



Munnell Run Farm News

January, 2008

Good Things To Come at Munnell Run!

On December 6, 2007 we learned that the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources awarded a grant of \$170,000 to help carry out a number of projects—totaling more than \$340,000—based on Munnell Run Farm's Master Site Plan, which was completed in 2005. A new entrance road, improvements to the existing farm lane, relocation of the historic Bigler House from Kidd's Mill to Munnell Run Farm, a handicap-accessible walking trail, and a new pole building to house equipment are among the things to watch for over the three-year grant period. The **MOST** exciting project, though, to anyone who regularly visits the Farm will be the addition of **RESTROOMS!** We're hoping that construction of the restrooms will take place this year—possibly by Farm Day in September.



Gardeners' Challenge!

Some details remain to be worked out, but the staff at Munnell Run Farm is issuing a "garden challenge" to any green-thumbed individuals or garden groups who might be interested in a "friendly" gardening competition. Participants would plant and maintain one of the eight centrally located raised-bed gardens near our trout nursery. The beds are approximately four feet wide by sixteen feet long. All of the beds are located in full sun all day long. Some are drier than others, some need soil improvements—all of them need the expertise of seasoned gardeners to make them the showpieces that they *should be*—since they are located at the center of everything we do here at the Farm. An entry fee of \$25.00 per garden will be held in a fund and the total will be awarded to the charity of the winner's choice. The "Golden Trowel Award" will be given to the individual or group judged to have the "best garden" by members of the public who attend a mid-summer ice cream social. If you think you have the "right stuff" to make our gardens grow, call us at 724-662-2242. We'll be waiting for you...

How YOU Can Help: Become a Friend of Munnell Run Farm!

It is an exciting time to become a Friend of Munnell Run Farm! The DCNR grant that has recently been awarded (see details in first story) will allow us to start several needed projects on the farm over the next three years. However, this is only the beginning! We rely on your memberships and donations for matching funds for grants, to continue our education programs, maintenance of the farm, and much-needed infrastructure improvements.

There are now three separate categories of annual associate membership: individual, student, and family. Individual memberships are \$25 and benefits include our newsletter, 10% discount on MRF merchandise, and a free gift (a heavyweight canvas grocery tote bag). The student membership benefits are the same as the individual membership, but the cost is \$15. A family membership is \$40 and includes all of the benefits of the individual membership **plus a 50% discount on all MRF programs.**

If you value the work that we do and have enjoyed the programs and events at the farm, please consider becoming a Friend of Munnell Run Farm. Please use the form on the back of this page for initiating your membership. Thank you for your support. Please visit the farm often to see the many changes that will be taking place!

Spring Fun at the Farm

If you have preschoolers, mark your calendar now for our upcoming Spring Preschool Program Series for children ages 3, 4, and 5. The programs will be held on four consecutive Wednesday afternoons at Munnell Run Farm from April 9 through April 30, 2008 from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

A complete description of the programs and online registration will be available by March 1 on our website: www.munnellrunfarm.org.



Munnell Run Regional Food Venture

What is a shared kitchen incubator? It is a licensed commercial kitchen that is available, for a small fee, to farmers and entrepreneurs providing the resources needed to develop food products, introduce them to the marketplace and grow a start-up business. Jams, jellies, salsas, cheese, yogurt and other products could be produced at the kitchen, alleviating the need for individual producers to have the up-front capital to construct or renovate a building, install the needed equipment and obtain the needed licenses.

We are at the beginning of the process to create such a facility at Munnell Run Farm that would serve small-scale producers in the region. The goal is to create a PA Department of Agriculture inspected creamery and commercial kitchen incubator where entrepreneurs can add value to their milk, vegetable and fruit commodities.

A steering committee has been established with representation from Munnell Run Farm, Mercer County Conservation District, Penn Soil Resource Conservation & Development, Penn Northwest Development Corporation, Small Business Development Center, PA Association for Sustainable Agriculture, Clarion Economic Development Council, Community Action Agency of Mercer County, Penn State Cooperative Extension and the farm community. Penn State's Technical Assistance Program has provided invaluable technical help. We seek additional representation from the food industry as well as consumers interested in buying local food products to help guide the effort.

The first task is to determine the feasibility of establishing the kitchen at the Farm. This entails determining the level of interest of producers who would use such a kitchen and consumers who would purchase the products from it. The level of usage determined from surveys and other means will reveal the potential for the kitchen's economic viability. A favorable determination will lead to the next step, which is seeking funding for the design, construction, equipping and operating the kitchen.

If you have an interest in this project, either from the production or the consumer side of local food production contact Jim Mondok at 724-662-2242 or jmondokmercercdd@verizon.net.

We Need A Few Good Vendors For Farm Day!

We are looking for traditional craftspeople to demonstrate and sell their wares at our 2008 Munnell Run Farm Day on Sunday, September 21 from 11:00 to 5:00. The purpose of the event is to acquaint the community with Munnell Run Farm, the area's rich historical and agricultural heritage, the works of local artisans and traditional folk crafters, and the season's bounty of locally produced farm products. There is no fee to participate, but donations are gratefully accepted. If you are a blacksmith, basket maker, or make other high quality, handmade items, we'd like to hear from you! Please call 724-662-2242 for more information.



Friends of Munnell Run Farm Membership Form

Membership Category	Amount
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$40.00

Munnell Run Farm Foundation, Inc., is a nonprofit organization with IRS 501c3 status. Your contributions are tax deductible and much appreciated. Please fill out this form and mail it to MRF with your donation. Make checks payable to Munnell Run Farm Foundation, Inc.

Name

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Please join us for Munnell Run Farm's 9th Annual Earth Day Celebration



Saturday, April 19
10 a.m. — 1:00 p.m.