



Transforming our relationship with farming and food for a healthier planet



*626-Acre Nonprofit Educational Farm
Open Free to Visitors Every Day
in Freeport, Maine*

Plan Your Visit

Wolfe's Neck Center is always open free to the public, and we encourage you to visit the livestock, attend a program, and more!

SEASONAL ACTIVITIES

- Oceanfront Camping
- Kayak & Canoe Rentals
- Bicycle Rentals
- Farm Café
- Farm Store
- Weekend Hayrides
- Community & Visitor Programs

YEAR-ROUND OFFERINGS

- Barnyard & Gardens
- Extensive Nature Trails
- Educational Workshops
- Group Experiences
- Dances, Festivals, & Events

Thinking Globally, Acting Locally

Whether you are a neighbor or are on your first visit, welcome! Wolfe's Neck Center is a place for you to connect to nature, learn more about where food comes from and how it is grown, and watch organic farming in action. It's a place to remind us that our planet is a valuable resource, and we need to take care of it as much as we can.

Beyond being a community resource, times are changing and climate change pressures us to take further action. More and more we are seeing its effects play out in the news, and they are even felt locally in our agriculture and fishing communities. Future generations depend on us to find solutions, and farming is one way we can take action. Our planet is a place worth nurturing, and it benefits all of us.

That can sound like a daunting task...that we need to protect our planet. How can we do that? We can do it by thinking small: When it's something you care about, you'll do your best possible job to make it thrive. In this newsletter, you'll read stories of the farmers and staff who are doing this in their own ways and proving that we all have a role to play, no matter how small, in making a greater impact.

You can make a difference, too. Throughout the newsletter, we've offered some tips on how you can do your part to create a healthier planet.

Thank you for being part of our community and supporting our important work!

Dave Herring, Executive Director

Q&A with Joe Grady

On regenerative farming at Wolfe's Neck Center

By Allison Carrier, Communications Coordinator

When not sporting his Wolfe's Neck Center hat, our new Senior Director of Programs Joe Grady heads Two Coves Farm with his family in Harpswell. Since 2009, they have operated a pasture-raised meat and egg farm on 88 acres. "Our time and energy is spent moving animals," Grady says of grazing their cows, sheep, chickens, and turkeys. "Moving animals is the best way to care not only for the animals but also for the soil that grows their food."

This ethos rings true at Wolfe's Neck Center, too, and makes Grady a critical team player as our organization progresses more publicly into becoming a collaborative hub for soil health research. We sat down with him to discuss his perspective on farming for the soil—more collectively deemed 'regenerative farming'—and how it can be adopted more broadly.

So, give us an overview on Two Coves Farm.

Two Coves is a small family farm in Harpswell raising meat and eggs on pasture. We have always put our focus on the simple idea that the animals

can do the work. We let the animals harvest their food as much as possible and impact the landscape as naturally as possible. It's our job to keep them moving to allow the pasture time to recover and regrow.

Was regenerative farming a natural starting point for you or did it take some time and education?

When we started farming the phrase "regenerative agriculture" was not used much. For us it started with a realization that raising animals on pasture and letting them express their natural traits produced healthier animals, better tasting and more nutritious food, and was a more thoughtful way to care for the land.

How do you know that your practices, like rotational grazing, have an impact?

Having been working the same land for close to 10 years there are changes and trends you can see in how much grows and how often you can harvest it. We are looking out for the thickness of the

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Visit the farm and campground

Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture & the Environment is a nonprofit organization with a mission to transform our relationship with farming and food for a healthier planet. Situated on over 600 acres of preserved coastal landscape in Freeport, Maine, we use our setting to connect people of all ages to the food they eat and where it comes from.

We are open year-round for visitors to enjoy the barns, trails, and coastline. Check out our seasonal Farm Store, or stay in our oceanfront campground. From Farm Camp to community programs and more, visitors of all ages can immerse themselves in food and farming!

How to find Wolfe's Neck Center

184 Burnett Road, Freeport

From I-295 North or South: Follow Interstate 295 to exit 20, or US Route 1 to Freeport. Across from L.L.Bean turn onto Bow Street. This becomes Flying Point Road. After approximately 2.5 miles, turn right onto Wolfe's Neck Road. Travel 1.5 miles, turn left onto Burnett Road. You are now on Wolfe's Neck property. Continue across the bridge to reach the farmhouse office, animal barns, summer camp, and hayrides. Continue 800' further down Burnett Road to find our Campground office with kayak and bike rentals, and our Farm Café. Drive slowly to enjoy the scenery and keep our neighborhood safe.



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Wolfe's Neck Oceanfront Camping

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freeportcamping.com

Follow us on social and sign up for our weekly emails to stay in the know!



The mission of Wolfe's Neck Center is to transform our relationship with farming and food for a healthier planet.

In 2017, we changed our name from Wolfe's Neck Farm to Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture & the Environment. This reimagined name represents the breadth and focus of our work and how it has grown over the past few years. It serves to improve and enhance your experience here, while at the same time allowing our organization to join others around Maine and throughout the country who share serious concerns about the state of our food system and the planet, and are working together to strengthen them.

Deepen your experience with fun activities for all ages



Livestock Education Barn

Walk through to see chickens, sheep, pigs and goats when they're not out on pasture. Learn about our livestock and how we care for them. Free and open to the public year-round from dawn to dusk.



Milking Parlor

Take the Discovery Trail over to the site of our new organic dairy facility. Walk into the milking parlor room to see where our cows get milked — you may even witness it in action!



Bike & Kayak Rentals

Paddle the calm waters of Casco Bay by kayak or canoe, or enjoy the peaceful country roads and scenic vistas by bicycle! Call or drop in the campground office to book. *June-October*



Community Programs

Engage in moments of fun and learning through one of our many educator-led programs. See the full list below.



