



NC Choices' Women Working in the Meat Business Conference Evolves to Meet Business Needs of Growing Industry

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Raleigh, NC: The sold out NC Choices' Women Working in the Meat Business Conference will host more than 70 women from all over the country in Orange County, NC for three packed days of hands-on training, learning, and networking October 2-4, 2016. The conference has doubled in size to meet growing demand from women meat producers, butchers, processors, and business owners, and reflects an increasing number of women-owned and operated farms and food businesses nationally.

NC Choices is an initiative of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems, a partnership of North Carolina State University, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. NC Choices provides information, technical assistance, educational programming, and networking opportunities for farmers, extension agents, meat processors, buyers, distributors, and consumers to advance local, niche, and pasture-based meat supply chains in North Carolina.

Conference venues include women-owned businesses [Lantern Table](#) and [Midway Community Kitchen](#) in Chapel Hill, [Cane Creek Farm](#) in Saxapahaw, as well as the [ArtsCenter](#) in Carrboro. The conference focuses on bringing together the entire local meat supply chain to foster collaboration and innovation, supporting growth of the industry as a whole. "The conference curriculum has evolved over the years to better meet the needs of the growing pastured meat movement, with more in-depth business training, hands-on meat cutting, and a wider variety of speakers than ever before," says NC Choices Director Sarah Blacklin.

The conference features nationally-known speakers such as Kari Underly of Range Inc, a third generation Certified Master Butcher, and North Carolina native Elizabeth Karmel, nationally-recognized grilling expert and founding executive chef of Hill Country Barbecue Market and Hill Country Chicken in New York City. Business-focused classes at this year's conference include "Entrepreneurs Redefining Small Pastured Meat Businesses," "Becoming Legit: Legal and Tax Issues to Consider in Structuring a Value-Added Meat Business," and a "Money for Meat" panel on financing options for local meat businesses.

NC Choices' Women Working in the Meat Business was the first conference of its kind when it launched in 2013. It has since inspired similar programming in other regions. NC Choices Women Working in the Meat Business programming has been featured on National Public Radio and in *Modern Farmer*, *The News and Observer*, [and more](#). In 2016 [National Farm Credit](#) recognized it as one of the top leadership programs "changing rural communities and agriculture for the better."

For more information about Women Working in the Meat Business, please visit <http://www.carolinameatconference.com/women/>

NC Choices promotes sustainable food systems through the advancement of the local, niche and pasture-based meat supply chain in North Carolina. NC Choices provides information, technical assistance, educational programming and networking opportunities for farmers, extension agents, meat processors, buyers, distributors and consumers. For more information please visit www.ncchoices.com

The Center for Environmental Farming Systems is a partnership of NC State University, NC Agricultural and Technical State University and the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. CEFS develops and promotes just and equitable food and farming systems that conserve natural resources, strengthen communities, improve health outcomes, and provide economic opportunities in North Carolina and beyond. For more information, visit www.cefs.ncsu.edu.