



The **4-H Education Center at Auer Farm** is a non-profit that provides education, agriculture and recreation opportunities to promote awareness and appreciation of the deep roots of agriculture in the community.

4-H Education Center at Auer Farm in Bloomfield



Summer on the Farm

Inside this issue:

Food from the Farm	2
Our Animals	2
Foodshare	3
Magnet Pre-School	3
Community Service	3
Become a Friend of the Farm	4

Register now for Auer Farm's **Summer Farm Academy**. The program is open to children ages 3-12. You can register for a week of full or half day sessions. Each week has a theme, like **"Pasture to Pizza"** or **"Old Macdonald, Phd."** We'll explore agricultural and environmental science through our acres of vegetables, herbs, berries apples and natural wildlife habitat. Then we'll officially graduate!

We are also offering an **Interdistrict Summer Farm Academy**. Each summer, we receive a generous grant to provide our nutrition, gardening and inquiry-based science programs to groups from Hartford who partner with groups from Simsbury and Canton. Suburban and urban students come together for three weeks on the farm for an exciting opportunity for growth!

Ice Cream, Visiting Farm and Pick a Program are all available all Spring and Summer. If you have a group and want to book a special program, let us know! We can accommodate large group field trips and birthday parties. Bring your Scout troop or Moms' group. Check our new website for a full listing or just give us a call!

Gardening tips:

- Love butterflies and birds in your yard? Look for plants that attract pollinators with scent, color and nourishing nectar.
- Try Asclepias, Russian Sage, Bee Balm, Butterfly Bush, Cosmos, Salvias and Verbenas
- Plant an edible flower garden: nasturtiums and pansies are great on salads or as a garnish!

Spring has Sprung!

Daffodils, tulips, baby greens...everything is turning green and putting forth the first blooms of 2008. It's a perfect time for a walk on the farm. Ramble through our gardens and pass by our pastures.

Book a Spring program for your group or join us for a Saturday of **hayrides, seeds and Summer Program Info on May 17th** from 10-2 and for **CT Open House Day on June 14th** from 10-2.

For a full listing and schedule, go to:
www.auerfarm.org
 (860)242-7144, ext.10



On Auer Plate in 2008

If you would like to be part of our current production project, please call the Farm Manager at (860) 242-7144, ext. 17



Christmas Trees for years to come! Contact us if you would like to donate trees or help plant them!

Our farmer has big plans for this season. With community support, we can produce more crops for the public and to support farm programs.

We're planting **400 Christmas trees** for cut-your-own. Tree sales are a fundraiser for farm programs and completely run by volunteers. **Come for a planting day!**

Blueberry fan? New netting over our bushes allows us to have a crop of blueberries for sale at our farm stand!

Visions of **fresh veggies**? The farmer will be growing squashes, peppers and more for sale at our farm stand starting in July.

Growing food at Auer Farm is a labor of love that requires many volunteer hours and the generosity of our community. In order to make this farm vision a reality, we do need to invest in labor, machinery and infrastructure which allows us to produce healthy local food. There are many ways you can support this community food effort. Come out and try our fruits and veggies; the difference in taste from supermarket produce is worth it! **Make your mark on farm crops through donations of labor, money or plants, or a little bit of everything.**

Reduce fuel costs for you and the farmer. Buy local food from farmers in your community!

It takes, on average, about 500 years to form one inch of soil.
-Natural Resources Conservation Service, of the USDA

Farm Animals and the Environment

An innovative grant for fencing from the **Natural Resources Conservation Service** is helping us to develop animal pastures that coexist with the farm's wetlands and enhance our educational programs. New fencing is almost complete and the cows are out in the new pasture. Our pastures allow our animals to be in their ideal environment, outside in the grass. The animals are more visible during programs and they can eat the green grass.

