

# Farm

# Sense

February 2022

UAPB Small Farm Program

## Dates to Remember

**February 8** - KIITF Estate Planning and Heirs Property Workshop

**February 9** - Taxes and Record Keeping Workshop

**February 14** - High Tunnels and Urban Agriculture Workshop

**February 15** - Mental Health and Farming Workshop

**February 21-22** - Vegetable Production Clinic

**February 24-25** - Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation (ALFDC) 41st Community Economic Development and Winter Farmers Conference.

**February 25, March 4, March 11** - Bee Keeping Clinic (3 classes for \$30 fee), 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Space limited to first 20 to register and pay.

**February 28** - Deadline for enrolling in the Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP) for certain cool and warm season crops such as mustard greens, squash, watermelons and sweet potatoes.

**February 28** - Deadline or sales closing date for obtaining crop insurance for soybeans, rice, cotton, corn and sorghum.

**March 7** - Landowner Empowerment Workshop

**March 16** - Deadline for signing up for the ARC and PLC Program.

## Good Yields Critical for Crop Insurance

The first step in building a crop insurance plan is to identify your Actual Production History (APH) or proven yield. This APH is used to set the amount of the yield or revenue guaranteed under most crop insurance plans. All growers must have records to prove their APH, and all growers should know their APH for each insurable unit. Growers should know if their APH is high enough to provide sufficient coverage of their cost of production at a reasonable price. Growers with high APH can get lower insurance premiums.

The APH is a four-year moving average yield that builds to 10 years. It is then a simple average of the number of years. If at least four successive years of records are not available, transitional or T-Yields (10-year

historical county average) are used to complete the four-year database. Growers having no records are assigned 65% of the T-Yield (a very low yield). However, beginning farmers receive 100 percent of the T-Yield.

Fields with low APHs (below the county average) will have lower yield and revenue guarantees with higher premiums. County average yields are almost always lower than a farmer's actual yield. Therefore, growers with low APH yields should consider buying an Area Risk Protection Insurance (ARPI) Policy. The ARPI Policy is based on county yields rather than individual farm yields. The ARPI plans are cheaper than other plans and could provide higher levels of protection while the farm builds records to establish higher APH yields.

Some federal disaster programs are tied to crop insurance. Producers paid under the 2018-2019 Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program (WHIP) are required to purchase crop insurance for row crops at the buy-up level (60 percent coverage level) for the next two years. Producers paid through the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) are required to purchase NAP for vegetable crops at the buy-up level (60 percent coverage level) for the next two years.



Flooded southern peas after heavy June rains.



Like us on Facebook at  
[www.facebook.com/  
UAPB.SAFHS](http://www.facebook.com/UAPB.SAFHS)



UNIVERSITY  
of ARKANSAS  
AT PINE BLUFF  
1873

School of Agriculture, Fisheries and Human Sciences



Like us on Twitter at  
[www.twitter.com/UAPB\\_  
SAFHS](http://www.twitter.com/UAPB_SAFHS)

# Now is Time to Make Plans for New Production Season

It is the beginning of a new year. The weather is a roller coaster ride, and the ground is wet. Now is the prime time to be making plans for the new production season and considering things such as financial projections, machinery maintenance, land lease negotiations and the crops to be planted.

Before planting new crops in 2022, producers should ask themselves the following questions:

- What herbicides were used on the fields last year and when were they applied? Depending on the types of soil residual herbicides applied, the time applied and the weather conditions after application, producers may face a herbicide carryover that could affect the new crop.
- What is the weed history of the field and how would you rate the weed history (very bad, average, no problems)? Depending on the weed history of the field, producers may need to consult a weed specialist to develop a weed control plan.
- What crop or crops were grown on the fields last year? What crops were

grown for the last three years? It is important to consider what has been growing on the fields because crop rotation may be needed to ensure soil health.

- Is there a compaction problem in the field? If you do not know whether you have a compaction problem, a soil compaction test should be taken in the field.
- What is the pH of the field? Producers should have already taken a soil test to determine if the pH is ideal for plant growth and to determine the fertility and lime recommendations. If they have not, then they should take a soil test to obtain this information.
- What types of soil are in your field? Producers with a smart phone should download the SoilWeb App to determine the types of soil in their field. The soil information can also help determine the variety to use and the correct herbicide rates to use.
- What seeds will you use? In the past few years, seeds have been in short supply. This is mostly due to adverse weather conditions that cause lots of damage to crops, which decreases yields and the availability of seeds for the next planting



Dr. Tomekia White, UAPB interim 1890 scholarship coordinator, tests soil for compaction layer.

season. It would be a good idea to consider the seed varieties and amounts needed and place your orders now.

- Do you want to use a deferred payment program to pay for seeds? Remember, seed companies not only take advance orders for seeds, but they also finance deferred payment programs for seeds. With this type of program, the producer receives the seeds and pays for them in early fall during the harvest season.

