



Annual Report 2022 ~ 2023

July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

Strong Family Farm, Inc.
Respecting Roots & Growing for the Future.

ON THE COVER:

This is the 10th year for SFF's Backyard Chicken Program. Children and their families learn everything about chickens from safety and predators to egg production.

About Strong Family Farm

Strong Family Farm, Inc. (SFF), is a private non-profit 501c(3) organization. Organized in 2013, the purpose of forming the organization was, and is to take responsible ownership of the historic Strong Family Farm with the goals of preservation, agricultural and local historical education as well as modern programming designed appeal to all segments of our population.

OUR MISSION:

Our mission is to provide a historic agricultural learning center where children, families, individual and community groups can experience an authentic family farm environment.

OUR VISION:

Our vision is to provide the community with a place to go that:

- ▶ preserves the area's rich farming tradition
- ▶ educates all about agriculture, and
- ▶ allows families to meet and embrace the tradition of farming life

A place that will be not only a learning tool, but also:

- ▶ rekindle fond memories for older generations,
- ▶ interests everyone who visits, and
- ▶ inspire children with the experience of farming life.

The farm will preserve agricultural tradition and create a space for memories to be made, while preserving and enhancing the character of the historic Strong Family Homestead.





A Word From Our President

Dear Fans and Supporters of Strong Family Farm,

Another year of success and progress for the Strong Family Farm! We continue to see a wonderful and dedicated group of volunteers return. This year, Nancy Strong and the board have hired Jen Smith to support leading and carrying out the work Nancy created to maintain and grow a healthy, focused, and energetic organization.

This past year has been wonderful and exciting. The enormity of the progress cannot really be expressed in the short bullet points below:

► **WE'RE EXCITED TO SHARE: WE HIRED A PART-TIME EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IN JEN SMITH.** She brings current trends in the world of non-profit management, as well as a commitment to agriculture and sustainability. We are lucky to have her here at Strong Family Farm!

► **WE RECEIVED A WONDERFUL "GOOD TO GREAT" grant from CT Humanities: \$107,870 for alterations to the yellow barn.** An enormous success for us!

► **WE'VE TURNED OVER OPERATIONS OF OUR Farm Store to True North Farm.** This allows us to concentrate on our mission with more focus. And it brings a new spirit and enthusiasm, and greater product selection to the store. True North are excellent partners for us. Please support them as you supported us through the 7 years we ran the store.

► **WE ARE CONTINUING OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH "Mon Soleil" as a pickup point for their CSA.** This program brings all kinds of fresh local produce to the CSA clients. You can buy Deborah's extra produce and more in the farm store.

► **WE CONTINUED OUR OWN "HOME GROWN" EVENTS.** The Chicken Run continues to be a popular spring event. The Harvest Festival is scheduled for October 22nd. "Sundays at the Farm" program continues with its mix of special events with farm animal visits. Something for everyone who stops by.

► **STRONG FARM CONTINUES TO BE GOOD STEWARDS** of our "heritage." We are collaborating with a farmer to renovate the parcel on West Road back into a farmable field and continue the farming on the Route 30 parcel.

► **BACKYARD CHICKEN PROGRAM CONTINUES.** The chickens are a learning experience every year and an attraction for every visitor.

► **OUR BEES ARE PROSPERING THIS YEAR.** We have 2 healthy and productive hives.

We will continue to progress. But let us remember what came before us and bring that strength, direction, focus, hard work and thought into the future. We have an organization that we can be proud of, the Town can be proud of and, if I dare say, Norman and Geraldine Strong would be proud of. We reap what we have sown, and the Strong Family Farm is the result of what has been sown before us. We continue to sow, and we see the truth of this statement in the progress made, preservation captured, and the programs and events held at the Strong Family Farm! Here's to a wonderful and vibrant future.

Brian Motola, PRESIDENT, STRONG FAMILY FARMS





From Our Executive Director

To our Members, Donors, Partners, Volunteers, and Sponsors:

The past year has been chock-full of opportunities for Strong Family Farm and for the communities we serve. From the start of my role as the Executive Director at Strong Family Farm until now, I have been talking with our community members, our partners on the farm, and our partnerships supporting our work with their talent, funding, and time. Connecting with each of you is a process you can participate in too! (*please see the short survey leaflet*) Thank you for giving your voice to our mission. Hearing your why for supporting SFF is truly inspiring.