This cuts our animal feed costs, keeps animal waste nourishing our fields, and away from the wetlands. Clearing the fencelines, streams and fields of invasive species makes way for the return of native species. It also creates ideal spaces for teaching folks of all ages about local ecosystems and responsible land stewardship. **Check out our website for our soil science, wildlife and animal husbandry programs!**



Fresh Produce for Foodshare

With the help of **Foodshare** volunteers, **UConn Master Gardeners** provide the leadership in this special garden at Auer Farm that produces healthy food for the community kitchens of Hartford. That's no easy task under the watchful eyes of the deer and turkeys! Producing enough food for the folks in Hartford means protecting our vegetable treasures! In our endeavor to be organic, we have learned to use hot pepper plants to dissuade

the deer, recycled trash barrel pots for potatoes, sticky traps for flea beetles, marigolds for insect pests and sunflowers to attract bees.

In '07, the garden produced 2500 pounds of vegetables for Foodshare. We invite volunteers to the garden this summer-to share in the hard work and satisfaction of making a contribution to the community,

while working under the summer sky, watching the hawks and bluebirds, or listening to nature's silence. Workshops and volunteer opportunities will be available throughout the summer. **Call Ed or Marlene Mayes at 232-0363, or Foodshare at (860)286-9999.**

Board of Directors

- Patricia Estill, Co-Chair
- Earl Gardner, Co-Chair
- Lynn Brown, Vice Chair
- Mary Catherine Healey, Secretary
- Dave Ryan, Treasurer
- Cecil Adams
- Sam Ahilan
- Tracy Bennett
- Anthony L. Drapelick
- Tina Foster
- Stephen Haynes
- Douglas Putnam
- Nicholas Miller
- Liz Salsedo
- Ty Tryon
- Vera E. Smith -Winfree
- Beth Salsedo
- Nancy Bull

Staff

- Education Director: Beth Salsedo
- Office Manager: Rose Dugas
- Teachers: Katy Vicchitto and Jenna Castle
- Production: Justin Whitehouse



Pre-school Partners

Earl Gardner and Pat Estill talked about the partnering of the new Bloomfield Pre-school with the farm. All students will spend two days a month at the farm engaged in activities in the garden and with the animals. Other board members who attended the

ground-breaking included Dave Ryan, Nick Miller, Tony Drapelick and Vera Smith-Winfree.



Community Service

Members of the **Willington Willing Workers 4-H Club** of Tolland County, visited the 4-H Education Center in early April for trash pick up and community service. Five 4-H members and 3 adults spent more than 2 hours picking up trash and debris from along side of Auer Farm Road.

Upcoming Community Service Events:

Bring your gloves and boots and join us **Saturday, May 10th** from 9-11 am.

Contact us for more volunteer opportunities.

(860) 242-7144, ext. 14



Udderly new from the farm!



4-H Education Center at Auer Farm
158 Auer Farm Road, off Rt.185
Bloomfield, CT 06002
Phone: 860-242-7144
Fax: 860-243-0005
E-mail: 4hcenter@comcast.net



Save the Date! Fall Festival 2008! Hay-rides, Food, Vendors, Corn Maze, Music!
Saturday, October 4th, 11-4

We're on the web!
www.auerfarm.org

Become a Friend of Auer Farm

We invite you to help us carrying out the mission of Auer Farm. Your generous support allows us to provide an outdoor educational experience for thousands of children across Connecticut, Christmas trees, delicious raspberries, blueberries and apples and open-space habitat for wildlife. As a friend of the farm, you can be sure that this 120 acres will stay open and accessible for you, and for generations to come! Donations are tax-deductible. Checks should be made payable to:

4-H Education Center at Auer Farm

Just tear off and return this portion of the newsletter to:

Friends of Auer Farm, 158 Auer Farm Road, Bloomfield, CT 06002

I want to help with future projects and my donation of

\$25___, \$50___, \$100___, \$250___, \$500___, other___ is enclosed.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State and Zip: _____

Phone number: _____

E-mail: _____

