



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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CESTA-1890 Land-Grant Programs at CSU

Central State University Extension Premier's Building Small Farm Viability Training

Learn how to increase farm success with Central State University Extension's Building Small Farm Viability Registrations being accepted now!

WILBERFORCE, OH – Designed for those who have started their own farm but want additional training to increase its success or grow the operation, the Central State University Extension (CSU-CESTA Extension) Building Small Farm Viability Program will educate participants about the multiple aspects of managing a successful growing operation.

“The Building Small Farm Viability program is for people who have already started their own farm within the last three to 10 years to provide more advanced education about production, marketing, and business planning,” says CSU-CESTA Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources Program Leader for Ohio and Project Co-Director Dr. Alcinda (Cindy) Folck.

The program free and made possible by a USDA 2501 grant, says CSU-CESTA Extension Associate Director and Project Director Dr. Siddharth Dasgupta. The USDA Office of Partnership and Public Engagement funds the program and supports farmers to connect with USDA programs. Both adult and youth farmers benefit from programs focusing on loans, financing, cost-sharing, crop risk, crop failure support and more.

“Our Building Small Farm Viability program is well aligned with our priorities here in CSU-CESTA Extension,” says College of Engineering, Science, Technology and Agriculture (CESTA), says Dean Dr. Michelle Corley. “It is a part of our Value Added 21st Century Farming Technologies we are aiming to provide to our underserved farmers in Ohio.”

“Programs are designed for adults and youth,” he adds. “Participants can include African-American and socially disadvantaged individuals who have been farming for at least three years; military veterans who have been farming for at least three years; and socially disadvantaged youth in Cincinnati and Toledo.”

Program experiences will include but not be limited to how to obtain farmland; manage heirs' property; farm vegetables, mushrooms, beekeeping, hydroponics, aquaponics; sell in retail/wholesale markets, grocery stores, produce auctions and more; manage a farm business; and opportunities to attend farm conferences in Ohio and beyond.

Conferences will include the Rid-All Green Partnership, Agraria Conference, and New Farmer University Conference.

Adult program sites will be held at Central State University, Wilberforce; Edgemont Solar Gardens, Dayton; Trotwood Incubator Farm, Trotwood; Springfield Ohio Urban PlantFolk, Springfield; Trumbull Neighborhood Partnership, Warren; Coit Road Farmers' Market, Cleveland; Green Movement (Glenville), Cleveland; Grace Community Center, Toledo; as well as remote learning with a smart app provided at no cost.

Specialized youth experiences will offer training in growing and selling vegetables; increasing leadership skills, public speaking and job interviews; and how the USDA can assist youth interested in agriculture.

Youth program sites include Grace Community Center, Toledo, and Cincinnati 4-H Initiative, Cincinnati.

"The Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Program at Central State University provides outreach, education and awareness to all Ohioans while enhancing sustainability of Ohio's most valuable resources," says Dr. Dasgupta. "Our mission is to become a premier community-based outreach and educational program leader, providing a holistic Extension approach to improve the lives of families in both rural and urban communities."

For more information about the Fastrack Farming program, contact Dr. Dasgupta at sdasgupta@CentralState.edu or Dr. Alcinda (Cindy) Folck at afolck@CentralState.edu.

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About Central State University: Central State University, located in Wilberforce, Ohio, is a regionally accredited 1890 Land-Grant University with a 135-year tradition of preparing students from diverse backgrounds and experiences for leadership, research and service. The University, which has been named HBCU of the Year by HBCU Digest, fosters academic excellence within a nurturing environment and provides a strong liberal arts foundation and STEM-Ag curriculum leading to professional careers and advanced studies globally.

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