As the fiscal year comes to end, programs are in full swing! We are delighted to celebrate our collective impact together as we gear up for another amazing year.

- ▶ Thanks to CT Humanities and CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), SFF is one of 34 Good to Great Grant 2.0 recipients to fulfill phase two of our capital project — certifying occupancy in the yellow barn structure for events and installing the first onsite bathroom facilities. This three year endeavor will be reimbursed by the state in phases. It is a project that will take our historic and cultural site from good to great!
- ▶ For the first time on our farm, we welcomed not one but two field trips for students ranging from Kindergarten to 5th grade from Northeast School and Vernon Youth Services. A huge thank you to our volunteers who made lasting memories for 55 students and their happy teachers and chaperones! We are excited to do more.
- ▶ We are fortunate to welcome, four new board members to strengthen our mission. Who are they? Find their testimonials in our report.
- ▶ With over 2,000 visitors to the farm in 2022,

volunteers create a fun experience for all. For us to grow deeper roots in our community we were funded by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for our volunteer retention program. We will be creating deeper impact together through new tools and training for over 240 volunteer individuals and groups.

Strong partnerships are everything. We are so excited to be partnering with you to continue preserving our family farm community for you to enjoy and care for while protecting it for our future generations.

Thank you all for planting the seed at the heart of our values—education, cultivation, community, history, and the environment.

As Nancy Strong’s mom, Geraldine, used to say, “I think it’s important that people remember their roots.” We can’t wait to see what fruit (and veggies) we will harvest together!

Jen Smith, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



“Thank you all for planting the seed at the heart of our values — education, cultivation, community, history, and the environment.”

~ JEN SMITH





The Year in Review

Programs and activities from this past year include:

Educational Programs:

BACKYARD CHICKEN PROJECT

25 chickens representing five gentle breeds are clucking in the coop! Families with children in grades 1 through 5 are excited to learn how to raise chickens from our longtime expert, Alexis Carmicheal. Ambassador chickens make appearances on the farm and in Strong Family Farm children's books written by local author, Lori Sanchez. Eggs of all colors are sold in the farm store!

RAISED BED GARDENING

Erika Phillips stepped into the Garden Leader role for the program, and we now have four Mentors, including Master Gardener, Dan Gallagher, who helped start the program in 2019. All 18 beds

are rented for the 2023 season (last year we had a few unclaimed beds), and we expanded by building two new beds. We also started earlier this year, the first weekend in April; seven to eight gardeners attend weekly workshops that are especially designed from our newly created curriculum. In an effort to digitize the program to share with a wider audience, read more on our website's garden blog.

THE BEES

The Flower Power fundraiser was a success! This Spring we purchased two hives of Italian bees, each with a queen. Our beekeeper, Walt Moody, gave a demonstration to visitors to the farm when he installed the hives in April.

CHICKEN RUN

The 10TH Annual Run and Walk took place on a perfect morning on May 21st. We welcomed 161 runners and walkers of all ages at the starting line. Families included, well over 200 people were at the farm. This year, for our biggest annual fundraiser, we had a private match that doubled our 35 donors and sponsors' impact bringing in, \$17,740 total! We want to thank all our sponsors and donors for making this the most successful race to date.

SUNDAYS AT THE FARM

Through the CT Humanities/CT Department of Tourism Free Museum Pass, our program director Katie Riordan Naplitan coordinates a

summer full of fun free activities for all to visit and enjoy the farm, including visiting animals from Aussakita Acres Farm. She also developed a scavenger hunt that took visitors all over the farm and to have fun learning farm family history. This year has taken off with the 2nd annual Touch a Truck with over 180 people of all ages in attendance.