# UAPB Accepting Applications for Beginning Farmers Class

The Small Farm Program at UAPB is accepting applications for its Beginning Farmers Class. Intended for individuals who have operated a farm for 10 years or less consecutively, the course will consist

of seven monthly workshops, starting on March 28 and ending on September 26.

Crop and livestock producers in east, southeast and southwest Arkansas are eligible for the program.

Course topics include agriculture business, soils and soil health, crop and livestock production, pest control and services offered by U.S.

Department of Agriculture agencies. The program will also include field demonstrations and farm tours.

Participants will be provided information about all services offered by the Small Farm Program, including one-on-one assistance through site visits and consultations to help with business and conservation planning.

The course will be held virtually due to social distancing guidelines related to the pandemic. However, if the situation improves, some sessions may be offered face-to-face. For information on how to participate, farmers should contact Karen Lee, UAPB Extension assistant, at [leek@uapb.edu](mailto:leek@uapb.edu) or (870) 575-7225.



Participants of the first Beginning Farmers Class.

# UAPB Project Helps Small Farmers Improve Operations through Farm Service Agency Programs

The Small Farm Program at UAPB is providing assistance to socially disadvantaged and limited resource farmers on behalf of the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Program personnel are informing Arkansas farmers about:

- FSA loan programs. The agency offers loans to help farmers and ranchers get the financing they need to start, expand or maintain their family farm.
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. This program provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops, such as vegetables, when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters.
- FSA Farm Numbers. Farmers must have a farm number to participate in U.S. Department of Agriculture programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentive

Program (EQIP) and Farm Loan Programs.

To inform the public about FSA programs, the UAPB Small Farm Program will be hosting a series of virtual meetings. Participants will learn about farm financial/business planning, record keeping and the Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act, which was designed to assist families in keeping their land.

These meetings are a great opportunity for farmers to learn how to make their operations more efficient and profitable. Participants will have the opportunity to ask Small Farm Program staff for advice. The Small Farm Program team will also help producers with obtaining USDA Farm Loans and Farm Numbers.

For information on how to participate, farmers should contact Karen Lee,



Vanessa Moore, FSA loan manager, speaks on the FSA Loan Programs at a UAPB outreach meeting.

UAPB Extension assistant, at (870) 575-7225 or [leek@uapb.edu](mailto:leek@uapb.edu).

# Improve Farm Profitability Through Conservation Practices

Implementation and efficiency of conservation practices has a huge impact on farm profitability. Van Banks, UAPB Small Farm Program consultant, recommends five Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation practices that can make a big difference in the profitability of farm operations. Each practice is identified below by its NRCS conservation practice and code (CPC) number.

**The seasonal high tunnel system (CPC 798)** uses a plastic covering to raise temperatures in a greenhouse-like structure by capturing radiation from the sun early in the season and conserving the rate of soil heat loss in the late season. High tunnels or “hoop houses” are used to extend the growing season for crops by approximately one or two months on each end of the season by increasing the temperature inside the structure and minimizing heat loss during the night. Temperature in the high tunnel during the growing season is controlled by using manual roll-up side vents and by opening end doors to provide ventilation. Under Arkansas conditions, crops can be started in the high tunnel as early as February, with crop production lasting until mid to late December.

**Cover crops (CPC 340)** are planted primarily to manage soil erosion, soil fertility, weeds, insects, diseases and wildlife in an agricultural system. Depending on the intended outcome, cover crops are usually not harvested, but are plowed under to aid in the growth and management of the primary crop grown by the pro-

ducer. Depending on their purpose, cover crops can come from different plant families. Under Arkansas conditions, legumes are commonly used as cover crops to add nitrogen to the soil. However, in areas of high wind or water erosion, a grass-type cover crop may be more suitable to hold the soil surface in place. On the other hand, some cover crops provide effective weed control. For example, cereal rye is often used in the control of herbicide-resistant pigweed in soybeans.

**Irrigation systems (CPC 441, 442, 443, 449)** for farming operations can vary depending on how the operator wants the system to work and the amount of water needed for the crop. In high tunnel systems, micro irrigation (CPC 441) is a must because the high tunnel is a controlled environment dependent on irrigation. Traditional methods of in-furrow, flood and overhead irrigation (CPCs 443 and 442) work across all farming operations. These methods have tradeoffs in their use. The major tradeoff is efficacy of water use versus manpower (CPC 449). These traditional methods require less manpower to cover larger areas of land with more water than may be necessary. If water efficiency is an issue, then drip irrigation is the best solution in the case of smaller farms. Drip systems deliver smaller amounts of water to the crop, but the delivery is more efficient and effective because the water is placed directly in the plant root zone. Water use is reduced by as much as 80% using the

drip system. Also, use of liquid fertilizer in this system will add nutrients and improve crop production.

