



Forest Farming Intensive Propagation to Processing

September 17-18, 2021

**Cove Ridge Center at Natural Tunnel State Park
Duffield, VA**

INSTRUCTOR BIOS

Dr. Jeanine Davis is an associate professor and extension specialist in the Department of Horticultural Science at North Carolina State University. She is located at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research and Extension near Asheville. For over 30 years, her program has helped farmers improve the profitability of their farms by growing new crops, transitioning to organic agriculture, and adopting more sustainable practices. Subjects of her current research include ginseng, ramps, hops, truffles, medicinal herbs, organic vegetables, and hemp. She has published over 150 peer reviewed publications and given over 600 invited presentations in the U.S., Canada, and Chile. She is also the lead author on the book "Growing and Marketing Ginseng, Goldenseal and Other Woodland Medicinals". She is a founding board member of the Organic Growers School and the NC Natural Products Association, board member for the Veterans Healing Farm, and an advisor to the NC Herb Association and the NC Tomato Growers Association. Jeanine and her family operate Our Tiny Farm where they raise and board mini-donkeys.

Katie Commender, Agroforestry Director at Appalachian Sustainable Development (ASD), started her agroforestry career in 2012 as an Agroforestry AmeriCorps VISTA at ASD, where she trained hundreds of beginning forest farmers and developed a multifunctional riparian forest buffer program with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In 2017, Katie received her Master's in Forestry from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, where she served as the graduate teaching assistant for the agroforestry class and researched preferences and intentions for riparian buffer adoption and retention. Today, Katie continues to teach the next generation of forest farmers as a founding member of the Appalachian Beginning Forest Farmer Coalition (ABFFC). In 2017, she founded the Appalachian Harvest Herb Hub to help medicinal herb farmers sustainably grow, process, and market herbs to premium domestic and international markets. When not whipping up foraged ramp biscuits and pawpaw ice cream, Katie is guerilla gardening, hiking, paddling, and skiing her way through the Appalachians.

Margaret Bloomquist works with Dr. Jeanine Davis in the NC Alternative Crops and Organics Program, since 2012, Dept. of Horticultural Science, NC State University. Based in western North Carolina, she engages with woodland botanicals, organics, vegetables, and other specialty crop research and extension efforts. Margaret received a B.Sc. in Global Resource Systems from The University of British Columbia, and graduate certificate in Rural Project Management, from Makerere University, 2006.



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Dr. Eric Burkhardt, Penn State University, is a botanist and ethnobotanist. He is Director of the Appalachian Botany and Ethnobotany Program at Shaver's Creek Environmental Center and Associate Teaching Professor in the Ecosystem Science and Management Department at Penn State. His research and outreach program in Pennsylvania is focused on developing sustainable wild stewardship and agroforestry production systems for specialty forest products including American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*), goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*), and ramps (*Allium tricoccum*).

Kat Crane is a Procurement Agent at Mountain Rose Herbs. She holds a B.S. in Environmental Science and Sustainable Agriculture from Oregon State University and is a self-proclaimed soil nerd. She grew up in the verdant Willamette Valley where she cultivated a deep appreciation for the agricultural community around her and the challenges in the food system today. She is passionate about the potential for regenerative agricultural practices and soil health to reshape the production paradigm from a harmful one to a healing one, and that passion informs the work she does for Mountain Rose Herbs. In her free time, you will find her in the kitchen learning to cook new types of cuisine, foraging mushrooms with her family, exploring new camping spots across the state, or adding to her vinyl collection.

Dr. Ryan Huish is an associate professor of biology at The University of Virginia's College at Wise in far southwest Virginia. With a background in botany and sociocultural anthropology, his research interests incorporate an interdisciplinary approach to address basic and applied questions in ethnobotany, ecology, and plant conservation. Some of his research topics include Appalachian ethnobotany and forest farming of medicinal and edible plants. He and his family are stewards of Appalachian Cove Forest Farm and Homestead, where they practice various agroforestry principles.

Kate Fotos the field coordinator for the Appalachian Program at Future Generations University. Her background centers around conservation biology and forestry. She began her work in maple syrup researching alternative tree syrups such as sycamore and walnut under Professor Mike Rechlin. In that first year, she also ran a state-wide maple education program for public schools across West Virginia. She has now expanded her scope of work to include producer coaching and public education for maple syrup production across the Appalachian range.

Robin Suggs joined the ASD's Agroforestry Program as Procurement Manager in the Spring of 2020. With a rather diverse set of skills in horticulture, community development and the production of non-timber forest products, he hopes to apply his life's experiences in growing relationships with both beginning and seasoned producers of medicinal plant species. The outcome of his work will ensure a sustainable, high quality supply chain for the Appalachian Harvest Herb Hub. Robin was raised in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. Heavily influenced by avid gardeners from both his maternal and paternal lineages, he started tending plants



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at the ripe old age of 8. Robin went on to receive a degree in Flower and Nursey Crops Technology from the North Carolina State University Agricultural Institute. After pursuing an early life career mostly in ornamental horticulture, Robin relocated from the Piedmont to the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina. It was there where he developed an appreciation and respect of the forest, and all its inhabitants, especially those with a tradition of harvest for medicinal use. Just prior to coming onboard with ASD, Robin created, owned and operated MoonBranch Botanicals, a small business dedicated to the production of medical plants native to the region supplying the highest quality bulk botanicals to medicine makers across the US.