



FARNHAM FARM, MORRIS

**PRESERVING WORKING LANDS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**

**Farmland History Preserved Twice Over  
 Early American Farms in Modern Times**

***“I am very excited about the future for the farm.”***

— Anne Fellows

Two heritage farms—farms in the same family for many generations—were protected with land preservation agreements in late summer 2017: Farnham Farm in Morris and Ballek Farm in East Haddam.

The 138-acre pre-Revolutionary-era Farnham Farm has been passed down to a single family member for eight generations from 1735 until the present.

In the 20th century, Ruth Richardson Farnham owned the dairy farm and, with her sisters, spent every summer there, welcoming the extended family. When Ruth died in 1988, the farm was held in trust by two nephews, who changed it from dairy to hay. In 2012, the last trustee died and Anne Howson Fellows was chosen to inherit the property.

The farm is the family’s gathering place. Every summer of Anne’s younger life was spent on the farm, happily being outdoors in nature. Anne and her husband, Mark, had their wedding reception in the apple orchard—one of many family weddings held there throughout the centuries.

When Anne was in her 30s, she had a nightmare: purple condos replaced the farm. Once she became the owner, Anne wanted to preserve the farm so that her nightmare could never become a reality. Then, her sister saw a Connecticut Farmland Trust ad in *Nutmeg* magazine: “Learn how to save your family farm.”

Connecticut Farmland Trust was pleased to work with Anne to

determine the most appropriate conservation strategy for her family’s farm. The property was a high priority for conservation due its high quality and quantity of farmland soils and Anne’s commitment to finding a new farmer to revive the land. Since the farm was protected this summer, Anne has selected a young dairy farmer to assume stewardship of the farm in November.

Anne has always had three goals for the farm: to get the land into good till; to get it financially out of the red and into the black, and to do right by the community. During the days of the family trust, there was little farm maintenance. Recreating a well-maintained farm requires considerable resources, so Anne and the family are very grateful for funds from the sale of the development rights helping to bring the farm back to life.

Preservation of Farnham Farm was made possible with funding from the US Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service and the CT Department of Energy and



Anne Fellows (in pink dress) and family celebrating conservation of their land.

Environmental Protection. The farm was preserved in collaboration with Morris Land Trust.

Ballek Farm is an even older continuously farmed property. Its farm origin dates from a King Charles II land grant in the 1660s given to dissenter Nicholas Ackley, who at age 19, was to begin a new colony. In preparation, Ackley was trained to survey, dig wells, farm, and preach the Gospel.

Nicholas's first wife Hannah Ford Mitchell convinced him to move his farm south from a Hartford floodplain. The couple canoed down the Connecticut River to find higher land. Hanna gave birth on or near the river while Ackley was surveying the 55-acre site of the current farm. She died in another childbirth before the move. Ackley and second wife Mariam Moore are the Ballek ancestors. That same acreage that Ackley claimed as his, is now a modern, preserved family farm operation 360 years later.

The acreage is under conservation except for the popular garden center site. The current barn is an expansion of the original: old beams are still visible. The 1660s well is still in use and has only gone dry once. Challenges are not new to the farm, including a Revolutionary-era accidental explosion of hidden gunpowder hidden in the farmhouse basement.

Owner Ms. Anita Ballek sees stewardship of her family's land as a serious responsibility so she and her children have ensured that the land is respected forever. Today, Anita is the family matriarch with great grandchildren. One of Anita's favorite childhood memories was playing on the beams in the barn, watching dust motes, and dreaming of the future.



*Four generations of the Ballek family at the farm homestead.*

Ever a force for good in her community, Anita founded a fledgling local land trust, East Haddam Land Trust, but that lacked the resources to help farms. The American Farmland Trust told her its priority was for large farms. About a year ago, Anita sought the help of Connecticut Farmland Trust, and she found the way to preserve her farm and family history.

