

## MEMBER NEWSLETTER

## SPREADING ROOTS

## You are helping make a difference!

As a member, you are supporting critical conservation programs on the Farm that impact the local and global community. Despite their importance, many pollinators are declining in number, posing a threat not only to the local and world's ecosystem, but to global food security as well.

We are excited to report that this spring and summer marked our first year of successfully attracting numerous pollinators to a critical conservation project we've taken on in Long Field!

With member support and with the help of dozens of adult and teen volunteers, we have created a native meadow that survived its first critical winter (and the grazing deer), and attracted adult **monarch butterflies** who deposited countless eggs on new crops of native swamp milkweed (*Asclepias Incarnata*) plants.



Monarch caterpillar photographed on native swamp milkweed in our native meadow

The work to protect native plants, pollinators, birds, and wildlife is always an ongoing effort. For instance, destructive invasive species like black swallow-wort, bittersweet, multiflora rose, and wild blackberries continue to persist. This fall we are working hard to search, remove, and eliminate future growth of these toxic plants. Fortunately, these efforts also serve as incredible educational opportunities for students and adults alike.

**Did you know?**

35% of the world's food crops and 75% of the world's flowering plants depend on pollinators to produce!

**You are helping to provide hundreds of local families with access to healthy, farm-fresh food.**

As a member, your support is helping us reach our goal of growing, harvesting, delivering, and donating the most fresh food we ever have - to more food pantries than ever!

To date, we have delivered over 3,500 pounds! We have 1,500 pounds to go to meet our goal!

According to recent research from the Greater Boston Food Bank, almost one third of residents in Massachusetts are facing food insecurity. You are helping to get food to people who need it right now.

In 2023, we added weekly deliveries to Weymouth Food Pantry, Interfaith Social Services (Quincy), a housing unit in Boston, Cohasset Food Pantry, and Hingham Food Pantry. And, we continue to deliver to Wellspring (Hull), and Scituate Food Pantry.

*Photo: Fresh harvest delivery to Weymouth Food Pantry during recent Carrot-by-Cycle ride.*



# Field Notes

Written by: Jean White, Friends of Holly Hill Farm Co-Founder

Field flowers have slowed production, except for perennial natives - while still the goldenrods, the asters, and Queen Ann's Lace color the farmyard. In the Paddock Garden the dahlias continue to bloom, and hopefully will until frost. The butterfly weed there has opened many of its pods and many were distributed to volunteers from Derby Serves, who came to the farm recently to help clear weeds in Peck's Meadow to assist the farmers.

Our farm caretaker, Gregg, has mowed the Ice Pond Meadow as the praying mantis fly to safety ahead of his careful travels, and as other areas dry, further fields will also be mowed. Our barn yard animals welcome this season as well, and Benji and the goats have started to seek out the sunny spots for feeding. Pumpkin loves his morning walks and the grass that brings him joy - as well as frequent visits from his loyal friends who have taught him to play kick ball!

Our six new chickens will soon be laying eggs to supplement the few that our older hens can manage. Courtney, the farm cat, maintains a watchful barnyard eye, and all the animals are happy to see groups here again after the end of summer, as the laughter and excitement they bring add just another dimension to the good life we all experience here on the farm.



## Thank you!

On behalf of all the barn yard animals, we would like to thank you! As a member you help to make sure all our friends are well cared for, fed, and housed.

Auggie and Benji want to remind you that they sure do love when you come to visit, too!



## WINTER FEST

*Benefitting Holly Hill Farm SHARES*

The Holly Hill Farm SHARES program provides healthy organic food from our farm stand free of charge to local families who are facing financial hardship or food insecurity. More info at: [hollyhillfarm.org/holly-hill-farm-shares](http://hollyhillfarm.org/holly-hill-farm-shares)



*Annual workshop!*  
**Wreath Making**  
11 am & 12 pm

*Members receive a discount.  
Advance registration.*



*Mini Local*  
**Artisan Fair**  
9 am - 3 pm



**Soup for Shares**  
11 am - 1 pm

*Scan code or visit [hollyhillfarm.org/events](http://hollyhillfarm.org/events) for more info or to register for our wreath making workshop.*



**Craft for Kids**  
11 am - 1 pm



## Educating the next generation about the changing climate

In a year marked by the Earth's hottest summer on record, powerful storms, and changing weather patterns, we are acutely aware of our role as educators in helping to mitigate this change in the best ways we can.

Caring for the land, our community, and the planet has always been at the heart of our educational programming - and everything we do.

As a member, you are supporting our ability to create and expand our climate change educational programming - right now!

This fall, our Education team continues to develop and introduce new and engaging climate-based curriculum for use on the farm and in schools. Our goal is to share lessons with children in an age-appropriate and hands-on way, to help them understand a variety of topics like soil health, how to bring a farm into "balance" by exploring how regenerative farming works, and how other practices and actions can negatively affect the health of the soil, land, air, and planet.

