

# 2022 Specialty Crop WEBINAR

Series

Kansas Department of Agriculture | 1320 Research Park Drive | Manhattan, KS 66502 | 785-564-6755 | agriculture.ks.gov

During the month of March and the first week of April, the Kansas Department of Agriculture will offer a Specialty Crop Lunch and Learn Webinar Series for those interested in the specialty crop industry. Topics of interest include production practices, specialized equipment, floriculture, diversifying and scaling your operation, turning your specialty crop operation into an agritourism destination, and specialty crop marketing plans and strategies. The six-part webinar series will be held at noon every Tuesday from March 1 to April 5.

**REGISTER HERE**

For questions about this webinar series, contact us at [fromthelandofkansas@ks.gov](mailto:fromthelandofkansas@ks.gov) or 785-564-6755.



## BEN HARTMAN

Ben Hartman is the author of *The Lean Farm* (Chelsea Green, 2016), winner of the prestigious Shingo Institute Research and Professional Publication Award. In 2017, Ben was named one of 50 emerging green leaders in the United States by Grist, and published a companion guide to *The Lean Farm* titled *The Lean Farm Guide to Growing Vegetables*. Ben and his wife, Rachel Hershberger,

own and operate Clay Bottom Farm in Goshen, Indiana, where they make their living growing specialty crops on less than one acre. Ben has developed an online course in lean farming, which can be found at [claybottomfarm.com](http://claybottomfarm.com), and is a senior consultant for USAID on agricultural projects.



## MICHAEL KILPATRICK

Michael Kilpatrick is the owner of Growing Farmers, a 508c1a non-profit and is a farmer (*The Farm on Central*), educator, and inventor who lives in Ohio. He's the host of the top-rated *Thriving Farmer Podcast* as well as the *Thriving Farmer Summit* series, which has been viewed by over a quarter million farmers. He's managed large farms and businesses, consulted for industry experts around the world, and spoken at dozens of conferences.

Michael believes that anyone can build a profitable farm by following the simple business and management skills that he teaches in the *Small Farm University*, his company's educational platform and community for thriving farmers.



## SUZI BATDORFF

Flowers have been a big part of Suzi Batdorff's life. Her mom Nancy owned and operated a flower shop in Big Rapids, Michigan. Growing up riding along on deliveries, learning the names of different flowers, and feeling the impact that a beautiful bouquet could have on someone's day made a huge impact on her heart. Before coming to farming full time, Suzi managed restaurants while spending her spare time helping plant and harvest at Viavi Flower Farm in Southwestern Michigan. She worked side by side

with Wanda, her dear friend, second mom, and the original visionary of Viavi along with Jim and Mary Hood. Upon the untimely passing of Wanda, Suzi knew she would keep alive Nancy and Wanda's legacies of honoring special moments and celebrations with beautiful flowers, and their warm spirit of loving the land where they're grown.



## JOSH VOLK

Josh Volk got his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and after a short stint designing tools for manufacturing he started working on small-scale, diversified vegetable farms over 20 years ago. He currently manages an urban CSA, Cully Neighborhood Farm, in Portland, Oregon, and does consulting under the name Slow Hand Farm. He is the author of two books, *Compact Farms* and *Build Your Own Farm Tools*, and is a regular contributor to *Growing For Market Magazine*.



## OLIVIA TELSCHOW

The love for agriculture runs deep at Helene's Hilltop Orchard. Initially established as a dairy farm in 1919, Olivia's parents, a couple of city kids, transitioned the small family dairy farm into an apple orchard in 1979. Some could say, "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree." Over time various aspects of her family farm may have changed, but the passion and dedication to agriculture has remained the same. After purchasing the farm from her parents in 2017, Olivia respectfully

continued their vision while adding authentic value added products to their seasonal retail farm store, respecting the legacy of her parents, yet taking the farm store to a new level. These additions are now opening the gates for generations beyond to experience the farm.



## DR. RUTH INMAN

Dr. Ruth Inman has 15 years of experience in marketing communications, first as an internal communicator and most recently as an assistant professor of agricultural communications at Oklahoma State University. At OSU, she taught courses and conducted research in digital and social media and integrated marketing campaigns, and served as a state extension specialist, where she developed programs and delivered training to small businesses

and organizations related to digital marketing. As a marketing "Jill-of-all-trades" who thinks being called a geek is a compliment, Ruth's current role as Director of Community Education for Social Media Pulse by Agorapulse allows her to put her geeky skills to use daily, overseeing and growing the company's suite of online educational courses for social media professionals. Ruth works with thought leaders and students to ensure Social Media Pulse courses stay ahead of the rapidly evolving social media landscape. She and her husband, Trent, live on a small farm in central Oklahoma with their sons, Fletcher and Dax.