FARM STORE

Welcome, True North Farm! After two years of seeking a local farmer to collaborate on the running of the CT Grown Produce local farm store, we kicked off this year with Brenna and Derek Bridwell of True North Farm. Brenna has a Cottage Food License and makes all the tasty baked goods in the store and takes orders! Many of our vendors includ-

VISITING ADOPT-A-CHICKENS:

“[The kids] don't want to miss this, and I want it for them, too. They can't get this experience anywhere else.”

~ PARENT OF CHILDREN IN BACKYARD CHICKEN PROGRAM





The Year in Review: 2022-2023

ing Mon Soleil Market Produce and our own Claudia Steele's jams, salsa and relishes continue to be available. Stop by and say, "hi" and support this hard working family! Ask if you don't see something you want and they will get it for the store if they can.

SCARECROW CONTEST

All the community LOVES the Strong Family Farm Scarecrows. It started in 2012 while we all were working on starting the nonprofit. Our tradition can be seen in nearby towns and what fun it is. Stop by again this fall to see them all OR sign up to create one of your own. This simple old-fashioned contest awards only blue ribbons- everyone else comes in second place!

Educational Partnerships:

FIELD TRIPS

Northeast Elementary School 336 Kindergartners got excited for an introduction to plant science about

Milestone Capital Project Funded!

'Good to Great' News for SFF



Strong Family Farm was awarded the CT Humanities Good to Great grant to finish restoration of the barn and develop the old woodshed/outhouse into a historical exhibit, and additional facilities. These grants fund capital projects for nonprofit arts, cultural, or history organizations that connect art, history, and tourism to enhance visitors' experience of an arts or cultural venue and/or historic site. *(Read more on page 11)*

berries with Garden Leader, Erika Phillips. They met our ambassador chickens that make appearances on the farm and in Strong Family Farm children's books written by local author, Lori Sanchez. They made an animal craft to take home.

Vernon Youth Services 19 campers from grades 1 through 5 visited to explore garden insects, planted sunflowers, interacted with children's farm storytime read by our local author,

and met our goats in residence- Hootie and Annie.

HANDS-ON LEARNING

Rockville High School RHS Agricultural Science Technology Education (ASTE) program students continue to volunteer on the farm. Students can learn about plant science, honeybees and pollinators,

and small farm animals like chickens while developing real life skills with hands-on experience to build their resume for college and work. 4-H Meetings Host Site 6-7 families and their rabbits visit monthly to practice showcasing their animal for the 4-H Fair in August every year. The students and their families are all appreciated for volunteering at our events throughout the year.

CT Kids Club Summer Camp

Why do honeybees live in hives? Priscilla Cruz, owner of CT Kids with a degree in elementary education, teaches cooking, reading and math. She led a well attended week of summer on the farm in 2022. This summer she expanded from one week to nine; each week has a new farm theme offering five mornings of fun STEM learning for ages 5 through 9. Register online!

Community Partnerships:

GREATER IMPACT

SFF is a strong presence



THE SUNDAY PROGRAM:

"Was our first time ever visiting (and we drive by daily.) So cute. Can't wait to return."

~ SARA PEREIRA,
LOCAL CAREGIVER





around town. You can see or hear about us at: National Night Out, Trinity Lutheran Summer Camp, RHS guidance office Community Opportunity Fairs, Ready Set School Fair, the Belding Wildlife Management Area for the 3rd Grade FieldTrips, Rockville Public Library Community Welcome, and the Vernon Healthfest. We hosted Troop 20/20 Mulch Distribution Day and we are active members of Vernon Volunteers Collaborative along with 13 other Vernon non-profits creating greater impact together.

Follow us to find out more on our website, newsletter, and social media.

Fixtures on the Farm:

MEMORIAL ORCHARD

In April we had the new assistant Extension educator of fruit production and IPM at UConn tour the orchard. A few of our fruit trees didn't survive the wet seasons and extreme heat of recent summers,

NEW SFF BOARD MEMBER

Christina Damato



“Farms have long been the backbone of communities, teaching us how to connect with nature, preserve our land and nurture our bodies. As Vernon’s last historical farm in operation, I am grateful for the opportunity to support Strong Family Farm as a board member to continue to preserve it’s place in the community.”

so after we consult with a land use specialist we will be determining the best placement for new trees to thrive for your enjoyment.

