CONSERVATION MATTERS

The Livestock Conservancy is a non-profit membership organization working to protect more than 150 breeds of livestock and poultry from extinction, including cattle, chickens, donkeys, ducks, geese, goats, horses, pigs, rabbits, sheep, and turkeys.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

**Animal Well-being**: We support practices that evolved from the historical uses of endangered breeds and lead to their good health, longevity, and full value in American agriculture.

**Quality and Integrity**: We practice science-based genetic diversity conservation, emphasizing research and education to promote endangered breeds.
Diversity: We emphasize the diversity of culture, perspectives, and practices in realizing our mission, which leads to greater opportunities for endangered breeds and human prosperity.

Collaboration: We encourage cooperative efforts among members of the heritage breed production chain, including breeders, producers, processors, and consumers.

Stability: We ensure the integrity of endangered genetics by maintaining a strong alliance with breeders and breed associations. We promote breeder livelihoods and breed resilience while supporting healthy markets and a strong consumer base.

PROTECTING THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

Rare breeds of livestock and poultry protect our food systems, both now and into the future. By securing genetic diversity we enable healthy agriculture development while preserving heritage, history, and culture. These animals represent an irreplaceable piece of earth’s biodiversity that once lost, will be gone forever.

Rare breed conservation retains animals well suited for sustainable, grass-based systems, which gives some small farms a competitive edge. It also broadens the marketplace with diverse fiber and flavorful foods. Their unique genetic traits offer an incredible variety that may be needed for future farms, including robust health, mothering instincts, foraging, and the ability to thrive in a changing climate.

As guardians of this genetic diversity, The Livestock Conservancy prevents extinctions, expands populations, educates beginning farmers, and helps breeders establish new markets for their products. Our programs maintain the long-term viability and sustainability of endangered breeds.

Since its inception in 1977, The Livestock Conservancy has not lost a breed listed on our Conservation Priority List.

*Cover photo of American Chinchilla rabbit kits courtesy of Alexandria Brown-Haglund. This breed moved from the Threatened to Watch category in 2020. Photo of grazing Tunis sheep courtesy of Julie Refer. Back cover photo of a Rhode Island Red (non-industrial) chick named Cinnamon courtesy of Carolyn Elliott.
The Livestock Conservancy discovers and studies lost livestock and poultry breeds for possible addition to our Conservation Priority List. We investigate remnant populations, document their numbers, and analyze their unique characteristics.

TEXAS LONGHORN CATTLE IN NEVADA

Effective breed conservation depends on the ongoing discovery of breed populations by experienced eyes and an engaged network of interested people. A call from David Holmgren in Nevada alerted The Livestock Conservancy to a previously undocumented herd of Texas Longhorn cattle that is of potential conservation importance.

Recent work at the University of Córdoba, Spain, documented that Texas Longhorns accepted by the Cattlemen’s Texas Longhorn Registry (CTLR) have a unique “New World Criollo” genetic signature that is otherwise unknown throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa. In addition to the Criollo genetic signature, CTLR Texas Longhorns retain the characteristics that helped them survive in the Texas scrub. They are a self-sufficient and hardy breed known for their longevity, ranging ability, and low-fat beef.

The CTLR type Texas Longhorn breed is a unique genetic resource that is Critically Endangered and could not be reconstructed from other existing breeds. Conservation is especially important for genetic resources that are found only in specific locations and cannot be duplicated by other breed resources. The Holmgren herd originates from an important Texas Longhorn root and was consistently subdivided into reasonably isolated local sub-herds. This unique situation of vast distances between family groups, naturally facilitated by springs on the RaHide Ranch, maintains isolation and allows genetic distinctions to persist. As development consumes productive agricultural land and livestock are pushed into more marginal terrain, these adaptable, hardy cattle represent an economically valuable opportunity and an important source of genetic diversity for other breeds.

