# Friendsof Holly Hill Farm & A Farm for Teaching & Learning

### **2023** Annual Report

Photo: Sunflowers in full bloom at Holly Hill Farm Summer 2023

#### FRIENDS OF HOLLY HILL FARM

# OUR MISSION

The Friends of Holly Hill Farm strives to provide healthy, organically grown food for the local community, and to foster good stewardship of the land by educating all ages about the practices of conservation and sustainable farming in a welcoming environment.

### **Growing healthy food**

**Teaching the community** 

# Being good stewards of the land

# Growing sustainably today and *for the future*

As the Executive Director of Friends of Holly Hill Farm, I am proud to present the 2023 annual report. This year marks our most successful year to date and a significant step in our journey towards growing sustainably for today and the future.

We worked to strengthen our financial and operating foundations to ensure the short and long-term success of our non-profit organization as we embarked on year one of our three-year strategic plan.

In 2023, we: welcomed new members to our board and announced a full farm team to grow for the community; donated the most food in our organization's history to families facing food insecurity and to local food pantries; marked our 23rd consecutive year as a Certified Organic farm; worked with volunteers for over 300 hours of conservation and farm work; expanded our educational team, curriculum offerings, and school partnerships; educated 20,000 children; introduced tiered and reduced pricing so that more people can access educational programs; and we were awarded Best of the South Shore for our Summer Educational Programming by the community.

For over twenty years, our mission has remained steadfast. Using and sharing this special place to teach and grow healthy food responsibly for everyone and caring for the land—and one another—remain at the heart of what we do.

Thank you for helping us continue to grow sustainably for today and the future!

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Meredith Laban, Executive Director

Photo: Summer programs on the farm for children. Exploring our growing fields.





### **Growing organically and sustainably for the community**

### Facing the changing environment sustainably

Combatting 2023's wet growing season meant using sustainable hand-scale methods to minimize soil disturbance and navigating the challenges of rising water tables. As a no-till farm, we preserved the health of the soil by eliminating the use of heavy machinery on waterlogged fields which causes soil compaction and erosion.

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#### Growing responsibly in every season

Our farmers retrofitted two greenhouses in 2023 to more efficiently heat crops in the winter, and improve the ventilation capacity to reduce disease risk for seedlings and summer crops.

#### Reducing the distance food travels from farm-to-plate, and helping sustain local small agriculture and businesses

Alongside our harvests, we provided fresh vegetables from three local and organic partner farms located in Easton and Sunderland Massachusetts, and Granby, New Hampshire! And, our farm stand supported thirty local food artisans, some of whose products we have carried for years! In 2023, we added new Massachusetts producers, like Roundtable Farm Cheeses and Sweet Babus Granola! And, this year we made it easier for a new neighboring community of local shoppers to enjoy our fresh harvests through a partnership with Marshfield Farmers' Market.



Organic microgreens thrived in 2023 thanks to the careful care of our farmers. Customers were excited for the addition of these culinary delights!

#### Helping families grow healthy organic food at home and offering more diverse and hard-to-find crops

In 2023 we grew more and a greater diversity of vegetable, herb, and flower seedlings for our Annual Plant Sale and the community. After surveying the community, we grew new exciting varieties of native plants, ornamentals and herbs! Customers loved new additions like mimulus, ashwaganda, lemongrass, evening primrose, anemone, and pearly everlasting!

### Growing over 120,000 organic seedlings for the farm and our popular annual plant sales



"I am always thrilled to find unusual varieties (husk cherries are a household favorite now). I grew up on a farm and think the overall mission of Friends of Holly Hill Farm is so very important. Everyone is so knowledgeable, and I always learn something new. Thanks for all you do to support home gardeners, or as I like to think of myself, yard farmers." Sarah from Plymouth

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# Ensuring families who face food insecurity can access healthy food



#### **Holly Hill Farm SHARES**

With rates of food insecurity high and on the rise, we continued to provide a way for families facing financial hardship or food insecurity to access our healthy organic harvests and locally sourced foods from our farm stand. In addition to accepting SNAP at check out, the Holly Hill Farm SHARES program made food more accessible to those who need it most. Families who are enrolled in this program received gift cards to purchase healthy food for their family at our farm stand.



