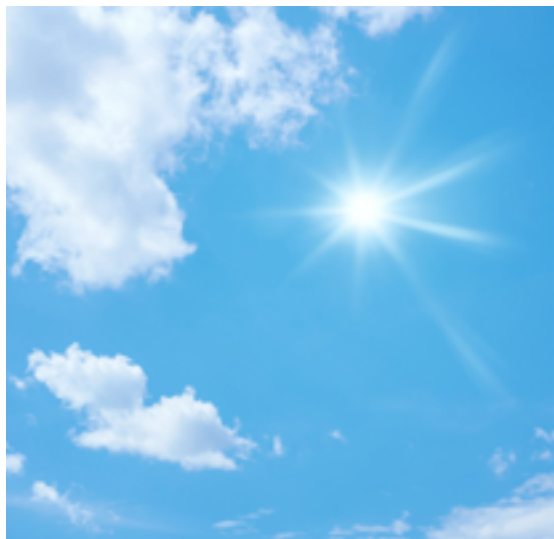


JULY '25

SOLID GROUND NEWSLETTER



Summer Update

Things have been relatively quiet at the Solid Ground office these days. We are all finding time on our farms to focus on growing, caring for livestock, and trying to sell our products at numerous farmers markets. However, we are still thinking about you too! As we are farming, we thinking about the skills and knowledge that we wish we had during these summer days and will bring that information back to our team meetings in the fall.

But perhaps you are also feeling the clarity of your needs as a farmer during this season! As we think about the next season of trainings, we encourage you to reach out to [any of our staff](#) to give them ideas about what would be helpful for us to implement in the next training season. From fencing to irrigation to sales, we want to be here to support what you need the most, as farmers. So feel free to reach out and share your ideas!

[Email your ideas HERE](#)

[Summer Update](#)

[Skill Shares: Livestock Rotational Grazing](#)

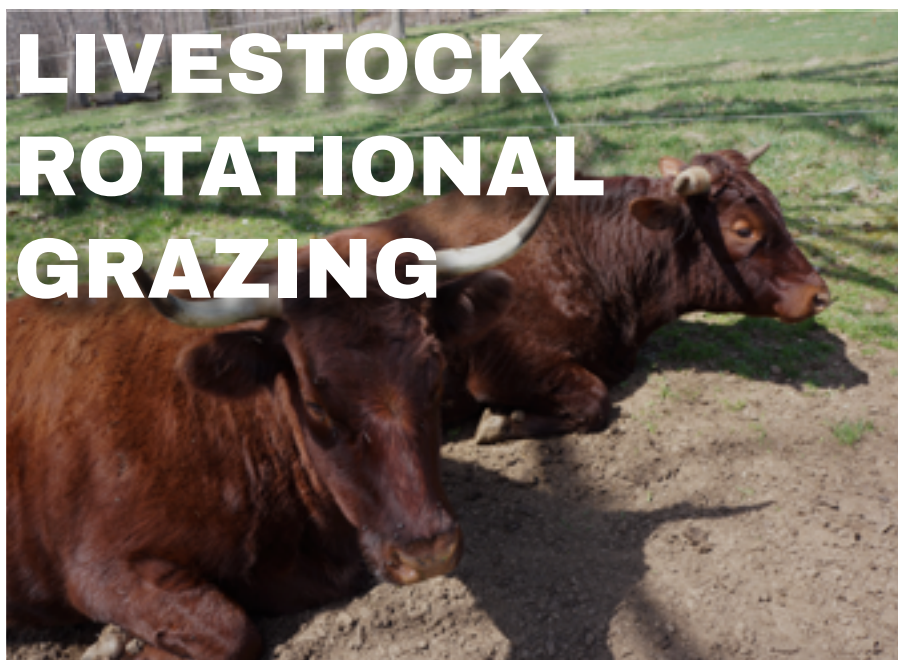
[July Farm Tasks](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[TOPP Corner](#)

[DIY Humane Animal Handling Video Series](#)

[Partner Highlights](#)



For livestock, or potential livestock farmers, get a great chance to visit 2 farms that are actively working to incorporate rotational grazing into their farm plan (and learn from their experience), but also get the opportunity to hear from the Grass Whisperer himself- Troy Bishop.

At each farm, participants will go on a pasture walk and get instruction on how to calculate correct size paddocks for rotational grazing, forage/dry matter calculations and how to utilize rotational grazing fencing. See more info on the next page or at the link below. Registrations will close August 4th at 5pm

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

Small Farms Innovations Project

A participation stipend, technical assistance and up to \$2,000 in supplies will be provided to support farmers who are currently, or are working toward, financially supporting themselves through their agricultural careers and are looking to create innovative solutions to issues on the farm.