CRIOLLO CATTLE

Criollo cattle descend from the first cattle brought by the Spaniards to the Americas more than 400 years ago. Criollo from Northern Mexico are a rugged breed adapted to high heat loss that thrive on the sparse forage found in semi-arid environments. Three important herds of these cattle in Texas, Colorado, and Arizona were established with breeding stock from the Mexican state of Chihuahua. In 2011, Program Manager Jeannette Beranger visited the Texas herd to document and compare them to other Criollo and Spanish breeds. Confirmation of Criollo and Spanish phenotype in the majority of the Texas herd, ongoing selection for this phenotype, and the rarity of Criollo cattle throughout the Americas made them important for conservation. In 2012, Criollo North Central Mexico cattle were placed in the Study category pending evaluation of the Arizona and Colorado herds as well as results from genetic studies.

In 2020, the name of the Criollo North Central Mexico cattle was changed to Criollo Chihuahua to reflect the breed name used in scientific literature. This name change allows people to connect with the history of the breed and to find information about them more easily. Criollo Chihuahua cattle are one of many Latin American breeds that include Criollo in the name, translating roughly to indigenous or landrace. Criollo Chihuahua cattle in the United States and Mexico have an exceptionally high proportion of Iberian genetics that now exist only in the Western Hemisphere. Their unique genetics, drought tolerance, fertility, and adaptation continue to make them a high priority for conservation.

Criollo cow from Texas herd (right) by Jeannette Beranger.
The Livestock Conservancy secures populations of endangered livestock and poultry breeds through census, pedigree registration, research, and conservation breeding plans.

GENETIC DIVERSITY AND MILK TESTING

American Milking Devon cattle arrived with colonists in the 1600s, providing milk, oxen power, and meat for the growing nation. By the 1970s, the breed was all but extinct. For nearly 43 years, the American Milking Devon Cattle Association and The Livestock Conservancy have partnered to secure this historic breed. We recently evaluated the breed’s genetic health, collected semen from important bloodlines, and studied milk composition for improved marketing of dairy products.

DNA testing of American Milking Devon cattle found moderately high genetic diversity. These results speak favorably to breeders’ stewardship in the past four decades and the American Milking Devon Cattle Association’s guidance. Future breeding recommendations include continuing the management practices that have kept inbreeding low while increasing the focus on rarer bull lineages. For long term genetic preservation, semen from five top-quality bulls was collected and cryopreserved at both the USDA’s National Animal Germplasm Laboratory and the breed association’s semen bank.

American Milking Devons are multi-purpose cattle, valued for beef, dairy, and oxen. A survey of current producers found that, while 43% used their animals primarily for beef production, an equivalent percentage used them for dairy or for multiple purposes. To evaluate American Milking Devon milk components (protein and butterfat) and milk fatty acid composition, farmers across the nation collected milk samples for testing. Fatty acid studies confirmed that American Milking Devon milk has a healthier fatty acid profile than regular grocery store milk, with a healthful Omega-6 to Omega-3 ratio.

While protein content was similar across samples, cows milked twice a day (rather than once) yielded much higher milk fat than typical grocery store milk. With a calf to share the milk, once-a-day milking may provide a time-saving option for busy farmers and offers consumers options for reduced-fat milk or products like yogurt and kefir.

The American Milking Devon cattle milk testing results are important for farmers as they adapt their milking practices for their farm objectives to increase the productivity and profitability of their farms. With continued genetic conservation, these truly multi-purpose American cattle offer a promising future for the next generations of farmers.