FENCE POST MEMORIALS

Don't forget to take a stroll and see the names of our neighbors and friends who have supported the farm by sponsoring a new fence post or rail and remembering those dear to them on memorial plaques. It is a heartwarming experience. We have only 3 more posts to be donated but many more rails available. Funds will replace our old fencing.

STRONG FAMILY FARM

“PASTURES” Hytone Farm, farmed by the Perrachio family is bringing back the land for prime agricultural use. They are good stewards of the soil, (and distantly related to the Strong's through marriage)! The trails get maintained twice a year by our friend Robert Arthur and funded now by the many generous donations to the Morgan G. Strong Memorial Fund.

THE CIVIL WAR ERA RED

BARN Located on Route 30 and at the entrance to

the Hartford Tpk. the barn has a new foundation! John Gannon, of Gannon Enterprises, is a master craftsman at recreating the foundation with the rocks and mortar to recreate the period look of the building. This is the first on the list of repairs needed to save this historic barn. In the fall, we will be applying for the 1772 Grant again from CT Preservation to address the siding and window.

A Peak Into the Near Future

MUSEUM AREA

Nancy Strong has expressed that before she is gone, she wants to see a Strong Farm museum in the dairy part of the barn. This will document the history of an active local “family farm” through the decades starting at the beginning in 1878; the future project will trace the trials and tribulations facing not just the Strong's, but all the family farmers at the time.



THE CIVIL WAR DAY CAMP:

“This was the best home school camp experience my children ever had.”

~ MOTHER OF FIVE,
TORRINGTON, CT





2022-23 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is always looking for individuals who feel strongly about our work, to serve with the members of the Board on the Finance Committee, Programming Committee, Building/Grounds Committee, Garden Committee, Store Committee, Marketing/Publicity Committee and Fundraising Committee. If you are interested in joining any of these committees, please call or email info@strongfarm.org for more details.

We welcomed 4 new Board members this year who bring with them their expertise from the business world! We thank them for their countless hours away from their families and dedication to our mission!

Board of Directors

Brian Motola
PRESIDENT

Wendy Wanchak
VICE PRESIDENT

Claudia Steele
TREASURER

Nancy Strong
SECRETARY

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

Christina D'Amato
Don Bidwell
David Emery
Jenn Hunting
Dr. Ellen Marmer
Michael Nelson
Bruce Pfalzgraf

Jen Smith
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Katie Riordan Napolitan
PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR

Liz Bologna
COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Jen Manley
BOOKKEEPER



SFF FOUNDER

**Nancy Strong,
Secretary**



“My family has always been deeply seeded in the Vernon community, giving countless volunteer hours to the Town of Vernon in both its government and local organizations. They instilled in their children to always give back to your community without second thoughts and that it always takes a “Village” working together for the benefit of all. I am so proud and humbled that I can leave a legacy of this family farm to Vernon for all current and future generations to experience. Someone asked me what I like most about my job these past 10 years serving as Secretary for the Board and Interim Executive Director. There are many aspects that are fulfilling; but knowing our community family farm will forever be a farm and offer farm experiences to be shared with others is hands down the most gratifying. There are very few investments in life that are permanent. Preserving a family farm is one.”

“Thank you for all your hard work retaining Vernon’s rural heritage.”

- CONGRESSMAN JOE COURTNEY, SECOND DISTRICT OF CT





Thank You to Our Members

Thank you to all of the Strong Family Farm Members, Partners, Foundations, and Sponsors from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023