We're excited to invite approximately 1,000 students from Weymouth and Quincy Public Schools here on-the-farm this year to learn and take part in these exciting new climate-based activities and lessons. We'll also be sharing these teachings in our on-the-farm programming, field trips, and in schools around the South Shore.

Thank you for helping us educate the next generation on this critical topic and instill a life-long curiosity and love for the natural world!

## Farming responsibly and serving our community every season

As one of our farmers said in a recent video shared at our Farm Fest event, "Farming is difficult, delicious, and rewarding work." When we reflect back on our productive spring, summer, and early fall growing seasons, these sentiments feel especially appropriate.

When it comes to delicious things, summer offered so many! Its truly hard to narrow it down. We were certainly thrilled our tomato crops did much better than last year! And, our expanded variety of fresh cut flowers, while not edible per say, were certainly a beautiful and "delicious" addition to our farm stand and Cohasset Farmers Market each and every week.

Farming and weather go hand-in-hand. Our farmers are always adapting for the predictable and unpredictable elements that come our way - especially in New England. This summer's heavy and frequent rains were certainly difficult. They brought lots of weeds and it meant some crops were lost due to the high humidity and root damage. Farming organically, responsibly, and using regenerative methods means we don't take shortcuts - like the use of dangerous chemical pesticides and herbicides, or tilling, which excessively disturbs the soil. Caring for the health of our crops, the soil, land, and you, is what we're focused on.

Now for the rewarding part. There are many positive take-aways from the last few months, including: a dedicated group of volunteers who serve as an integral part of our operation, many new and loyal customers who shopped the farm stand and local farmers market throughout the summer and into this fall....and you! As a member, your support is critical to our efforts to grow responsibly, to feed our community, and to continue farming in difficult, delicious and rewarding times. Thank you!

## This fall we welcomed our first AmeriCorps Service Member with TerraCorps!

TerraCorps partners with a network of 40+ nonprofits in Massachusetts and Rhode Island focused on community needs related to local land conservation and sustainable agriculture.



Jessica

As a Youth Education Coordinator, Jessica will be helping us better serve our school communities and our school garden programs, support our Farm to Food Pantry Program, and spearhead sustainability and conservation projects for the farm.



TerraCorps

Jessica will serve as a service member through the summer of 2024. We look forward to the contributions she will be able to offer us during this time.



**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.

**Board of Directors**

- Mark DeGiacomo, Chairperson
- Lydia Adelfio, Vice Chairperson
- Helen Arnold, Treasurer
- Kristen Astley, Clerk
- Richard Avery
- Carolyn Coffey
- Christine Cunning
- Eric Eisenhauer
- Cate Faddis
- Martha Gangemi
- Lauren MacLellan
- Allison Waters Doherty
- Jean M. White
- Jennifer White
- R. Charles White



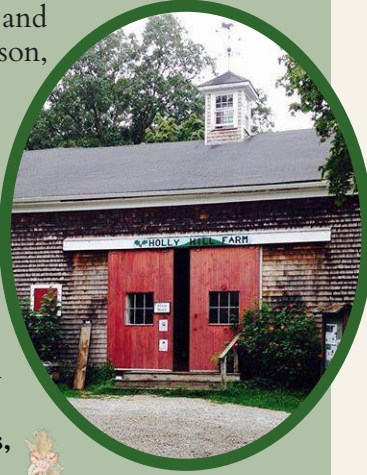
**Staff**

- Christina Barber, *Marketing, Membership & Registration*
- Jonathan Belber, *Community Outreach Director*
- Brody Foster, *Assistant Grower*
- Gregg Frazier, *Caretaker*
- Bruce Frost, *Education Director*
- Zachary Herman, *Farm Educator*
- Linda Hetue, *Farm Educator*
- Meredith Laban, *Executive Director*
- Janice McPhillips, *Grant Writer & Farm Educator*
- Clare Parkinson, *Farm Manager, Greenhouse Operations*
- Cindy Prentice, *Volunteer and Conservation Ambassador*
- Aubrey Robertson, *Assistant Farm Manager, Retail*
- Matt Saburn, *Farm Manager, Field Operations*
- Deborah Tamborella, *Bookkeeper*
- Meghan Watts, *Farm Educator*

**Holiday Favorites at the Farm Stand**

We're growing now, through the winter, and every day of the year! For this holiday season, look forward to delicious items like:

-  **Fresh organic holiday herbs**
-  **Organic leafy greens, squash, potatoes, onions, and lots of fresh veggies!**
-  **Local organic cranberries from Fresh Meadow Farm (Carver, MA)**
-  **Fresh baked breads and pastries from Steel & Rye Bakery (Milton, MA)**
-  **Farm fresh eggs, local spices, sea salts, brining seasonings, holiday gift sets, dried farm bouquets, and so much more!**



Thank you!

