



## **Agroforestry Trainings for Natural Resource Professionals**

### **Silvopasture Design Intensive**

**October 24-25, 2024**

#### **Speaker Biographies**



**J.B. Daniel** is the Grassland Agronomist and Grazing Specialist for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service in Virginia. J.B. grew up in a rural farm community in Southside Virginia and later went to Virginia Tech to study agriculture. He earned a BS and completed his MS in Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences in 1997, then worked for Virginia Cooperative Extension for many years where his interests led him to the management of forage and livestock systems. Since 2008, his statewide responsibilities as the Grassland Agronomist and Grazing Specialist in VA have focused on the conservation management of grasslands for the full productive use for livestock, hay and/or wildlife based on the goals of the farmer or landowner. JB was instrumental in VA NRCS adopting silvopasture as a conservation practice in 2011 and overseeing the planning and implementation of the silvopasture demonstration in Blackstone at the Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center as part of a USDA-NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant. His efforts continue to support the planning of silvopasture on Virginia farms and educating landowners and agricultural professionals on successful sites.

**Emilie Tweardy** is an agroforester with Appalachian Sustainable Development where she works in education, outreach, and grant administration for silvopasture, alley cropping, and other agroforestry practices. Outside of ASD, she is co-owner of ShireFolk Farm, her family farmstead in Central VA that is home to a variety of animals, a plethora of perennial plants, a 9-acre silvopasture project, as well as an increasing variety of woodland natives. She also co-owns and is a Lead Instructor for Shenandoah

Permaculture Institute, where she's been coordinating and teaching Permaculture Design Courses and consulting with landowners on systems design for nearly a decade. She earned her BA in Natural Resources Management at Colorado State University, spent many years as a Whitewater Rafting Guide, and has been working in and around farming and ranching since 2012. In her professional life, she enjoys the opportunity to demystify Agroforestry concepts, practices and techniques. In her personal life, she is a creative who enjoys plant propagation, artistic endeavors, ethnic cuisine, and time in the woods. She is currently working with New Society Publishers on a book about Perennial Permaculture Nurseries.



**Miller Adams** is an Area Forester with the Virginia Department of Forestry. He works in Southside Virginia and has served Charlotte County for just over 24 years. He also co-manages an ~ 80 head commercial cow-calf operation with his parents since the early 90's. He implemented very basic rotational grazing in early 2000 and has gradually increased the intensity of his forage and grazing management. Miller has worked with landowners to establish riparian buffers in Charlotte County, as well as in his home operation. Miller also has an ongoing interest in silvopasture. In 2019 he started to develop a pine silvopasture project from an existing loblolly pine stand using native warm season grasses as the forage. He encourages communication among producers to share experiences and ideas on silvopasture, since there is limited information on the topic.



**John Fike** is a professor in Virginia Tech's School of Plant and Environmental Sciences and serves as Virginia's state forage extension specialist. Fike holds an MS in forage agronomy (Virginia Tech) and a PHD in dairy nutrition (University of Florida). His primary research arena is with forages, but over his career he has conducted research in forage-livestock systems, bioenergy crops and systems, and industrial hemp production. Silvopasture has been a primary research and extension arena for Fike for almost 20 years, and he has focused on developing new information and demonstrations to show the multiple production, animal welfare, and ecosystem benefits of integrating trees into pastures. Fike grew up on a small family dairy farm in Virginia.



**Adam Taylor** is a native of Tazewell County Virginia, and earned his B.A. in Environmental Studies at Emory & Henry College, and a Masters of Agriculture at Oklahoma State University. He has worked as a farm intern for author Barbara Kingsolver and husband Steven Hopp in Meadowview, VA producing vegetables for restaurants, and tending to sheep, turkeys, and chickens. He also served two years in the Peace Corps as a Forestry Extension Agent in Mkushi, Zambia installing demonstration plots and leading workshops on conservation agriculture in an effort to increase food security and prevent deforestation. Before joining the ranks of Virginia Tech, Adam worked as a project coordinator

in West Virginia for both the WV Farmers Market Association and the WV Food & Farm Coalition. Adam is also the co-owner/operator of Singing Spring Farm with his wife Eliza and son Luke. They manage a diversified homestead operation involving dairy goats, wool sheep, pastured poultry, annual vegetable production, and many different perineal fruit and medicinal tree and shrub species.



**Stesha Warren** is an agroforester with Appalachian Sustainable Development where she works in education and outreach for forest farming, silvopasture, alley cropping, and other agroforestry practices. Her current primary focus with ASD is working as the lead on developing and advancing Agroforestry Trainings for Natural Resource Professionals throughout central Appalachia and beyond. She also teaches Wild Mushroom Identification and Certification classes for Mushroom Mountain. Stesha received her B.S. in Agricultural Education from NCA&T in 2010. She has spent over a decade teaching foraging skills, primitive living techniques, forest farming, wild mushroom identification, and more. She is co-owner of Eliana's Garden, LLC which is a small agroforestry focused farm in Stoneville, NC. She resides with her husband, two young children and tons of furry and feathered companions. Stesha enjoys spending time in the forest and working the farm, creating wild crafted culinary delights, exploring fiber arts, and researching fungi, native medicinal botanicals and more!



**Wyn Miller** is an agroforester for Appalachian Sustainable Development. She is also environmental land management consultant and lifetime farmer hailing from East Tennessee. She previously received a Master's in Landscape Architecture from the University of Tennessee, and thereafter worked as a licensed landscape architect in the fields of stormwater, water quality, and ecological landscaping. Now, she works to apply her environmental training to the field of livestock agriculture, using her family's century farm – Lick Skillet Farm – as a proving ground for new climate-smart management methods and agroforestry techniques. Some of her applied research projects include a SARE producer grant testing out plant-based browsing deterrence of new trees planted in pasture, low-input establishment and proliferation of native species in existing cool-season pastures, agroforestry applications for large and small ruminants and mono-gastrics, and coppice agroforestry for graziers.