



Many Hands Organic Farm and Sustainability Center

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Dear friends of the Many Hands Sustainability Center,



Using tarps (background) instead of tillage preserves soil carbon, final hoeing prepares seed beds.

This year has been our best in many ways. The wonderful weather resulted in abundant early pollination for our fruit trees, longer frost-free seasons for our vegetables, and drier fields for our pastured animals. The unplanned kelp bounty (we received 14 tons of the stuff in early July) uncovered a potent feed additive for hens, us and the soil. Staff, working share-holders and volunteers seemed especially focused and competent. Many hands do make a farm!

The Many Hands Sustainability Center, our non-profit arm, has been in existence since 2007 and supports our food donation program as well as our small farm research and education work. We are asking for your support.

Among the great satisfactions of small farming – apprenticing in creation, getting plenty of exercise, providing others a valuable product, ceaseless learning and new challenges – is the fact that farms can be community resources. This year we had student groups helping and studying from as close as Clark in Worcester and as far away as Hamilton in New York. WPI drones are measuring



Every work day includes a lunch made with farm food.

moisture in our fields. In the spring there was a student group almost every week. Our flexible staff helped not only make their stays memorable for the students but also productive for the farm in a time of year where there is no end to work.



Jack talks with students who are eager to learn more about small farming and our experience doing it.

Our long-term relationship with the Stetson School in town allows those teens to master simple work skills every Monday all year-long. Many Hands welcomes retired couples who are enjoying a weekly garden date as well as young mothers bringing home-schooled kids out to take on chores. Besides our regular 6-8 paid part time staff,



Stetson students help move and stack cordwood, our source for cooking, home heating, and hot water



All ages and abilities are welcome here. We try to find something everyone can do to help.

If food is medicine, then what we put in our mouths largely defines our health. And our nation is not doing a very good job of succeeding at that. Over a third of American youth are overweight or obese; for adults it is more like three-quarters. We need more people growing and eating healthy, simple unprocessed food. Not only do we raise the highest quality food, but we serve breakfast and lunch every work day and

our sometimes reliable and sometimes intermittent volunteers bring at least another 6-8 folks to the farm on a daily basis.

We continue to grow our relationship with the Woo Community Fridges in Worcester where this year MHSC supporters paid for and MHOF provided 16 CSA shares for 26 weeks. Local residents are often lined up for a chance at our produce.



Volunteers process food, move chickens and collect eggs send everyone home with a large “share” of food each week. It is our vision that every town should have several active farms of this sort.

As more of our Central Massachusetts towns become bedroom communities and local businesses are supplanted by mega malls with global outlets, it is important that we retain neighborhood small farms for food security, for good health, and for economic independence.

Our weekly farm newsletter is packed with farming and health information, and often some political comment too. We stay connected with over 1000 folks in this way.

Consider how you can become involved. Your donation is tax deductible. You can send a check to MHSC, 411 Sheldon Road, Barre, MA 01005 or use this [link](#). Or would you like to volunteer occasionally? Thanks for your help!

Sincerely, Jack and Julie



The farm looks almost magical on a cool summer morning shortly after dawn,