Nature Trails

Beyond the barnyard, our 600 acres span an array of ecosystems, from coastline, forest, salt marsh, and pastures. Head out for a walk to spot the clues of wildlife that call this place their home!



Wolfe Tracks

Explore the far reaches of our forest, pastures, and shoreline through a Wolfe Tracks adventure! Pick up your booklet at the Farm Store or Campground Office for a self-guided journey across campus. *June-October*



Farm Store

Visit our seasonal Farm Store for organic produce, pasture-raised meats, poultry, and eggs from our farm, and local goodies. Take home a souvenir of your farm or campground visit!



Farm Café

Enjoy a quality meal or tasty treat at our seasonal Farm Café. Many ingredients come from the farm, but we also have Maine lobster rolls and ice cream. *June-Labor Day*

From Zoo to Farm

Connecting visitors to animals, land, & food

By Andrew Lombardi, Public Programs Manager



We offer an array of programs for you to interact with farm animals

As a lifelong educator, I have been lucky enough to work all over New England teaching children and adults about everything from marsh grasses, to AP US History. Then one day in 2012 I packed up the car and drove west to Seattle, Washington to work at the Woodland Park Zoo.

Woodland Park Zoo specializes in not only some of the most innovative exhibits, but on their conservation connections. Zoo animals act as ambassadors for their species, allowing people to reach a deeper connection and develop empathy towards the plight of their wild relatives. That connection leads people to act and make choices to not only help animals but help work towards a healthier planet.

I got the chance to introduce zoo visitors to animals up close, whether it be a snake, armadillo, or my personal favorite, opossum. When visitors can really engage with an animal, it opens their eyes and brings that opportunity to learn and care, which leads to action.

This same reason is why I now love working at Wolfe's Neck Center. Whether it be a family camping in July, or a local parent and child from Freeport, Wolfe's Neck educators get a chance to build the connection between animals, the land, and our food every day. This connection, just like at the zoo, inspires people's actions and decisions.

Visitors to the farm may take a goat hike with one of our three goats, Ghost, Jack or Snuggles, or maybe they have a chance to visit the dairy barn and learn about our organic milking process. All of these experiences lead you to learn about the connection between farming and this earth, and hopefully carry it with you beyond your visit.

Community & Visitor Programs

For a unique experience on your farm visit, join one of our programs:

- **Farmer for the Morning**, Ages 2-6
- **Farmyard Storytime**, Ages 6 & under
- **Goat Hike**, Ages 6 & up
- **History Hay Wagon**, Ages 12 & up
- **Afternoon Milking**, Ages 6 & up
- **Trucks & Tractors Hay Ride**, Ages 12 & under
- **Salamander Meander**, All ages
- **Bike and Jogging Tours**, Ages 10 & up
- **Chicken or the Egg**, Ages 6 & up
- **Hay Wagon Ride**, All ages
- **Taste of the Farm**, All ages

Farm Café Menu

OPEN 7:30 AM TO 8:00 PM DAILY
(Closed Mon-Wed until June 17)

BREAKFAST (Served 7:30-11:00 AM)

Breakfast Sandwich
Our pasture-raised egg with local sausage/bacon
Fruit Salad
Stonyfield Yogurt Parfait
Smoothies

WOOD-FIRED PIZZA (Served 4:00-8:00 PM)

Available: Tues/Weds/Thurs, June 18-Sept 5
Made with farm-fresh ingredients!

BURGERS & MORE

Wolfe's Neck Barn Burger
Our own pasture-raised beef, seasonal greens, tomato, onions, served on a brioche bun
Fresh Maine lobster roll
Chicken Tenders
Hot Dog locally-made with natural casing
Grilled Chicken Sandwich
Veggie Burger locally-made
Grilled Cheese
Farm Grilled Cheese with tomato and pesto

SALAD AND SIDES

French fries
Potato chips
Stonyfield organic yogurt
Seasonal fruit salad
Seasonal salad with farm veggies
Hummus plate with farm veggies

DRINKS

Organic coffee (Hot or iced)
Maine sparkling apple cider
Maine Root sodas
Organic Maine chocolate milk

SWEET TREATS

Maine-made Gifford's Ice Cream
Sundaes: Chocolate or Caramel
Root beer float
Milkshake

Events on the farm

Events are a wonderful way to enjoy locally grown food, music and good company while supporting our work. To register online, please visit wolfesneck.org/events

New event! Beers in the Barn Festival, Saturday, July 6, 3-6 pm

By Allison Carrier, Communications Coordinator



Craft breweries have exploded across Maine, guaranteeing a gamut of destinations for a laidback, raise-a-glass kind of Saturday afternoon. But there's more to a lot of these breweries than just good beer. Many are showcasing and forming relationships with local growers, and subsequently creating an unprecedented boom in our state's agricultural economy in more ways than one. At a time when eaters and drinkers are distanced further and further from the source of their food, this back-to-the-roots philosophy is renewing the connection. By honoring Maine's food culture and roots, these breweries are sparking a relationship between food and farming for tourists and locals alike.

Our new summer Beers in the Barn festival will highlight the progressive Maine breweries standing by this philosophy. Here's a look at a few of the industry players being featured at the event, and ways they are supporting our state's agricultural economy through beer.

■ **Blue Ox Malthouse: Meeting a demand for local hops and grains**

When Blue Ox was founded in late 2015, Maine's booming craft brewing industry was already well underway. Its quick surge of popularity, however, left a need for infrastructure to support its demand for ingredients. That's when Blue Ox sought to offer a Maine malt since there was already a market for it. Craft breweries at the time were purchasing \$35 million worth of malt annually from two large out-of-state companies, and Maine farmers were already growing the barley needed to make malt. Producing malt in-state with local grains was a win-win for growers and brewers.