2019 POULTRY SUMMIT

Turkeys and waterfowl face new challenges as older breeders downsize their flocks. A summit of poultry leaders came together at P. Allen Smith’s Moss Mountain Farm in Arkansas to address these concerns. They developed an action list to guide joint promotion of heritage breed poultry and development of more educational resources for breeders. Following the Poultry Summit, participants launched a census of turkeys at the Ohio National Poultry Show, and promoted geese on social media throughout December. The Livestock Conservancy continues to promote these poultry, and other rare breeds, through monthly species-specific social media content.
INTERNATIONAL GENETIC RESEARCH

The Livestock Conservancy launched a genetic survey of Suffolk horses in the United States and the United Kingdom in 2019. Early results point to distinct genetic differences between the populations, with more genetic diversity in the U.S. group. These results underline the importance of international collaboration for saving our rarest breeds. More than half of the global population of Suffolk horses now reside in the U.S., and genetic comparisons of breed groups lays the groundwork for joint conservation efforts.

The Livestock Conservancy also began analyzing herdbook data for Dexter cattle in the U.S. and U.K. The research will trace foundation bloodlines using DNA and herdbook analyses. The results will guide the optimal management of current herds to maximize the preservation of unique and irreplaceable international genetics.

Many small farmers depend on this hardy breed for beef and dairy production. The U.S. and the U.K. hold most, if not all, of the genetic variation found in Dexter cattle today. With population challenges in both countries, some Dexter genetic lines are in danger of being lost forever.

“An early peek into the genetic influences of present-day Dexter cattle holds tantalizing hope that some of those earliest threads are still available to breeders on both sides of the Atlantic,” said Dr. Phil Sponenberg, The Livestock Conservancy’s Technical Advisor. “Bringing all of this information together and scientifically documenting it will allow breeders to make informed decisions, whatever their goals.”

SWINE INITIATIVE

After years of extensive collaborative efforts from many organizations and farmers, new life and new genetics were introduced to Large Black Hog herds this summer. The first critically-endangered Large Black piglets bred from frozen imported semen were born at Purdue University. This brings two new boar bloodlines from the United Kingdom to herds in the United States.

Not surprisingly, heritage breed pig reproductive cycling is different from commercial pigs, where artificial insemination is common. For nearly two years, Purdue University scientists studied female reproduction in 20 Large Black pigs donated by farmers across the nation. With USDA support, the researchers refined a sow cycling protocol that allowed them to predict ovulation, thaw frozen, imported semen at just the right time, and inseminate the females to produce healthy half-U.S./half-U.K. piglets.

Researchers will share these techniques with heritage pig breeders, enabling them to use on-farm artificial insemination with frozen semen to produce their own Large Black breeding stock. Frozen semen can be more widely exchanged between breeders to keep endangered herds genetically healthy.

“When I heard that The Livestock Conservancy was having trouble finding enough girls for this research project, I thought I would donate four sisters that were weaned and ready to go,” said Felicia Krock, Registrar and Secretary of the Large Black Hog Association and a member of The Livestock Conservancy. “This was such a great opportunity to enhance the survivability of a very special breed.”

With more than a decade of research and partnership, the Swine Initiative illustrates the power of collaboration to advance rare breed conservation.
CONSERVATION PRIORITY LIST 2020

The Livestock Conservancy determines conservation priorities based on a breed’s annual number of registrations in the United States, its estimated global population size, and its genetic history. These numbers are used to rank the threat of extinction for an individual breed using the following criteria:

- **Critical** breeds have fewer than 200 annual registrations in the U.S. and an estimated global population less than 2,000.
- **Threatened** breeds have fewer than 1,000 annual registrations in the U.S. and an estimated global population less than 5,000.
- **Watch** breeds have fewer than 2,500 annual registrations in the U.S. and an estimated global population less than 10,000.
- **Recovering** breeds have improved in numbers and are approaching graduation from the Conservation Priority List.

The *Puerto Rican Paso Fino* was added as a Threatened breed. They descend from horses brought to the island by Spanish colonists and have long held an important place among gaited breeds native to the Americas.

*Teeswater* sheep were added as a Critical breed. In the United States, the breed includes sheep graded up from other longwool breeds and a few animals resulting from semen and purebred embryos imported from the United Kingdom. Breeders in the U.S. contribute to the Teeswater’s international survival since numbers remain low among all longwool sheep breeds throughout the world.

