



PHOTO: WINTER CAPLANSON, FARM WEATHER ACRES FARM, ROCKY HILL

## PRESERVING WORKING LANDS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

### Thanks to You CFT Celebrates Protection of 50 Farms

***"I just want to see the farmland preserved."***

— John Forker, Co-owner of Bristol's Farm

Connecticut Farmland Trust (CFT) staff and supporters are celebrating the protection of 50 farms since 2002 — a significant milestone as CFT increases its preservation efforts.

The 50th property, Bristol's Farm near the Farmington River and Nepaug State Forest in Canton, brings the land trust's total of preserved farmland to more than 3,625 acres.

#### **Persistence adds up to Protection of Bristol's Farm**

It took 16 family members 20 years to preserve 27 acres of Bristol's Farm in Canton. And 2019 is the year it all came together.

Dan Bristol, a fourth-generation owner of the 112-acre property, said the family started to pursue protecting the farm in 1999 but not all of the family-owners were on board.

"We started the process again in 2015 and it's taken from then to now to work things through to sell the development rights on the property," he said. "The biggest thing is the family is all on board this time."

The property has been farmed by the Bristol family since 1888. Dan's son, Josh Bristol, is the family's fifth-generation farmer and runs the operation, which grows berries, sweet corn, flowers, and a variety of vegetables such as kale, cabbage, broccoli, lettuce, radishes, beans, snap peas, tomatoes, peppers, beets, eggplant, and squash.

The farm focuses on sustainable agriculture practices, using natural and organic pest control methods and no herbicides or GMO crops.

#### **Four Preservation Partners**

To protect the farm's 27 acres of tillable land, the Bristol family applied for the Community Farms Preservation Program through the CT Department of Agriculture, which reached out to CFT to partner on the project in 2017.

CFT provided \$25,000 toward protection of the farm. The Town of Canton and the Canton Land Conservation Trust agreed to supply the remainder of the local match needed for the project.

CFT, the State, the Town of Canton, and Canton Land Conservation Trust then agreed to co-hold an easement interest. "At 27 acres, the farm was the perfect candidate for the Community Farms Preservation Program because it's designed to protect smaller, food-producing farms," said Kathleen Doherty, Conservation Coordinator for CFT.

#### **Fertile Fields, Preserved Forever**

On Bristol's Farm, 18 of its 27 acres are considered prime, statewide, and locally important farmland soils. John Forker, one of the family-owners, said the region is particularly fertile for growing crops, which makes preserving area farms more important than ever.

"When you're a farmer and you understand how rich the soils are in Connecticut, it boggles your mind how they developed the whole Connecticut River Valley — that's some of the finest farmland in the world that will never be farmland again," he said. "You see it time and time again. The bulldozers come and they push the topsoil off, and something gets built. And when you're old school, it starts to annoy you. I just want to see the farmland preserved."

## Adding up the Acreage

The family also received a grant through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service to develop a forestry plan to preserve the farm's remaining acreage.

"The back acreage that can't be used as a vegetable farm is going to be used in forestry and we're going to have a conservation plan," said Dan. "This way we'll preserve not just the 27 tillable acres but the whole 112 acres."

## Farming into the Future

Located along Albany Turnpike, the farm's fields and farm stand are highly visible, drawing customers that keep the operation's CSA and farm stand viable.

"It's a lucky spot for us because we're on a main thoroughfare," said John. "And as long as Josh is willing to farm it, I just hope it stays the way it is."

Josh recently became a father, hopefully ensuring the family's farming legacy will continue. "He just had a baby boy and maybe he'll be the sixth-generation farmer," said John.

He added that the most important thing is the family has come together to preserve the farm. "The one thing we can all agree on is we want the farm to remain a farm."

"It's a great joy to have reached the mark of protecting 50 farms in our state. We aim to keep on protecting as many as we can," said Executive Director Elisabeth Moore, who has been with CFT since 2004.

**You're invited to celebrate because we couldn't do this without you. See back of newsletter and [ctfarmland.org](http://ctfarmland.org) for details.**



Bristol's Farm, Canton



Bristol's Farm Market

## Couple Honors Farm's 300-year Legacy with Land Preservation

About 1710, Scott McCall's family established McCall Farm in Lebanon and it's been in the family ever since.

"I grew up on the farm, it's where my roots are," said Scott, who owns the 75-acre property with his wife, Catherine.

The McCall family ran a dairy operation on the farm for many years and now Scott raises Scottish Highland cattle and hay.

"When I grew up, my father was milking cows as all the McCalls had done prior to that," he said. "I'm no longer milking cows, but I'm trying to keep the land active and clear. We have several hay fields and I have four cows — they help keep the weeds down and keep the fields open."

Connecticut Farmland Trust (CFT) partnered with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Town of Lebanon to protect McCall Farm from development in March 2019. McCall Farm contains 66 acres of prime, statewide, and locally

important soils. It's also the 13th farm in Lebanon that CFT has protected. The farm joins a quilt of agricultural fields that add up to more than 1,000 acres of farmland within a two-mile radius, of which about 500 acres are now preserved.

The Town of Lebanon reached out to CFT to assist in the purchase of development rights. CFT secured funding from the USDA and negotiated a bargain sale with the owners. In this case, a bargain sale means that the purchase price is sixty-percent of the easement's value. Selling their development rights at such a discounted rate points to the generosity of the couple. They were determined to see the land protected.

