

## 2011 Organic Farming Conference

Written by Greg Leaf

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Organized by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES), the annual Organic Farming Conference (OFC) is the largest organic farming conference in the U.S. It will be held February 24 – 26, 2011 in La Crosse, WI. It's an extraordinary, farmer-centered event featuring more than 70 informative workshops, 150 + exhibitors, locally sourced organic food, live entertainment and nationally known keynote speakers.

The OFC is considered the foremost educational and networking event in the organic farming community. In 2010, the OFC attracted more than 2,700 farmers, advocates, educators, students and industry representatives. A 27-page flyer of all the 2011 conference offerings and registration form can be found at, <http://mosesorganic.org/conference.html>.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OFC

**MOSES Farmer of the Year award** – Every year, MOSES recognizes an outstanding organic farmer or farm family who are innovators; who excel in managing their farm resources and are good stewards of the land; and who serve as educators and shining examples in their communities and to the next generation of organic farmers.

**Organic University** – The Organic University offers nine intensive courses on various organic agriculture topics for novice and experts alike through pre-conference, full-day courses.

**Research Forum** – Through integration of the Organic Research Forum with the Organic Farming Conference, researchers have a unique opportunity to share their cutting edge organic agricultural research with farmers, students and agriculture professionals.

**Workshops** – More than 70 workshops will be offered on a multitude of organic farming, marketing, production and management topics and timely agriculture issues.

**Young Organic Stewards** - Young people have always been at the heart of the MOSES Conference. The Young Organic Stewards program recognizes the need to honor and support the next generation of food producers through targeted workshops and social activities.

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Organic, Locally Sourced Food – Two full days of meals for conference attendees featuring the best locally sourced, organic food prepared in delicious entrees, sides, salads and desserts.

Networking Opportunities – The OFC is an outstanding place for new organic farmers to connect with experienced ones to share and collect information. This year offers even more opportunity through Farmer Connection Roundtables.

Evening Entertainment – Live music, topical films, a children's show and a poetry slam will all be featured as "after hours" entertainment at the 2011 OFC.

Inspiring Keynote Speakers – MOSES will once again be host to two outstanding keynote speakers. Urvashi Rangan, Ph.D., is the Director of Technical Policy for Consumers Union. She developed the ratings system, database, and website for evaluating environmental labels. Rangan continues to decode the meaning of eco-labels for consumers, and advocates for credible labeling in the marketplace, including influencing government policy decisions at the state and federal level.

Tom Stearns, of High Mowing Organic Seeds, will speak about local food systems development in Hardwick, Vermont, and the fascinating, collaborative work among farmers, businesses, and the community as they face this challenge in a bold and ambitious way. Tom Stearns founded High Mowing Organic Seeds in 1996 when he began sharing seeds with others through a small seed flyer. Since that time, High Mowing Organic Seeds has expanded into one of the leading organic seed companies in the United States.

CONTACT: To request a conference flyer or to request a media pass contact MOSES at 715-778-5775, [info@mosesorganic.org](mailto:info@mosesorganic.org) or [www.mosesorganic.org](http://www.mosesorganic.org).

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