Rabbit breeds on the Conservation Priority List were updated with more accurate listings in 2020. Unlike other livestock species, rabbits are not registered by litter or parentage. Instead, rabbits must be inspected individually to ensure that each animal meets the breed standard before registration. Typically this takes place at exhibitions sanctioned by the American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA). Therefore, the two non-profit organizations partnered to develop new parameters to evaluate rare rabbit breeds more accurately.

“Our new formula incorporates rabbit show numbers from the ARBA National Convention and the national breed clubs,” said Alison Martin, The Livestock Conservancy’s Executive Director. “Combined with registration data, the results are more representative of the breed populations nationwide.”

Critical rabbit breeds now include the *Blanc de Hotot*, *Silver*, and *Silver Marten*. Threatened breeds are the *Argent Brun*, *Checkered Giant*, *Crème d’Argent*, and *Standard Chinchilla*. Several breeds are in the Watch category, including the *American*, *American Chinchilla*, *Giant Chinchilla*, *Lilac*, *Palomino*, and *Rhinelander*. A few breeds were found in more significant numbers at rabbit shows, leading to their listing within the Recovering category, including the *Belgian Hare*, *Beveren*, and *Silver Fox*.

Rabbits remain a popular beginner animal for many livestock breeders while serving an important role for small homesteading operations.
DRAFTING THE FUTURE

The American Cream Draft is the only surviving draft horse breed developed in the United States. Good dispositions and a willingness to work make them an easily managed breed on small farms, where they can be used for many types of riding, hitching, and driving. Despite their multiple uses, the breed remains critically rare. The Livestock Conservancy recently partnered with the American Cream Draft Horse Association to launch a genetic survey and promotional activities. Herdbook studies guide the collection of DNA samples from a variety of bloodlines and will be analyzed for an updated genetic profile of the breed.

Engagement of young owners and breeders is critical for the future of the American Cream Draft breed. Brint Corson of Idaho received the first Youth scholarship in 2019 to support his conservation work with American Cream Draft horses. He estimated the coat color probabilities for 2020 foals born into his family’s breeding herd. Cream coat color is part of the breed standard, although darker horses can still be registered in the registry’s appendix. Additional scholarships will be offered in the future.

POITOU DONKEY PROGRESS

The Livestock Conservancy’s Jeannette Beranger met with Races Mulassières du Poitou representatives in France and received their endorsement to launch the first Poitou donkey census in the United States. Documenting the U.S. population is the first step in developing a successful recovery plan for this critically endangered equine breed. Next steps in the plan include translating the breed standard and evaluation protocols into English and establishing a U.S. pedigree registry.

A MILESTONE YEAR

The Livestock Conservancy registered Sneelock as the 2,000th Hog Island sheep in 2020. The breed has come a long way since the remaining sheep left the Virginia island in 1978. Still critically endangered, this breed is gaining fans thanks to their prominent place in notable living history museums like George Washington’s Mount Vernon. Mount Vernon led the launch of the Hog Island Sheep Breeders Association in 2019 with guidance from The Livestock Conservancy. The museum was also excited to register Lorax as their 600th lamb this year!

Brint Corson with one of his American Cream Draft horses (left) by Charlene Couch. Hog Island lamb courtesy of Megan Bannon (right). Poitou donkey (next page) courtesy of Patrick Archer and Christopher Jones.
FARM TO FASHION

Now in its second year, the Shave ‘Em to Save ‘Em Initiative continues to positively impact the financial success of rare breed shepherds. Many of the 700 fiber providers sold out of wool for the first time, and some are increasing their breeding flocks to meet wool demand. In July, a survey confirmed that 37% of shepherds had sold between 50-200% more wool than before the program began.

