Thanks to the support of our dedicated members, The Livestock Conservancy continues to ensure that over 150 historic breeds of livestock and poultry are around for future generations.

Cover photo: Pineywoods cattle have moved from “Critical” to “Threatened” on the Conservation Priority List with the help of supporters like you.
Dear Livestock Conservancy Supporter,

The Livestock Conservancy just ended a productive year. Your generous donations of time, energy, and dollars are protecting rare livestock and poultry from extinction – both on your farms, and by enabling The Livestock Conservancy to engage, educate, and empower farmers and breeders. Thank you.

Among the program accomplishments described in this report - such as acceleration for swine and horse programs, and sharing with our international partners - you will read about sustained growth of the Conservancy’s outreach programs. In the past five years, Chicks in the Classroom, From Service to Stewardship, the Livestock Conservancy stage at six Mother Earth News Fairs, and more have brought the joy and value of raising heritage breeds to entirely new groups of current and future farmers across the country. We know this is working because they come back, year after year, to share stories of their progress. Members have always been a critical part of raising awareness in their own communities, and the expanding circle of heritage livestock breeders secures the future for heritage breeds.

This report contains information about programs and about numbers. But the special thing about The Livestock Conservancy is our people. It is such an honor to be part of an amazing team that includes our staff, board of directors, countless volunteers, and a dedicated membership. Our common support for the livestock and poultry that grace our barnyards, and for the farmers who raise them, gives life to your dream for the future. Heritage livestock and poultry are a vital element of our ecosystem. Conservation nourishes our bodies, farms, and communities today, and our planet tomorrow.

As we look forward to all that 2017-2018 will bring, thank you for investing in the future and supporting our important work today.

Sincerely,

Alison Martin  
Executive Director

The Livestock Conservancy  
PO Box 477, 33 Hillsboro St.  
Pittsboro, NC 27312  
(919) 542 - 5704

LivestockConservancy.org
Celebrating 40 Years!

We’ve come a long way! The Livestock Conservancy was founded at a kitchen table in Vermont in 1977, and continued as a volunteer, grassroots organization for several years. In 1985, the first paid employee, Libby Henson, launched both a literal and figurative journey of discovery for the fledgling organization. Henson’s famous 18-month road trip of breed discovery followed closely in the footsteps of similar work in the U.K. by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust - founded by Libby’s father, Joe Henson.

The effort to re-discover forgotten livestock breeds brought about the first breed census, and the first Conservation Priority List (CPL) was published in 1986. Many of the breeds on that first CPL were ill-defined, so it was refined over the next several years using breeds research, and fundamental principles were established for inclusion on the list – a long history in the United States, global census numbers, and the continuing existence or extinction of foundation breeds. The principles by which we conserve livestock today were established in the first ten years, and after 40 years, are still the proven tools for categorizing breeds and prioritizing conservation work.

Discover, Secure, Sustain - Three Steps to Save a Breed

1. Discover and study lost breeds
2. Secure breeds by documenting conservation status, building a critical mass of animals and breeders, and helping breeders find, organize, and communicate with each other
3. Sustain breeds by learning what they do best on the farm and in the marketplace, and by recruiting and training the next generation of breed stewards

As guardians of genetic diversity, The Livestock Conservancy has helped prevent extinctions, expanded populations, educated beginning farmers, and assisted breeders in establishing new markets for their products. Livestock Conservancy programs help farmers and breed organizations maintain the long-term viability and sustainability of endangered breeds.

Conservation of rare breeds:
• Protects our food system by securing genetic resources,
• Ensures broad genetic diversity for the evolution of agriculture,
• Preserves our heritage, history, and culture,
• Maintains breeds well-suited for sustainable, grass-based farm systems,
• Provides small farms a competitive edge,
• Broadens the marketplace with diverse fiber and flavorful heritage foods,
• Retains valuable genetic traits.
Securing Valuable Genetics

Thanks to a generous donation by Lowell and Carolyn Larson, critically rare Caspian horses are one step closer to safety. Conservancy staff completed a United States comprehensive census of Caspian horses and obtained pedigree and registration information from three breed registries. A deep pedigree evaluation revealed that several of the original foundation Caspian lines are quite rare in the United States and elsewhere.

Six stallions representing some of the rarest bloodlines were identified in Texas, Kentucky, Missouri, and North Carolina. Stallion owners have been approached to participate in creating a conservation collection of semen for the long-term preservation of these bloodlines due to the importance and rarity of this breed. Semen collections are planned for Spring 2018 to secure these valuable genetics for the future.