Pamela Abbott
 Chery J. Abbott
 Dale Abbotts
 George & Shirley Arthur
 Fred & Cherie Arzt
 Laurie Bajorek
 Tom & Donna Barnas
 Carol Barry
 Don Bellingham
 Charlotte Benson
 Maryann Bienkowski
 Kristina Blanchette
 Vincent & Peggy Bologna
 June Bray
 Sandee Brittain
 Laurie Brooks
 Linda and Dick Brown
 Paul Brown
 Richard & Annette Burgess
 Carol Burke*
 Cindy Butler
 Barbara Campbell
 Jerlyne & Christopher Caron
 George & Gail Carroll
 Richard & Antonia Carterud
 Cynthia Castagno
 Emily Aberle Champ
 Carol Chappel
 Phyllis Chase
 Charles & Carol
 Chatterton Family
 Donna Ciesnicki
 Richard & Julie Clay*
 Thomasina Clemons
 Cloudlinks LLC - P. Collins
 Michael & Cindy Colombaro
 Audrey & Joe Courtney
 Priscilla Cruz
 Mary DalPorto/Michael Fulks
 Linda Danehy
 Dottie Davies
 Jo-Ann Dean
 Dudley DeCarish Jr.
 John & Judith DelBene
 David & Janet Dexter
 Ellen Donadio
 Suzanne L. Dunlap
 Joe & Etienne Duplessie
 Miriam & Howard Epstein
 Matt Faherty
 Tim & Lynn Fahy
 Cynthia Ferguson
 Carol Formica
 Katherine Fowler
 Carol A. Gadbois
 Mary Gelezunas
 Shir Ginzberg
 Daryl-Lynne & Eric Gottier
 Barbara Greenleaf

Maureen Gregoire
 David Grunberg
 William & Diane Gutzmer
 Thomas & Linda Hamlin
 Lempi Hannaford
 Mary Ann Hanson
 Judy Hany
 Karl Hasel*
 Phil & Cindy Hays
 Cheryl Hazen
 Virginia Hickton
 Barbara Hinsdale
 Jean Hopkins
 John & Marcia Horan
 Lucille Horn
 Gordon Howard
 Nancy & Richard Huebner
 Bob & Lorraine Hurd
 Beverley Hyde
 Charles Iadaresta
 Karin James
 Claire Janowski
 Angela Johnson
 Kurt & Ann Johnson
 Lynn & Loyd Johnson
 Joyce Jordan / Dave Conant
 Barbara & Richard Jubinville
 Sandra Justin & James Sulzen
 Beth Kellogg
 George & Marge Kelly
 Judy & Russel Kelly, Jr.
 Devin & Melanie Keyes
 Lawrence King
 Susan & Frank Knorr
 Kurt & Kelly Knotts Family
 John Koziol
 Chris Kunz
 Peter Ladd
 Sara Landon
 Ed & Louann Landsberg Family
 Suzanne Langone
 Shirley Lanz
 Deborah Lavoie
 Daniel J. Leblanc
 Paige LeBlanc
 Stephen & Marsha Ledger
 David & Linda Lee

Ann & Bob Letendre
 Ron & Maryann Levesque
 Donald J. Lewie
 Kathleen Lewis
 Michael Lewis & Family
 Janel LoDolce
 Elizabeth Loglisci
 Jean & Bruce Luddy
 Victoria Madden
 Susan & James Malanga
 George Males
 Steve & Candy Malinoski
 Paul & Pat Margelony
 Mr. & Mrs. Carmine Margiotta
 Dr. Ellen Marmar
 Gloria Martocchio
 Sandra McNally
 Karen Meehan
 Gail Meyers & Ed Jaworski
 Gloria Miller
 Cassie Miller
 Nancy Mocadlo
 Lisa Moody
 Walter and Erin Moody
 Julio Morales Jr.
 Sylvia Morgan
 Beverly Morin
 Kirk & Maryann Morris
 Meredith Moseley
 Brian & Penny Motola
 Barbara Muldoon
 Jan & Tony Muro
 David Murphy
 Mike Nelson family
 Ann & Rich Nevelos
 Al & Marilyn Newton
 Wil & Julie Nicholson
 Frank & Claire Niederwerfer
 Karl and Sue Niederwerfer
 Marilyn Niederwerfer Cummings
 Ann Olcutt
 Bill & Millie Oliphant
 Nancy Orlovski
 Dorothy & Lee Paquette
 Amy & Gordon Patterson
 Blanche Percillo
 Becky & Ross Person