Driving the demand for rare breed wool are more than 2,000 fiber artists, who are working to fill their passports with stickers verifying their purchase of wool from 23 rare sheep breeds. Fiber providers can directly market their fiber products to artists through Shave ‘Em to Save ‘Em Facebook and Ravelry groups, as well as our annual Directory: Rare Breeds And Products Resource Guide. Maintaining a long-term rare fiber market is aided by marketing training for shepherds. As of August 2020, 745 people had signed up for online workshops on Marketing Your Fiber Products and From Farm to Fiber Folks.

“I farm in an economically-depressed market, which makes marketing my fiber particularly challenging,” said Charis Walker, a fiber provider. “Shave ‘Em to Save ‘Em allowed me to sell all of my roving, yarn, and fleeces within 2 weeks of listing it on Etsy. When I started my flock, I was concerned about how I would sell my fiber. This program has exceeded my expectations and allows me to more effectively promote the breed to my guild members, my local community, and the fiber community at large. The impact can be measured in my sales and traffic to my Etsy site and website. My ability to grow my flock larger than my original intention is tied in large part to the interest in my fiber and breeding stock, which I credit to Shave ‘Em to Save ‘Em.”

The success of the program is also attracting interest from the fashion world. The Parsons School of Design in New York and The Livestock Conservancy’s Ambassador, Isabella Rossellini, created a scholarship program to support fashion students working with rare breed wool. Parsons’ student Katya Ekimian studied all aspects of the wool supply chain while creating a farm-to-fashion line of clothing with rare breed wool for her senior project. Inspired by our mission and the work of rare breed shepherds, Ekimian also became a Livestock Conservancy Ambassador.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND

The Livestock Conservancy established a fund for emergency assistance to rare breed stewards and organizations. The fund will operate on a case-by-case basis to help breeders of genetically-important herds and flocks affected by environmental catastrophe, global crisis, or owner death or disability. We hope to sustain this fund so we can respond quickly to future emergencies, preventing farm crises from turning into breed crises.

To help farmers and breed stewards cope with the changing landscape of farm profitability during a global pandemic, we also created a web page dedicated to COVID-19 Emergency Resources (bit.ly/TLCCOVID19Resources) and launched an updated Heritage Breed Marketplace (HeritageBreedMarketplace.com).

Photo courtesy of Katya Ekimian for her senior project using rare wool. Vogue France Paris Fashion Week KIDSUPER collection.
2019 MICROGRANT RECIPIENTS

Small financial awards make a big difference for heritage breeders. Microgrants put funds into the hands of people who steward rare livestock and poultry for the security of tomorrow’s food and fiber system. In 2019, The Livestock Conservancy awarded $19,342.65 to 11 farmers, ranchers, and shepherds across the United States.

Youth Microgrant recipient Liam Beheler used his Microgrant to build a chicken tractor and coop to expand his flocks of Nankin and Dominique chickens.

Youth Microgrant winners Monica and Pauline Kennedy installed permanent perimeter fencing for their flock of Jacob and Oxford sheep.

Steve Edwards made rotational grazing improvements at Gwaltney Frontier Farm. This will reduce the need for supplemental hay and enable savings to be put back into educational programs.

James McClay built and improved the mare/foal run-outs and stallion paddock for his Traditional Morgan horse breeding program, increasing safety for animals and humans.

Stephanie Hays collected semen for multiple breedings from her Baca Chica horses, including the only breeding colt from the Baca herd’s foundation stallion.

Lynn Moody expanded her Santa Cruz sheep barn and pastures to improve grazing and provide a space for shearing and on-farm events.

Sister Telchilde Hinckley, on behalf of the Abbey of Regina Laudis, purchased semen to improve the genetic diversity of the Abbey’s Dutch Belted cattle herd.

Joe & Shelly Trumpey added a new boar bloodline to their Mulefoot swine herd and improved their pastures and grain storage at their farm in Michigan.
Andrew, Kathy, and Lily Van Ord purchased a semen tank, liquid nitrogen, and multiple straws of semen from several quality American Milking Devon bulls to improve their small herd’s breeding genetics.

