

Black Environmental Thought: Land, Power and Sustainability

May 22-24, 2007

Kellogg Conference Center

Tuskegee University

Tuskegee, Alabama

Topics including but not limited to:

- Agrarian ethics emerging from slavery and Southern farming
- Contemporary Black environmental thought in rural settings
- Influence of Africanisms on Black Ecological thought
- Symbiotic exchange between native and African American world views and their impact on Black environmental thinking
- Interface between justice, sustainability and landscape
- Black perspectives on sustainable agriculture
- How African American artistic expression can encourage learning and integration of Black ecological philosophy

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- Southern Region SARE
- The Federation of Southern Cooperatives
- Tuskegee University
- Fort Valley State University
- University of Georgia
- The AfroEco Group

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This conference is designed to broaden the environmental discussion by asking, “*What is a framework for Black ecological philosophy that can inform African American agriculture and sustainable agriculture more broadly?*”

In the dominant environmental movement, ethical and conceptual frameworks driving ecological initiatives are based on a well-elucidated, widely shared ecological philosophy. For African-Americans there is common ethical and philosophical ground in practice, but the literature base is poorly developed and not widely read. African-American agricultural philosophy is grounded in the unique cultural, historical and ecological experience of Black people, informed by the values and history of the African Diaspora. This includes agronomic traditions brought from Africa, the experience of slavery, sharecropping and tenant farming, the story of migration to the industrial North and the gardening traditions that were carried with them, and concerns about contemporary food systems issues.

Yet there is also much we don't know about Black environmental thought for complex and tragic reasons. Through slavery, and a history of institutional intervention in Black attempts to build an abiding connection to the land, a complicated and difficult legacy has been generated. In a positive sense, however, the strength and resilience of African Americans in surviving and overcoming these struggles can reflect the restoration of culture, community and land.

The purpose of this conference is to develop more concrete thinking and identification with Black ecological thought and its applications to African American farming, sustainable agriculture, and professional development opportunities. The goal of the conference will be to move innovation in Black sustainable agriculture forward and contribute to overall diversity of thought in sustainable agriculture.

Papers, posters and other presentations are invited on various topics including but not limited to: agrarian ethics emerging from slavery and Southern farming; contemporary Black environmental thought in rural settings; the influence of Africanisms on Black ecological thought; the symbiotic exchange between Native and African American worldviews and their impact on Black environmental thinking; the interface between justice, sustainability, and landscape; Black perspectives on sustainable agriculture; how African American artistic expression can encourage learning and integration of Black ecological philosophy; and a Black vision for agricultural sustainability.

DETAILS about submissions, registration, lodging, and other information are continually updated at www.blackenvirothought.org