



**FOOD ANIMAL CONCERNS TRUST**  
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### **Livestock Farmers Eligible for Grants Through FACT's Fund-a-Farmer Project**

#### **National nonprofit Food Animal Concerns Trust opens application period for grants to help farmers improve animal welfare**

Chicago, IL – Family farmers looking to improve their farm animal welfare now have a chance to apply for funding! Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) announced today a call for applications for its [Fund-a-Farmer Project](#)! Now in its third year, the Fund-a-Farmer Project is a competitive microgrants initiative designed to empower livestock and poultry farmers across the country. This year, FACT will award grants of up to \$2,500 to at least 15 farmers for projects that will improve the welfare of animals on their operations. **Applications are due by May 1, 2014 and grants will be awarded in August 2014.**

Through the Fund-a-Farmer Project, FACT awards grants for projects designed to help farmers (1) transition to pasture-based systems, (2) improve the marketing of their humanely-raised products, or (3) more generally enrich the conditions in which their farm animals are raised.

Working, independent family farmers that raise pigs, broiler chickens, laying hens, dairy cows and/or beef cattle are eligible to apply for any of the three types of grants. Projects involving goats and sheep are only eligible for marketing grants. **The newly improved online grant application can be accessed at [www.fundafarmer.org](http://www.fundafarmer.org).**

"In general, larger farms and industrial operations are the ones that receive subsidies or grants from the government," said Lisa Isenhardt, FACT's Humane Farming Program Manager.

"Smaller, family farms often aren't eligible or don't have the staffing to do the huge amount of paperwork required by federal grants. Our Fund-a-Farmer Project provides a unique opportunity for grant funding that is suited to independent family farmers."

In the first two years of the project, FACT awarded 27 Fund-a-Farmer grants totaling nearly \$40,000 to farmers located across the nation from California to Massachusetts. Fourteen of the funded farms hold at least one of the following sustainable and humane certifications: Certified Organic, Animal Welfare Approved, Certified Naturally Grown, Certified Humane and American Grassfed. Beef cattle, dairy cows, pigs, laying hens, and broiler chickens have all benefited from the funded projects. The majority of the projects increased animals' access to pasture or improved their welfare. However, a few of the projects were marketing focused.

For example, FACT awarded East Fork Farm in North Carolina a grant to buy sausage making equipment and to acquire training. This marketing focused grant allowed East Fork Farm to expand its business and add a new value-added product: fresh ground sausage. Other previously funded projects include installing wind curtains on barns for cow comfort and warmth in the winter, constructing mobile housing to protect chickens while rotating the birds on pasture, and purchasing electric fencing to enable a farm to transition to a pasture-based, rotational system for raising hogs. The projects not only make a difference in the lives of several thousand farm animals, but also positively impact the livelihoods of family farmers.

Alexis and Gillies Robertson, funded farmers with Skyelark Ranch in Brooks, California stated, “We are getting a lot of requests for our pork, but cannot increase our herd until we have proper fencing in place. This grant will help us continue to grow our business, as well as ensure the pigs are being raised on pasture to our standards.”

For more information on applying for a Fund-a-Farmer grant in 2014, contact Humane Farming Program Manager Lisa Isenhardt at (773) 525-4952 or [grants@foodanimalconcerns.org](mailto:grants@foodanimalconcerns.org).

Additionally, FACT will offer two [online information sessions](#) on the Fund-a-Farmer grant application process in February. Interested farmers can join the organization on February 11 @ 1pm CST/2pm EST or February 12 @ 6pm CST/7pm EST. Farmers can [register online](#) for either of these free sessions.

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*Founded in 1982, FACT is a national nonprofit organization based in Chicago that promotes food safety and humane farming.*