■ **Allagash Brewing Company: Pushing creative uses for in-season ingredients**

Summers in Maine host not only a spectacular array of outdoor activities, but also an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables. Several craft breweries are highlighting what's local and

in-season by getting creative with their beer ingredients. Allagash Brewing Company in Portland has been consistently at the forefront of this concept, often seeking out fruits from local family farms to give their beers a fresh flavor.

■ **Oxbow Brewing Company: Giving beer drinkers an agricultural education**

Despite New England farms being critical to the food we eat, our economy, and the environment, for many people agriculture is not a topic regularly given much thought. Craft breweries like Oxbow are changing this with an impressive selection of beers that focus on local agriculture. Three of their beers—Native/Wild, Harvest, and Farmland—are 100% Maine-grown. Their beers tell the story of Maine's diverse and growing agricultural sector by showcasing high-quality Maine-grown ingredients. Plus, the consumer knowledge it's generating could prompt a growing demand for local sourcing in the craft beverage industry.

■ **Maine Beer Company: Supporting environmental issues with beer sales**

Like many other craft breweries in our state, Maine Beer Company significantly sources Maine malts and Maine-grown wheat. They, however, take their support a step further. Since 2009, they have been a member of *1% for the Planet*, an international nonprofit made up of businesses, environmental nonprofits, and consumers committed to solving some of the world's most pressing environmental issues. MBC donates 1% of its annual sales to 12 partners, ranging from land conservation organizations to farms and more. They say, "The reach of our beer community has allowed us to share this commitment to the environment with a much larger audience than we would ever have imagined."

Farm to Table Dinner Series at Wolfe's Neck Center

Area chefs highlight local foods at the peak of their season



Summer Tasting with Miyake Sunday, June 23, 5-8 pm

Celebrate the start of summer with Masa Miyake and a sunset at the Mallet Barn. Visit a variety of tasting stations for the freshest flavors of the season. Drinks from our partners New England Distilling and Maine Beer Company are included.

Register online at wolfesneck.org/farm-to-table-series



Family Ice Cream Social Sunday, August 18, 2-4 pm

Bring the whole family down to the Mallet Barn for a summer afternoon! MDI Ice Cream will scoop delicious flavors from farm toppings and other local treats.



Southeast Asian Street Food with Big Tree Hospitality Sunday, September 15, 5-8 pm

Join us for a Southeast Asian street food-inspired tasting from the talents of the Portland restaurant group behind Hugo's, The Honey Paw, and Eventide Oyster Co. Drinks from our partners New England Distilling and Maine Beer Company are included.



Harvest Dinner with Piccolo Sunday, October 6, 5-8 pm

Feast on the harvest of the season with a seated, family-style dinner and dessert in our historic Mallet Barn. Drinks from our partners New England Distilling and Maine Beer Company are included.

Events on the farm



Spring Festival Saturday, June 1

Interact with the animals, learn about seeds and plants, and observe farm demonstrations. Enjoy hayrides, live music, and food. Crafts, face painting, and a hay bale climb, too! No advance registration is required and half-off for members.



History Haywagon Tours Saturdays, June-September

Join us for a wagon ride to the past! Climb aboard and travel through time as you hear stories of the ship captains, fishermen, farmers, and homemakers who have lived on Wolfe's Neck over the past 250 years. Ages 12 & up, preregistration recommended.



Harvest Dance Saturday, September 28

Celebrate the season and enjoy a night out with friends! Foods, drinks, and a contra dance kick off the festivities before the Mallett Brothers take the stage. Held in our historic Mallet Barn, ages 21+. Advanced registration required



Fall Festival Saturday, October 19

Celebrate sustainable agriculture and the bounty of autumn in Maine! This family friendly festival features activities and demonstrations, live music, haybale climbing, face painting, animal interactions, tasty local food and more. Take a hayride to our vegetable plot and pick out your favorite pumpkin.

Dig Deeper Discussion Series Tuesdays monthly, June-August 4:30-5:30 pm

We explore the mix of ecosystems that make up Wolfe's Neck Center, and discuss how good land and water management play a key role in stewarding these critical natural resources in the face of climate change. *Free, RSVP recommended.*

Healthy Soil Can Cool the Planet Tuesday, June 18

Joe Grady, Wolfe Neck Center's Senior Director of Programs, will walk us through the pasture as we learn how grazing management and regenerative agriculture can capture carbon in the soil.

Managing Our Neck of the Woods Tuesday, July 18

Robert Bryan of Forest Synthesis will discuss a new forest and wildlife management plan for Wolf Neck Center and what we are doing to keep our woods healthy, diverse and a welcome place for wildlife and birds.

Casco Bay Begins in Your Backyard Tuesday, August 13

Mary Cerullo, Associate Director of the Friends of Casco Bay, will talk about the impacts of climate change in our coastal waters, and how Mainers are addressing, mitigating, and adapting to changes in the marine environment. She'll also go over what you can do in your own yard to help protect the Bay.

Oceanfront camping

Campers immerse in food, farming, and nature

Wolfe's Neck Oceanfront Camping is an experience like no other. How often are you setting up a tent with ocean views to one side and farmland to the other? Since 1952, our family-friendly campground has offered spacious campsites and cabins on our farm's idyllic 626 acres of oceanfront pastures and forest.

We now offer more programs than ever before for campers to connect to food and farming. With the campground open from May through October, participate in activities, rentals, and an array of events throughout the season. Join a Goat Hike, Farmer for the Morning, Afternoon Milking, or one of our other programs to immerse yourself in this place and support our important work.