[Deadline to apply: July 15](#)

SOLID GROUND Upcoming Events

[Building a High Tunnel](#)

Date: Monday, July 21st

Time: 8pm-4pm (lunch included)

Location: Brown Farm, Scotland

Cost: \$10

[Livestock Twilights- Rotational Grazing \(2 sessions\)](#)

1st Session-

Date: Wed, Aug. 6th

Time: 5:30pm -8pm (pizza dinner provided)

Location: Hidden Blossom Farm, Union

2nd Session-

Date: Wed. Aug 13th

Time: 5:30pm -8pm (pizza dinner provided)

Location: High Silo Farm, New Hartford

Flower Farming Twilights 2 sessions in September, sign ups coming soon!

*Muddy Feet Flower Farm,
Ashford*

5:30-7:30

*Appleberry Farm,
Sandy Hook*

5:30-7:30

JULY FARM TASKS: MANAGING HEAT ON THE FARM

We've already tackled so much heat this season, but we know that more heat waves are on their way. So if you haven't thought about the best steps to take for your livestock, farm crew and yourself when the heat hits big, let's get you that info.

[CT Department of Ag put out a notice](#) about the stress that heat can cause on animals and provided several steps that farmers can take to prevent animals from being stressed or becoming ill from excessive heat. These include:

- Provide ample shade based on herd size & moveable structures for rotation.
- Maximize airflow with natural breezes or ag-rated enclosed fans.
- Use misters or sprinklers for extra cooling.
- Keep drinking water clean and shaded.
- Move or work animals during cooler hours.
- Reduce fire risk: avoid overloaded circuits, hot equipment in barns, and improperly cured hay.

In addition to keeping our animals cool, is important that we consider ourselves, the farmers, who are caring for our plants or animals. [UConn has put out notes \(pg. 47\)](#) for anyone that is working outdoors:

- Acclimate gradually to heat by increasing time in hot conditions.
- Drink 2-4 cups of water per hour; don't wait until you're thirsty.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and sugary drinks.
- Replace salt lost through sweat with sports drinks if needed.
- Use broad-spectrum sunscreen and reapply as directed.
- Schedule tasks early to avoid peak heat (11 a.m.-4 p.m.).
- Wear a wide-brimmed, ventilated hat and light, loose clothing.
- Take breaks in air-conditioned spaces when possible.
- Remind coworkers to hydrate and cool off regularly.
- Get medical help if anyone shows signs of heat illness (cramps, nausea, headache).

Keep all these things in mind and be sure to take care of yourself and your team!

- The Solid Ground Team



This project is supported by USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Award 2023-49400-40870 supported by USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Award 2023-49400-40870

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Upcoming:

Partner Events

[Grains & Staples CSA Programs:](#) July 15th, online- 2PM to 3:30PM

[Tax Education for Growing Small Businesses:](#) July 15th, online- 1PM to 3PM

[Soil Health and Reduced Tillage Day:](#) July 16th, Massaro Community Farm, Woodbridge- 4PM to 6PM

[Grow Together Nights: Value Added Products:](#) July 29th, The GOOD Farm, Columbia- 6PM to 8PM

[COC Elections Local Workshop:](#) July 29th, 1185 New Litchfield St, Torrington- 10AM. RSVP by clicking the link to email Aimee Fusco

Understanding PA 490 Webinar
Introduction to Farm Estate Planning:
[Aug 7th](#) & [Sept 9th](#), online- 6PM to 9PM

Pastured Livestock & Rotational Grazing (Eastern CRAFT), Aug 18th, BOTL Farm, Ashford- 4PM to 6:30PM

[Soil Health 3 Ways](#), Starting Sept 10th with 4 sessions, Online and In-person



Now accepting applications for Fall Mentorship! Who is this program intended for? Anyone that is:

- interested in organic farming and has owned a farm business for at least 2 years AND wants to get certified, or has just gotten certified on your own (you can apply to become a mentee)
- already certified (for at least 3 yrs) and you feel like you have some valuable lessons to share (you can apply to be a mentor to someone that wants to pursue organic farming practices)
- interested in providing guidance on specific topics, skills, or areas of interest to farmers who are transitioning to organic methods.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor or mentee, CT NOFA will connect you with another farm and support you through the process for a year. Farmers on both ends are matched with folks that best fit their operations so that the work is relevant to your business goals.

So if this sounds like you, and what you want for your farm, check out the link below for more info, or email sherlene@ctnofa.org

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Northeast Farm Transition Survey

The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development (NERCRD) and its collaborators are seeking farmers in the Northeast U.S. to complete a survey about farm transition, succession planning, and generational change. This survey is an opportunity to share your insights on the challenges and successes of farm transition, succession planning, and generational change. Your feedback will directly impact programs and policies aimed at supporting farmers through transition processes. DUE July 31

[Fill out the survey here](#)