Joshua Ream, on behalf of the Last Frontier Poultry Association, will purchase cages and pay for a licensed poultry judge to travel to a heritage poultry exhibition in Alaska. Plans are on hold because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Travis Wright is preserving foundation lines of Leicester Longwool sheep with frozen semen from the original breed imports.

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The Endangered Equine Alliance unites more than 50 equine breed associations, university partners, industry leaders, and horse sport associations to save rare horse and donkey breeds. In 2019-2020, The Livestock Conservancy continued its support for equine breed associations through joint promotion efforts, genetic studies and cryopreservation of important bloodlines.

Archery on Canadian horseback courtesy of Gregory Beldam.
**OUTREACH**

*Education and outreach are the best ways to engage a larger audience in the conservation conversation. The experience of seeing and touching a heritage breed or their products for the first time can be life-changing. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic limited the amount of hands-on experiences in 2020, we still made important connections through virtual events and social media.*

**CHICKS IN THE CLASSROOM**

Rare breed poultry in second- and fourth-grade classrooms have taught students about embryology, heritage breeds, and genetic conservation. Each spring, teachers guide students through a hands-on 4-H embryology curriculum on incubation and the embryonic life cycle. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic triggered school closures weeks before incubation began. To help teachers with online learning and programming, Jeannette Beranger, The Livestock Conservancy’s Senior Program Manager, developed 15 short videos with Victoria Brewer, NC 4-H Cooperative Extension Agent. The videos aired in virtual classrooms across the world, receiving more than 5,800 views.

**SPECIALTY RABBIT SHOWS**

Using the Conservation Priority List to determine breed eligibility for entry, the American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA) sanctioned the first Rare Breed Specialty shows in January 2020. These shows increased exposure and excitement around heritage breed rabbits before public events were widely canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to celebrating this new opportunity for rare breed rabbits in the future.

“Rare Breed Specialty shows will be a wonderful opportunity for our members to showcase their rare breeds and market these animals to individuals sharing a similar passion for breed conservation,” said Eric Stewart, Executive Director of ARBA.

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Jazzalyn Hamilton, age 9, presenting her American Chinchilla buck named Tucker to Judge Dan Sauinier at the February 2020 Stark County RCBA show in Canton, Ohio. Photo courtesy of Alexandria Haglund-Brown.
2019 HERITAGE BREEDS CONFERENCE

The “All Things Sheep!” Conference drew shepherds, shearers, fiber mills, and fiber artists to Santa Rosa, California, to network and learn about targeted grazing, shearing, marketing, breed recovery, and livestock guardian dogs. Despite the smoke from local fires, participants tried their hands at dyeing wool and attended a demonstration of machine felting by a local artisan using heritage breed wool.

WORKSHOP AND FAIR HIGHLIGHTS

- Akhal Teke Association of America General Meeting, ON
- American Cream Draft Horse Association Annual Meeting, IA
- American Milking Devon Cattle Association Annual Meeting, VT
- American Rabbit Breeders Association Annual Convention, NV
- Boys and Girls Club of North America, NC
- Central Carolina Community College, NC
- The Economist: Feeding the Future, United Kingdom
- Food Forever Solutions Summit, DC
- Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock, KS
- Homegrown Food Summit Online
- Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival, MD
- Mother Earth News Fairs, PA, KS, TX, OR
- New York Sheep and Wool Festival, NY
- Ohio National Poultry Show, OH
- Saint Croix Hair Sheep International Association Annual Meeting, KS
- State Botanical Garden of Georgia, GA
- USDA Genetics Policy Coordinating Committee Meeting, TX
- State Fair of Virginia, American Milking Devon show, VA

INTERNATIONAL HERITAGE BREEDS WEEK

International Heritage Breeds Week raises global awareness about endangered livestock and poultry breeds. Heritage breeds around the world continue to be replaced with modern “improved” breeds at the expense of a massive loss of genetic diversity. Worldwide, about one domesticated livestock breed is lost to extinction every month. Celebrated the third week of May, International Heritage Breeds Week highlights international partners and the global impact of rare breed stewards.

