

# **OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD, AND FORESTRY**

2800 N. Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, OK 73105-4912  
**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Ashley Bender, (405) 522-4330 or [ashley.bender@ag.ok.gov](mailto:ashley.bender@ag.ok.gov)

Micah Anderson, 405-406-8903 or [micah.anderson@ag.ok.gov](mailto:micah.anderson@ag.ok.gov)

## **Plasticulture conference set for Feb. 13**

The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry will host its 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Plasticulture Conference on Sat., Feb. 13 at the Mid America Technology Center in Wayne. The conference provides gardeners with the latest information on the plasticulture growing technique.

This year's theme will be "Advanced Techniques for Plasticulture." Keynote speaker Itzhak Esqira is the Greenhouse and Plasticulture Extension Specialist for the Israeli Plants Board. He teaches greenhouse technology at Tel Hai College and offers agricultural consulting through his company, GreenIT in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Plasticulture is a farming technique that creates raised soil beds covered with plastic sheeting and equipped with irrigation drip lines laid directly under the plastic. Vegetable seedlings are planted in holes punched through the plastic.

Micah Anderson, ODAFF Plasticulture Program Coordinator, will give an overview of his recent trip to the International Agriculture Conference in Tel Aviv, Israel. Other speakers include OSU Area Extension Horticulturist Dr. Jim Shrefler, Noble Foundation Horticulture Consultant Steve Upton, US Foods Manager Freddy Phillips and Dr. Merritt Taylor of the OSU Agricultural Economics Department.

The general session on Saturday will be from 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m. Register for the conference by calling Ashley Bender at (405) 522-4330. Registration costs \$10 per person and includes lunch. The Mid America Technology Center is located at 27438 State Highway 59 in Wayne.

A pre-conference session will be held Fri., Feb. 12 from 3-6 p.m. at Mid America Technology Center. It is open to the public at no charge and will include an outside demonstration laying a plasticulture bed with a tractor and a display of hoop house design by Kingston Greenhouses.

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Suggested Photo Caption:

Israeli greenhouse and plasticulture specialist Itzhak Esqira will be a guest speaker at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Plasticulture Conference sponsored by the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food and Forestry on Sat., Feb. 13 at the Mid America Technology Center in Wayne.