Evidence that a Caspian type horse existed as early as 3000 B.C. can be found in ancient writings and artifacts. Photos courtesy of CaspianHorseSociety.org. Visit their website for more information.
Finding New Stewards

Andy Anderson was a dedicated breeder of White Dorking chickens in rural NC; his birds were among the rarest color varieties of this ancient breed. In the spring of 2017, Andy had a terrible fall at his farm which left him unable to care for his flock. He reached out to The Livestock Conservancy for assistance. We reached out to our network of breeders, and within several days identified a new steward who drove from Pennsylvania to pick up the flock. This flock will be shared with one other Dorking breeder to continue the work that Andy began.

Recovering the Rarest

The Crevecoeur is among the most endangered chicken breeds in America. In 2014 there were fewer than 100 breeding birds in this country, and not many more in France. Thanks to a concerted recovery effort by The Livestock Conservancy, careful selection for improvement is slowly returning the birds to breed standard. The population is growing as interest generated by social media and magazine articles spreads. It is now estimated that close to 300 quality breeding birds are bringing Crevecoeur chickens back from the brink.

Crevecoeur breeding birds: from fewer than 100 to almost 300 in three years
Teaching Our Children

For four years, the Heritage Chicks in the Classroom Project has partnered with 4-H to connect elementary school classrooms with farmers, and provide incubators and heritage breed hatching eggs to enhance a required curriculum topic of embryology. This year, schools in three states incubated and hatched heritage breed chicken and duck eggs, which doubled the number of students reached over last year. One teacher in a rural New York county used video technology and creative lesson plans to include students, teachers, and community members. An agriculture extension agent in Eastern North Carolina added the program to schools in an economically-challenged area of the state. Teachers in other areas of the country are eager to join this popular program.

Impact

- Implemented the program in 21 classrooms and 6 schools in Chatham County, NC
- Held 168 videoconferences in 27 schools and 59 classrooms throughout NY
- Reached more than 4000 students in classrooms
- Improved science grades of 83% of students involved
- Received over 300 thank you letters from the students

Pre-K through 5th graders took lessons on egg parts, life cycle, feathers, and nests

ENGAGED THE COMMUNITY BY:

- Presenting 6 Barnyard Cackle Shows
- “Hatching” 1,000 marshmallow peeps during lunch on hatching days
- Reading 17 chicken riddles during AM announcements
- Hosting 2 Family Hatching Nights with 400 visitors
Images bring conservation to life, document breed characteristics, and explore the lives of breeders. Each year The Livestock Conservancy’s photo library grows. The library now includes both heritage and non-heritage breeds, and video interviews have added a learning dimension.

*Photo documentation is supported in part by Tractor Supply Company.*
Saving Heritage Swine

The Guinea Hog was once considered our rarest pig breed. Dedicated breeders, guided by the principles and strategies outlined in Managing Breeds for a Secure Future, have saved the pigs from extinction. Now breeders have launched the “Lost Herds Project” to diversify the breed. This national effort has already restored to the herdbook on registered pigs, several historic herds while documenting the history of the owners and their work with the breed.

With the help of The Livestock Conservancy, Gloucestershire Old Spots and Large Black pigs (below) have become popular Heritage breeds for pasture-raised pork. Large Black pork even won the prestigious “Cochon 555” culinary contest for two years in a row. But the genetics of both these breeds are dangerously narrow, so the Conservancy imported germplasm from distant British bloodlines in 2015. The first test matings have taken place; unfortunately without resulting pregnancies. Reproductive experts from three universities are working to resolve the technical issues. Once the semen is proven, it will be used with selected recipient sows to carefully broaden the genetic base for the American population.

The Ossabaw Island hog recovery effort continues to add new pigs to the registry, and now includes herds within Canada. Since the beginning of the program, we have successfully added 69 animals to the registry and have ensured they will not be lost to conservation. The Cane Creek Farm herd of Ossabaw Island hogs is one of the longest-standing purebred herds in the country. Livestock Conservancy staff helped sort the breeding stock, take DNA samples, photograph each pig, and document pedigrees so that these genetically valuable animals could be added back into the registry.
Inspiring Future Shepherds

Wool and fiber festivals are a wonderful place to reach current and new members. Interest in fiber arts such as spinning, weaving, and knitting is amazing and interest in heritage breeds of wool sheep is significant. The Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival is one of the largest festivals, and home to the Youth Conservationist Program.

