March 2021

USA Regenerative Agricultural Alliance, Inc.

A 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to educating and assisting farmers and ranchers... helping them to improve their land, livestock, and lives.

Continuing The Soil Health Revolution Through Education And Sharing Real Life Experiences

You Are Invited...

TO OUR 2021 SPRING WORKSHOP
TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 2021
from 1:00PM - 4:00PM...
with a great FREE cookout to follow
at 203 Wilson Hill Road,
Greeneville, Tennessee

Mike McElroy
President

RSVP- Call 888-574-9472 to reserve your ticket as workshop is limited to 100 guests.

Twenty - three hundred + (2,300+) farmers in Greene County, Washington County, Hawkins County, Hamblen County, Jefferson County and Cocke Counties will receive this newsletter every other month, starting with the March issue.

The spring workshop will be heavily devoted to grasses for rotational grazing. This includes a discussion on broadcast versus no-till drilling of grasses.

We will have seven speakers who are very knowledgeable in the wide variety of grasses and legumes that work in the East Tennessee environment.

The USA Regenerative Agricultural Alliance, is the organization that featured Gabe Brown, Ray Archuleta, Russ Wilson, speakers from the University of Tennessee, etc. at the 2019 Summit at the Northeast Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center in Greene County, Tennessee.

Ray's Crazy Mix is excellent for farmland reclamation, renovation, or when transitioning forest or idle land back into production. For vegetable growers it is also a good short season cover crop to build soil organic matter and contribute fertility in selected beds or fields. You will be able to purchase this mix at the workshop. Many other grasses and legumes will be covered.

Another area that will be of high interest is how to reduce frame size of cattle in order to take advantage of rotational grazing and faster weight gains.

See you on April 6 at 1:00PM!

Save These Dates!

Tuesday, April 6, 2021
FREE Spring Workshop

September 22, 23, 24, 2021
International Summit
will be held at Clyde Austin 4H Center in Greene County, Tennessee.

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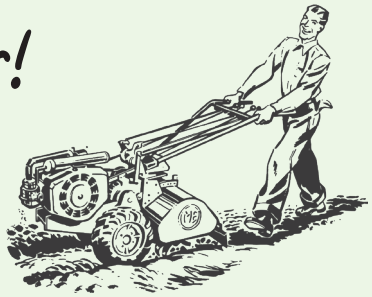
Creating A Spring No-Till Garden



March and April are great months for starting a no-till garden. Ideally many experienced gardeners recommend starting in in the fall, but any time is fine, as long as you're willing to be patient and observant. The earlier you can start, the sooner the ground will be ready to receive seeds and plants.

1. Some things to remember about the location: full sunlight – 8+ hr/day; must drain well – no boggy/mucky spot; it should be easily accessed – you'll pay more attention to it; don't plan more garden than you can work – you can always add more next year.

2. No soil disturbance; In fact,the ground and its inhabitants will appreciate you not destroying their home. The objective is to completely cover the area, to smother out, or kill all the current green. This can be done several ways:

A) black plastic (preferably thick), covering the ground completely, then secure it all the way around with pegs, stones/bricks. Remove plastic before planting and put down the paper, cardboard and compost.

B) layers of cardboard, newspaper, junk mail, etc., overlapped on the soil, so that every inch is covered. Top off with straw, hay, mulch, etc.

C) aged hay (several years old), or old straw. Unroll/spread across the whole area, covering thickly and completely. The black plastic method is great in summer because it will work with the sun to completely kill weeds, seeds, and harmful pathogens. It's called "solarization".

3. If it's Spring, and you're dealing with an existing garden spot, you can put your regular seeds down before rolling out the hay.. If it's past the last average frost date, you can plant vegetables, such as tomatoes, peppers, etc. Pull back just enough hay to make the hole, then plant, and pull the hay back up over the soil, close to the stem.

4. How are persistent weeds controlled? A weed eater…or pull them when they're young. This will improve every year. You'll see as you move through this process: that life will return to your garden soil, plants will be healthier and you'll have better yields. If you've harvested your garden, don't leave it fallow. Nature gives us a clear picture of the necessity of cover crops, by putting "pioneer plants" (a.k.a. weeds) on any bare soil. Why? For soil to be alive…for it to give life…for it to feed us, it must first be fed. The plant and its roots are where this begins. Sunlight + photosynthesis = "liquid sunshine."

5. Once the soil is not disturbed, the ground is armored by the growing plants, and the previous year's hay (cardboard, mulch, paper, etc.) has decomposed, life is returning.