Open May through October, our award-winning campground offers over 130 campsites and three oceanfront cabins. Book online at freeportcamping.com.

You can also explore over three miles of nature trails, rent a bicycle or kayak, visit the animal barns, stop in for lunch at the Farm Café, and visit our Farm Store to take home a Maine souvenir.

While there is so much to do, see, and explore at Wolfe's Neck Center, we're only ten minutes from outlet shopping and L.L.Bean's flagship store in downtown Freeport. Take advantage of a natural getaway at our campground, conveniently



located close to Freeport, Portland, and Brunswick attractions. Be sure to see what events may be happening during your stay!

How ever you spend your camping trip at Wolfe's Neck Center, your stay supports our mission, and we hope you'll deepen your relationship to food and farming while you're here.



Keep your camping trip sustainable by sorting your waste. Bring two bags —one for trash and one for recycling —and dispose of them in our bins on site. Compost at our Farm Café too. With your help, we can reduce our impact on the landfill.

What's new in 2019

Quiet Cove: Walk-in Quiet Sites

This car-free quiet area is perfect for those looking for a back-to-nature camping experience. Set along the edge of a tidal estuary, this area will quickly become a favorite for solitude-seekers. Each campsite comes hammock-ready and is limited to three people and one tent.

Comfort Camping: Luxury Campsite

Enjoy a seaside retreat in our new canvas bell tent with a real queen size bed! The site is nestled in the trees along our Casco Bay shoreline, and will come outfitted with everything you need for camping in style and ease. Two camping cots with sleeping bags will keep the kids happy, and you'll love the comfy camp gear and other amenities!

Fall & Spring Lower Rates: Discounted Slow Season Camping

Summer, vacation, and family go hand-in-hand and make for a busy July and August in our campground! Revel in the quieter season with new lower rates from late April to mid-June, and again for September and October. Enjoy the slower pace of the shoulder seasons and have your pick at a new undiscovered-to-you campsite to round out the experience.

Connect to Food & Farming

Kids of all ages engage in special moments of discovery at a place unlike any other

Farm Camp

Explore, learn, and play on a coastal farm

Immerse your child in the wonders of farming and food, exploring the outdoors and making new friends with a week of Farm Camp! At camp, kids learn hands-on about sustainable agriculture and ecology across the diverse ecosystems of our 626 acres.

Farm Camp is a day program with ten Monday through Friday sessions from late June to August. Extend your child's visit with **Before & After Care**, or make it an experience for the whole family by participating in our **Camp & Camp** discount program. While your child or children are in Farm Camp, you'll have all day to shop, bike, or relax in a hammock, all while receiving 25% off your campsite when you stay 5 nights or more. *Thanks to the generous donors of our Judy Higbee Scholarship Fund, a limited number of Farm Camp scholarships are available.*



During our summer Farm Camp, campers tend the gardens, care for livestock, and explore our farm, fields, and coast.



Teens at camp

Junior Counselors (JCs)

Volunteer and gain high school service hours

Teens ages 15-18 gain leadership experience while assisting with the day to day fun of Farm Camp through our summer JC program. JCs help with camp activities and encourage the curiosity of campers by participating in group activities. This experience is ideal for building a college application or first resumé, and gives teens a chance to actively develop their leadership and educational skills. *Apply online.*

Farm-Based Cooking

Get a taste of the season on our farm

Announcing our new program for teens ages 13-15 to dive deeper into fresh food and farming! Participants learn how to simmer, sauté, and celebrate the bounty of the summer season while building their culinary skills. In addition to learning food safety techniques and exploring the importance of sustainable food systems, teens will practice preparing delicious dishes from scratch using produce grown right here on the farm. *Two weekly sessions available, August 5-16.*



Make your child's Farm Camp session more sustainable! Using reusable water bottles, lunch containers, and snack bags cut down on waste.

Connecting my kids to the natural world, and why you should, too

By Jeannie Mattson, Development Director

Not only do I consider myself fortunate to work at Wolfe's Neck Center, but I get to do so as my two adventure-seeking boys are growing up. They have camped under the stars here, kayaked and swum in the Little River, watched lambs being born, milked goats, turned the compost pile, eaten crunchy green beans right off the plant, and hiked through the woods along the estuary. These kinds of experiences are so important for all kids. It connects them to nature and their food in a way that will stay with them.

Sadly, these opportunities aren't easy to come by in this day and age. Too many kids don't know where their food comes from, and lack a connection to the land that grows it. This has a big impact on what foods they choose to eat, and what foods they even have access to. The lack of time in gardens, on farms, and outside is having a fundamental effect on the health and well-being of a whole generation.

This is why places like Wolfe's Neck Center are so important and why we are so lucky to have it in our community. Each year, hundreds of kids come here and are immersed in farming and nature while getting their hands dirty. They try kale for the first time, or collect eggs. These are sensory-rich experiences that will stay with them, and connect them in a meaningful way to something that matters.

Early last summer, we were camping here at the farm. The boys had been at Farm Camp that day, and they shared stories of their busy day as we sat around the campfire watching the sun go down. Just as it got dark, the pasture next to our campsite lit up with hundreds of fireflies. I saw their faces, full of excitement and wonder and I thought, *this is just magic*. This is how WNC can make the world a better place—by inspiring the next generation to love and appreciate nature, to care about how their food is grown, and to play a role in a better future for food and farming.

