



An advocate of organic food who encourages environmental stewardship, Farmer D tends his garden in the heart of Hampton Island.

BY ALLISON HERSH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANGELA HOPPER

FARMER D

DARON JOFFE, better known as "Farmer D," is committed to growing a better world.

At 31, he serves as a leader in the Peach State's growing organic farming movement, and he is the vice president of Georgia Organics, a statewide consortium of farmers and activists.

This entrepreneurial grower, who owns Farmer D Organics, enjoys educating others about the benefits of sustainable agriculture.

"I love growing healthy food," he enthused. "I'm passionate about saving the small farm and promoting sustainable agrarian economies."

Originally from South Africa, Farmer D moved to Atlanta at the age of 3. While attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison, he attended a two-day biodynamic farming conference and was instantly hooked. He eventually quit school and worked as an apprentice on a farm to learn firsthand about sustainable agriculture.

Over the years, he has developed organic farms for universities, prisons, schools and low-income communities in an effort to encourage environmental stewardship and to offer equal access to fresh, healthy foods.

Since 2005, he has run the organic farm at Hampton Island, an upscale

private community in Riceboro that emphasizes environmental responsibility and sustainable living. He grows organic vegetables, fresh herbs, Carolina Gold rice, green tea, sugar cane, blueberries and citrus trees on the 13-acre farm, which will soon expand to 30 acres and include farm animals and artisan cheeses.

"We want to be a totally self-sustaining farm," he said. "It's been a huge success. The farm has really become the heart and soul of Hampton Island."

Farmer D has also developed plans to recreate Savannah's historic Trustees Garden, an experimental endeavor originally launched in 1733 that resulted in crops such as cotton and peaches becoming the foundation of the state's agricultural economy.

This busy entrepreneur recently debuted his own line of biodynamic compost, which transforms green waste from Whole Foods stores across the Southeast into nutrient-rich planting material, and he plans to develop and market a wide range of Farmer D brand organic products.

He's especially excited about partnering with Union Mission, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to helping the homeless, to develop an innovative pilot program to feed, empower and employ families in need by growing their own organic produce.

"Organic food shouldn't be elitist," he explained. "It should be available for everyone." ■

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