### **2023 Winter Fest**

This festive farm community event raised awareness and funds to help support our Holly Hill Farm SHARES program. Community attendees enjoyed a local artisan fair, wreath making, children's' activities, and hot soup. We hope to continue this fun and important tradition with the community for years to come.

Photo: Local food producer, McGuire's Mushrooms seen here selling their gourmet responsibly grown mushrooms at Winter Fest 2023. McGuire's grows just a town away in Hingham, MA.



### **Farm to Food Pantry**

2023 marked our 11th year of growing and donating food to local food pantries. This year we donated 4,500 pounds - our most ever!

In 2023 teens and adults volunteered their time to work alongside us to work in our gardens, harvest, make compost, and play a critical role in this important community food access program. We served seven local pantries with weekly deliveries.

Photo: Farm to Food Pantry Coordinator, Jon Belber, delivering fresh harvests to a local food pantry in Quincy, during his annual Carrot-By-Cycle awareness building ride.

23.4

Tons of food scraps collected in 2023 to be made into healthy soil for our growing fields

### 900

Each week we diverted approximately this many pounds of food scraps from incineration and landfills.

Our compost program helped reduce harmful emissions and helped us grow healthy crops.



Voted and awarded Best of the South Shore Summer Programs 2023 by our community.\*

hoto: Farm Educator, Zack Herman, exploring the flower d growing fields with children during a Summer 2023 Pro

Educating all ages about sustainable farming, climate change, healthy eating, conservation, and being good stewards of the land.

### Growing our relationships with schools and seeding new school partnerships

In 2023, we partnered with over 40 schools from Boston and all around the South Shore. Over 20,000 children participated in our educational programs in schools and here on the farm in 2023.

Three schools in Quincy and their students in Grades K-5 enjoyed school garden lessons, and their harvests were donated to Interfaith Social Services to feed the community.

We welcomed a new partnership with Center School in Hanover. 600 students in grades 2-4 participated in school garden lessons in 20 new garden beds that yielded many pounds of fresh produce for school sampling and educational opportunities.

#### Hands-on learning in schools and school gardens

In 2023, we built and installed over **80 new school garden beds** in towns and schools from Quincy to Scituate, including a new student-driven garden program at Scituate High School (featured in photo).

#### Making educational programs accessible to more children and adults through new tiered-pricing

In 2023, we introduced tiered pricing for all our on-the-farm educational programs for children and adult workshops. This new pricing model offers three price points for all programs, including reduced pricing. This program is voluntary and individuals choose the tier that best suits their financial situation.



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\*Source: South Shore Home, Life, and Style Magazine

### Connecting children to nature and instilling a love for the natural world that will stick with them for life.

Photo: Farm Educator and Integrative Nutritionist, Meghan Watts, teaching children about tapping trees and syrup making.

"This experience gave my students exposure to a world that is mostly foreign to them - a world of natural growth, cyclical change, and rewarding outcomes." - Local school partner

#### **Climate Change**

Thanks to a grant from Battelle Foundation, Grade 5 students from 12 Quincy and Weymouth Public Schools participated in free field trips to the farm that focused on soil health, regenerative farming, changing weather patterns, and more.

# Learning and growing sustainably

### Growing our team and providing more robust educational programs

Our on the farm and in school programming benefitted from the addition of two experienced educators in 2023.

Their passion and experience allowed us to strengthen our programming and curriculum and deepen what we can provide to students.

In 2023, we introduced healthy eating and cooking classes for children. Adults enjoyed educational workshops on topics like gut health, healthy cooking, and eating seasonally.

New programs like "Survival Skills" and "Shelter Building" provided valuable lessons, and helped to foster a healthy and adventurous spirit when it comes to spending time in nature.







In September of 2023, we welcomed our organization's first Terra Corp Service Member.