Bruce E. Pfalzgraf
 Eileen & Dick Phelps
 Erika Phillips & Dan Roper
 Charles & Kerry Piader
 Dennis & Karen Plevyak
 Wayne & Julie Polansky Family
 Glen Potter
 Scott & Beth Powell
 Dick & Barbara Quinby*
 Richard Jr. & Lisa Quinby*
 Beth Quinby Andresen*
 Wayne Reiske
 Barbara & Gordon Richmond
 Karen Montgomery Risley
 Jaime Rizner
 Anthony & Erin Rizzie
 Chris & Sue Robare
 Cecily Robinson
 Joseph H. Rodgers
 Jon Roe
 Jacqui & George Roraback
 Joanne & Winston Rose
 Blanche Ross
 Nancy Rowe-Huebner
 Sue Rubinstein
 Ruchin & Associates LLC
 Carol Rudert-Lyons
 Marjorie Sanborn
 Lori Sanchez
 Steven Scanlon Sr.
 Carl & Polly Schaefer
 Sherrie Schallack
 Tom Schirmer
 Marie Scinto
 Tina Seekins
 Susan Severson
 Thomas & Pegi Shea
 Al & Diane Sheridan
 Paul Shimer
 Ann & Tony Silvestro
 Barbro Simmons
 Ed & Carole Slattery
 Herbert Slicer
 Jen Smith
 Joel and Gail Sokolov
 Rose Spafford
 Elaine & Gary Spieker

Madeline St. Germain
 Vernon Police Association
 Richard & Claudia Steele
 Nancy Steffens/Bob Felber
 Catherine Steinnagel
 Mark & Molly Stephanou
 Nancy Strong*
 Bob & Kathy Sumislaski
 Elly Swan
 Tom & Lynn Sweet
 Sharon & Frank Tarala
 Richard & Ruth Tavolieri
 Don Tenerowicz*
 Elizabeth Thomas
 Lori Thomas
 David Thomas
 Valerie L. Thompson
 Nancy Traut
 Elizabeth & Donald Tremblay
 Ann Tremont
 Nancy & Steven Trinks
 Irene Turner
 Thaddeus Valenski
 Lisa Vivenzio
 Wendy Wanchak*
 Doreen Ward
 Betty & Bill Wardrop
 Theona Wheelock
 Dan & Isabelle Whelton
 Nancy Whitman
 Scott & Mandy Wieting
 Kimberly Wilkerson
 Deborah Winicki
 Michael & Phyllis Winkler
 John & Gloria Wraight
 Joanne Wright
 Lisa Young

**indicates Life members*

We are deeply sorry if we missed or misspelled your name, please contact us at info@strongfarm.org so we can make it right for future print.

NEW SFF BOARD MEMBER



Jenn Hunting

“What excites me most about being on the Strong Family Farm Board is being part of preserving a piece of agriculture in Connecticut for younger generations to learn through hands-on interactions. SFF is rich with stories and education around the role farming played, the practices they used and the evolution of why things changed.”





SFF Volunteers

Thanks to our faithful 2022-2023 volunteers

A heartfelt thank you to our growing volunteer family. Winston Churchill said that “We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.” All of the experiences available at the farm are due in large part to the remarkable work of our volunteers who come out to support the farm year after year. **WE CAN’T THANK YOU ENOUGH!** The work of non-profits, like ours, would cease without volunteers. Nonprofits would shut down and we would be much poorer culturally, historically, socially, educationally—you name it—without volunteers. From our volunteer Board of

Directors, historic architect (Thank you, Bob Hurd!), landscapers to our instructors, weeders, cleaners, sweepers, builders, shovelers, painters, exhibitors, fetchers, haulers, lifters and other do-gooders,

SFF runs on volunteers!

And volunteers run on a sometimes inadequate thanks but experience a sense of accomplishment and community participation. Our biggest thanks!

A Heartfelt Thanks to . . .

Treasurer, Claudia Steele, for her 9 years of service as Treasurer for Strong Family Farm. Claudia took us from a simple account in 2014 and created our Quickbooks account with all its complications with the development of the farm over the last 9 years. She also is in the kitchen creating the tasty jams and jellies for the farm store. We are excited to continue seeing her kitchen demonstrations at our programs. Thank you, Claudia!