When on the farm, give it a try

By Maranda Chung, Farm Camp Director

It was a sunny June afternoon, and after weeks of weeding the strawberry patch, it was finally time to harvest. I was 19 at the time, about to start my junior year of college, and volunteering on an organic farm in Phippsburg, Maine. I gave myself permission to sample one strawberry before filling my basket on harvest day. It's hard to describe just how delicious it was...exceptionally sweet, tender, and still warm from the sun. It was unlike anything I had tried before, and worlds removed from the cold, tart, grocery store strawberries I was familiar with.

This was my first farming experience, and I was loving it. That strawberry, and that summer of

farming, changed my whole relationship with food. I was thrilled by the freshness and flavor of foods that I had helped to grow. I was captivated by the colorful plant varieties that enlivened the landscape. And perhaps most importantly, I realized that food connected me to a broad network of people and places that I hadn't been aware of before. I left the farm feeling informed, inspired, and insatiably curious to know more.

I want children coming here to have the same transformative experience. Who knows? One of them might even have their life changed by something as deliciously simple as a strawberry.

Our work: Organic Dairy

Residential apprenticeship prepares new farmers to enter the organic dairy industry

A morning milking football commentary

Playing like champions

By Ben Jensen, Dairy Manager & Herdsman

“Good Sunday morning to all of you organic dairy farming fans out there! I am Bob Cowstas, joined by color commentator Dairy Bradshaw. We’re ready for a great game of farming this morning from our two WNC players Caitlin and Tierney!”

“That’s right Bob, these two farmers are the real deal. I expect to see a high level of execution of the game plan, and an entertaining next 4 hours as they valiantly conquer the morning milking.”

“Wow Bob, look at the form with those manure forks. These ladies can really toss a cow patty! That last one went about twenty yards!”

“Here they come, showing excellent clock management as they arrive at the barn at 4:30 am on the dot. Dairy Bradshaw, it looks like they’re taking a quick huddle to plan out their next moves, as it appears the cows have done a number on the bedded pack overnight. They’ll need to bring in some fresh bedding this morning.”

“And here they go with the first play of the day, feeding the milk cows. Watch the execution as the grain is evenly distributed along the bunk and a fresh bale is brought in. Just about flawless. Looks like they’re going to start cleaning the barn while the cows are eating their breakfast, a good strategy here.”

“That’s right, this entire routine is orchestrated to make things as easy as possible for those milk cows. Happy cows are the cornerstone of this team’s game plan.”

“Wow Bob, look at the form with those manure forks. These ladies can really toss a cow patty! That last one went about twenty yards!”

“That’s right Dairy, some real farm muscles there! Here they move onto dividing up the rest of the morning’s work between either milking and feeding calves or taking care of the outside chores. After a quick huddle we have Caitlin on the milking and Tierney on the chores.”

“Bob, both of these plays require a substantial amount of skill. Milking requires constant diligence and awareness while doing the rest of the feeding and cleaning chores requires brute strength combined with finesse and quickness with heavy equipment.”

“Oh, will you look at that! Looks like we have a first calf heifer in there running a little misdirection!”

“Bob, they’ve got her headed back in the right direction with some outstanding stockmanship.”

“That’s right Dairy, they’re all in the holding area and ready for milking. Now watch the cow prep going on here, this is just an outstanding job by Caitlin getting the cows milked.”

“And some great execution there by Tierney as she manages to get the cow yard scraped AND the pack all re-bedded AND another bale fed out before that second string of cows comes back out of the barn. That’s some high-level play right there.”

“That triple play was pioneered by the WNC team’s legendary—and very handsome, might I add—coach Ben Jensen.”



The opening of our new organic dairy facility represents a major milestone in our organic dairy farmer training program in partnership with Stonyfield. Features include a compost-bedded pack barn, solar panels, and milkhouse with public viewing area.

Our new organic dairy facility

Our new Organic Dairy Teaching Facility was completed in May 2019 and serves as the hub of our organic dairy apprenticeship program. This means an entirely unique way for visitors to experience dairy farming! Walk to the dairy site from the main campus along our new Discovery Trail or through the Farm Café picnic area and look out for the herd in the barn if they’re not out grazing on pasture. Get up close to the action and watch a milking, too! Head into the Parlor Viewing Room to see the space, or plan your visit around 4:30pm when the cows are milked every afternoon.

“We go to our aerial coverage now, as Tierney heads across the Little River to the Pote Farm to take care of the dry cows and heifers.”

“Back in the milking parlor, it looks like Caitlin has flown right through milking. Another great example of clock management. These two will be done with their respective duties at almost the same time and be able to have breakfast at about 8:30, after four hours of work. Most people haven’t even started their day yet!”

“That’s right! Dairy farming requires a lot of dedication and hard work. Definitely not for the faint of heart.”

“The game plan calls for another quick huddle at 9, then a second round of chores at 10 to clean the barn again as well as execute another milk cow feeding. I’m sure that Coach DeGrandpre will have an audible or two to call as welding and equipment projects change this afternoon, then we will be right back here at 3:30 this afternoon to cover all the afternoon milking and chores action, only on FBN, the Farming Broadcast Network.”

My new normal: A day of a dairy farmer

By Tierney Lawlor, Organic Dairy Program Apprentice

Our cows are milked twice, every day at Wolfe’s Neck Center. The first milking starts around 5:30 AM, so we have to get to the barn early to set up and prepare. Getting up early is sometimes challenging, but when you know you are going to work with some amazing animals and doing something you truly love, the time of day does not bother you.

I get in to work at 4:45 AM and walk into the barn to greet all my cow friends. Another apprentice and I feed the cows breakfast, set up the milking parlor, clean the manure on the pack and in the yard, and then get the milk herd in position to get milked. One worker will milk the cows and another worker will do other chores to take care of the other animals on the farm. It takes about 2.5 hours to get the herd milked and all the other animals on the farm fed.