Today, the land's owners include Anita M. Ballek and her children George F. Ballek, Nancy Ballek MacKinnon, and Richard A. Ballek. Anita says her goal is "to preserve environmentally sustainable work for her family." Eleven Ballek family members now work on the farm and so a long family legacy of working the land will continue.

---

***"As long as we have land, we have so many opportunities available for farming."***

— Anita Ballek

---



## Comings and Goings

### **New Staff!**

**Kathleen Doherty** has joined CFT as our *Conservation Coordinator*. She has two and a half years of land trust and conservation experience and interned with the CT Department of Agriculture.

**Brianna Dunlap**, former Director of the CT Valley Agricultural Museum, has joined CFT as our new *Development and Communications Coordinator*.

**Naomi Marinelli**, CPA, joined CFT as our *Controller*. She has been a staff accountant with several area accounting firms.

**John Weedon**, We wish happy trails to our former Conservation Manager. He has taken a position in Ohio to be closer to his family's farm. Good luck, John!

### **New Board Members!**

**Lisa Bassani**, Assistant Director of Development at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

**Chris Casiello**, Arethusa Farm Dairy Plant Manager and a nationally recognized cheese maker.

**Keith Stechsulte**, Enfield Branch Office Manager of Farm Credit East.



## Cato Corner Interview

### A Decade After Farmland Protection

Nearly a decade ago, Elizabeth (Liz) MacAlister protected her land, Cato Corner Farm in Colchester, with CFT. We caught up with her to learn about what has been going on since 2008 and where the farm is heading next.

Liz and her son Mark Gillman have been making cheese at Cato Corner Farm since 1997. “We come from a cheesy family,” says Liz. “We grew up eating many interesting cheeses.” Today they produce more than 18 cheeses. The American Cheese Society honored their Womanchego cheese as a Best American Raw Cow’s Milk Cheese 2017.

#### How did you come to own Cato Corner Farm?

“We were living on a leased farm and wanted a ‘real farm,’” says Liz. Finally, in 1979 she found a listing in the Market Bulletin for the farm on Cato Corner Road in Colchester. The farm now employs 15 staff and is home to over 70 animals, including 32 milk cows.

#### What made you want to preserve the farmland?

In 2008, the family worked with CFT to protect the farm. “It was always our goal to protect it,” says Liz. “We always wanted to own a farm and when we finally got this place, it just didn’t seem like we’d ever want it to go into development.”

She noted, “It’s hilly, not river bottom land, so it wasn’t of interest to the state of Connecticut,” which was focused on prime farmland soils. Liz donated the development rights on her land, to preserve the farm for future generations.

Since then, several of Liz’s neighbors have decided to conserve their land. She says, “It snowballs. When you have one person in an area like this do preservation and people see that it’s beneficial, they start to think of things they wouldn’t have thought of – like protecting their own land.”



Liz MacAlister of Cato Corner Farm

*“It just didn’t seem like we’d ever want it to go into development.”*

— Elizabeth (Liz) MacAlister

#### What is the next step for the farm?

Cato Corner Farm recently received two grants, a Farm Viability grant from the state to expand their infrastructure and, a USDA value-added grant to improve value added products and to help them expand their farm operations. Liz and Mark plan to build an extension to the cheese barn and increase cheese production. They will partner with River Plain Farm in Lebanon, for pasteurized milk, to make new products: fresh cheese—such as ricotta, goat cheese, soft mozzarella, and crumbly feta.

#### Where can Cato Corner Farm cheese be found?

Cato Corner Farm sells its cheese nationwide. In 1999 they were the first cheesemaker at New York City’s Greenmarket, and they continue to sell at three markets in New York as well as hundreds of restaurants and grocery stores across New England and the country. You can buy Cato Corner cheese at the farm’s shop or order online at [www.catocornerfarm.com](http://www.catocornerfarm.com).