The Youth Conservationist Program enables aspiring young shepherds to experience the joys and responsibilities of raising and conserving heritage breeds of sheep under the guidance of an adult mentor. Youth receive a yearling ewe – for free! Breeder-mentors help the recipients learn to care for their sheep, breed to a registered ram, produce woolen items using the fleece of their own animal, and promote and show their particular breed of sheep. Past recipients often continue as shepherds, and become donors in the Youth Conservationist Program themselves. Launched by a Livestock Conservancy member in 1998, this long standing program gives away 10-15 donated sheep each year, many from Livestock Conservancy members.

Documenting Master Breeders

The Conservancy has partnered with Backyard Green Films to produce a series of videos documenting the work and stories of the breeders and organizations conserving endangered breeds. Backyard Green hopes to turn these stories into a full length documentary that will introduce a broad audience to the conservation mission. The first results of this endeavor are now available on our website, including Temple Grandin’s take on the importance of genetic conservation.
Training Farmer Veterans

The fourth *From Service to Stewardship* Veterans workshop for beginning and growing farmers was held in Lexington, Virginia in early April. This year’s program was organized by dedicated veterans and farmers who had attended previous workshops. A highlight of the most recent event occurred Saturday afternoon when all participants shared their farm plans. Everyone left with 3 new ideas for improving their farm. We are exploring funding opportunities to bring this workshop to the West Coast and Midwest.

Farmer Veterans learned to:
- Fit the farm to the land
- Farm on leased land
- Become a better breeder
- Butcher & shear sheep through live demonstrations

“I love the Heritage Breeds... I am at heart a romantic and lover of history, and as former military myself, and from a childhood raised in a military home, you understand and appreciate the sacrifices of those that came before you. Our heritage breeds deserve the same respect and recognition. These are the breeds that built our great nation.... [Like]the bovine that gave us so much in meat, dairy, oxen, leather goods, and even horns to keep gunpowder dry.” -- Joey Walker, scholarship recipient

# 1 Takeaway:
Connecting with experienced heritage breed farmers
Instructing and Networking

Each year, The Livestock Conservancy’s conference brings together a large and diverse group of heritage-breed farmers together, giving attendees the opportunity to have their questions addressed by experts and master breeders and to network with fellow rare-breed enthusiasts. In 2016, the Conference was held at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts - the site of the Conservancy’s very first members meeting in 1977. The Conference theme, “Collaboration,” was reflected in the selection of keynote speaker, Tom Beeston, CEO of sister-organization Rare Breeds Survival Trust of the UK, and attendees from Rare Breeds Canada.

Participants got acquainted at an icebreaker on Thursday evening, setting the tone for the weekend. Networking continued at clinics and demonstrations ranging from the fundamentals of small dairies to sharing success strategies for breed associations. Instructors on Saturday divulged how to use websites and social media for marketing, sheep artificial insemination techniques, soil restoration using Shetland sheep, cattle breeder selection, and many other informative topics.

“I look forward to attending the Conference, networking with fellow Livestock Conservancy members, getting advice from the Conservancy staff, and learning valuable information at the workshops and clinics. As a rare landrace breed association president, I have found that there is a lot that I can take back to share with our members to help ensure the future of our breed, Pineywoods Cattle.”
-- J. Brown, MS