After completing the morning chores, the next part of the day is spent doing various jobs that need to be done around the farm. At around 3 PM,



Tierney Lawlor is an apprentice in our 2-year organic dairy program

my coworker and I start doing afternoon chores to prepare for afternoon milking. We feed the cows dinner, clean the pack and yard, feed the other animals, and get the milk herd into the parlor. Afternoon milking takes about another two hours.

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Our work: Livestock

See the animals supporting soil health & farmer training



Haden Gooch

21st Century Farmer

Being creative on & off the farm

By Haden Gooch, Small Livestock Manager & Journeyworker

I got into farming five years ago and have certainly learned a thing or two along the way. One of the most important? Farming on a small scale takes resilience, insanity, and a lot of creativity.

To be profitable as a small dairy farmer, or any farmer for that matter, means wearing many hats. Not only do you have to be a mechanic, vet, crop producer, environmental steward, record keeper, etc., but you now have to market, process, distribute, and sell your product to remain viable. That means having skills in branding, photography, social media, and customer interaction. That's a lot to do in only 24 hours!

Luckily, there are a growing number of young people out there with diverse backgrounds who want to continue the tradition of dairy farming in New England. I am one of those people.

My hobby of photography has helped me a lot in my farming career. Small farmers across the world have flocked to Instagram to market themselves and their products. Having an ability to take pictures that people like has been huge for my following and will really help my future in ag business.

Music has also been a huge help in my farming career. I'm really into jazz, blues, and jam music, so I've spent a lot of time playing instrumental improv music with different bands and friends of mine. I've been able to incorporate this improv mentality into farming, too. Whether you need to fix a fence on the fly without half the tools you actually need, or are trying to get a sick cow to be able to stand up, coming up with solutions on the fly is a key component of farming.

Aside from playing guitar and taking pictures with a mediocre camera, I occasionally fire up the ol' table saw and spend an unnecessary amount of time building a picture frame, or a table top (I'm pretty terrible at woodworking).

I never thought that some of my creative endeavors would find themselves in my farming career, but they have shined through in some unexpected ways. To me, farming is one of the most creative things you can possibly do. You control how and when things grow, how those things react and interact with the environment, and how you portray the products you create to the public. I'm not really sure of anything that's more artistic and creative than that.

Livestock Education Barn



Wander into our Wishcamper Livestock Education Barn to see our animals! While many may be on pasture in the warmer months, you may see sheep, lambs, pigs, goats, and chickens on your farm visit. Check out our Community & Visitor Programs for ways to engage with our animals.

Regenerative Farming

Continued from cover

pasture, the diversity of the plants in the mix, and how many times we can harvest an area by cutting it for hay or sending the animals through.

Over time we have seen our practices lead, quite naturally, to an increase in production and an increased capacity to feed more animals and also store more forage. We have also seen a boost of biological activity in our soils and the rate at which they can digest and utilize the manure and compost we put out each year.

As a farmer, why is it important for you to consider the health of your land in conjunction with the quality of your products?

They go hand in hand. If you are not managing your land in ways that produce healthy soil, the plants you grow and the animals that eat them will not be in good health. The biggest mistake in the world of conventional, large scale agriculture is that the focus is on feeding the plant, not feeding the soil. Regenerative practices focus on the soil—a truly healthy plant will be the result of a strong and vibrant soil community working beneath the surface to feed that plant and give it access to what it needs.

What barriers are other farmers facing to incorporate organic or regenerative practices on their own farms?

Most of the barriers are economic. It's not that the practices cost more, but that often times the right practices require the right training...and that can be expensive and time consuming. Since most farms are driven by the need to generate profit, there needs to be a shift to give farmers a greater economic incentive to use regenerative practices, and a greater incentive to seek training where available.

What is Wolfe's Neck Center's role in regenerative agriculture? What direction is it going?

WNC is currently playing an impactful role by providing access to education through programs and exposure: There are two robust training programs for aspiring farmers. Our fruit and vegetable training program teaches new farmers with seasonal opportunities to see how we use regenerative agriculture. Additionally, our fruit and vegetable farmer offers workshops year-round covering various topics related to organic food production.

WNC is also a training site for the national Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship program. This program is turning out the next generation of organic dairy farmers trained in organic and regenerative land care and farming practices. This, to me, is such an exciting program because it is revitalizing an industry very important to Maine and New England's agricultural past and future.

We also play a great role in exposing people to the ideas and practices of regenerative agriculture. WNC has over 30,000 visitors a year and their interaction with our programs, our Farm Store, and our Farm Café all have an impact. With an increased focus on regenerative agriculture as it becomes a global priority to address climate change, we are poised to play an even bigger role in the near future.



Not only is it tasty, but meat and produce from our farm serves a greater purpose of building the health of our soils and educating visitors about where our food comes from. Purchasing Wolfe's Neck Center food is a simple way to support our mission and make your dinner plans easier!

Our work: Farmer Training

Preparing the next generation with organic farming apprenticeships

Wolfe's Neck Center is preparing the next generation of farmers by providing opportunities for individuals to gain knowledge and hands-on experience on a working organic farm. A 2-year organic dairy apprenticeship and a seasonal fruit & vegetable internship prepare farmers to enter the agricultural industry.

My new normal

Continued from page 7

After the cows are milked and the parlor is cleaned, we check on the herd one more time to make sure everyone is happy. Then we head home for the night to get ready to do it again the next day.

The joy and happiness I get from going to work each day and working with cows, pigs, chickens and so on is well worth the early mornings and late nights. Working with these creatures everyday puts a smile on my face and makes me feel good knowing that I am helping them live a happy life while being able to sustainably supply quality products to customers. I've come to learn that each animal has its own unique personality and it is awesome to see them grow and develop over the years. I love working with animals and I love being a farmer. It is an amazing, challenging, yet rewarding career.



