



The Crows' Courier

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*The mission of Crows' Feat Farm
is to build community through a collaborative
commitment to regenerative farming*

WHAT'S GROWING ON

Anniversaries & Celebrations

2024 marks the **fifth anniversary** of Crows' Feat Farm, and it's hard to believe how fast the time has flown! When we embarked on the journey of bring food and friendship to the community, we anticipated that it would take *at least* ten years to figure out what we were doing. That sounds about right – we are now only half as stupid as we were when we started! After all, the one yield that farming reliably supplies is humility.

Given this region's short seasons, each year we get one crack at remedying past years' mistakes and (hopefully) learning something new that's useful. Against a backdrop of naturally variable growing conditions – not to speak of market dynamics and people challenges – we are always on our toes.

Our commitment to permaculture methods exposes us to more than the usual uncertainty, because we don't try to control everything through the use of chemicals (fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides) or energy-intensive growing methods. We try as best we can to rely on low-intervention strategies that work alongside the wisdom nature offers. It's fascinating, because along with every year's crushing disappointments...

Usually there are at least a dozen such events, which this year included the loss of many chicks and hens, the devastation of the squash vine borer, premature bolting of broccoli and lettuce, and out-of-control rabbits (just to name a few)

...come many unexpected blessings.

These included the self-seeding of our gorgeous amaranth and arugula when the originals failed or bolted; the abeyance of last year's pests (the Colorado potato beetle and tomato horn worm); an abundance of honey; and the arrival of tree frogs, kildeer (aka land pipers) and hundreds of monarch butterflies to dance with us. Not to mention the overwhelming support and enthusiasm of our volunteers, farm share participants and market customers

So, on this our fifth anniversary, we stand humbled, as we sit in awe and gratitude to nature and our community.



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In Honor of Devin Torres

In July we also celebrated Devin Torres's one-year anniversary with Crows' Feat Farm. Devin joined us last year to assist with our summer concerts and picnics. We thought it would be a limited engagement, but he has proven himself to be indispensable to the mission of Crows' Feat Farm. Despite a lengthy commute amid crazy drivers, Devin has missed only one day of work over the past year. He has come early and stayed late. He has accepted any task we asked of him, and done it well. He now understands all the seasons of a farm, and we are delighted that Devin will become a founding member and equity participant of our cooperative.

Devin is a strong man, who has brought extraordinary grace and dignity to the hard work of farming. He is an exceptional person, a standout among his generation. In other words, we admire and love him. On July 14th Redemption Band played at the farm, in honor of our dear friend and colleague, Devin Torres.

With Gratitude Comes Generosity

With the formalization of our cooperative, we are gathering a group of people who care about and are willing to be stewards of the long-term future of the farm. Our goal is to ensure a smooth transition to the next generation of farmers, while maintaining Crows' Feat in perpetuity as a working permaculture farm.

The inaugural group of our stewardship committee includes Yoni and Kimberly Draiblate, Nell and Andy Fillmore of K-Farm in Kingston, Trish and Mike DeCaprio, Alison McKay and William Parker Feld. Peter and Karen will be participating (*ex officio*) while our corporate counsel, Amy Manzelli of BCM Environmental & Land Law will oversee legal matters. We deeply appreciate these outstanding individuals, as well as all the workers and volunteers who have made Crows' Feat Farm a success.



Speaking of appreciation, we're extraordinarily grateful to the talented crews who built our new farm store, especially the team of builders led by Munch Marek, and the gorgeous site work performed by Randy Freeman. Come check it out, and pick up some fresh produce, eggs, pasture-raised chickens, as well as a wide variety of pickles and preserves, honey and flowers. The store is located at 180 Drinkwater Rd, and is open Fridays from 4-7pm, Saturdays from 9 am-2pm and on concert Sundays. You can also find us at the Exeter Farmer's market on Thursday afternoons. For more information, visit www.crowsfeatfarm.org

COMMUNITY CORNER

In August, visiting farmer and opera virtuosa Kimberly Oppelt joined Karen for a [radio interview](#) on WKXL (103.9 FM). Jane Cormier of the Artful Living show engaged us in a discussion about our friendship, Tony Cicoria's remarkable Lightning Sonata, Crows' Feat Farm's mission and the meaning of permaculture. It's a quick way to learn a great deal about the farm, so if you're interested, follow the link to tune in!

The Artful Living interview followed our August 11 concert, a "Classical Confection" with pianist Asiya Korepanova, cellist Yoni Draiblate and Kimberly. The highlight of the concert was Asiya's performance of the Lightning Sonata, followed by Tony sharing the near-death experience that led him to compose this extraordinary piece of music. Tony, Asiya and Karen will be in the studio in late September to produce a high-quality recording of the piece, along with footage for a documentary about Tony's life and music. Stay tuned!



COME GROW WITH US!

First Saturday Working Parties

October 5th
November 2nd
December 7th

We start at 9 am (10 am following the daylight savings time change), work together for 2-3 hours, and then enjoy a hot farm lunch!

By custom, on the first Saturday of every month we gather as a community to perform the work of this farm that none of us can do alone. Volunteers of all ages – from 8 to 80 years old – have been critically important as we have built this farm, and renewed the spirit of community.

In October we will be building a [keyhole garden](#) in front of the store, which will receive compost from the neighborhood and provide fresh produce to our visitors. Come and join us - newcomers are always welcome!