#### Board of Directors

**Susan E. Lockwood**, *President*, Redding  
**Dawn C. Adiletta**, *Vice-President*, East Woodstock  
**Charlotte Hansen**, *CPA, Treasurer*, Stafford Springs  
**Joshua G. Welch**, *Secretary*, Stonington  
**Lisa Bassani**, New Haven  
**Chris Casiello**, Litchfield  
**Robin Chesmer**, Lebanon  
**Dr. Michael A. Fotos III**, West Hartford  
**Gordon F. Gibson**, Vernon

**John C. Haller**, *CPA*, East Granby  
**John J. Kriz**, New Canaan  
**Richard A. Marone**, West Hartford  
**Nicholas Moore**, Sharon  
**Sara. D. O’Connell**, Bloomfield  
**Toni Robinson**, Essex  
**James Shepherd**, Stonington  
**Tim Slate**, Lebanon  
**Keith Stechschulte**, Windsor

#### Staff

**Elisabeth Moore**,  
*Executive Director*  
**Kathleen Doherty**,  
*Conservation Coordinator*  
**Brianna Dunlap**, *Development and Communications Coordinator*  
**Naomi Marinelli**, *CPA, Controller*

# Who Helped Protect Family Farms in 2016?

## A Gracious Thank You to CFT's Supporters

### Foundations & Granting Agencies

Aetna Foundation, Inc.  
Anonymous (1)  
Anonymous (2)  
Anonymous (3)  
Anonymous (4)  
Anonymous (5)  
Community Foundation for Greater New Haven  
Connecticut Community Foundation  
Cornwall Conservation Trust, Inc.  
The Geoffrey C. Hughes Foundation, Inc.  
The Hermann Family Charitable Foundation  
The Stewart and Constance Greenfield Foundation  
The Thompson Family Foundation  
MFUND  
Hunter Grubb Foundation  
Tolland County Agricultural Center, Inc.  
SBM Charitable Foundation, Inc.  
Silver Mountain Foundation for the Arts  
Peter and Patricia Findlay Family Foundation  
Pfizer Foundation  
United Way of Central & Northeastern CT  
The Vanderbilt Family Foundation

### Individuals

Barbara and Jim Abraham  
Dawn C. and Joseph M. Adiletta  
Paul and Tina Allaire  
Linda Allard  
Heather Allen  
Nancy Anderson  
Anonymous (1)  
Anonymous (2)  
Anonymous (3)  
Michael and Yvonne Appleton  
Daniel and Mary Atwood  
Sherill Baldwin and Kimball Cartwright  
Kim Bakoledis  
John and Frances Barclay  
George Ann Bardenheier  
Nicholas and Kathy Barone  
Lisa Bassani  
Mike and Denise Baum  
Matthew Baxter  
Bennett and Carol Beach

Rick Beatty  
Stewart Beckett  
Pierre and Sandra Belisle  
Samuel and Lois Bergami  
Peter and Arlene Bergan  
Jonathan and Amy Bernon  
Richard Berry  
Michael and Florence Betten  
Barbara and Rob Bettigole  
Paul Bezzini  
Susan Parker Boal and Charles Mirabile, Jr.  
John and Michele Boccalatte  
Scott and Roxanne Bok  
Marnie Bolstad  
Linda and John Bowers  
Wayne and Kim Boyington  
Bernadette and Tim Brady  
Peter B. and Rosalie Brainard  
Philip Brencher  
Patti and Richard Broad  
Barbara Brown  
Scott and Susan Brown  
Nancy H. and David Bull  
Cynthia Burger  
Louise Burr  
Bonnie Burr  
Carol and Murray Buttner  
Guido and Anne Calabresi  
Gail Cameron  
Jay Cantor  
Catherine Cardwell  
Peggy Carlson  
Nancy Carrington  
Paul and Julie Chelminski  
Thomas and Lynn Cherry  
Robin and Kathryn Chesmer  
Frank Chiaramonte  
Stephanie Christino  
Christine Ciccone and Peter Waite  
Bill and Corinna Clendenen  
Christopher and Annette Clow  
Jerry Clupper and Shirley Dion  
Cris Coffin  
Richard and Ann Cohen  
Phoebe Cole-Smith  
Margaret Cooley  
Peter and Diana Cooper  
Eugenie and Belton Copp  
George Coxeter  
Tom Crider  
Margaret Crone  
Doug Cullen and Eva Pao  
Tiffany Cunningham  
Ruth Cutler  
Stuart Daly  
Andrew Damokosh  
Barbara David  
Peter DeBell  
Nicole DeLong