You can support new farmers, too. Meet them at your local farmers' market, learn their stories, and hear what drew them to a career in agriculture.

How I traded city burnout for a vegetable plot From law to the land

By Sarah Martel, Second-year farm intern



Sarah Martel tends the crops in her new office

I moved to NYC after college on a whim. I had landed a job as a real estate paralegal through the Smith College alumnae network and planned on law school, but otherwise had no specific career or life goals in mind yet.

Eleven years later, I found myself running a successful real estate law firm in Manhattan. I took pride in my extensive network of loyal clients within a fast-paced and competitive industry, but the work was incredibly demanding and stressful, and burnout was inevitable. I found some freedom and space in riding my bike, but still craved quality of life and a more meaningful career. To me this meant starting over elsewhere—a scary prospect.

One morning in February 2018 I reached my limit. Again with no set plan, I started telling colleagues

that I wasn't taking new clients anymore. Word spread quickly, and just like that, I was freefalling. I had to make soul-searching a priority.

My dreams revolved around Maine, food, and nature. I grew up in Lewiston and wanted to be closer to my parents. I spent a lot of time cooking, going to farmers' markets and restaurants, reading about food, and planning my next meal, all while missing nature like crazy. Suddenly, everything clicked and I had a compelling urge to be on a farm growing food.

In late March, I discovered the Fruit & Vegetable Farming Internship at Wolfe's Neck and was over the moon when I was hired. April and May were a blur of tearful goodbyes and nostalgic moments. Fifteen years to the day, I moved away from the city where I'd had 9 different apartments and a lifetime of experiences.

Once the internship began in June 2018, I felt a reassuring sense of calm standing near our fruit and vegetable plot washing salad greens and looking out at Casco Bay. Starting over has been challenging in many ways, but not once have I questioned my decision to make the leap. As I enter a second season at Wolfe's Neck, my former pencil skirts and high heels are a distant memory. I dream of running a business again someday, maybe a small-scale farm enterprise with a hospitality element, hosting retreats or workshops, allowing people to enjoy nature and food as I do. Whatever comes next, this is exactly where I belong right now.

Our work: Soil Health

Regenerative farming practices restore nutrients in our soil

Helpful new use for a harmful invasive

By Tom Prohl, Fruit & Vegetable Production Manager

European green crabs have been getting a lot of attention lately for wreaking havoc in warming Gulf of Maine waters. This invasive coastal species originally traveled to North America in the ballast water of ships in the mid-1800s and has since been aggressively feeding on marine animals found in our intertidal zone, including soft shell clams and blue mussels. The green crab also burrows into tidal mud, destroying eelgrass habitat, and is increasing erosion in our bays and estuaries. Without some measure of control, this predator is on track to irrevocably destroy the balance of our marine ecosystem and related fishing industries.

Because Wolfe's Neck Center is situated along the coast and values the health of the ecosystem, we knew we needed to get involved in finding a solution. Last summer, we were fortunate enough to meet Nicole Twohig, the Development Coordinator for Quahog Bay Conservancy. QBC is an environmental nonprofit in Harpswell leading a number of marine initiatives, including

the trapping and removal of green crabs from Quahog Bay. They have been looking to create a commercial market for the crabs to incentivize regular trapping.

With this in mind, we used harvested green crabs as an experimental fertilizer at the farm. We hoped to answer a simple question: Could this marine pest improve the fertility of our soils?!

We were energized by the results of a nutrient analysis test. It showed that green crab flesh is rich in nitrogen and phosphorus, key ingredients in fertilizer. The shell is also beneficial for the soil, as it contains an abundance of calcium and a protein known as chitin, which strengthens plant immune systems and suppresses pests.

We brought our first trial batch of live crabs to the plot in September 2018. We manually crushed them with a tamper and dispatched them into our manure spreader. While it was satisfying to destroy this invasive predator by hand, it was labor intensive and



European green crabs used as fertilizer

often challenging to "process" the green crabs in a timely fashion, creating some funky smells around the farm! We have since acquired a wood chipper to streamline the process in the future.

In addition to spreading large amounts of crushed green crabs on our hay fields, we created a "crab test" area of 3 raised beds in our vegetable production field, took a soil test from each, and then applied crushed crabs to 2 of the 3 beds (the third left as a control). Now we wait for the soil to warm up so we can retest and compare results.

We have a working waterfront in Freeport and fertile clamming grounds here on the farm. Those clams will soon be gone if the green crabs persist. Our innovative partnership with QBC gives us an exciting connection to our unique waterfront, while repurposing an invasive menace to feed our soils and in turn, our community.

The case for improving soil health

By David Herring, Executive Director

Conventional agricultural practices, which have enabled humanity to grow and flourish, have become a prime origin of the degradation of our land, the loss of our resources, and the declining health of our communities. Since the beginning of agriculture over 12,000 years ago, human-caused deforestation, clearing of the land, and crop tillage have released carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Now current atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide are already at 400 ppm (parts per million) and rising, and scientists agree that we need to get this level to drop below 350 ppm to avoid catastrophic changes.

There are more microbes in one teaspoon of healthy soil than there are people on the earth

The global food system is responsible for approximately 40% of the world's manmade greenhouse gases, the consequence of agriculture's reliance on fossil fuels, the overgrazing of methane-producing livestock, over tilling and monocropping, and the overuse of toxic pesticides and fertilizers. Erosion, heatwaves, and drought – byproducts of the warming of the earth's climate – in turn create arable soils with a prohibitive ability to absorb carbon and be productive for farming. The reality is that our farming practices, globally, are contributing to a changing climate and the byproducts of this change are making it even harder to farm. It's a vicious cycle and given our

reliance on agriculture to feed the world, it may seem as if our situation is a dire one.