6. Fertilizer: what to use? Livestock manure, preferrably composted, this is my choice over bagged fertilizer. Manure is part of the natural cycle that was set in place before us. Nitrogen in the manure helps decompose the hay (carbon - nitrogen ratio).

After raking back old mulch, paper and chicken litter were put down

Single layer of cardboard over the paper and litter

7. A good example of one process: 2nd season, in August, broadcast a multi-species mix of cover, which consists of winter oats, cereal rye, crimson clover, Austrian winter peas, daikon radishes and turnips. There are grasses, legumes and brassica

Continued on page 7

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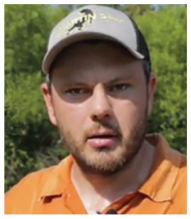
2021 Spring Workshop

Featured Speakers

Mike McElroy
President

Greg Brann
Multi-species Farmer

Jessi Linkous
District Conservationist NRCS



David Bryant
Smoky Mountain Cattle Consulting SE AgriSeeds

Justin McKinney
Director Northeast TN AgResearch and Education Center

Jeremiah Durbin
TACD Soil Health Specialist

Dr. Katie Mason
UT Assistant Professor Extension Beef Cattle Nutrition Specialist

Melody Rose
Greene County UT Extension Agent

Schedule of Speakers

1:00PM - 1:10PM	Mike McElroy	*Welcome*
1:10PM - 1:30PM	Greg Brann	Grazing Multispecies
1:35PM - 1:55PM	Jessi Linkous	NRCS Cost Share Program
2:00PM - 2:20PM	David Bryant	Aitchison GrassFarmer Drill
2:25PM - 2:45PM	Justin McKinney	Overview of Northeast Tennessee AgResearch & Education Ctr.
2:50PM - 3:10PM	Jeremiah Durbin	Cover Crops, Soil Tests
3:15PM - 3:35PM	Katie Mason	Grazing Small Frame Cattle
3:40PM - 4:00PM	Melody Rose	Garden Cover Crops

4:00PM - ***Join us for a great FREE Cookout!***

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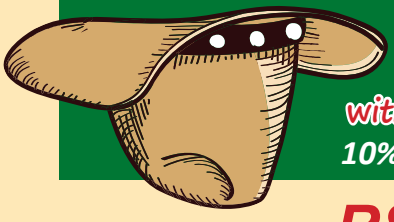
to the 2021 SPRING WORKSHOP TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 2021 from 1:00PM - 4:00PM... with a great FREE cookout to follow at 203 Wilson Hill Rd,Greeneville, TN!

The Spring Workshop will be heavily devoted to grasses for rotational grazing. This includes a discussion on broadcast versus no-till drilling of grasses.



Put your name in the hat and you may win a 50 LB bag of* Ray's Crazy Mix *with an $80 retail value! 10% of Attendees will win!

Ray's Crazy Mix is excellent for farmland reclamation, renovation, or when transitioning forest or idle land back into production. For vegetable growers it is also a good short season cover crop to build soil organic matter and contribute fertility in selected beds or fields.

RSVP - Call 888-574-9472

to reserve your ticket as workshop is limited to 100 guests.

USA Regenerative Agricultural Alliance, Inc.

USA Regenerative Agriculture Alliance is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Your membership and donations help educate and empower agriculture producers and interested individuals to utilize regenerative practices that rebuild soil fertility and biodiversity, produce abundant nutritious food, and revive local economies and communities.

I WANT TO HELP!

BY BECOMING A MEMBER:

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS: Free bi-monthly newsletter, free attendance to our workshops, a **$120.00 discount off the regular $300 price of attending our 3-Day International Summit in September, PLUS *Members can rent our Aitchison GrassFarmer No-Till Drill for the discounted price of $4 per acre.***

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

I wish to pay $10 per month ☐ I wish to pay $120 for a year's membership. ☐ Paying by check: ☐

Paying by credit card: ☐ Visa ☐ American Express ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐

Card Number_____ Expiration Date _____ CSC ____

Call 888-574-9472 to pay by phone.

BY MAKING A DONATION:

100% of your generous contribution goes towards soil health initiatives. All donations are appreciated. Your donation is tax deductible.
ANY AMOUNT IS APPRECIATED!

Donation Amount: _____ One-time donation: ☐ Monthly: ☐

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

I am including a check. ☐ I wish to pay by credit card. ☐

Visa ☐ American Express ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐

Card Number_____ Expiration Date _____ CSC ____

Call 888-574-9472 to pay by phone.

