



FALL 2007 NEWSLETTER

## Executive Director Note

Greetings from the Farm Based Education Association! The FBEA is a one-year old organization established by members of the farm-education community to support this fast-growing network. Our mission is to inspire, nurture, and promote farm-based education. We aim to do this by establishing a clearinghouse for information and resources, providing opportunities for professionals to connect and learn from each other, and by creating a collaborative structure to advance these types of programs in the fields of education and agriculture.

For more information about the FBEA, please visit our website or contact me – I love to talk about this exciting work! I hope you enjoy this first edition of the FBEA newsletter, will consider becoming an FBEA member, and will enjoy years of FBEA newsletters and events to come.

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## 3rd Educational Farm Symposium – growing bigger and reaching further!

Dana Hudson, Shelburne Farms

In 2003 the first Educational Farm Symposium was held at the Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm in Dayton, Ohio. Hosted by the Association of Nature Center Administrators with the leadership of Charity Krueger, Aullwood's Executive Director, this event launched the idea that a growing group of farm based education programs needed another venue to network and discuss their successes and challenges beyond existing farming and education conferences.

The movement and excitement grew into 2005, when the 2nd Educational Farm Symposium was held at the Delaware Nature Society's Coverdale Farm under the enthusiastic leadership of Michele Wales, Agriculture Education Coordinator. The growing group of participants left this event rejuvenated and dedicated to the importance of this gathering. At this symposium, the idea of creating the now named Farm-Based Education Association continued to gather momentum.

The 3rd Educational Farm Symposium at Shelburne Farms in Vermont is expected to draw more than 175 participants from the United States, Canada and Europe—more than double past symposia. The event, coordinated by Dana Hudson of Shelburne Farms, will officially launch the FBEA, establishing new traditions and a strong network of professionals. With 43 workshops and 9 field trips, there is something for everyone,



including keynote speaker Peter Forbes, photographer, writer, and farmer, who will share his passion for the growing farm based education movement and his own experiences running the Center for Whole Communities at Knoll Farm.

The 3rd Educational Farm Symposium has been made possible by the dedicated group of volunteer conference planners. Huge thanks go out to all the workshop presenters and field trip leaders who are volunteering their time, and to Shelburne Farms and its staff for hosting and planning this event. Its dedication to the growth of farm based education programming is inspiring. 🍅🌿

## 2007 FBEA Award Recipients!

### TEACHER FARMER of the YEAR Dianne Parmelee

Education Coordinator, Farm Manager  
Flanders Nature Center, North Barn,  
Woodbury, CT

Awarded to the farm educator who has made a significant contribution to the success of their farm program and who shines in the eyes of his/her colleagues, students, and the farm community.

### FARM BASED EDUCATION PROGRAM of the YEAR The Farm Education Programs of the Board of FBEA

*for their dedication to launching the association.*

Delaware Nature Society-Coverdale Farm, Drumlin Farm, the Farms of the Trustees of Reservations, the FARM Institute, the Farm School, Hawthorne Valley Farm, Lands Sake, Maysie's Farm, North American Montessori Teachers and Association, Shelburne Farms, Spannochia Foundation, Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture, and Stonewall Farm.

Awarded to the farm program that has made a significant contribution to its community and that shines in the eyes of its staff, visitors, and the community at large.

## Winner of Free Year Membership to FBEA!

A survey was sent out to a wide audience of farm-based education program folks to gather information about developing the Farm-Based Education Association. Those who completed the survey were entered in a drawing for a free one-year membership. From these 40 people, we are excited to announce the winner:

**Brianne Casadei**, Executive Director  
Terra Firma Farm, Inc  
www.terrafirmafarm.org

## The Birth of the FBEA

Ben Holmes and Patch Connors, the Farm School

As with many creation myths, this one starts with one individual's drive and vision and culminates with the energy and enthusiasm of many. In the winter of 2001, Brooke Redmond left her job at ABC News to explore something that

had fascinated her since the first summer she spent on a farm as a child: farm education. She entered a Masters program at Lesley University, and over the next two years roamed the Northeast to discover what programs and experiences were available for kids on farms, how they worked and the benefits they offered.

She had to rely on reporting skills to find her way around the community of educational farms: at one place she'd hear about another great program - from there she'd follow a thread to a different farm. A list of farms grew and the lack of consistent contact between these wonderful places became evident: while many knew of each other, and had even participated in conferences together, on a day-to-day basis each existed very much in its own world, insulated by both geography and the demands of running



FBEA Board, April 2006 strategic planning meeting, Pocantico Conference Center of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund

both a farm and a school at the same time. Even more glaring were the missed opportunities to help each other — a teaching tool or business technique used on one farm that would solve a question on another. Perhaps most importantly, they weren't being

inspired by a sense of shared mission. While none were raising the banner on their own, every farm she visited expressed real interest in strengthening the ties in the community.