DIY HUMANE ANIMAL HANDLING

Video Highlight

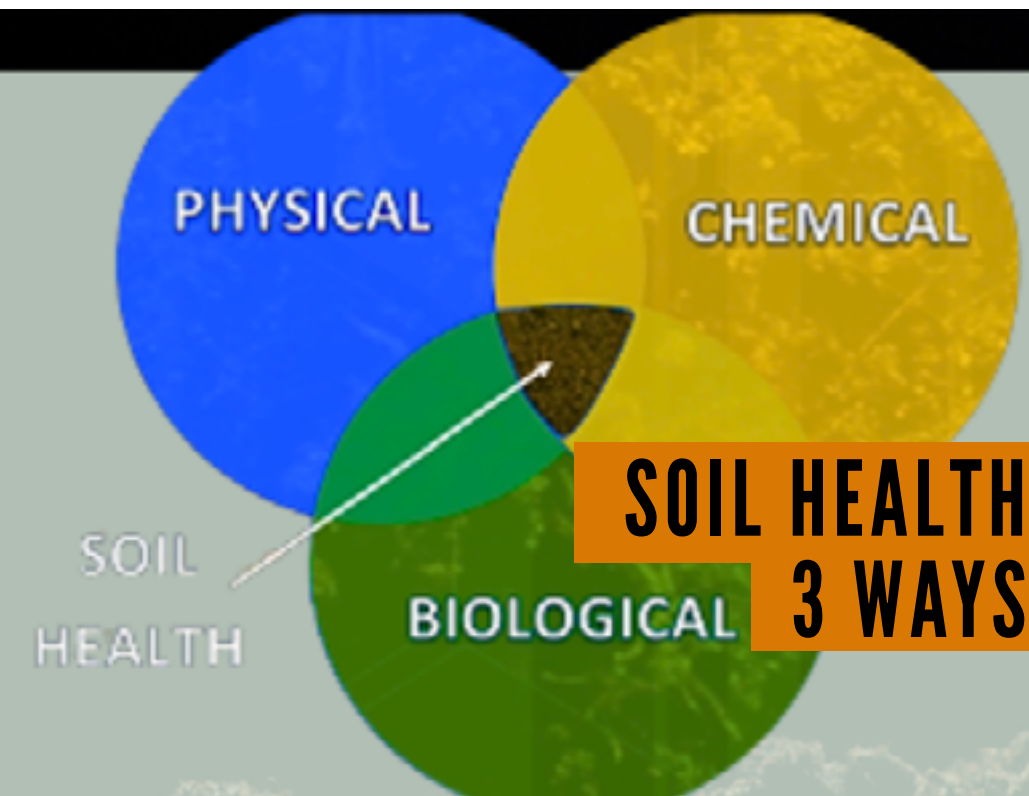
As part of our DIY series, we visited a couple farms in the state that have DIY'ed some of their essential parts of managing their livestock. We love the different, innovative infrastructure and tools they created to keep their livestock safe and make their lives a little easier. These range from a portable feed dispenser, shelters, water distribution hacks, and more. Check them out and see if there is a DIY project that fits your livestock operation.

[View the Videos here](#)



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CT NOFA SOIL CLASS THIS FALL

CT NOFA is offering a 4-week intensive course for farmers and gardeners that will study the physical, chemical, and biological properties of healthy living soil, with instructor Monique Bosch. Using this as a framework, attendees will apply knowledge by learning growing methods that work with nature to produce healthy plants and nutrient-dense food. If you have taken the microscopy course offered last year, this would be the perfect follow up to understand your soils. The dates and topics are as follows

Online Sessions

Week 1 – (Wednesday, September 10th, 6 – 7:30 pm):

Physical Properties of Soil

Week 2 – Wednesday, September 17th, 6 – 7:30 pm:

Chemical Properties of Soil

Week 3 – Wednesday, September 24th, 6 – 7:30 pm:

Biological Properties of Soil

In-Person Session

Week 4 – Saturday, September 27th, 10 am – 1 pm

The Hickories Farm in Ridgefield, CT

[Find Out More](#)



For questions surrounding this newsletter,
please reach out to rebecca.toms@uconn.edu

Is Agrotourism a Good Fit For Your Farm?

Agritourism is defined as a commercial activity, conducted on a working farm, that is designed for visitor enjoyment and provides supplemental income for the farmer. It offers farms a valuable opportunity to diversify their income, by welcoming visitors for unique on-farm experiences. These can be as simple as a farmstand and as complex as a summer day camp! If you are interested in learning more about how you farm might integrate agrotourism into your farm, check out this recent factsheet put out by UConn Extension to consider the ins and outs.

[READ THE FACTSHEET HERE](#)

FSA County Committee Election

FSA county committees are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA and allow grassroots input and local administration of federal farm programs. The committees are made up of three to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Nomination forms are available on the FSA website or from the FSA county office. Forms must be postmarked or delivered to the FSA office by Aug. 1, 2025. Voting takes place this fall, and new members and alternates will take office on Jan. 1, 2026. Nominate yourself or someone else to impact your local area today!

[Info About Nominations Here](#)