As a Youth Education Coordinator, our service member Jessica served through June 2024. She helped us better serve our school communities and our school garden programs, supported our Farm to Food Pantry Program, and spearheaded sustainability and conservation projects for the farm.





Teen, adult, and local business volunteers

### 300

Number of hours adults and teens from all over the South Shore visited the farm to learn and roll-up their sleeves to make a difference here *and in the community*!



### 24 +

The number of 2023 adult educational workshops, guided walks, and expert guest speaker events on topics like building a cold frame, designing a native habitat, identifying fungi and edible plants, and more!

Photo: Edible plant walk at Holly Hill Farm with expert Russ Cohen

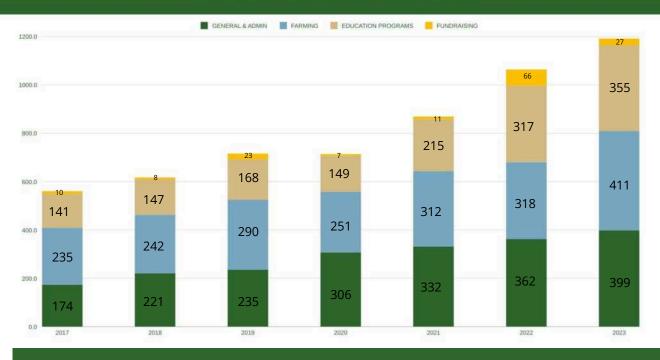




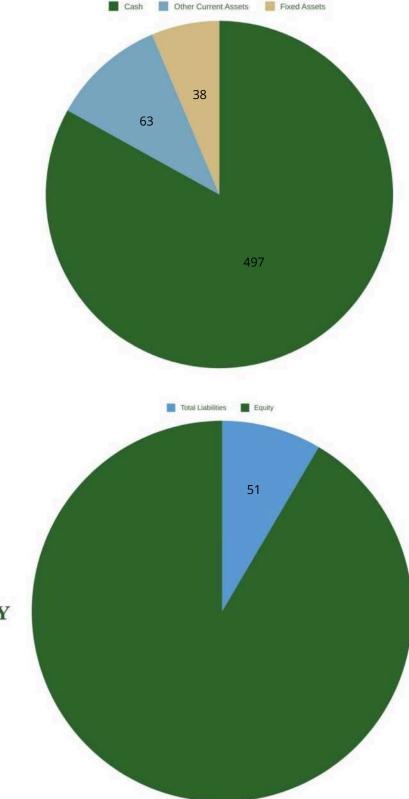
#### **REVENUES BY CATEGORY (000'S)**



#### **EXPENSES BY CATEGORY (000'S)**



### 2023 FINANCIALS



### **BALANCE SHEET 2023**

TOTAL 2023 ASSETS OF \$532K

**BALANCE SHEET LIABILITIES AND EQUITY** (000'S)



# THANK YOU TO OUR SCHOOL PARTNERS

Atherton Hough Elementary School Beechwood Knoll Elementary School Bernazzani Elementary School **Carriage House** Cedar School Center School Central Middle School Clifford Marshall Elementary School Codman Academy **Cohasset High School Cushing Elementary School** Daniel Webster Elementary School **Deer Hill Elementary Derby Academy** East Elementary Erdman Preschool **Foster Elementary** Frederick C. Murphy Primary School Gates Middle School Hatherly Elementary School **Hingham High School** Inly School

Jenkins Elementary School Joseph Osgood School Lawrence W. Pingree Primary School Lillian M. Jacobs Elementary School Lincoln-Hancock Elementary School **Merrymount Elementary School** Montclair Elementary School Old Colony Montessori Parker Elementary School Pathways at Weymouth High School (Chard Street) Plymouth River Elementary School Point Webster Middle School **Quincy High School** Saint Paul School Snug Harbor Elementary School South Shore SNAP South Shore Stars Squantum Elementary School Wampatuck Elementary School Weymouth High School Weymouth Youth & Family Services Teen Center Wollaston Elementary School

### 2023 IBOAIRID OIF IDIIRIECTIORS



Mark DeGiacomo serves as the Chair of Friends of Holly Hill Farm. He is a partner at Murtha Cullina, LLP and works as a Department of Justice appointed bankruptcy trustee for cases filed in the Eastern District of Massachusetts. Mark serves as a Director for the Cohasset Conservation Trust, and previously served on the Cohasset Zoning Board of Appeals and the Cohasset School Committee. He is a lifelong resident of Cohasset where he and his wife raised their two sons.



