

Spring 2024

Re: Fund a Female Farmer Proposal

My name is Amy Fiedler and I have been farming for the past 15 years with my mother at Springhouse Farm, located in the Appalachian Mountains of Watauga County, NC. Over the years I have achieved many accomplishments including the Beekeeper of the Year and Female Farmer of the Year awards. As a single mother, my greatest accomplishment has been raising both of my children on this land, instilling in them the importance of hard work and perseverance. Both farming and beekeeping have traditionally been male-dominated careers, and as a woman I have succeeded in both.

Springhouse Farm uses regenerative farming practices to grow beautiful flowers (food for the soul) and healthy vegetables (food for the body). I have established over 25 local markets that include: Artisanal, a premier destination restaurant; grocery stores; a hospital workplace CSA (Community Supported Agriculture); a non-profit housing and homeless agency CSA; multiple farmers markets and a produce stand located on the farm that is based on the honor system.

A cornerstone of our business model is community outreach. In 2023 we worked directly with the AppHealthCare Rural Farm Stand Project, which helped farms in our surrounding counties build their own produce stands to increase healthy food access. We also received a USDA pandemic grant in 2022 and used it to build a pavilion where we host our many agritourism events: You Pick Flowers, Farm to Table Dinners, and most importantly, team-building space for local businesses such as Oasis, a domestic violence service group. We also donate flowers every year to our local Hospice Center for nurses, families and patients and last year we provided bags of vegetables for the elderly in our community through the 2023 Creating New Economies Fund Grant from the Conservation Fund's Resourceful Communities program.

Internship/Volunteer/Community education is near and dear to our hearts as we believe knowing how to grow food is a fundamental basic right. We have hosted hundreds of interns, volunteers and service work groups from Appalachian State University (ASU) and welcomed countless groups onto our farm including extension agents, master gardeners and other farmers in the spirit of sharing our knowledge. We are also sharing our specialized sustainable practices with Dreaming For Change, a non profit organization from Burundi, Africa that can be used in their country to increase food security for malnourished families.

As a self-taught farmer and business woman, interns have been instrumental in helping me grow Springhouse Farm. I offer both part time and full time seasonal internships March through October. My goal is to promote the business and art of farming while teaching women how to grow food and flowers. The problem I face is that I cannot effectively support all of the interns who are applying to be on my farm. I ask for you to support me as I implement a curriculum that teaches other women how to farm and succeed themselves as business women. I am requesting your sponsorship in order to offer this service. I have hired 11 interns and currently have a waiting list with another 10 women on it.

Average Cost of one Full Time Intern (full season): \$10,000

Average Cost of one Part Time Intern (half season): \$2,000

Levels of Sponsorship:

- Seedling \$500
- Sapling \$1000
- Fruit Tree \$5000

Benefits of Sponsorship:

- All sponsors will receive a thank you ad in the Watauga Democrat and your name on our farm banner. In addition, Fruit Tree sponsors will receive a personal farm tour that includes a bag of fresh vegetables and a flower bouquet, all grown here on Springhouse Farm!

If you find our work worthy, **any and all financial contributions** to Fund a Female Farmer are accepted and greatly appreciated. Checks can be made out to: Springhouse Farm LLC and mailed to 433 Silverstone Road, Vilas, NC 28692. You will receive a receipt for your donation, and you will be added to our newsletter so you can stay abreast of all our farm happenings.

Thank you so much for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Amy Fiedler
Owner, Springhouse Farm LLC