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28 FAMILY FARMERS IN 19 STATES RECEIVE GRANTS FROM NATIONAL NONPROFIT

Humane farming infrastructure grants bolster family farmers’ environmental and financial sustainability

(Chicago, IL – Feb. 20, 2018) Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT), a national nonprofit that promotes the safe and humane production of meat, milk, and eggs, this month awarded more than $66,000 in Fund-a-Farmer Grants to 28 independent family farmers in 19 states across the country. These grants, ranging from $374 to $2,500, were awarded for projects that improve farm animal welfare, with farmers increasing the environmental and financial sustainability of their operations. FACT’s Fund-a-Farmer Grants help farmers expand the welfare of animals raised on their operations, ultimately increasing the number of farm animals that are raised humanely.

A 2017 survey of grant recipients found that 91 percent of the projects still are in use, 95 percent had highly improved animal welfare, and 91 percent had improved the farms’ financial sustainability, by improving profits, creating recurring cost savings, and increasing customers.

FACT offered two types of Fund-a-Farmer Grants; one priority focused on farm improvements to result in successful animal welfare certification, the second on improving and expanding pasture-based farming. For the second year, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals® (ASPCA) is generously underwriting FACT’s Animal Welfare Certification Grants to enable farmers to attain animal welfare certification from Animal Welfare Approved, Certified Humane, or Global Animal Partnership (GAP).

“The ASPCA is proud to fund another year of FACT’s Animal Welfare Certification Grants as we work together to create a more humane and transparent food system,” said Kara Shannon, senior manager of farm animal welfare at the ASPCA. “It’s been inspiring to see so many farmers across the country using FACT grants to fund welfare certification projects that improve the lives of the animals they raise and meet the demand of consumers who increasingly care about how farm animals are raised."

The 28 grants FACT awarded included 18 Pasture Improvement Grants and 10 Animal Welfare Certification Grants. FACT has now cumulatively awarded 119 grants to deserving family farmers across 31 states, directly impacting more than 83,000 animals since 2012. Individual reports describe improved water and grazing management that lead to pasture regeneration and healthier soil.

Dru Peters and Homer Walden, owners/operators of Sunnyside Farm in Dover, PA reported a profit increase of $40,000 per year due to their FACT-funded project. The farmers received a Fund-a-Farmer Pasture Improvement Grant in 2013 to build mobile houses for their broiler chickens on pasture.
“Our ability to replace all of our poultry pens had a profound effect on our farm. The grant got us over a rough spot when we didn't have cash flow to rebuild our pens. The new pens have resulted in fewer losses, increased wellbeing for the poultry, and greater yield of both meat and eggs each year,” said Peters.

“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,” said Larissa McKenna, FACT’s humane farming program director. “Our organization supports family farms by funding projects that improve animal welfare and help farmers increase their profit margins.”

Krista Raymond, owner/operator of Five Sprouts Family Farm in Alexandria, OH received a $2,500 Fund-a-Farmer Animal Welfare Certification Grant this year to install fencing for rotational grazing of her pigs, turkeys, and chickens. In addition to keeping the animals safe and protected on pasture, this project will help the farm attain Animal Welfare Approved certification.

“We greatly look forward to being able to add Animal Welfare Approved to our label as we feel it suggests a commitment to quality and not something that every farm has to offer; it will set us apart.” Raymond said.

Mark Brady and Katie Kennedy, owners/operators of Timberfeast Farm in Chatsworth, IL received a $2,500 Fund-a-Farmer Pasture Improvement Grant to build a portable "egg mobile" chicken coop and portable fencing system to safely house and rotationally graze 300 laying hens. This project will provide a predator-proof home for their hens to roost in the evening while allowing them to be free-range and outdoors during the day safely inside portable electric netting. In addition to its animal welfare benefits, the project will serve as an educational resource for beginning farmers.

“We are planning to release a prototype plan for our egg mobile and pasture system so other farms and consumers can experience the pleasure of rotationally grazed, humanely raised, happy pastured hens and eggs,” Brady said.

Animal Welfare Certification Grant recipients are:

1. Baseline Farm in Dexter, MI $2,500
2. Beaver Creek Farm in Lawrenceburg, KY $2,500
3. Briscoe Farms in Arab, AL $2,500
4. CATHIS Farm in Lillington, NC $1,614
5. Five Sprouts Family Farm in Alexandria, OH $2,500
6. Home Place Pastures in Como, MS $2,340
7. Old Dutch Hops in Hillsboro, OH $2,500
8. Pink Elephant Farm & Kitchen in Smithfield, KY $2,500
9. Shady Ridge Farm in Port Matilda, PA $2,500
10. ShireFolk Farm in Palmyra, VA $2,500
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20. ShireFolk Farm in Palmyra, VA $2,500

Pasture Improvement Grant recipients are:

1. 4 Winds Farm in Valentine, NE $2,500
2. Apple Creek Farm in Bowdoinham, ME $2,500
3. Broad Brook Acres in Preston, CT $2,500
4. Bugtussle Farm in Gamaliel, KY $2,500
5. Cartermere Farms in Celina, TX $2,500
6. Deary Creek Dorpers in Deary, ID $2,500
7. Derrydale Farm in Belle Plaine, MN $2,500
8. Fallen Aspen Farm in Volant, PA $2,430
9. Ferne Clyffe Farm in Buncombe, IL $2,500
10. Fresh Coast Farms in Eau Claire, MI $2,500
11. Leaning Pine Farm in Mount Savage, MD $374
12. Pasture 42 in Guinda, CA $2,500
13. Red Bird Acres in Corvallis, OR $2,500
14. Rising Phoenix Farm in Morning View, KY $2,500
15. The G Farm in Larsen, WI $2,000
16. Timberfeast in Chatsworth, IL $2,500
17. Uwharrie Farm in Asheboro, NC $2,500
18. **Willow Way Farm** in **Kerrick, MN** $2,500

For more information on FACT’s Fund-a-Farmer Grants and the other services we provide to small farmers, please visit foodanimalconcernstrust.org/farmer/. FACT also offers free webinars, scholarships, mentorship, and an online farmer forum as part of our services benefiting family farmers. To hear about the experiences of previous FACT Animal Welfare Certification grantees, visit www.aspca.org/farmergrants. Please contact Larissa McKenna, humane farming program director, at (773) 525-4952 or lmckenna@foodanimalconcerns.org with questions about FACT’s farmer services.

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FACT promotes the safe and humane production of meat, milk, and eggs. Learn more at www.foodanimalconcernstrust.org.