Thank you to all who donated food for the banquet which featured products from Gloucestershire Old Spots and Mulefoot hogs, American Milking Devon cattle, and Cayuga ducks.

```
| Interacted with over 120,000 people at fairs and events around the country, leading workshops on keeping and caring for endangered breeds |
| Reached 17,216 members & subscribers |
| Welcomed 1.9 million visitors on our website |
| Connected with 24,119 Facebook followers |
| Passed on master breeder knowledge to 410,426 future conservationists through our partnership with the Mother Earth News Power of Poultry Institute |
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Expanding Heritage Breeds Week

International Heritage Breeds Week (IHBW) continues to expand. Now in its third year, this week in May brings together livestock conservation organizations from around the world who highlight the threats to genetic diversity in their respective countries. This event puts livestock conservation into a global perspective, and encourages alliances to secure the genetics for trans-boundary breeds through international collaboration. In 2017, nearly 200,000 more people were reached through Facebook, and seven times as many people were reached through Twitter than in 2015.

Uniting with Conservation Partners

Conservation of Heritage (Native) Milking Shorthorn cattle, Leicester Longwool sheep, Shetland geese, and many other breeds depends on international cooperation. This year, Rare Breeds Canada, Rare Breeds Survival Trust (UK), and The Livestock Conservancy exchanged ideas at the annual conferences of Rare Breeds Canada and The Livestock Conservancy. Updated census numbers for each country’s conservation list were exchanged, with a commitment to work toward a joint release date for these lists in future. As conservation becomes more challenging for all, cultivating closer ties with global partners ensures that we can collaborate effectively to help the rare breeds that we have in common.

#HeritageBreedsWeek
Eating Sustainably

California diners explored Heritage foods at two special dinners: “Flavors: Historic California” and “Flavors: Future of Food.” The result of a year-long collaboration between the Conservancy and the Autry Museum of the American West, attendees sampled Texas Longhorn beef, Spanish goat, Standard Bronze turkey, Mulefoot pork, and Navajo Churro lamb. The sold-out events sparked lively conversation about the role of rare livestock and poultry as a source of food. Livestock Conservancy staff and farmers were on hand as experts.

“I want to thank you for your support throughout the long gestation of this series – it really wouldn’t have been possible without all the help and advice you gave me, and the contacts you and Alison provided.” -- Ben Fitzsimmons, Senior Manager, Programs and Public Events of the Autry Museum of the American West

Sharing Conservation Success

“July 21, 2017 was a genetic milestone at Cowpen Creek Farm. Thanks to Bryant Rickman, Billy Frank Brown, and Dr. Phil Sponenberg, a buckskin filly was born. This was a mating of very closely related Colonial Spanish horses separated for almost 200 years (1830-2016). The Pine Tacky and the Choctaw horses are landrace strains of Colonial Spanish horses brought into present day Mississippi by early explorers. The Choctaw horse now resides in southeastern Oklahoma and the Pine Tacky in southern Mississippi. The Choctaw horses left Mississippi during the years of 1830-1850, otherwise known as “The Trail of Tears,” when the Native American Indians were forced into present-day Oklahoma. Due to special efforts by dedicated staff of The Livestock Conservancy and heritage breeders Bryant Rickman and Billy Frank Brown, this mating of old strain genetics was made possible.” -- Jess Brown, Cowpen Creek Farm, MS
Workshops & Talks

- American Poultry Association Meeting (OH)
- Carolina Farm Stewardship Association (NC)
- Central Carolina Community College (NC)
- Connecticut Farm Bureau (CT)
- Elon University Food and Agriculture students (NC)
- Flavors: Historic California (CA)
- Heirloom Expo (CA)
- Homegrown Food Summit
- Leicester Longwool Sheep Breeders Association Annual Fall Conference (VA)
- Moore County Driving Association (NC)
- Mother Earth News Fairs in PA, KS, NC, TX, VT, OR
- North Carolina Cooperative Extension (NC)
- Organic Commodities and Livestock Conference (NC)
- Reynolda House Museum of American Art (NC)
- San Clemente Goat Association Goat Gathering (VA)
- Seed Savers Exchange (IA)
- Successful Small Farms Opportunities Conference (NC)
- The Power of Poultry Institute (NC)
- World Pork Expo (IA)
## Financial Reports

![SUPPORT & REVENUE Pie Chart](image)

- Contributions - $233,653
- Foundation Grants - $186,000
- Membership - $74,835
- Sponsorship - $24,500
- Conference/Program Services - $74,610
- Merchandise Sales - $10,981
- Other Revenue - $5,620

Total Revenue $610,199

![EXPENSES Pie Chart](image)

- Program/Outreach - $347,929
- Management and General - $134,779
- Fundraising - $40,245

Total Expenses $522,953

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### Partners

*Working together with partners allows us to achieve more*

- 5M publishing
- Association of Living History Farms and Agricultural Museums
- Amherst College
- American Poultry Association
- Brookgreen Gardens
- Central Carolina Community College
- Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
- Colorado State University
- Greenfield Farms
- Heritage Poultry Conservancy
- International Boar Semen
- International Caspian Society
- Mother Earth News
- Mississippi State University
- North Carolina 4-H
- North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service
- Oklahoma Heritage Horse Sanctuary
- Purdue University
- Rare Breeds Canada
- Rare Breeds Survival Trust
- Sandhill Preservation Center
- Sedgwick County Zoo
- Seed Savers Exchange
