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FACT AWARDS FUND-A-FARMER GRANTS TO SEVENTEEN FAMILY FARMERS

National nonprofit advances pasture-based farming systems in the U.S.

Chicago, IL – Today, Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT), a national nonprofit, awarded nearly \$41,000 in grants to family farmers across the country to help them transition and/or improve access to pasture-based systems. Animals raised on pasture, when managed properly, experience a high level of animal welfare, which is the ultimate goal of the Fund-a-Farmer grants.

Seventeen farms located in 11 U.S. states received grants through FACT’s Fund-a-Farmer Project. This innovative project awards grants and facilitates peer-to-peer farmer education to increase the number of animals that are raised humanely in the United States. Since 2012, FACT has awarded 67 grants to deserving family farmers across 26 states, directly impacting more than 54,000 animals. Included in the cumulative total, this year’s grant projects will impact an estimated 19,000 farm animals.

“Today, an increasing number of people want to know where their food comes from, who produces it, and how it was grown,” stated Larissa McKenna, FACT’s Associate Director. “Small and mid-sized sustainable farms are essential to meeting consumer demand for humanely-raised food, but often face financial challenges due to high costs associated with economies of scale. Our organization supports these farms by funding projects that improve animal welfare and also help farmers increase their profit margins.”

Brian and Lisa Bruno, owners of [Apple Ridge Farm](#), which is located in Saylorsburg, PA, received a Fund-a-Farmer grant to build a mobile hen house to expand their flock of laying hens. By doing so, they will be able to meet the growing demand for their pasture-raised eggs. They currently sell their eggs at numerous farmers’ markets in the area. Their ultimate goal is to create a diverse system of stacked enterprises that maximizes the amount of food that can be produced on a piece of land, while also improving the soil, creating good jobs, and eliminating waste.

“It is very hard to find pastured eggs in the supermarket these days, and it is important to our customers to know that our hens enjoy life on pasture,” stated Mr. Bruno. “Our hens spend most days out in the pasture eating grass, digging along the fence lines for bugs, and scratching in the freshly plowed areas of the farm for worms. The mobile house will help us to grow our flocks while ensuring they still have adequate access to grass.”

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The 2016 Fund-Farmer grant recipients include:

1dr Acres Farm, Prairie du Sac, WI

Harris Family Farm, Westport, NY

[Apple Creek Farm](#), Bowdoinham, ME

[Haucke Soil + Stock Co.](#), Viroqua, WI

[Apple Ridge Farm](#), Saylorsburg, PA

[Larson Farm](#), Wells, VT

[Auntie Annie's Fields](#), Dundas, MN

[Red Bird Acres](#), Corvallis, OR

[Black Mesa Ranch](#), Snowflake, AZ

[Shannon Brook Farm](#), Watkins Glen, NY

[Brattset Family Farm](#), Jefferson, WI

[Sol Seeker Farm](#), Prunedale, CA

[Clear Valley Farm](#), Arlington, WA

[Stuart Farm](#), Gerald, MO

[Farmer Brown](#), Enosburg Falls, VT

[Wild Rose Farm](#), Owego, NY

[Food 4 Life](#), Klamath Falls, OR

Other projects funded by FACT this year enable farmers to effectively utilize livestock guardian dogs, watering systems, and mobile pig shelters on their farms. For example, Cherrie Nolden of 1dr Acres Farm in Wisconsin received funds for the production and training of four livestock guardian dog puppies that are temperamentally ideal for guarding pastured poultry. The dogs will be placed with FACT-approved farms that would benefit from a livestock guardian dog to protect their pastured poultry from aerial and ground predators. This project will impact an estimated 7,000 birds on four farms.

Teresa Penhall of [Food 4 Life](#) in Oregon faces the challenge of getting fresh water to the beef cattle, dairy cows, and pigs living on the farm's pasture. The Fund-a-Farmer grant will be used to install underground piping, frost free waterers, and water troughs in order to easily supply water to the animals. Shannon Ratcliff and Walter Adam of [Shannon Brook Farm](#) in New York were previously funded by FACT to construct mobile hen houses. This year, the farmers received a second Fund-a-Farmer grant to help build two mobile pig shelters that will be located on pasture and moved on a daily basis during the grazing season. Both farms' projects will improve farm animal welfare and help the funded farmers expand their customer base.

In addition to awarding grants, FACT offers free webinars, conference scholarships, and an online forum for livestock and poultry farmers. To receive information about future funding and upcoming free webinars, FACT invites farmers to visit www.fundafarmer.org and sign up for email updates. Consumers can learn more about shopping humanely through FACT's [Humane Choices Project](#). For more information contact Associate Director Larissa McKenna at 773-525-4952 or lmckenna@foodanimalconcerns.org.

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Food Animal Concerns Trust promotes humane farming and advocates for the safe production of meat, milk and eggs. FACT also helps consumers make humane and healthy choices. Learn more at www.foodanimalconcerns.org.