



HIGHLIGHTS

YOU COULD USE SOME GOOD NEWS, RIGHT?

7 farms CFT preserved in 2021 (ties for the record)

50 farms protected in CFT's first 16 years

67 farms protected at end of 2021 (3 years later)

450 farmers CFT served through FarmLink

YOU Our Hero (not technically a number, but true!)



PHOTO: CARLA MCLEROY

Protecting farmland is personal

*By Elisabeth Moore,
Executive Director*

Thanks to you, I devote my time to helping farm owners think through how to protect their farmland in perpetuity.

I want to know, what is the story that motivates you to protect farmland through your gift to CFT? It is a personal question, so I want to share with you my own answer.

My passion comes directly from my childhood.

I grew up in a small town in Northwest Ohio surrounded by thousands of acres of rich, fertile fields of corn, soybeans, and alfalfa. My bus to elementary school passed mile-square blocks of

these flat, immensely productive—and developable—fields.

Then I watched it nibbled away. Several years later, on the bus route to high school, I noticed that entire fields were no longer there. Up had cropped housing subdivisions. Then shopping plazas. And then “big box” stores. While I didn’t grow up in a farming family, I knew as a kid that the loss of this land—with some of the best, most productive soils in the country—was significant.

My love of land is also influenced by where my mother grew up—I have many fond memories of

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YOU CAN PROTECT FARMLAND FOREVER

with a gift in your will.

Please contact Kimball Cartwright anytime for a confidential discussion regarding how you can protect CT Farmland forever through a gift in your Will.

You can reach Kimball at 860-247-0202, ext 223 or at kcartwright@ctfarmland.org.

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spending time there with my grandparents. My mother's family has lived on and loved that land for more than 120 years and that love was instilled in me at an early age.

The property is now a fraction of its original size, significant acreage unfortunately sold to settle an estate many years ago. I feared the remainder of the property would likely be sold for development because my brothers, cousins, and I didn't agree on what we should do with the land when my mother died. I made a commitment to her that I would make sure that didn't happen.

Thirteen years ago, I worked with her to permanently protect the property with a conservation easement. When the final documents were signed, I felt tremendous relief that I no longer had to worry about the property's future. I had to overcome challenging family dynamics and other hurdles,

but I would definitely do it again. Definitely. There is truly no greater feeling than knowing that my family's land will forever be as wild as it is now. Many landowners have said something similar to me when they've protected their farms.

The experience—with its ups and downs—of protecting my family's land helps me better support farm owners who are considering a similar decision. It's a weighty decision. When I share my personal story, families are comforted—and relieved—to know that it's possible to resolve the issues and obstacles they're facing, to know they too can make that decision.

Some families, like mine, don't agree on what should be done with their land. Others need to figure out a way to divide the land between family members but keep it in agriculture. Some farm owners don't have heirs and want the land to be their legacy.

Thanks to you, I'm able to



The author at age six at her grandparents' Ohio home.

devote the time needed to work with farm owners to tailor a conservation scenario that meets their individual, family, and financial needs. It is the most challenging and fulfilling work. It is hands down the best part of my job.

Your donation inspires me every day. Consider inspiring me again with your story of why you have become involved. Thank you again for supporting CFT's work. I look forward to staying in touch in 2022.



Elisabeth Moore
Executive Director

Your partnership preserved Lakeview Orchards legacy!

In Lakeview Orchards' case, as with six other farms in 2021, your support was part of a powerful partnership.

A month ago, I took a walk with Joan Barney, who with her brother David dreamed about protecting their family farm, Lakeview Orchards in Easton, for years. They finally fulfilled that dream when they closed on the sale of an agricultural easement in 2021 that will permanently protect the land as farmland. Joan confessed it wasn't easy to get started protecting their farm before Connecticut Farmland Trust (CFT) got involved.

"One of the most difficult things to wrap your mind around as a farmland owner, is what it means to sell or donate your 'development rights,'" Joan leaned in to tell me as we walked toward farm equipment invented and built by her father and still in use in the orchards. "You are exchanging something highly conceptual instead of something tangible," she continued.

Joan's grandparents emigrated to the town of Fairfield from Hungary where they rented an apartment and gradually saved enough money to buy some land in Easton. Joan's grandfather was a carpenter and built one of the houses on the property. Joan's



PHOTOS: KIMBALL CARTWRIGHT



(left) Joan standing next to the "Rapid Picker" her father invented for making faster fruit harvesting from the upper branches. He obtained a patent for the picker and even built one for another farm!

(above) One the most important activities in a fruit orchard is pruning and this lift, designed and built by Joan's father, makes the work more accessible.

grandmother raised chickens for eggs for the family, a couple cows for home milk consumption, and turkeys for sale.

Joan's father was born around 1919 and grew attached to the soil quickly, learning how to run an orchard from Aspetuck Orchards in Easton. Though he did not have advanced schooling, he taught himself enough to cultivate apple and peach trees and invented a lot of the farm equipment he used.

The 37-acre farm was named Lakeview Orchards because it had a great view back in the 1940s or so of the Easton

Reservoir, prior to the trees growing up around it. The reservoir has changed hands a couple of times and the State of CT now owns it, part of its Centennial Park.

As we rounded a large barn full of apple crates, headed to the peach trees, Joan offered that the idea of tearing down the fruit trees and replacing them with fancy houses every five acres was an incredibly emotional image. Then she confided that before learning about land conservation programs available in Connecticut, she didn't

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ASK AN EXPERT SERIES

It's back for 2022! **Join us the first half of March** from the comfort of your home or office for information and education. Dates, times, and registration available on our website: ctfarmland.org. The series will catch you up on what we've been up to, and you'll hear from outside experts too, farmers and scientists, regarding current events in agriculture.

For you, there is no charge, but you must pre-register to receive the webinar link. Sign up at ctfarmland.org.

While We Were Still Working From Our Dining Rooms: 2021 Accomplishments

Elisabeth Moore, Executive Director, CFT

Strawberry Fields Forever: How Does CFT Preserve Farmland "In Perpetuity"?

Kathleen Doherty, Conservation Manager, CFT

FarmLink: The Future of Finding Farmland

Maddie Dres, FarmLink Associate, CFT

Climate Change Means Farming (and Food) Will Change

Elisabeth Moore and special guests

Future of CT Food: Two Farmers' Perspectives

Kimball Cartwright, Development Director at CFT, with Baylee Drown of Long Table Farm and Amanda Freund of Freund's Family Farm

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know any options to ensure the land would be kept in farming.

Kathleen and Elisabeth from CFT met with Joan and David, and many other people, to find the resources needed to buy an agricultural easement on the land. Ultimately, CFT, the Town of Easton, a committed group of volunteers on the Easton Agricultural Commission, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and CT's Department of Agriculture joined together to preserve the farm. Lakeview Orchards is now protected as farmland in perpetuity.

As we finished the tour, Joan offered that Kathleen and Elisabeth's ability to weave together multiple partners behind the scenes while giving her the time she needed to make her personal decision made it easy to decide.

"It's a deeply personal decision" Joan noted, when we walked by some very tall spruce trees which Joan noted were what remained of her father's experiment in growing Christmas Trees on the farm. "Keeping the land in farming is not exciting, it is just a good thing, the right thing" Joan explained.

CFT supporters can take pride in helping both Joan and David preserve an historic family farm in one of the last agricultural communities in Fairfield County. Thank you again to CFT supporters who contribute to our partnership-focused approach to protecting farmland!



Kimball Cartwright
Development Director



SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, Sept. 11th

20th anniversary
Celebration of CFT's
Founding

Details to come