Jean and David Demchak  
Susan DeSilver  
Charles Dimmick  
Daniel Donahue  
Lise Dondy  
John and Janis Downey  
Elizabeth Drake  
David and Deborah Dressler  
David Drumm  
Ellen and Michael Ebert  
Raphael Elkind  
Anthony and Elizabeth Enders  
Erica and William Fearn  
Manuel Fernandez  
Leslie Findlen  
Joy Floyd  
Jim and Lauren Foote  
Kristine Ford  
Michael Fotos and Claudia F. Lindsey  
Linda P. and Jacque G. Francois  
John and Susan Franzis  
David Freeman  
Gail Freeman  
Judi and Louis Friedman  
Susan Froshauer and Philip Mancini Froshauer  
Kathleen Fuhr  
Rebecca Furer  
Joseph Futtner  
Jim Gage  
Fritz and Mary Lou Gahagan  
Shirley Galka  
Rosemary Ganser  
Trudi Ganz  
Robert Garavel  
John E. and Tiggie Gerli  
Gordon Gibson  
James Gillespie  
Olga Goff  
Barbara Golden  
Sherwin Goldman  
Leslie and George Grant  
Tarn Granucci  
William and Jean Graustein  
Elissa and Richard Green  
Kim and Jeffrey Greenberg  
Beverly Gregory  
Lucy Grimes  
Stephen Gudernatch  
Kevin Guernier  
Ann Guerrera and William Champagne  
Lisa and Ken Hageman  
Stephanie Haig  
Marcia and Robert Hall  
Jim and Julia Hallene  
Jack and Kathy Haller  
Mig Halpine and Calico Harington

Nusie Halpine  
Philip and Pamela Handfield  
Scott Hanley  
Hildegard and Hunter Hannum  
Charlotte Hansen and Gary Fisher  
Elyse Harney  
Dudley and Ethel Vicky Harrison  
Rebecca Harvey  
Ruth Harwood  
Monika and Christoph Haugstetter  
Harvey and Myrtle Hayden  
Linda Heatherly  
Laurie Heiss and Cornelius J. Grealy  
Paul Helenski  
Harry Heller  
Anne and Charles Hepner  
John and Bernice Hibbard  
David and Tracy Hill  
Samuel and Marcia Hinckley  
Marie Annette Hise  
Charlotte Hitchcock  
G. Warfield Hobbs  
Jane Hoben  
Lisa Holmes  
Irving Hopkins  
C. Hornish  
Donna Hoskins and Hank Barlow  
George Host  
Maryann Houde  
Linda Houser  
Helen Humeston  
Roberta Isleib and John Brady  
Michael and Cindy Italiaander  
Christine Jacob  
Loretta and John James  
Holly and Tim Jarrell  
Richard A. and Mary L. Jensen  
Don and Sue Joffray  
Mike and Annie Johnson  
Eliot and Stephanie Johnson  
Raymond Johnson  
Jane Kaczmarek  
Llyn and Jeff Kaimowitz  
Diane and Michael Karabin  
Susan and Donald Katz  
TJ Kehoe  
David and Barbara Keiser  
Robert and Jane Keiter  
Suzanne Kelley  
Annalise Kieley  
Lyle and Ellen Kloke  
Doris Knight  
Kip Kolesinskas and Lesley Schurman  
John Kriz and Angela Jameson  
Joan Krochmal  
Jeanne Kuslis

