For Immediate Release:
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38 FAMILY FARMERS IN 19 STATES RECEIVE GRANTS FROM NATIONAL NONPROFIT

Humane farming grants bolster family farmers’ environmental and financial sustainability

(Chicago, IL – Feb. 26, 2019) 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 $94,000 in Fund-a-Farmer Grants to 38 independent family farmers located in 19 states across the country. The grants, ranging from $600 to $5,000, were awarded for projects that improve farm animal welfare and build capacity, with farmers increasing the environmental and financial sustainability of their operations.

This year FACT offered three types of Fund-a-Farmer Grants: (1) Pasture Improvement Grants for projects that help farms transition to a pasture-based system, expand the animals’ access to well-managed pasture, and/or improve the quality of pasture; (2) Animal Welfare Certification Grants for projects that would help farmers to attain animal welfare certification from Animal Welfare Approved by A Greener World, Certified Humane, or the Global Animal Partnership (GAP); and (3) Capacity Building Grants for high-welfare farmers and ranchers who already hold one of the three certifications above, a new grant type for 2019.

As in past years, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals® (ASPCA) is generously underwriting FACT’s Animal Welfare Certification Grants, in addition to the new Capacity Building Grants that support continued growth through infrastructure, marketing, and sales efforts.

“The ASPCA is proud to fund our third year of grants to help more independent farmers certify the welfare of their animals. Through this year’s new Capacity Building Grants, we are also dedicated to the continued growth of existing certified farmers looking to expand or reach new markets,” said Kara Shannon, senior manager of farm animal welfare at the ASPCA. “Year after year, we are inspired by FACT grantees’ pursuit of farming practices that better the lives of animals and generate more options for conscious consumers.”

The 38 grants FACT awarded included 20 Pasture Improvement Grants, 11 Animal Welfare Certification Grants, and seven Capacity Building Grants. Since 2012, FACT has cumulatively awarded 157 grants totaling over $355,000.00 to family farmers across 34 states, directly impacting more than 97,000 animals.

A recent 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 their customer base. Individual farmers also report improved water and grazing management that lead to pasture regeneration and healthier soil.

“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 farmers by funding projects that improve animal welfare and help farmers increase their profit margins.”

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Gwynne Mhuireach and Thomas Gillett, owners of Black Tansy Farm in Springfield, OR, received a $2,500 Fund-a-Farmer Animal Welfare Certification Grant this year to construct movable outdoor farrowing huts for their sows, as well as shelters for their pigs, sheep and cattle on pasture. In addition to keeping the animals safe and protected, this project will help the farm attain Animal Welfare Approved (AWA) by A Greener World certification.

“Receiving a Fund-A-Farmer Grant from FACT is critical to helping us achieve AWA status within the next year. The certification will help our customers understand our farm’s commitment to animal welfare, as well as affirm what we already know to be true – we care deeply about the well-being of our animals and their quality of life,” Mhuireach said.

Meg and Joel Wittenmyer, the owners of Bifrost Farms Creamery in Boyceville, WI, received a $2,500 Capacity-Building Grant to add an “aging room” and to purchase equipment needed to make aged, hard goat milk cheese. The farmers currently hold Animal Welfare Approved (AWA) by A Greener World certification for their herd of dairy goats, and provide fresh goat cheese to their local community.

“Building an aging room and adding new aged cheeses to our inventory will increase the profitability of our creamery substantially,” Wittenmyer said.

Mark Santoro of Gaia’s Breath Farm in Jordanville, NY received a $2,500 Pasture Improvement Grant to install a remote pump based watering system and temporary fencing equipment for his 120 pigs on pasture. This project will ensure that a high quality source of water is available for the pigs at all times.

“Our funded project will help us to further our goals of producing high quality food, enhance the economic side of the equation through improved farm efficiency, and create the environment for a more content pig,” Santoro said.

Animal Welfare Certification Grant recipients are:

1. **Black Tansy Farm** in Springfield, OR, $2,500
2. **Blue Yonder Organic Farm** in North Salem, IN, $2,500
3. **Chinook’s Acres** in Laingsburg, MI, $2,500
4. **DKH Destiny Farm** in Caldwell, ID, $2,467.33
5. **Driftless Hills Farm** in Calmar, IA, $2,500
6. **Fraga Farmstead Creamery** in Gales Creek, OR: $2,500
7. **Harmony Fields** in Bow, WA: $2,500
8. **Hell or High Water Farm** in Enumclaw, WA: $2,500
9. **Rossallini Farm** in Scio, OR: $2,500
10. **Two Mothers Farm** in Ithaca, NY: $2,500
11. **Wandering Roots** in Jeffersonville, VT: $2,500

Capacity Building Grant recipients are:

1. **Back Creek Angus** in Mount Ulla, NC, $2,500
2. **Bifrost Farms Creamery** in Boyceville, WI, $2,500
3. **Bull City Farm** in Rougemont, NC, $1,710
4. **Health Hero Farm** in South Hero, VT, $5,000
5. **Ironstone Creamery** in Pottstown, PA, $2,500
6. **North Country Creamery** in Keeseville, NY, $2,500
7. **Prodigal Farm** in Rougemont, NC, $2,500

Pasture Improvement Grant recipients are:

1. **Adirondack Beef Company** in Croghan, NY, $2,500
2. **Bishop Katahdins** in Newfield, NJ, $2,500
3. **Case Country Farm** in Chatham, MI, $2,500
4. **Chitwood Family Farm** in Spring Hill, KS, $2,500
5. **Gaia’s Breath Farm** in Jordanville, NY, $2,500
6. **Grass Powered Poultry & Meats** in Hillsboro, OH, $2,500
7. **Islotte Farm** in Esparto, CA, $600.
8. **J&J Farms** in Pinewood, SC, $2,500
9. **Kopf Canyon Ranch** in Troy, ID, $2,500
10. **Lydia's Flock Registered Icelandic and Shetland Sheep** in Bellingham, WA: $2,500
11. **Meadowdale Farm** in Putney, VT: $2,500
12. **Pastured Providence Farmstead** in Chillicothe, OH: $2,500
13. **Pettit Pastures** in Milaca, MN: $2,500
14. **Shelly's Farm** in Brentwood, CA: $2,500
15. **Skyelark Ranch** in Edgewood, CA: $2,500
16. **South Stitch Farm** in Athens, OH: $2,500
17. **Sweet Grass Meats** in Naples, NY: $2,500
18. **Turning Page Farm** in Monson, ME: $2,500
19. **Whitney Farmstead** in Ann Arbor, MI: $2,500
20. **Wild Harmony Farm** in Exeter, RI: $2,302

For more information on FACT’s Fund-a-Farmer Grants and the other services we provide to small farmers, please visit [foodanimalconcernstrust.org/farmer/](http://foodanimalconcernstrust.org/farmer/). In addition to the grants, FACT also offers free webinars, conference scholarships, and a mentorship program for livestock and poultry farmers who wish to improve the welfare of their farm animals. Please contact Larissa McKenna, Humane Farming Program Director, at (773) 525-4952 or lmckenna@foodanimalconcerns.org with questions about any of 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](http://www.foodanimalconcernstrust.org).