

CT FARM ANIMAL SANCTUARIES MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD

The public is inundated with food company ads portraying farm animals in pastoral scenes, grazing cage-free in plush, green meadows under the warm afternoon sun surrounded by their offspring. The reality is dairy cows have their offspring forcibly removed from them at birth, with male calves immediately removed and sent to slaughter as they are considered useless by dairy farmers. Female calves are separated from their mothers at once after birth and raised separately to replace older dairy cows in the milking herd. Pigs are trapped in gestation crates so small they are prevented from standing or turning around, and so-called, free-range chickens are confined in overcrowded, unsanitary conditions unable to move freely, see daylight or fulfil basic natural behaviors.

Yet here we are in 2024 and these horrific factory farms still exist in this state. In fact, this year CT may be faced with the possibility of another factory farm as a bill is currently pending in the Connecticut Legislature for a program to farm rabbits for food. Under this proposal thousands of rabbits will be slaughtered annually.

In the last several years, to combat the factory farm movement, Connecticut has been moving the bar forward and establishing farm animal sanctuaries to rescue these animals from dairy farms, slaughterhouses, hobby farms, and from abuse and neglect cases seized by the State.

Here are two CT farm sanctuaries making a difference in CT's burgeoning farm animal sanctuary movement, the JP Farm Animal Sanctuary in Litchfield and The Kindness Matters Farm Sanctuary in Avon.

THE JP FARM ANIMAL SANCTUARY, LITCHFIELD, CT

Nestled in the bucolic hills of Litchfield, CT and hidden away down a long driveway, is the tranquil, wooded setting of the JP Farm Animal Sanctuary, home to several rescued cows, chickens, pigs, one people-loving turkey and the home of Oscar Janssen and Lynn Printy, the "J" and "P" of the JP Farm Animal Sanctuary.

The couple who was already involved locally with animal rescue, became intrigued with the Scottish Highland cow, a small cow with a thick, shaggy coat and prominent horns. They located a breeder in Ct, and when, on one of their trips to visit the breeder's farm they realized the farmer did not intend to treat one of his injured cows, they offered to adopt her and her young son. They visited the farm frequently while the injured cow healed before they could move her, and then decided to take another cow Mom and her son.

In 2013, after clearing and fencing part of their property, the two cow moms and their young sons arrived at their new home, the JP Farm in Newtown, CT.

The couple soon realized these four cows were just the beginning of their quest to rescue farm animals, but their Newtown property wasn't ideal to house any more farm animals. They started looking for a larger tract of land in rural Connecticut.

Deciding on forty-four idyllic acres in Litchfield, CT, the JP Farm joined the Farm Animal Adoption Network, and in 2019, the JP Farm Animal Sanctuary was born. After convincing Oscar's sister, Britt Janssen and her husband, to move back to Ct from the Netherlands to work on the new farm, Britt quickly eased into the role of Farm Manager, and is now affectionately known as "Farm Boss."

Since 2019, the JP Farm Animal Sanctuary has given forever homes to their current and very happy rescued cows, both Highland and dairy cows, also known as "grass puppies", chickens, pigs, and turkeys - and with the current expansion and addition of a new barn, the plan is to continue to rescue several more farm animals in the future.

Realizing one of the best ways to bring their message of compassion to all living beings was to start by educating young children. Lynn and Britt began traveling locally and speaking to school- Yeah I don't know that cigar speak cross picture Google What are you doing Why you wait here age children about the JP mantra of Inspiring Compassionate Living and by inviting groups of young people to visit the sanctuary to meet and spend time with the farm animals exposing these open, eager minds to the three tenets JP Farm adheres to:

- 1) Compassion to all beings: Animals are sentient beings – they have emotions - and just like people, they need friendships, the ability to maintain basic animal behaviors, and to feel love.

- 2) Promote a healthy lifestyle: Eating animal products does not promote good health. Science has shown eating animals causes heart disease. Large, industrial farms look at animals as commodities so need to ensure they survive until slaughtered, by adding hormones, antibiotics and other additives to animals and their feed thereby moving those same additives directly into the human food chain, and to,

- 3) Protect the Earth: Grazing lands and forests are being destroyed by industrial farming at an alarming rate, deforestation is causing mass wildlife and plant extinction. The earth, as we know it, is not sustainable at the current rate of land and forest destruction.



<https://jpfarmsanctuary.org/>

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KINDNESS MATTERS FARM SANCTUARY, AVON, CT

Kindness Matters, opened in 2020, is one of the more recent additions to the growing number of farm animal sanctuaries in CT. Owner, Diedre Galbo, a small animal veterinarian for more than 20 years, was ready to leave West Hartford and find a larger piece of land in CT for her family - her husband, three active teenage boys and a very friendly black lab, Neon, a therapy dog.

Viewing the property in Avon for the first time, she was immediately drawn, not only to the large, lovely home, but to its rolling five acres and stunning stone and timber barn, a perfect place - and opportunity - to rescue donkeys, one of her favorite animals.

To begin her dream for the Kindness Matters Farm as a sanctuary, she became a member of the Farm Sanctuary Network, a branch of the well-established Farm Sanctuary in Watkins Glen, NY. The network serves as an educational resource for sanctuaries, as well as a channel for farm animals needing to be rehomed.

It was through this network, Dr. Galbo was introduced to the Save Your Ass rescue in Acworth, NH, a sanctuary dedicated to rescuing, rehabbing, and rehoming unwanted or neglected donkeys and mules. It wasn't long before the first of the eventual herd of five mini donkeys arrived, now all living their best life at Kindness Farm.

Soon after, the farm became home to three Merino sheep, Fanny, Nelly and Chubbs, rescued from a wool producer who no longer had any need for the three ewes. They had not been sheared for more than two years, a dangerous practice for sheep. Bucky and Uno, two Nigerian dwarf goats, followed the sheep adoption after being rescued from a farm that had suddenly shut down leaving 100 animals homeless. Bucky and Uno were the last two goats left that had not been adopted and they became the perfect addition to the growing animal herd at Kindness Matters.

Now all living together for over a year, the donkeys have taken on the role of herd protectors. Recently, an animal wandered onto the property and was apparently perceived by the donkeys as a danger to the smaller animals. The donkeys formed a circle around the goats and sheep and remained in that position until the threat was gone.

Dr. Galbo, who along with her full-time veterinary practice, is a Mindfulness Teacher at Take Paws Mindfulness, and as such, is keenly aware of the place animals have in our lives to reduce stress and anxiety. To that end, she has opened the sanctuary to many visitors and volunteers with mental health challenges, dementia and undue stress, all of whom benefit from volunteering or just visiting and observing. Dr. Galbo explains, “The humans who visit can easily see love. I think the beautiful thing about our Sanctuary is that the purposeful work of rescuing and caring for these animals is amazing, but there is so much human benefit and therapy as well... a true blessing for all.”



<https://www.facebook.com/KMfarmsanctuary>

For additional farm animal sanctuaries, please go to <https://www.farmsanctuary.org/farm-animal-adoption-network/>