## CFT's Supporters continued

Henry and Susan Kustosz  
Drew Landon  
Catalina Langin  
Mary and Richard Lanier  
Marigrace Larke  
Jed and Janet Larson  
James and Susan Laurino  
Marta Jo Lawrence  
Raymond Learsy  
Molly LeVan  
Ronald and Emily Levitt  
Leslie and Ralph Lewis  
Roger and Fa Liddell  
Everett and Rita Lister  
Scott Livingston  
Susan Lockwood  
Henry Lord  
Robert and Susan Ludwig  
Jon Lukomnik  
John and Sue Lynch  
Sandra and Robert MacGregor  
William and Diane MacLaren  
Nancy and Bob Macy  
Lance and Pauline Magnuson  
Christi Maida  
Regina and Fred Malsbary  
Ecton and Betsy Manning  
Richard and Sandy Marone  
Priscilla and Bob Marshall  
Jo Anne McClurg  
Phyllis McDowell  
William McGuire  
James and Ruth Diane  
McHutchison  
Field McIntyre  
Douglas and Ruth McKain  
Fillmore and Joan McPherson  
Josie Merck  
Lee and Michele Mergy  
Tom and Svea Meyer  
Richard and Joan Mihm  
Jim and Pam Miller  
Maxine Mindel  
Josephine Mineo  
Edward and Geraldine Mohr  
Joanne Monaco  
Tony and Shirley Mongillo  
Elisabeth Moore  
Deborah and David Moore  
Nicholas and Leslie Moore  
Peter Moore  
Amy Morgan  
Jason Morrill  
Mary Lee Morrison and  
William Upholt  
Pat and Rusty Murawski  
Shirley Murtha  
Bill and Shirlee Neil  
Dennis Neumann  
Diane Norman  
John and Sara D. O'Connell  
Jack O'Connell  
Thomas and Sarah O'Connor

Tom and Carol Odell  
Elizabeth Olson  
Deborah Oswalt  
Joan Packer  
John and Bobbie Padgett  
Wright and Anna Maria Palmer  
John and Shirley Perotti  
Diana Perron  
Ross and Becky Person  
Julia and David Pickett  
Lore Pierce  
Anne Pierson  
Dawn and Tim Pindell  
Edward Platt  
Nancy Pogmore  
David Pond  
Michael and Susan Prior  
Hector and Erica Prud'homme  
Robert Quagliaroli  
David Rackey  
Robert Reed  
Andrea Reese  
Linda Reid and Mark Branse  
Allen Reiser  
William and Laurie Renda  
Dennis Rich  
Timothy J. and Louise E.  
Rickard  
Joseph Rinaldi  
Noemi Rivera  
Barbara Robert  
Clarence and Frances Roberts  
James Roberts  
Barbara Robinson  
John and Lupi Robinson  
Toni Robinson and Michael  
Plouf  
Andrew Rondinone  
Jeanne Rovaldi-Manning  
Betsy Russell and Family  
William and Harriett Sanborn  
Christie Sanders  
William Sawch  
Craig and Pietrina Saxton  
Steve and Paula Schimmel  
David and Virginia Schneider  
Tanya Schneider  
Beth and Franz Schober  
Charles Schoendorf  
Paul and Georgina Scholl  
Katherine Schoonover  
Eric Schott  
James Scott  
Thomas Scull  
Cheri Lynn Scull  
Robert and Elaine Sederquist  
Thomas and Christine Semenza  
John Setaro  
Peter and Barbara Setlow  
Cathy Setterlin  
Kevin and Catherine Shea  
Tim and Carol Shepard  
James and Shrevie Shepherd