- Society for Preservation of Poultry Antiquities
- Spanish Goat Association
- Storey Publishing
- Texas A&M Univeristy
- United Nations Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- University of California - Davis
- University of Cordoba
- University of Missouri
- University of Pennsylvania - New Bolton
- USDA National Animal Germplasm Program
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
- Virginia Tech
- Wildwood Heritage Provisions
- More than 150 breed associations, clubs, and registries
Consider making a lasting gift to The Livestock Conservancy in your will or estate plan.

Contact Alison Martin for more information, or to share your plans:
amartin@LivestockConservancy.org (919) 542-5704

All inquiries are completely confidential and at no obligation.

The Livestock Conservancy cannot render legal or tax advice. Please consult your professional advisor before making a charitable gift.

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Thank you for your support in 2016-2017!

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71 Lifetime members
Sharing Stories

“The Livestock Conservancy has been a wonderful resource for me since the day I joined. At first it was the informative newsletters, listings on the website to sell my heritage rabbits and sheep, and the directory of breeders. In 2013, after adding Guinea hogs, I contacted Ryan Walker and we had a teleconference to help me develop a plan to address what would happen to my livestock if something happened to me. I purchased copies of Managing Breeds for a Secure Future and a Conservation Breeding Handbook for their information about genetics, and to learn strategies to develop my breeding plans. Last year, I led a teleconference study group on the first edition of Managing Breeds for a Secure Future. This year I am leading a Google Group that is discussing the second edition, with all three authors participating. I took principles from the first edition to heart, and will be presenting what I have learned at the Heritage Livestock Conference this November. Jeannette has opened the Conservancy archives to me as I am writing the first history of the Guinea hog.

I am so proud that the United States has such a vibrant, well-staffed organization looking after so many breeds. They are experienced and well-versed in genetics and in working through difficult situations in breed associations. I am truly grateful for their existence, and for knowing that they are just a phone call or email away when breeders like me need them. I recommend to all my breeder friends and customers that they support this group!” -- Cathy R. Payne, Broad River Pastures, Elberton, GA

Managing Breeds for a Secure Future

The long-awaited update of Managing Breeds for a Secure Future was launched this spring. Since it was first published in 2007, this book has served as a resource for heritage livestock breeders, guiding maintenance of rare breeds, and even serving as a textbook. This second edition includes a clear discussion of breed biology, constructive strategies that aid in breed viability and survival, and specific mating plans and instructions. A frank discussion of common pitfalls and political issues encountered by breed associations and other groups provides strategies for working with each other for the benefit of the breed. The first edition found broad appeal with dog breed clubs, so updates have been made to make it more applicable to this species as well. Managing Breeds for a Secure Future is interesting reading and appeals to all, from the backyard breeder to the classroom. Available through LivestockConservancy.org.
Building Bridges

Conservation professionals from Latin America invited Livestock Conservancy Technical Advisor Dr. Phil Sponenberg to lecture and to discuss conservation of traditional landrace breeds. At the 17th international Iberoamerican Symposium on Conservation and Utilization of Animal Genetic Resources held in Argentina, Dr. Sponenberg presented a plenary session entitled, “Traditional Livestock Production and Genetic Resources in the USA’s Technological Environment.” Other lectures to veterinarians in Argentina, Panama, and Cuba covered traditional breeds, and another of Dr. Sponenberg’s specialties, color genetics.

Dr. Sponenberg says, “Our approach is especially appreciated in Latin America, where our definition of endangered breeds and criteria for conservation are often helpful to them as they develop effective conservation programs. They appreciate insights into the high genetic value of purebred local resources despite a lack of documentation surrounding traditional breeds.”

It wasn’t all indoor science sessions. Some of the highlights of Dr. Sponenberg’s tours this year included visits to a fleece fair in Patagonia, and a local fair and rodeo in Cuba. A special favorite was a visit to a Patagonian farm raising Criollo Patagónico cattle. The owner, Marcelo, presented a wonderful session on the economic advantage of these cattle due to their fertility, longevity, and adaptation. Marcelo and Dr. Sponenberg discussed the importance of rational crossbreeding and the use of these adapted breeds. Dr. Sponenberg’s favorite was a 20 year old polled blue roan cow, still fat and productive.
Volunteers
A big THANK YOU! to our generous volunteers who give their time to the Conservancy.

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Thank you! to all of our members who staff a booth at their local fair to represent the Conservancy.
Become a Conservation Champion

With regular, ongoing support from monthly donations, we can continue to protect America’s rarest livestock and poultry breeds which are integral to our national identity and our future generations.

Give a monthly gift!

Visit LivestockConservancy.org, call (919) 542-5704, or write to The Livestock Conservancy, PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312 for more information.