Judy Olivieri for her five years as the manager of our seasonal farm store. We hope you had a chance to meet Judy, and saw her stocking the shelves with wonderful local products or faithfully putting up and taking down the farm stand signs each day she was here. In her five years, Judy never missed a day of work, was never late, never called out sick and never asked for time off. Her dedication to the farm and the farm store project was unwavering. We are all so grateful that she found us at a time we were looking to fill this need. Thank you Judy for helping the store become a community fixture.



NEW SFF BOARD MEMBER



David Emery

“Serving on the SFF board offers important connections to farming, the history of central Connecticut, engagement with current residents of the region, and opportunities to encourage the development of future farmers (or gardeners). I am thrilled to work with a farm that has such a long history and strong ties to the community, having operated for nearly a century and a half in Vernon Connecticut. SFF provides opportunities for those in the region to better understand the importance of farming and its contributions to our daily lives!”





Volunteers & Sponsors

Special Thanks to all who helped make 2022-2023 a success!

Thanks to Our Faithful Volunteers

- All the BOD & Steering Committee members
- Michalina Pietras, CPA
- Laurie Sanchez and her special chickens/books
- Judy Hany & Gail Meyers - Chicken Supporters
- Kris Viens and family & Girl Scout Troop
- Robert Arthur clearing our paths
- Jon Roe and Vernon Volunteers Collaborative
- Vernon Historical Society
- Theona Wheelock
- Roger Barker
- Barbara Muldoon
- Jacquie Roraback
- Erika Phillips
- Robert Hurd, Architect
- All at CT Dept. of Agriculture
- Liz Bologna - Marketing specialist
- Walt Moody - Apiarist
- All SFF RHS AgEd students
- Tom Barnas - Painter Extraordinaire
- Richard and Claudia Steele
- Loyd Johnson, Plumber/Gardener, and Lynn Ruchin & Associates
- Dan Gallagher - Master Gardener
- Cecily Robinson for dedicated composting
- Nick West for dedicated tractor attention (& dad!)
- Adam Hunter - Graphic Artist
- Nina Ovrzyn Design - For this Annual Report

OUR FARMER FRIENDS

- Hop-A-Long 4-H Club
- RHS Ag.Ed. Department & Students
- Aussakita Acres Farm
- Hytone Farm
- True North Farm

FARM PHOTOGRAPHERS

- Dan Villeneuve
- Andre Garant
- Scott Reed
- Community Voice Channel

CHICKEN RUN - MAY 21, 2023

► Many thanks to our returning and new sponsors and our **GOLD SPONSOR PROHealth Chiropractics!** All sponsorships of the 10th Annual 5K Chicken Run were **MATCHED!** What a great way to double the impact!





The Good to Great Grant

The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) in partnership with CT Humanities awards grant to fund a milestone capital project

The Big Yellow Barn

After Covid put everything on hold, Executive Director Jen Smith worked with Historical Architect, Bob Hurd, and Founder, Nancy Strong, to collect ten years of documentation: previously funded capital project improvements, design plans, historic preservation documentation, photographs, the capital needs assessment, and feasibility needs assessment to apply to CT Humanities for capital funding. It was little surprise we were awarded to finish restoration of the barn and update compliance measures for a certificate of occupancy. Part of the grant covers the hay barn

section, phase two of a three phase project. Small groups and parties of up to 200 people will be able to rent the historic space when we are not hosting events.

Woodshed/Outhouse

The second part of The Good to Great Grant, the old woodshed/outhouse that is next to the house will be divided in half with the “3 holer” being a historical exhibit and the old woodshed being a restroom facility (that might be off the grid). This building was transported by horses to the farm from the railroad crossing on Route 30 where it was used for freight storage.



SFF TREASURER



Claudia Steele

“What excites me most about being on the SFF board is the desire to provide a welcoming environment to help individuals (of all ages) learn where our food comes from, and what those that have gone before us did to care for their families and communities. Land is a resource that needs to be protected and utilized. When we lose our history, we can lose the skills needed to be “independent and interdependent on those in our community.” If we don’t understand where our food comes from, we run the risk of being dependent on resources that are out of our control and easily impaired or restricted.”





Financial Statement 2022 -2023

We appreciate all who generously give their time and financial support to Strong Family Farm.

