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Armed to Farm: Soldiering the Success of Military Veterans in New Poultry, Livestock and Agroforestry Enterprises

Presenter: Annie Donoghue, PhD
Sarah Wright, Program Coordinator

PD: Dan Donoghue, PhD
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
BFRDP Award # 2015-70017-22898



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Program at a Glance

BFRDP GRANT AWARDS
2010-03143
2014-07424
2017 to start in December



VETERANS IMPACTED

One-on-one: 675

Scholarships for Southern SAWG: 144

Internship hours: over 13,000 hours logged

Online module access: 61,391

English: 41,359

Spanish: 20,032



“The mixture of topics and hands on learning was so thoroughly thought out. I never expected to learn so much on every topics things I never have thought of. It was amazing.”

“The diversity of the programs was awesome...”

“I loved all the information provided and everyone’s willingness to just want to help and answer questions.”



2017 Armed to Farm Group
& Feedback



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Partners/Collaborators

- **Partners:**

University of Arkansas



USDA-Agricultural Research Service



- Dale Bumpers Small Farm Research Center, Booneville, AR
- Poultry Production and Product Safety Research Unit, Fayetteville, AR

National Center for Appropriate Technology, Margo Hale



The Center for Agroforestry, University of Missouri

Appalachian State University



NATIONAL CENTER FOR
APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY

University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

Farmer Veteran Coalition



Across the Creek Farm, Veteran Mentor

- **Collaborators:**

Arkansas Women in Agriculture

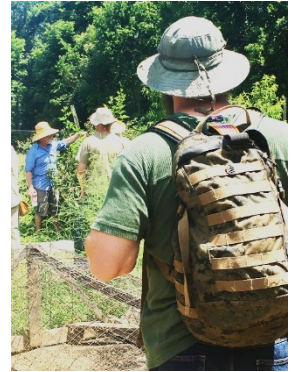




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Project Overview



KEY APPROACHES AND OUTCOMES

Workshops/Armed to Farm Boot Camps

- Armed to Farm Boot Camps at Fayetteville, AR (summer 2016 & 2017)
- Annual on-farm workshops in the fall serve serving area new and beginning farmers. We have one coming up in Oct. 2017

Agroforestry Academy

- Week-long, hands-on academy at the University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry
- Great Networking, Research-Proven Practices and more!

Online Training Programs

- Courses over poultry, sheep & goats, agroforestry, business practices and more
- 35 modules available in both English and Spanish

Internships and Hands-on Training

- We've worked with two farmer mentors, one in Arkansas (Across the Creek Farm) and on in North Carolina (New Life Farm)
- We've had over a dozen interns go through the program, logging more than 6,000 hours

Networking and Mentoring Services

- This grant has allowed us to pay registration for veterans to the Southern SAWG conference from 2015-2017
- SSAWG Networking Session for Veterans with NCAT
- Booth at the trade show highlighting the Small Farms program



PROJECT AUDIENCE

- Returning war veterans
- Spanish speaking population
- Native Americans
- Women
- New Farmers

Interested in...

- Poultry
- Diversified Livestock
- Agroforestry





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Project Accomplishments

OBJECTIVE 1. NEW FARMER ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAM

- Website built and courses can be found in 3 locations
- Online training program accessed over 30,000 times during grant and 60,000 times during lifetime
- Modules continually being updated and uploaded



OBJECTIVE 2: ARMED TO FARM WORKSHOPS, ON FARM DEMONSTRATIONS, INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

Agroforestry Academy – July 2015 – 24 attendees, 9 veterans

July 2016 – 27 attendees, 12 veterans

July 2017 – 20 attendees, 6 veterans

Armed to Farm – June 2016 with 24 participants from 11 states

June 2017 with 30 participants from 15 states

Farm Foundations Workshop – October 2015 with 25 participants

October 2016 with 20 participants

October 2017 to be held

Internships: Year One - over 2500 hours logged

Year Two – 3300 hours logged

Year Three – roughly 2600 hours logged



OBJECTIVE 3: NETWORKING AND MENTORING SERVICES

- Southern SAWG Conference sponsoring registration fees
 - 2015 – 48 veterans
 - 2016 – 45 veterans
 - 2017 – 51 veterans
- Networking session – engaged with over 150 veterans
- Trade show – interacted with over 2500 new/beginning farmers
- BFRDP/Farm Answers Webinar on Veteran Farmers



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Impacts and Evaluation



OBJECTIVE 1.

NEW FARMER ONLINE TRAINING PROGRAM

Expected to total 10,000 downloads – *met the goal and exceeded!*



OBJECTIVE 2:

ARMED TO FARM WORKSHOPS, ON FARM DEMONSTRATIONS, INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

Worked one-on-one with almost 300 beginning farmers through workshops & internships. Interns have logged over 6000 hours of work since the start of the grant
Mentored interns with our 2 mentor farmers at Across the Creek Farm and New Life Farm

OBJECTIVE 3:

NETWORKING AND MENTORING SERVICES

Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group Conference

Paid registration for 144 veterans and their spouses

Over 100 veterans reached through to networking session

Engaged with over 2500 farmers in the trade show





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Lessons Learned & Best Practices

Free access and use of our online Beginning Farmer training course

poultry-science.uark.edu/small_farms.php

and/or

www.attra.ncat.org/uofa/

Make veterans comfortable:

- Shared military experience
- Small workshops
- Informal programs
- Be aware of benefits



Connections with veteran mentors/opportunities





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Next Year & After

Our plan is to continue our work with veteran farmers and mentorship/networking programs



We have received a new BFRDP Grant

We will focus on:

1. Enhancing our existing courses & adding training modules for pasture beef production
2. Armed to Farm 2.0 Boot Camp
3. Intensive internship opportunities
4. Expanding our networking & mentoring systems to support a new generation of farmers





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Questions?

Dan Donoghue
Project Director
ddonogh@uark.edu
479-575-2913

Sarah Wright
Project Coordinator
sbwright@uark.edu
479-575-2104

Annie Donoghue
Research Leader
annie.donoghue@ars.usda.gov
479-575-2413

Visit our Website at:
poultry-science.uark.edu/small_farms.php