For questions contact Mike McElroy, President
mmcelroy@plastic-innovation.com 888-574-9472
203 Wilson Hill Rd. | Greeneville, TN 37745

USA Regenerative Agricultural Alliance Members Donated Monies for the Purchase of This Drill

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The ONLY ONE Available in the County

~ Is Available To Rent ~

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To Rent - Contact Mike McElroy at 888-574-9472

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USA Regenerative Agricultural Alliance, Inc.

Continuing The Soil Health Revolution Through Education And Sharing Real Life Experiences

2021 Regenerative Agricultural Summit

Sept. 22, 23, 24 - 2021
Greeneville, TN

2021 Summit will be held at the

Clyde Austin 4-H Center

Greeneville, TN

Lodging will be available on-site at the 4-H Center as well. To find out more about the Center visit *https://extension.tennessee.edu/clydeaustin4hcenter/Pages/default.aspx*

Featured Speakers

Dr. Allen Williams	Greg Judy	Russ Wilson	Teddy Gentry
Mississippi	Missouri	Pennsylvania	Alabama

Guest Speakers

Greg Brann	Kelsey Keener	Dr. Gary Bates	Dr. Forbes Walker
Kentucky	Tennessee	University of Tennessee	University of Tennessee

Objective

Understanding soil principles, the impact of healthy soils and healthy ecosystems

- See how forage heights, "resting" periods, and livestock, benefit soil health
- Discover how lowering in-puts equals better soils and improved profitability
- Uncover the secrets of soil life, and how to read it
- Learn how effective livestock management can restore landscape and water quality
- Step-by-step simplified grazing practices and its relationship to better forages

For more information or to register, call: 888-574-9472

The planned meals, with pasture-raised meats and homemade sides, will be just as deliciously sumptuous as 2019, and there'll be refreshing break snacks and beverages provided. At the 2019 Summit mealtime and breaks were great opportunities to network and meet other farmers with like mind, and form new allies in regenerative thinking.

Attendee Pricing

Includes 3 days of conference plus lunch each day

- Individual - $300
- Family - $500

(2 members of a family)

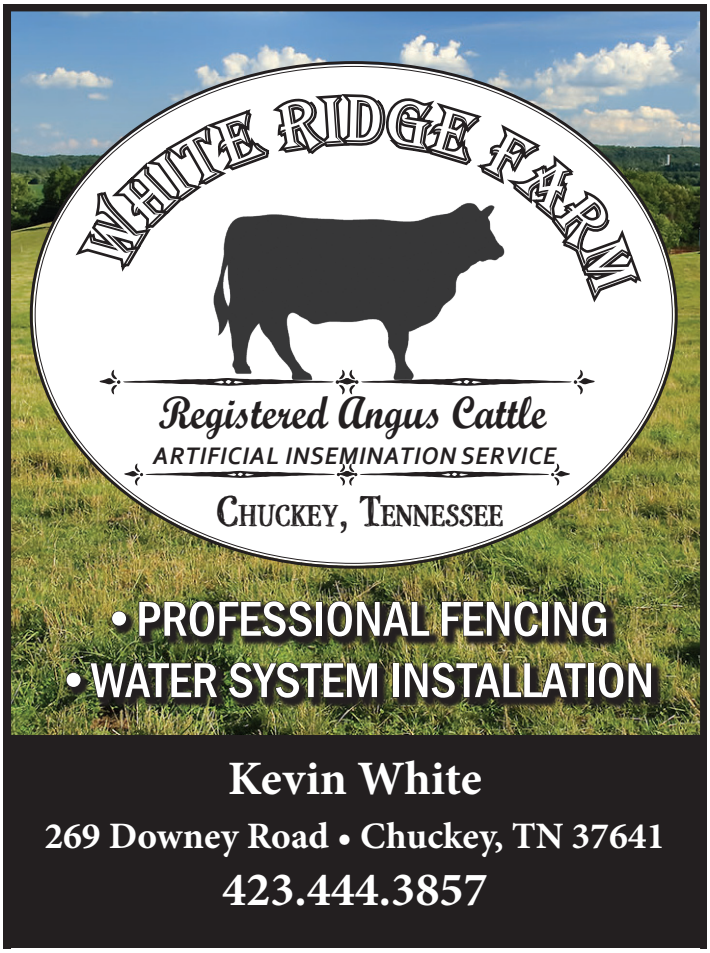
No-Till Garden, *continued*

in the mix (ideal). You may want to contact the NRCS office for more options.

2"-4" composted goat and chicken litter and old mulch is applied over cardboard. Rain will settle it.

