



2022 Annual Review

Keep farming. Feed people. Build community.

Over 13 years of farming we've experienced extremes of all kinds. We know that significant weather events can occur in every month of the year. In 2021 we had massive rainfall in each month of summer, from June to September. This summer, hardly a drop. 2022 was among the hottest and driest we've experienced, with most of the state the same. We build flexibility into our planning to adapt throughout the season as needed. While this year's conditions presented a significant challenge, we were prepared, and delivered bountiful harvests of high-quality produce to our nearly 300 summer Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscribers.



**Farmers
Alanna Gilbert
and MC Whelan
at Dinner
on the Farm**

Photo Credit: Chris Randall Photography

We offered sliding scale CSA pricing for the first time in 2022, allowing people to choose the pricing tier that fits best for them, ensuring nobody is turned away for lack of funds. Sliding scale pricing engages the community in Community Supported Agriculture, helping to make our produce accessible to more people while covering costs of operation. We also began accepting EBT cards as payment for our products, and we're



Photo Credit: Chris Randall Photography

**Farm director Steve Munno
with board member Bob Tucker**

working on making it possible to use EBT cards for online payment in 2023.

The flock of laying hens we introduced last year continued to scratch and forage in our pasture, living in an integrated solar-powered system. To support the chickens over winter, we improved their acreage, we leveraged National Resources Conservation Service and CT Department of Agriculture grant funds to install a bioswale, electricity and a frost-free hydrant. And we owe a big "thank you" to the Haynes Group, who was a key partner in completing this work.

"I have been coming to the farm since the moment I heard of it. From the freshest of carrots to the crunch of beans you pick yourself, every week is a special treat of honestly grown produce. And purslane, who knew? I hope to come to Massaro for the rest of time!"

— Debbie Fried, CSA subscriber

Organic FARMING

FARM EDUCATION

Since farm-based education launched in 2012, we have sought ways to provide opportunities for individuals and families to stay engaged with the farm from youth through adulthood. In 2022, the 28 distinct youth and adult programs offered everything from beekeeping to bird watching, from maple tapping to field sketching. Summer camp returned for six weeks and hosted 225 campers.

If the last two years have taught us anything it's how nurturing our connection to the land and each other can be. This was evident from the 25 home-schooled students who returned for weekly programs and 80 students who attended after-school programming. We experienced a resurgent interest in field trips and hosted 10 groups over eight weeks this fall.



Marinara Taste Test at Branford High School

We also saw an expansion of Massaro's farm-to-school connection thanks to the recently enacted CT Farm to CT Schools legislation. Branford School District purchased marinara sauce for its cafeteria made solely with heirloom farm tomatoes. We also developed a close relationship with West Haven Child Development Center, which received 90 seedlings for their school garden, two garden instruction classes, two CSA shares, five online cooking classes and farm field trips for 85 preschoolers. We expect this partnership to continue in 2023.



Keeping goats cool in the summer heat

"Since discovering Massaro Farm last Summer our family has fallen in love with their programs and generosity to the community. The counselors at Massaro Farm were excellent in providing a safe, caring and nurturing learning environment for the kids. As a mom providing weekly food demonstrations there, the ability to contribute to learning was appreciated!"

*-- Lisa McManus,
Summer camp parent*



Tasting farm produce is a regular part of educational programming



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Massaro continued its food security efforts to support local families. Food donations included just over of 5,000 pounds of produce and ~200 dozen eggs. The farm continued to support twelve community gardens across Ansonia, Derby, Shelton, Seymour and Oxford. Two gardens in Ansonia and one in Seymour are planning to expand in 2023.

"I so enjoyed my time spent at Massaro Farm this past summer as an arts & crafts instructor (as well as a parent). It was wonderful to see a diverse group of counselors assisting the campers. The farm provides a rich invaluable experience for children. I wish all students could experience life on the farm. Massaro continues to grow a rich program that is ever more important in this day and age."

-- Ana Henriques, instructor/camp parent



*New Learning Garden Pavillion
nears completion thanks to
Emmett O'Brien Technical School students.*

The farm is grateful to partner with students of Emmett O'Brien Technical School in the construction of a 24' x 32' post-and-beam pavilion. The pavilion will provide much needed weather protection for farm staff and serve as a gathering space for educational programs. Additionally, these students are gaining valuable experience for their future in the workplace.