Revenue & Expenses	2022	2023	2024
	ACTUALS	ACTUALS	BUDGET
Grants	6,825	10,025	15,000
Public Support	16,435	60,312	29,531
Other Income	18,751	21,148	3,050
Program Income	23,806	20,266	26,700
Rentals	400	2,200	2,266
Total Income	\$66,216	\$113,951	\$76,547*
COGS	10,792	11,813	0
COGS - Inventory	0	(40)	0
Total COGS	\$10,792	\$11,773	\$0
Gross Profit	\$55,424	\$102,178	\$76,547
Awards and Grants	-	-27	00
Business Expenses	100	50	50
Contract Services	18,746	6,568	14,870
Facilities & Equipment	16,787	34,016	13,769
Operations	3,768	4,039	6,642
Other Expenses	3,597	7,157	8,593
Payroll	11,581	44,749	52,427
Travel & Meetings	1,157	653	50
Total Expenses	\$55,736	\$97,205	\$96,602
Net Ordinary Income	(\$312)	\$4,973	(\$20,055)
Net Income	(\$312)	\$4,973	(\$20,055)

What's Included?

Section descriptions

GRANTS

All Grants

PUBLIC SUPPORT

Business & Individual Gifts/
Sponsorships, In-Kind Gifts

OTHER INCOME

Farm Stand Sales

PROGRAM INCOME

Memberships Dues, Program
fees, Chicken Run, Harvest
Festival fees, Adopt a Chicken

COGS (COST OF GOODS SOLD)

Farm Stand COGS

COGS - INVENTORY

Farm Stand Inventory

AWARDS AND GRANTS

Benefits paid to members

BUSINESS EXPENSES

Business Registration fees

CONTRACT SERVICES

Accounting/Payroll fees, Marking &
Other contract Services

FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT

Equip Rental & Maintenance,
Property Insurance, Property Tax,
Rent, Parking, Utilities

OPERATIONS

Books, Subscriptions, Reference,
Postage, Mailing, Printing/ Copying
& Other Supplies

OTHER EXPENSES

Liability & D&O Insurance, Program
Expenses, Membership, Other

PAYROLL

Gross Pay & FIC, Medicare & FUTA

TRAVEL & MEETINGS

Conferences, Conventions,
Meeting & Travel

VALUE ADDED

***\$107,870** This Good to Great award will be added to our 2024 budget. It's awarded for capital projects that look beyond basic facilities repair and towards new means of telling stories of our cultural and historic sites.





In Memoriam

*This year we lost three members of our Strong Family Farm, Inc. family:
Morgan G. Strong, Bryan Flint, and Virginia "Ginny" Hickton.*

Morgan G. Strong



The last of the Strong farmers, Morgan worked the family farm for decades until he retired to a smaller scale farm and the quiet life in Virginia. During his 50 years at the farm, Morgan worked hard on many farm projects from hay making to turkey production. He embraced the family farm lifestyle and his family's heritage and was very proud of what his sister had done to protect their family heritage. So much of the family history goes with him, but he is will always be here in spirit.

Bryan Flint



All of the Town of Vernon community recently lost Bryan Flint who gave so much of himself to help others. Strong Family Farm, Inc. also mourns his passing. Bryan's giving nature helped our non-profit when we started, offering directions for getting involved in the community, MCing the Harvest Festival and most of all, directing his daughter, Alexis Flint Carmicheal, to help Nancy at the farm. Alexis has become an essential member of our Steering Committe and leads our Backyard Chicken Program. Thanks from our hearts, Bryan.

Virginia "Ginny" Hickton



Ginny was a supporter and friend of the family and farm from day one. As a charter member of Strong Family Farm, Inc, she was always available to help in supplying creative crafts for the farm to sell (some are still in the store today!). She specifically left her memorial donation to go to the farm. Honoring her love for crafts, we have designated these funds toward craft items for our programming.



Left, N. Morgan Strong; above, Morgan G. Strong

“There are very few investments in life that are permanent. Preserving a family farm is one.”

~ NANCY STRONG, FOUNDER & SECRETARY, STRONG FAMILY FARMS





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