Fortunately, there is hope for our future right beneath our feet. The earth's topsoil is the one place where excess carbon is truly beneficial, and maintaining its health is the key to reversing the damaging effects of climate change and to adaptation and building resiliency at the farm level.

While most agricultural soils have lost between 30-75% of their original organic carbon, it is estimated that with better management, farmlands have the potential to store an additional 1.85 gigatons of carbon each year—as much as the annual emittance coming from global transportation. Healthy soils can contain two to three times more carbon than the atmosphere, and the implementation of regenerative agriculture practices have the potential to sequester more than 100% of our current annual CO2 emissions.

Not only is sequestering carbon beneficial for the atmosphere, carbon is also essential for soil fertility and the hardiness of agricultural crops. Organic carbon increases soil's population of healthy microbes such as nematodes, protozoa, fungi, and bacteria. In fact, there are more microbes in one teaspoon of healthy soil than there are people on the earth. Regenerative agricultural practices that promote the absorption of carbon, such as composting, crop rotation, and minimizing tillage, result in soils that require fewer chemical inputs, maintain nutrients, and



To use farming as a solution to climate change, we look to the soil.

are less susceptible to erosion. And the healthier the soil, the more plants will thrive, and the more robust food production becomes. It's a win-win for both the human population and the planet.

What can you do? Get to know your local farmer. Ask them if they are using regenerative practices like no-till, composting, managed intensive grazing and cover crops. Purchase food from companies that are supporting the advancement of regenerative farming and healthy soils practices.



The Wolfe's Neck Center campus reimaged: What's next

With the opening of our dairy facility this spring, we are one step closer to completing the implementation of our master plan. The current master plan was developed starting in 2015 and several of the plan's elements have been completed since 2016. If you've been a visitor since then, you may have seen these improvements happening over the last few years. Completed projects include:

- ▶ A renovated Little River Farmhouse and new Wishcamper Livestock Education Barn, located at the center of the campus.
- ▶ A renovated Pote Barn, located along Wolfe Neck Road adjacent to the State Park.
- ▶ A completely new Dairy facility, located just east along Burnett Road from the Farm Café and Campground Office.

- ▶ A new Waste Management facility including a recycling, trash and compost station, located along the campground exit road.

Over the next few years, we plan to complete our campus plan with the construction of:

- ▶ The Smith Center for Education and Research, named for the long-time owners and original donors of Wolfe's Neck Farm. The Smith family had the vision and generosity to set this place aside for all of us, forever.
- ▶ The Farm Discovery Gardens, located adjacent to the Smith Center and the Visitor Center, will connect visitors to the landscape from each of the facilities at the center of campus.

- ▶ A new Visitor Center, located nearby the current site of our campground office. This new facility will house our campground office, Farm Café and Farm Store all under one roof.

Your support as a visitor, member and/or donor helps make this transformation possible.

Since 2016, we have raised more than \$7 million to support this reinvestment at Wolfe's Neck Center. Over the next year, we are working to raise an additional \$3.5 million to support the completion of the master plan. All of this work is possible because of you and our campaign donors.

To learn more about our campaign and find out how you could help, please call or email Jeannie Mattson, Director of Development at jmattson@wolfesneck.org, 207.865.4469 ext. 110.



Do good, fields good

Support our pastures and the important work happening on them

The array of offerings you read about in this newsletter rely on member support. Become a member today to support place-based education, farmer training, and immersive experiences for people of all ages. Your membership makes this vision a reality through the development of programs to give visitors a deeper understanding of where our food comes from and why farming is important for our planet. Perks include discounts on festival admission, Farm Café, early access to ticket sales for popular events, members-only events, and more!

[Visit wolfesneck.org/give](http://wolfesneck.org/give) to become a member



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Wolfe's Neck Center: Where the new isn't new

By Sam Smith, son of Mr. & Mrs. LMC Smith, who started Wolfe's Neck Farm

I wasn't too surprised to learn that Wolfe's Neck Center was getting into regenerative agriculture. After all, the farm has been doing new things most of its life. In the 1940s my parents had joined the new Cumberland County Soil Conservation District and started a Maine Tree Farm.

As a sub-teen back then, I was already into recycling—taking our garbage each day to feed three pigs. Soon I was taught that plowing wasn't good for the soil and that everything should be grown organically—then still a new idea. This was a little heavy to absorb, but by the time I was 13, I was driving a tractor and double-clutching a six-wheeled truck, so didn't mind it a bit.

The list of new things grew: the state's first wood chipper, first rototiller, and first round hay baler were introduced at the farm. And we experimented with cafeteria style feeding.

One thing you learn trying to do the new is that not everything works. Such as my father using my mother's vacuum cleaner to pull air out of hay piles covered in plastic. The vacuum cleaner didn't survive the summer and the primitive silos lasted not much longer.

I spent some of one summer driving a tractor back and forth over a 50-foot long, 40-foot wide box built of railroad ties, compacting the silage in it. It



Mrs. Smith stands beside a sign indicating that, from the beginning, the property was stewarding our environmental resources.

was called a trench silo even though it was 15 feet high. And with nothing to stop you from going over the edge it wasn't particularly safe either.

But trying, failing and learning kept leading to new ideas that worked. And even though I would end up an urban journalist, my teen years working on Wolfe's Neck Farm taught me, as with its interns today, not to be turned back by problems or afraid of the new. If as a young teenager you help move a house or jack up the corner of a 120-foot-long barn, your view of what is possible in life changes forever. And the importance of doing it right.

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