"I like the idea the farm will be in one preserved piece after I'm gone," Scott said. "I hate to see it every time another tract of housing goes up on what was once a farm and I'd hate to see my property wind up with houses on it." Happily, that will never happen.

***"I grew up on the farm, it's where my roots are."***

— Scott McCall, Owner of McCall Farm



Scottish Highland Cattle



McCall Farm, Lebanon

## Thank You to Farm Aid!

Farm Aid, the country music fundraising concert, partied in Hartford in September 2018. As part of its mission, Farm Aid awards grants to agricultural-based non-profits. CFT is proud to be one of six CT organizations that received \$5,000 to help further its work to protect family farms. Thank you, Farm Aid.



## CT Farmlink – Matching Farmers and Land

*Have you heard about CT Farmlink?* CT Farmlink helps farmland owners connect with farmland seekers. The program is funded by the Community Investment Act and administered by the CT Department of Agriculture, in partnership with Connecticut Farmland Trust.

CT Farmlink assists with the transition between generations of landowners to keep farmland in production. There is a new generation of farmers who want to be tomorrow's stewards of the land today, but they need land to work. Surveys of beginning farmers list land access as the #1 challenge of farming in the U.S.

"There are many landowners in Connecticut that are unsure about the future of their farmland and don't know where to start when it comes to succession planning," said Lily Orr, Farmlink Coordinator. If

we want to keep farmland in production across the state, and not let it go to development, we need to make it easy for landowners to connect with farmland seekers. The CT FarmLink website helps to streamline that first step of finding a farmer and initiating conversations.

If you are starting your own farm operation, a current farmer looking to expand, or a family seeking a new generation of landowners to protect your area's agricultural legacy, please visit **ctfarmlink.org** for more information or call Lily Orr at (860) 242-0202 x227. From fruits and vegetables to hops and dairies, farmers are looking for parcels as small as an acre and as large as several hundred.



**CT Farmlink helps  
farmland owners  
connect with farmland  
seekers.**

### 2019 Farm Tours

#### CT Farm Flavor Series

**Pears and Pairings** at Westford Hill Distillers,  
Ashford  
May 4, 2019

**Goat Yoga** at Aussakita Farm, Manchester  
May 25, 2019

**Yes, Cheese** at Sweet Grass Creamery on  
Mattern Farm, Preston  
June 8, 2019

**Garlic Galore** at The Garlic Farm, Granby  
July 26, 2019

**All details and tickets available at [ctfarmland.org](http://ctfarmland.org) or on Facebook.**

**The series is generously sponsored by Farm Credit East.**

**We need volunteers!**

**Can you help?**

**Please call**

**(860) 247-0202 x223**



**Guida's Charity Golf Invitational**

at Lyman Orchards Golf Club

**June 28, 2019**

**9:00 am – 4:00 pm**

To register to golf, visit:

**[www.guidas.com/golf](http://www.guidas.com/golf)**



*Goat Yoga Fun in 2018*

### Board of Directors

**Dawn C. Adiletta**, *President*, Woodstock  
**Lisa Bassani**, *Vice-President*, New Haven  
**Charlotte Hansen, CPA**, *Treasurer*,  
Stafford Springs  
**John J. Kriz**, *Secretary*, New Canaan

**Chris Casiello**, Litchfield  
**Robin Chesmer**, Lebanon  
**Dr. Michael A. Fotos, III**, West Hartford  
**Paul M. Geraghty, Esq.**, New London  
**Gordon F. Gibson**, Vernon

**John C. Haller, CPA**, Granby  
**Richard A. Marone, Esq.**,  
West Hartford  
**Nicholas J. Moore**, Sharon  
**Sara D. O'Connell**, Bloomfield  
**Michael P. O'Neill, Ph. D.**, Storrs  
**Toni Robinson, Esq.**, Essex  
**Dr. James Shepherd**, Sharon  
**Tim Slate**, Lebanon  
**Keith Stechschulte**, Windsor

### Staff

**Elisabeth Moore**, *Executive Director*  
**Sandy Allen**, *Accountant*  
**Kathleen Doherty**, *Conservation Coordinator*  
**Brianna Dunlap**, *Development and  
Communications Coordinator*  
**Kip Kolesinskis**, *Consulting Conservation  
Scientist*  
**Lily Orr**, *Conservation Associate*



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



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

CONNECTICUT  
**FARMLAND**  
T R U S T



PRESERVING WORKING LANDS  
FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

## Contents

Thanks to You, CFT Celebrates Protection of 50 Farms .....	1
Couple Honors Farm's 300-year Legacy with Land Preservation .....	2
Thank You to Farm Aid! .....	2
CT Farmlink – Matching Farmers and Land ..	3
2019 Farm Tours: CT Farm Flavor Series ...	3
Guida Golf Invitational .....	3

Printed on Recycled Paper

***You Deserve to Celebrate!***

**50<sup>th</sup> Farm Protected by CFT**  
**at Bristol's Farm, Canton**  
Saturday, June 15, 2019



Generously sponsored by Farm Credit East

***FREE and family-friendly***

Contact 860-247-0202 ext. 223 for more information.