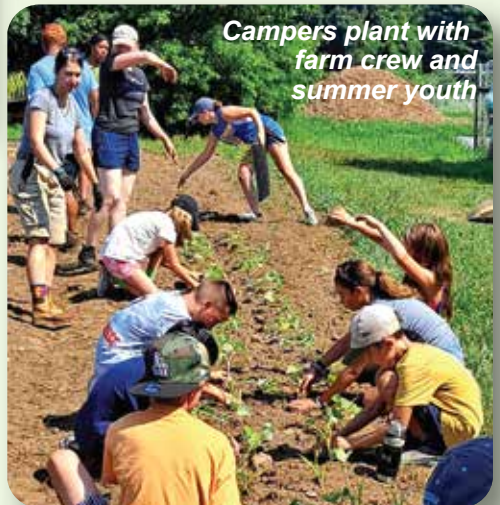
Farm and youth crew with camp staff



Led by experienced farmers MC Whelan and Cass Darrow, 10 youth (from Ansonia, Orange, Seymour, and Woodbridge) took part in the farm's summer youth employment program this year. During their 10 weeks with us, this team was largely responsible for the several tons of summer squash and cucumbers harvested on the farm.

Highlights for the students - Alexandra, Aliah, Bella, Bobby, Faith, Halvor, Maddie, Morrigan, Steven and Zeke - included each of them facilitating a staff workshops on a topic of their choosing, consisting of the right to healthy food, the enrichment of animals on a farm, and mental health for farmers.

*Campers plant with
farm crew and
summer youth*



FARM EVENTS

Participating in one of four community-wide events hosted by the farm each year is a wonderful way to get to know us. Hundreds attend free family movie nights and outdoor concerts where everyone gathers on the lawn and there are often crafts for young children. **Celebrate Spring**, when we recognize the opening of the season with a **Maypole Dance** and **Fairy House Trail** curated by local artisans can draw over 500 visitors.

Join our team of two dozen who ride annually in the **Rock-to-Rock Earth Day** event or be sure you're one of the lucky 150 guests who attend the annual farm-to-table dinner, **Dinner on the Farm**. The latter two also serve as important fundraisers for the farm.

Farm events are also an opportunity to shine a light on the many Massaro community partners. In 2022, we hosted over 20 vendors in our first-ever vendor fair. In addition to being a venue for artisans emerging from two years of pandemic-related restrictions, we collaborated with businesses like **Pretty Little Witchcraft** and **Happily Ever Farmhouse**, food trucks like **Addeo's Fire and Ice** and **Cafe Rebelde Coffee Truck**, among others. Whatever your interests, there is sure to be something for you and your family to enjoy on the farm.



*Farm staffers Ariel and Maia pose for
**Celebrate Spring and
Fairy House Trail***



*Farmer Steve and family
Rock to Rock*



Photo Credit: Chris Randall Photography

***Farm tours are
a way for folks
to connect food
choices with
climate change***

***"I got to meet new people and friends. I learned
about special, new, cool bugs that I didn't know about." - Jonah, age 9***

VOLUNTEERS & TEAM BUILDING

The farm's success has always depended on the generosity of volunteers. This year we welcomed over 300 volunteers from across the region. This included a new wave of volunteerism in the form of businesses interested in connecting employees with their philanthropic efforts.

Massaro applauded employee volunteers from Citizens Bank, Elevance Health, The Henkel Group, Newtown Savings Bank, and nationally-recognized Daily Harvest. These corporate groups provided much needed farm support; 15 group volunteer hours completed large projects like de-vining trees, planting, weeding, and mulching. The 275 employee volunteers were also able to enjoy social time on the farm removed from the confines of the office while enjoying the beauty of the farm. Student volunteers from Choate, Quinnipiac, Wesleyan and Yale contributed an additional 12 group volunteer hours.

Going forward, group volunteer efforts can greatly support our farm staff by contributing many hands at key times of the year like spring and fall. This lightens our load and provides an opportunity to many who don't know about the farm to get to know us and experience the effort behind local food production. It also connects individual altruism with the farm's efforts to distribute more healthy produce to those who need it most.



*Daily Harvest Corporate
Team Building Day*

Thank You for Your Support!

Ways to Give

Gifts of any size are welcome and can be made via check, Paypal or Venmo. Consider a planned gift or contribute to one of our endowment funds:

- **The Get Outdoors and Enjoy Nature Fund** - established by Louisa Cunningham and Bill Kelly
- **The Massaro Farm Legacy Fund** - established by Paul and Judy DeCoster
- **The Jon Gorham Sustainability Fund** - established by John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker

"It's very important that local food banks receive fresh produce. It is important that children see where their food comes from."

*-- Toni Anne Cassidy
Seymour Oxford Food Bank*



We encourage you to sign up for our bi-weekly email newsletter to receive current news about upcoming farm events and programming.

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