After publishing her thesis, Brooke remained in touch with a number of these farms and began to explore the concept of forming a professional association with them. At an exploratory meeting at Shelburne Farms in May 2006, many of these folks quickly unified behind forming an association. Today, with Brooke as Executive Director, the support of farm educators throughout New England, and with generous grants from like-minded foundations and individuals), the new Farm-Based Education Association is poised to connect farmers to each other and expand the possibilities for connecting people with the land. 🍓

## Become A Member of FBEA!

Join the growing professional network of the Farm-Based Education Association!

This is your chance to get in on our ground level introductory rates only good until the end of 2007!

### What does membership get me?

- A one-year membership at introductory rates
- 10% discount on seasonal workshops and events
- Invitations to all FBEA events
- Access to the FBEA database of over 400 farm-based educators, administrators, and related organizations (database will be ready by years-end!)
- Receive our informative, quarterly e-newsletters, networking and professional development opportunities, and involvement in program research and development projects.

### Introductory membership rates

Student.....	\$35
Individual .....	\$50
Organization.....	\$140

(organizational members may send up to 3 staff members at a discount to FBEA events)

Make your check out to "FBEA c/o Shelburne Farms" and mail it to: FBEA/ Shelburne Farms, 1611 Harbor Road, Shelburne, Vermont 05482

Check the membership section of the FBEA website for updates and more information.

# Summer Camp: How to manage the crowds and paper work while making hay

Matthew Goldfarb, The FARM Institute

As the spring gains momentum and summer nears, life and activity on the farm move faster than the typical human pace. Every year I'm amazed at how quickly the work is upon us. With lambing, chicks arriving, garden planting, livestock pasture rotations, field planting, calving, setting irrigation, and more planting, there is little time for fixing equipment, maintaining buildings or designing new innovations. On top of that we are finishing spring education programs and preparing for close to 100 students a day over the 11 weeks of summer programs. Yet somehow we have managed to get most of the crops planted and fields tilled, welcomed newborns and given our students the gift of working, learning and playing on the farm.

I am not so sure if making it through each summer is more about planning and management or more about just hold-

ing on and having faith it will work out. There is a moment just before it all starts when I review the winter and spring work and hope that we did all our chores and planned for a manageable summer season. This moment brings a short-lived breath of confidence that I did it right this year. Once summer comes, regardless of our preparations, everything just grows too quickly, visitors are curious and demanding and our students inquisitive and persistent. We are learning to hold on, knowing there will be a brief mid-summer pause between haying, harvesting and working the fields with our students. This pause lasts from three days to a week, before the summer crowds



*continued on next page*

## Tried and True – Education Programs at Stonewall Farm

Marci Birkes, Stonewall Farm

Any teacher can tell you that the quality of education experiences is directly affected by the number of students. This also holds true on a farm. Planting a seed or visiting a newborn calf has a very different feel when done with 10 students versus 30. When your mission includes providing as many students as possible with enriching farm experiences, a structured rotation system is key to providing the greatest number of students with quality small-group experiences. At Stonewall Farm, all of our programs rotate students through various stations that each accommodates 10–20 students at a time.

The two programs described here draw several thousand students to our farm in October and February. By addressing curriculum standards and connecting to classroom work, they have become a valuable part of units developed by area teachers, many of whom return year after year. If you are interested in more detail for each program, or complete lesson plans, please call Stonewall Farm at 603-357-7278. 🍅🌿

### PUMPKINS are the GREATEST

This program for younger students celebrates fall on the farm, exploring life cycles, plant growth and simple machines. Each station lasts about 30 minutes, creating a program that easily accommodates 60 children in an hour and a half.

#### STATION 1: The Great Pumpkin

A right of passage for all instructors at Stonewall Farm is spending at least one morning in the pumpkin patch wearing a giant pumpkin suit. The sleeping Great Pumpkin wakes up to tell her life story from seed to pumpkin, then sends her young audience on their way to help pollinate pumpkin flowers, for which each earns a small pie pumpkin to take home.

#### STATION 2: Cider Making

Students make observations about the cider mill, followed by a demonstration. Then each student places apples from a bin into the mill and waits for the first drops of cider to hit the waiting pail. Outside, students enjoy a cup of cider and a pumpkin cookie.

**STATION 3:** No fall field trip is complete without a horse-drawn hayride through the forest and fields!

### ICE HARVESTING

This program focuses on a traditional New England industry that has virtually disappeared. Stations 1 & 2 last 40 minutes each and accommodate 10 students. At station 3, the class gathers indoors to warm up and end their farm experience with a tasty treat.

#### STATION 1: The Museum

Our large collection of antique ice harvesting equipment and industry memorabilia helps guide students through 'growing' ice to door-to-door sales, focusing on the lives of the people who worked in the industry and the dangers inherent to it.

