenry, as well as discussion groups for women, veterans and LGBTQ farmers and advocates. NOFA-NY aims to recognize divisions, bridge them, and honor their diversity. Stephen Gabriel will organize a teach-in (or two) for Farmers in Action to prepare for civil leadership in the coming months and years. NOFA-NY also will live stream the January 21 **Women's March on Washington** in the Tradeshow exhibit area.

Special interest tracks feature fruit, vegetables, livestock, grains, beverage, mushrooms, permaculture, gardening and homesteading, draft animals, plus marketing and business, policy,

social justice, urban farming, small scale food processors, and community, education, and co-ops. More than 80 conference exhibitors also will be in attendance.

Mike and Gayle Thorpe of [Thorpe's Organic Family Farm](#) are the 2017 NOFA-NY Farmers of the Year. Their family-owned and operated farm encompasses more than 2,000 acres of organically managed land in East Aurora, New York. The Thorpes grow over 300 varieties of certified organic fruits, vegetables, hay, and grains, have a CSA of 540 families, and an organic citrus grove in Florida.

For attendees with children ages 5-12, a children's conference with hands-on activities is available.

NOFA-NY is a member-based, non-profit educational organization of farmers, gardeners, and consumers creating a sustainable regional food system that is ecologically sound and economically viable. Through demonstration and education, it promotes land stewardship, organic food production, and local marketing. NOFA-NY brings consumer and farmer closer together to make high quality food available to all people.

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NOTE: Advanced and on-site interviews are available as are photos.