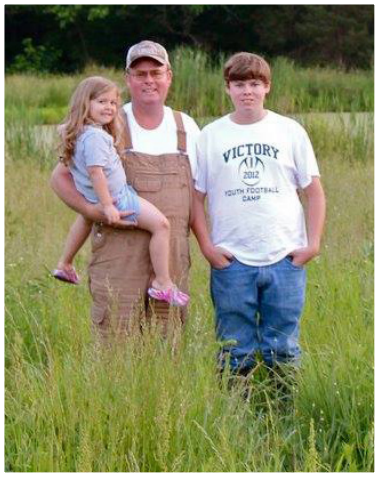
8. Following a fall/ winter cover crop: at least two weeks prior to planting, you'll need to terminate the cover crop, using a glyphosate herbicide (optional) or rolling the cover crop down. Depending on the species used, rolling may not completely terminate the crop. Don't chop the residue! Keep the plant attached to the root. At the end of each season, you can use a bush hog or mower, set high, to cut residue, adding carbon back to the surface. Another benefit: is it allows rainwater to be drawn in (sequestered) in the residue, roots and water table. Cover cropping and no-till can virtually eliminate erosion and run-off, while it strengthens plant roots and resilience.

Sherrie Ottinger – Freelance Writer for USA Regenerative Agricultural Alliance, Inc.



This Month's Spotlight on Two Members of the USA Regenerative Agricultural Alliance Board of Directors

Wayne Hughes



The ties that bind

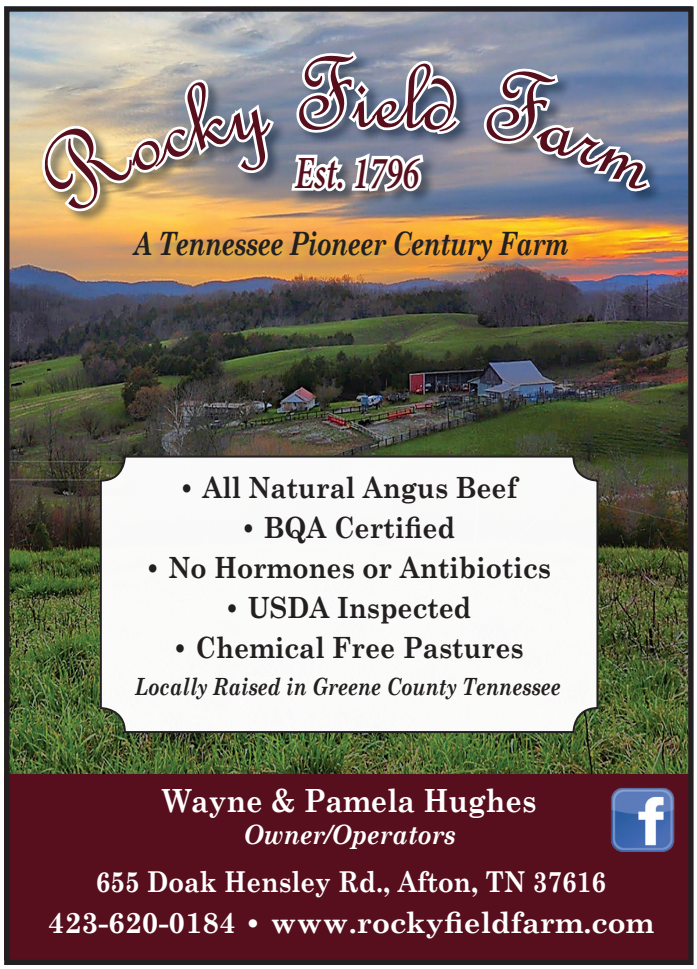
Wayne and his family are continuing the multigenerational family farm along the Sinking Branch of Lick Creek in TN. Rocky Field Farm has transitioned away from traditional agriculture methods that has reduced the biodiversity on the farm.

Wayne's focus is centered on the impacts of soil health and the benefits that improving soils bring to the pastured angus cattle.

He believes regenerative practices are key, ensuring the farm's sustainability for future generations.

Barry Bales

The Bales family is carrying on traditions

Barry is the 6th generation on the Bales Farms in Mosheim, TN. Trotting after his grandfather as he went about his work, Barry learned to care for livestock and the land. Passing on those same values along with the recent understanding that soil health is paramount to all life on the farm, Barry's son now works alongside him.

When not tending to pastured pigs and poultry and raising grass fed beef to grace TN tables, Barry is working as a musician with some of Nashville's great country music legends.