Lydia White Adelfio serves as Vice Chair of Friends of Holly Hill Farm Board. Adelfio, former Board Chair, serves on the Board of Center City Public Charter School, a consortium of six schools in Washington, DC that serves a majority of at-risk students. She also serves on the Board of the Siena School, a school for children with mild to moderate language-based learning disabilities. Previously the Assistant Head of School for Administration at Sidwell Friends school, and has recently served two terms on the school's Alumni Executive Board. Lydia grew up spending a decade of summers and many other annual vacations at Holly Hill Farm with her grandparents, which engendered a deep fondness for the farm and its mission.





**Helen Arnold** joined the Board of Directors in 2013. She has been practicing organic gardening for many years and appreciates the value of having this amazing resource in the community. She serves as Treasurer, is on the Executive Committee and is Co-Chair of the Finance Committee. Helen spent 26 years in banking and financial accounting. She and her husband live in Cohasset where she is active in the schools, currently serving on the boards of the Prom Committee, the PSO, and the Arts Boosters.



Kristen Astley has lived in Cohasset for 26 years and has been an active member of the Holly Hill community for more than 20 years. Kristen has been a member of the Fundraising Committee, leading the 2021 Gala event and spearheading the 2022 private dinner series. Kristen currently works with small businesses and individuals on financial issues. She also worked at the Joseph Osgood school in kindergarten and with special needs programs. Kristen's early professional life was in public relations for technology companies. Other volunteer experience includes the South Shore committee for the Roxbury Boys and Girls Club where she was instrumental in the development of the summer camp fundraising campaign, critical for families who need supervision for their children when school is out of session. She also volunteered for Dress for Success in Boston, working directly with women (often living in shelters, recently out of jail/drug treatment or are new to the country) to select appropriate clothing for upcoming job interviews or new jobs to help them re-enter the workforce. Kristen's strong belief in the importance of local organic food took hold after her husband's battle with cancer. The Astley's are long-time supporters of the Holly Hill farm stand and local organic CSA programs in Vermont. She has coordinated the delivery of

Vermont meat and produce CSAs to Cohasset. Kristen has a BA from the University of Michigan.



**Dick Avery** received a BA and MBA from Dartmouth College. After retiring, Dick started a second career, aiding conservation-minded groups, including the Cohasset Conservation Trust, Cohasset Land Foundation, Straits Pond Watershed Association, and Weir River Watershed Association. Working with Boy Scout Troop 28 and as an Eagle Scout Advisor, he has overseen extensive work to enhance and improve access to local conservation areas.



**Carolyn Coffey** has been an active town volunteer since she moved to Cohasset nearly 20 years ago. She volunteered in the schools her children attended and served on the board of the Cohasset Education Foundation. She has been very involved with Cohasset's public library, most recently as an elected trustee and as a director of the Cohasset Library Trust, which raises money and manages an endowment for the long-term benefit of the library. She is also a member of the Cohasset Town Hall Rebuilding Committee. Her professional background is in finance and she earned a BA from Duke and an MBA from Columbia. She is drawn to the farm by her love of gardening, hiking and the outdoors and is excited to help it transition from a family-owned to a non-profit-owned farm.



**Christine Cunning** is a Managing Principal at Sullivan, Garrity and Donnelly Insurance Agency. She has served as Governor at Eastward Ho Country Club and is a Board Member at the South Shore Art Center, also leading fundraising and planning for the Cohasset Field Hockey boosters. With husband Sean, she's raised three daughters around the corner from the farm, and is committed to its mission of sustainable farming, education, supplying organic food to the needy and protecting open space.



