NO-TILL ORGANIC MARKET GARDEN

Community Impact Study

Growing Food, Growing Community

The Story of Konda Mason and Jubilee Justice

Rapides Parish, Louisiana



USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

NO-TILL OMG! Organically Managed Gardening

CAMPTI Field of DREAMS

Cultivating Soil, Community, and Rural Prosperity

For Konda Mason, regenerative agriculture is about much more than growing food. It is about creating pathways to economic opportunity, improving community health, restoring relationships with the land, and building systems that allow rural communities to thrive.

As the founder of Jubilee Justice, Konda has dedicated her work to exploring how regenerative agriculture can serve as a catalyst for community development and rural prosperity. Based in Rapides Parish, Louisiana, Jubilee Justice brings together principles of soil stewardship, food sovereignty, local entrepreneurship, and community resilience. Through education, demonstration projects, and farmer engagement, the organization seeks to strengthen local food systems while creating opportunities for historically underserved communities. Since participating in the project, Jubilee Justice has successfully completed its transition to USDA Organic certification, demonstrating that regenerative and organic principles can work together to support both ecological stewardship and economic opportunity.

Konda joined the No-Till Organic Market Garden (No-Till OMG) project because she saw regenerative agriculture as a practical solution to many of the challenges facing rural communities. She was particularly interested in understanding how soil health practices could improve productivity while reducing dependence on costly external inputs. Equally important was the opportunity to learn alongside other producers and contribute to a growing network of farmers committed to conservation and community well-being.

Throughout the project, Konda became an active participant in educational programming, soil health monitoring, farmer-to-farmer learning activities, and technical assistance opportunities. The project provided a framework for evaluating regenerative practices while connecting producers across Louisiana who were experimenting with similar approaches on their own farms.



“Healthy communities depend on healthy land.”

For Konda, one of the most valuable aspects of the project was the opportunity to combine scientific observation with practical experience. Soil health testing, field demonstrations, and peer learning reinforced what she had already begun to observe in the field—that healthy soils are the foundation of resilient farms and healthy communities. The successful transition of Jubilee Justice to USDA Organic certification further demonstrated that ecological stewardship, community development, and farm profitability can reinforce one another when healthy soil remains at the center of the system.

Learning Through Innovation

One of the most significant contributions made by Jubilee Justice during the project was a no-till variety trial conducted in 2022. The trial compared heavily mulched no-till production plots with conventionally tilled plots to better understand how regenerative management practices influence crop performance. The results were striking.



Konda Mason with her team at Jubilee Justice

The heavily mulched no-till plots consistently outperformed the conventionally tilled comparison plots across multiple indicators. Crops grown in the no-till system experienced lower disease pressure, fuller grain development, and reached maturity nearly two weeks earlier than crops grown under conventional tillage. The mulched system also required less irrigation and reduced labor requirements associated with cultivation and weed management.

Most notably, average yields from the no-till plots were 91 percent higher than yields from the conventionally tilled plots.

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The trial reinforced the importance of protecting the soil surface and minimizing disturbance. Heavy mulch helped moderate soil temperature, conserve moisture, suppress weeds, and create favorable conditions for soil biological activity. These observations aligned with many of the principles being promoted through the No-Till OMG project and provided practical evidence that regenerative practices could improve both productivity and resource efficiency.

While every farm operates under unique conditions, the results demonstrated the potential value of no-till systems as a tool for improving resilience in Louisiana's climate. The trial also provided an important learning opportunity for other producers interested in adopting similar practices.



Cover crops and biological soil-building practices became central to the Jubilee Justice production system.



NRCS soil scientist, Mathew Denton, discusses soil structure with Konda Mason and Iriel Edwards.

A Soil-First Approach

Throughout the project, Jubilee Justice continued to refine a production system centered on soil health. Cover crops, heavy mulching, reduced tillage, and biological soil-building practices became foundational elements of the operation. Rather than relying primarily on synthetic inputs, the focus shifted toward improving natural soil processes that support plant growth and long-term productivity.

Field observations and soil monitoring indicated improvements in soil structure, moisture retention, water infiltration, and biological activity. Increased earthworm populations and improved aggregate formation suggested that the soil ecosystem was becoming more active and resilient over time.

Among the practices explored during the project, cover cropping emerged as one of the most valuable tools. Cover crops helped protect the soil surface, reduce erosion, suppress weeds, increase organic matter inputs, and support soil biology. They also contributed to a more resilient production system capable of withstanding periods of drought and extreme weather. For Konda, these outcomes reinforced an important lesson: successful farming begins below ground. Healthy soils create the conditions necessary for healthy crops, healthy ecosystems, and sustainable farm businesses.

The project also highlighted the importance of observation and adaptation. Rather than following a rigid formula, regenerative agriculture requires farmers to observe natural processes, respond to changing conditions, and continuously refine their management practices.

Growing More Than Food

While many agricultural projects focus primarily on production, Jubilee Justice views regenerative agriculture through a broader community lens.

The organization recognizes that healthy food systems require more than healthy farms. They also require markets, infrastructure, education, and community engagement.

Throughout the project, Konda emphasized the connection between soil health, food access, economic opportunity, and community well-being. Regenerative agriculture became a vehicle for addressing multiple community needs simultaneously. Improvements in soil health supported food production. Increased food production created opportunities for local marketing. Local marketing strengthened community food access and helped keep food dollars circulating within the local economy.

This systems-based perspective became one of the defining characteristics of Jubilee Justice's participation in the project.

The educational opportunities provided through the No-Till OMG initiative—including the Argus Farm Stop training—helped expand this vision even further. Exposure to successful local food aggregation and marketing models demonstrated how regenerative agriculture could be integrated into broader strategies for community development.

The result was a growing commitment to building infrastructure that supports both farmers and consumers while strengthening regional food systems.

"Healthy food systems require more than healthy farms. They require markets, infrastructure, education, and community engagement."



Looking Forward

The lessons learned through the No-Till Organic Market Garden project continue to shape the future direction of Jubilee Justice.

Building upon the knowledge gained through soil health monitoring, regenerative production practices, and local food systems training, Jubilee Justice is developing a community Farm Stop expected to open in Alexandria in 2026. The initiative will provide new market opportunities for local producers while expanding access to fresh, locally produced food for community members.

For Konda, the project demonstrated that regenerative agriculture is not simply a production method. It is a framework for creating healthier farms, stronger communities, and more resilient local economies.



Key Lessons Learned

- Soil health is the foundation of productive and resilient farming systems.
- Cover crops and reduced tillage provide multiple agronomic, environmental, and economic benefits.
- Regenerative agriculture can reduce external inputs while improving productivity.
- Strong local food systems require both producers and market infrastructure.
- Community development and regenerative agriculture are deeply connected.

Key Themes from Konda's Journey

- Soil Health
- Climate Resilience
- Food Sovereignty
- Rural Prosperity
- Community Development
- Local Food Systems
- Historically Underserved Producers
- Regenerative Agriculture

Closing Reflection

For Konda Mason, healthy soil is not the final goal—it is the foundation upon which stronger farms, stronger communities, and greater rural prosperity can be built. Her work through Jubilee Justice demonstrates how regenerative agriculture can serve as both a conservation strategy and a community development tool, creating benefits that extend far beyond the farm gate.