Bree Shirvell  
Brian and Jeanne Shirvell  
Janet M. and Benjamin R. Shute  
Irving and Nancy Silverman  
Bruce and Pam Simonds  
Gary and Susie Singer  
Joseph and Angela Sinicrope  
Jennifer Siskind  
Tim and Linda Slate  
Tina Sommers  
Jon and Cleo Sonneborn  
William Spear  
Pete and Sue Sposito  
Suzanne Ste Therese and  
George Wolfe  
James Stengel and Beverly  
Bartow  
Hillary Stern  
Frank Stewart  
Robert Stilson  
Edward Stodolink  
Patricia Storage  
John and Mary Louise Stover  
Roberta and Bruce Sullivan  
Ed Tollmann  
Lyn Traverse and Charles  
Copeland  
Don and Carol Tuller  
Molly Turner  
James Urbano  
Carlos Valinho  
Sally and William Vaun  
Cathy Velenchik  
Catherine and Curtis Vouwie  
Bruce and Kathy Wandelmaier  
Christina Wasch  
Michael Watts  
Howard Wayland  
Lynn and Donna Weaver  
Phyllis and Richard Weisberg  
Richard and Robin Weiss  
Woodie and Ellen Weiss  
Joshua and Alejandra Welch  
Joseph and Jessica M. Welsh  
Victor Westman  
Vicky and Donald F. Wetherell  
Rosemary and James Whelan  
Edward and Brooke Whittemore  
David and Laura M. Wilk  
Robert Wilkins  
Cynthia and George Willauer  
Claire Williams  
Ellen Williams  
Evelyn Williams  
Marjorie Wilson  
Judy Wilson and Richard  
Schenk  
Roger M. and Della Winans  
Patricia Winer  
Katherine and Carlton Winslow  
Vicki and Fred Winter  
Timothy Wolf and Linda Pagani  
Ellen and Michael Wolfson

Bill and Marie C. Woodburn  
Steven Word  
Bernard and Maureen Wright  
Kay and Tim Yates  
Alice Yoakum  
Mike and Karen Young  
Penny Young  
Scott and Nancy Zahner  
William Zenko and Kathleen  
Ryan  
Howard and Linda Zonana  
F. and Sally Avea Zunino

## Companies & Sponsors

Ascendant Compliance  
Management  
Bank of America Matching  
Gifts  
Bethlehem Grange #121  
Blackmer Farm  
Cherry Brook Garden Club  
Cheshire Grange #23, P of H  
Country Carpenters, Inc.  
East Central Pomona Grange #3  
Elana Owens Photography, LLC  
Fairfield Garden Club, Inc.  
Farm Credit East  
The Farmer's Cow  
Futtner's Family Farm  
Foskett Equipment, Inc  
Greens Farms Garden Club  
Guida's Milk  
Harney & Sons Fine Tea  
Hemlock Grange #182 P of H  
IMB Corporation Matching Gift  
JW Prof Services DBA  
Holbrook Farm  
Killingly Intermediate  
Retirement Committee  
La Bonne's Markets  
Lyme Grange #147  
Merchandise Sales  
New Shoreham Human  
Systems Consulting LLC  
North Stonington Grange #138  
River Tavern  
Sepe Farm LLC  
Sophie Lemieux Agency  
Stanton Equipment, Inc.  
SuperSeedz  
Trillium Garden Club  
U.S. Trust, Bank of America  
Private Wealth Management  
Winter Brook Farm  
Woodside Garden Club  
The Vanilla Bean Cafe, Inc.  
Vernon Grange #52 P of H

*We apologize for any omissions or mistakes.*

**Connecticut Farmland Trust**  
77 Buckingham Street  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106  
telephone 860.247.0202  
fax 860.247.0236  
www.CTFarmland.org

Non-Profit  
US Postage  
PAID  
Hartford, CT  
Permit No. 35



**Contents**

**Farmland History Preserved Twice Over**  
Early American Farms in Modern Times . . . 1

**Comings and Goings**  
See Who is New to CFT . . . . . 2

**Cato Corner Interview**  
A Decade After Farmland Protection . . . . . 3

**A Thank You to Our Supporters** . . . . . 4-5

Printed on Recycled Paper

**THANK YOU to the Guests and Sponsors of  
Field of Greens at Fairfield Farm!**



PHOTO CREDIT: JEAN SALTER

*Fairfield Farm at The Hotchkiss School*