**Allison Waters Doherty** has 25+ years of agency Operations, Design and Production experience in the marketing and advertising fields. She has held roles on both the brand and agency side, at Tiffany & Co., Lowe & Partners, Arnold Worldwide, and mostly recently, Colossus Creative Co. In 2017, Allison left Arnold Worldwide to join Adam & Co., later renamed A&Co, as Partner. A&Co. currently serves clients across a wide range of categories including lifestyle brands, consumer products groups, commercial real estate & hospitality, higher education & cultural institutions, luxury brands, non-profits and start-ups. In April of 2022 she merged A&Co. with Colossus Creative and now serves as the Head of People and GM of Colossus.

Allison lives in Cohasset with her husband, three daughters, a rabbit, a Bernese Mountain dog and several thousand bees. She is also a founding member of the Executive Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Derby Academy, and a member of the Cohasset Garden Club.



**Eric Eisenhauer** currently serves on the Cohasset Conservation Commission. A veteran of the US Navy and Viet Nam, he earned his MBA from Harvard University. Eric moved to Europe to pursue a career in business management, meeting and marrying his wife overseas. Early retirement allowed him to pursue his passion for horticulture. A master gardener and Royal Horticultural Society Qualified Rosarian, he frequently lectures about raising roses organically and is a staunch native plant advocate.



**Cate Faddis** has over 20 years of investment experience in investment management and financial services. For the past 5 years, she was the President and Chief Investment Officer of Grace Capital. Cate is a CFA and member of the CFA Institute, and previously an Analyst at Putnam Investments, and Auditor and CPA at Deloitte. Cate serves on the Executive Board of the Boston Economic Club, on the Board of Directors of La Tienda Corp, and is a Corporator of the Cambridge Savings Bank. She is a frequent guest correspondent on CNBC and Bloomberg Markets. Cate is multilingual, a proud mother of twins, and a beekeeper. She earned a Bachelor in Business Administration at the College of William & Mary and an MBA from Harvard Business School.



**Martha Gangemi** is a community leader with an interest in environmental advocacy. She was successful in presenting a Citizen's Petition to the Cohasset Town Meeting which resulted in a single use plastic bag ban. Martha currently serves on the Trustees of Reservations Advisory Board, and recently completed her term as president of the Cohasset Garden Club. Martha has been an active provider of pro bono consulting services for Community Consulting Teams for over 14 years, and volunteers as a tutor with School on Wheels. She has a background in finance, having worked in investment management for Aldrich, Eastman and Waltch and in corporate finance for Bankers Trust. In her spare time Martha enjoys working with clients of her residential landscape design company. Martha enjoys photography and serves as a photography competition judge, is a member of the Cohasset Discussion Club, and enjoys any and all racket sports.



**Charlie White**, has been a part of Holly Hill Farm since his summers spent working for his grandfather, Dick White, and riding horses on the property's extensive trails. Charlie received his MBA at the University of Virginia's Darden Graduate School of Business Administration and has spent most of his career working in the retail industry for national brands such as L.L. Bean, Land's End, and J Jill. He is CEO and owner of Lyn Evans, a regional retail clothing company with an on-line presence and 3 stores in Massachusetts.



**Jean White** moved to Cohasset in 1998 together with husband Frank White, an educator who had grown up on Holly Hill Farm. Jean and Frank began to farm the land and received certified organic status in 1999. In 2002, they founded the Friends of Holly Hill Farm with the goal of utilizing the land to teach the value of growing healthy food and preserving a healthy environment for the community and all its denizens. Jean remains a daily fixture on the Farm, caring for Holly Hill's resident farm animals.



**Jenny White** (Clerk) is a clinical neuropsychologist who earned her BA and Ed.M from Harvard University and her PhD from the University of Wisconsin. She is the Director of McLean Hospital's Child and Adolescent Testing Service and an instructor at Harvard Medical School. She spent summers visiting her grandparents at Holly Hill Farm and has been involved with its activities since her parents, Jean and Frank White, began educational and farming operations when they 'retired' to Cohasset in 1998. She joined the Board in 2009.



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