#### STATION 2: The Ice

Students harvest ice on our small pond using antique tools. They cut a block with an ice saw, then work as a team with a large boom to lift the block to the harvester and scale.

#### STATION 3: Insulation

Students must solve the ice harvester's dilemma of keeping ice through the summer: they can earn an ice-cream treat only after it spends 3 minutes in a 500°F oven. Beaten egg white is the solution that sets students making a version of Baked Alaska.

## 2008 Events Calendar

Check the FBEA website for details  
[www.farmbasededucation.org](http://www.farmbasededucation.org)

### February FBEA Winter Workshop

Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture, Pocantico Hills, NY

### April FBEA Spring Workshop TBD

#### April 20 & 21

#### Project Seasons for Farmers:

*Digging Deeper into Farm Education*  
Shelburne Farms, Shelburne, VT

#### June 22-26

#### ALHFAM Annual Conference and Meeting

Association of Living History, Farms & Agricultural Museums. Ottawa, Canada [www.alhfam.org/index.php](http://www.alhfam.org/index.php)

### August FBEA Summer Workshop

Hawthorne Valley Farm, Ghent, NY

### October FBEA Fall Workshop

the FARM Institute, Edgartown, MA

#### October 4-8

#### Community Food Security Coalition Conference,

Philadelphia, PA  
[www.foodsecurity.org](http://www.foodsecurity.org)

#### October 19 & 20

#### Project Seasons for Farmers:

*The ABC's of Farm Education*  
Shelburne Farms, Shelburne, VT

#### October 21-25

#### National Preservation Conference

National Trust for Historic Preservation, Tulsa, OK [www.nthpconference.org](http://www.nthpconference.org)

*"Summer Camp" continued from p.3*

double, the heat intensifies and we begin to worry if we can irrigate, sleep, eat, harvest, and teach enough to keep up with the demands.

Hidden within our faith and persistence is our planning and management process. We begin planning just after Labor Day for the next summer, starting with a week-long evaluation of everything we do with our entire core staff, seasonal staff, volunteers and board members. In these sessions we're careful to separate out evaluation time and brainstorming time. The tone is open and constructive; we only explore what happened and then open the floor to generate creative ideas and next steps for the following year. During the fall we go back to our notes, collectively agree to what we can and will do the following season, draft work plans of who and how and then dig in and have the faith and persistence that the work is important enough, that we have the right support, the fields will be green and the sleep will eventually come. 🍓🌿



## FBEA Board

**Chair: Megan Camp**, Vice President and Program Director, Shelburne Farms, Shelburne, VT  
**Marci Birkes**, Education Director, Stonewall Farm, Keene, NH  
**Wayne Castonguay**, Farm Manager, The Farms of the Trustees of Reservations, Ipswich, MA  
**Erin Cinelli**, Exec. Dir., Spannocchia Foundation, Portland, ME  
**Patch Connors**, Asst. Director, The Farm School, Athol, MA  
**Brian Donahue**, Trustee, Spannocchia Foundation, Portland, ME, & Co-Founder, Land's Sake, Weston, MA  
**Sam Feldman**, Founder & Chairman of the Board, The FARM Institute, Edgartown, MA  
**Judy Fink**, Education Programs Director, Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture, Pocantico Hills, NY  
**Matthew Goldfarb**, Exec. Dir., The FARM Institute, Edgartown, MA  
**Ben Holmes**, Director & Founder, The Farm School, Athol, MA  
**Dana Hudson**, Farm-to-School Coordinator, Shelburne Farms, Shelburne, VT  
**Nena Johnson**, Public Programs Director, Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture, Pocantico Hills, NY  
**David Kahn**, Executive Director, North American Montessori Teachers Association; Founding Program Director, Hershey Montessori Farm School  
**Grey Lee**, Executive Director, Land's Sake, Weston, MA  
**Tia Pinney**, Teacher/Naturalist/Adult Education Coordinator, Drumlin Farm, Lincoln, MA  
**Rachel Schneider**, General Management Group, Hawthorne Valley Farm, Ghent, NY  
**Louise Schorn Smith**, Board of Directors, Maysie's Farm Conservation Center, Glenmoore, PA  
**Michele Wales**, Farm Program Coordinator, DE Nature Society, Hockessin, DE

## FBEA Advisory Board

**Michael Ableman**, Farmer, Author, Photographer & Founder of the Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens, British Columbia, Canada  
**Rolf Diamant**, Superintendent, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller, National Historical Park, Woodstock, VT  
**Daphne Derven**, Program Dir., Northwest Youth Corp, Eugene, OR  
**Scott Stokoe**, Organic Farm Manager, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH  
**John H. Vogel, Jr.**, Adjunct Professor of Business Administration; Associate Faculty Director, Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth, Hanover, NH



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