**Nutrient management (CPC 590)** is critical for agriculture systems. Crop production can only be as good as the nutrient management system used. The first step in nutrient management is always to get a soil test. A soil test will tell you what soil amendments are needed for profitable crop production. A soil test should be done at least once every three years. After receiving your test results, follow the recommendations. Over the years, the soil will begin to build up and improve thanks to proper management. Cover crops (CPC 340) are also an excellent way to build up soil health.

**Integrated pest management (CPC 595)** minimizes crop damage from weeds, insects or plant disease. Pest prevention is best achieved using good hygiene methods around the farm. Plowing under or burning old plant debris will prevent pests from having a place to hide in the off-season while waiting for your new crop to emerge. It is important to consider what other locations on your property may be a haven for pests. A weedy ditch bank is an alternate hosting ground for many insect and disease vectors waiting for your crop to emerge. It also serves as a nursery for many weeds that can eventually move over into your field. Remember, the cleaner you keep your farm, the fewer pest issues you will face.

University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff  
Small Farm Outreach  
1200 North University Drive  
Mail Slot 4906  
Pine Bluff, AR 71601

## UAPB Project Provides Training, Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers in 35 Arkansas Counties

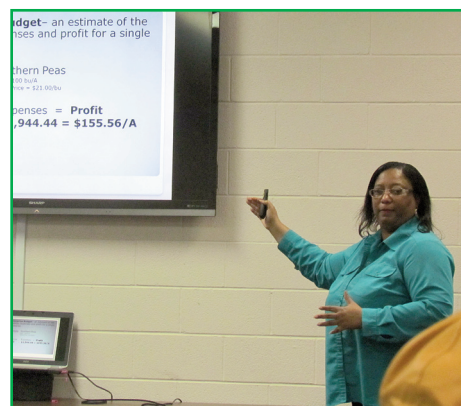
A new UAPB project provides assistance to socially disadvantaged and limited resource farmers in 35 Arkansas counties. Through participation, farmers will learn how to take advantage of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) conservation programs to operate and maintain their farm businesses more efficiently. In addition to learning about beneficial USDA programs, producers will receive training and technical assistance in:

- farm financial planning
- crop and livestock production
- developing marketing plans for fresh vegetables
- developing weed control plans
- increasing yields through Extension production practices.

The Small Farm Program will also provide counseling for landowners who own heir property and lack the clear titles that allow for active

management of their land. This project targets farmers in the following 35 Arkansas counties: Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Calhoun, Chicot, Clark, Cleveland, Columbia, Crittenden, Cross, Dallas, Desha, Drew, Grant, Hempstead, Howard, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lee, Lincoln, Little River, Lonoke, Miller, Mississippi, Monroe, Nevada, Ouachita, Phillips, Pike, Pulaski, Sevier, St. Francis, Union and Woodruff.

The UAPB project is funded by a three-year grant awarded through the USDA 2501 Program. According to the USDA, the 2501 Program was created through the 1990 Farm Bill to help socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers and foresters who have historically experienced limited access to USDA programs and services. The 2014 Farm Bill expanded the program's reach to veterans. Grants are



Dr. Tracy V. Dunbar, chair, UAPB Department of Agriculture, presented during 2501 Vegetable Production Meeting.

awarded to higher education institutions and nonprofit and community-based organizations to extend USDA's engagement efforts in these communities.

For information on how to participate, farmers should contact Karen Lee, UAPB Extension assistant, at (870) 575-7225 or [leek@uapb.edu](mailto:leek@uapb.edu).

### UAPB SMALL FARM PROGRAM STAFF

Dr. Henry English, Program Director, [englishh@uapb.edu](mailto:englishh@uapb.edu)  
Karen Lee, Program Aide, [leek@uapb.edu](mailto:leek@uapb.edu)  
or (870)575-7225  
Stephan Walker, Extension Associate, [walkers@uapb.edu](mailto:walkers@uapb.edu)  
Dr. Kellye Lockett, Extension Assistant Specialist,  
[lockettk@uapb.edu](mailto:lockettk@uapb.edu)  
Kandi Williams, KIIF Coordinator,  
[williamska@uapb.edu](mailto:williamska@uapb.edu)  
Alex Cole, Program Aide, [colea@uapb.edu](mailto:colea@uapb.edu)  
Travis Collins, Program Aide, [collinst@uapb.edu](mailto:collinst@uapb.edu)



UNIVERSITY  
of ARKANSAS  
AT PINE BLUFF  
—1873—

School of Agriculture, Fisheries and Human Sciences

PRINTED BY UAPB PRINTING SERVICES

The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff is fully accredited by The Higher Learning Commission, 230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, IL 60604, 1-800-621-7440/ FAX: 312-263-7462. Issued in furtherance of Extension work, Act of September 29, 1977, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Dr. Bruce W. McGowan, Interim Dean/Director, 1890 Research and Extension Programs, Cooperative Extension Program, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. The Cooperative Extension Program offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.