SPECIAL PUBLICATION

The Livestock Conservancy’s Technical Advisor, D. Phillip Sponenberg, DVM, Ph.D., served as a guest editor for the scientific journal Diversity, Special Issue: Conservation of Rare Breeds of Livestock. Published online in October 2019, the Special Issue included 15 worldwide articles featuring the variety of genetic resources represented in domesticated animals, their diminishing genetic status, and strategies for effective conservation.
MEMBERS & SUPPORTERS

THANK YOU for your membership and support. You are helping discover goat herds that have nearly disappeared, secure Poitou donkeys through census and registration, and sustain rare breed sheep through the marketplace. Your membership makes a difference every day.

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Dutch Hookbill duck (below) courtesy of Kyle Just. San Clemente Island goat (right) courtesy of Erin Link.
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Royal Palm turkeys (left) by Lana Foley.

Millie and David Holderread

Heather Loomis and a Romeldale/CVM sheep
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THANK YOU to our Partners, whose expertise, collaboration, and boots-on-the-ground support saves rare breeds from extinction.

American Cream Draft Horse Association  
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American Milking Devon Cattle Association  
American Poultry Association  
American Rabbit Breeders Association  
American Suffolk Horse Association  
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Colonial Williamsburg  
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George Washington’s Mount Vernon  
Heritage Livestock Canada  
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Large Black Hog Association  
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More than 150 breed associations, clubs, and registries  
Mother Earth News  
Murray McMurray Hatchery  
NC 4-H and Cooperative Extension Service  
North Carolina Horse Council  
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Races Mulassières du Poitou  
Rare Breeds Survival Trust  
Santa Rosa Community College  
SVF Foundation  
Texas A&M University  
Texas Poitou Donkeys  
United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)  
University of Missouri  
USDA National Animal Germplasm Program  
Virginia Tech

Graduate student Katharine Sharp holds one of the first half-British/half-American Large Black Hog piglets born in the United States from frozen imported semen. Photo courtesy of Purdue University.

Committed to The Livestock Conservancy’s nonprofit mission, the Board of Directors brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the governing body. These volunteers set policies and priorities for the organization. Directors are elected by the membership and serve three-year terms. THANK YOU to our Board of Directors who generously support The Livestock Conservancy with their time, knowledge, and leadership.

Brian Larson (Chair)  
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Andrew Heltsley  
Steve Kerns  
Heather Loomis  
Marie Minnich  
Lawrence Rushton  
John Wilkes  
Brice Yocum

(Board Listing June 30, 2020)
AMBASSADORS

Ambassadors serve as spokespeople for heritage breeds. As well-known public figures in their fields, Ambassadors carry our message to the world. THANK YOU to our Ambassadors who generously give their time for important outreach.

Wendell Berry, a member of The Livestock Conservancy since 1986, is a novelist, poet, environmental activist, cultural critic, and farmer. He raises sheep and horses while supporting sustainable agriculture, appropriate technologies, and healthy rural communities. Known for connection to place, as well as the pleasures of good food, farming, and work, Berry is a respected advocate for local economics, the miracle of life, fidelity, frugality, reverence, and the interconnectedness of life.

Ariane Daguin is the founder of D’Artagnan Foods, the leading purveyor of organic poultry, game, pâtés, sausages, smoked delicacies, and wild mushrooms in the United States. Internationally recognized for her food-related accomplishments by The James Beard Foundation, Bon Appetit Magazine, and the French Legion d’Honneur, Daguin serves on the board of City Harvest and is active in both The American Institute of Wine and Food and the Women Chefs and Restaurateurs organization. She is also the founding president of Les Nouvelles Mères Cuisinières, an international association of prestigious women chefs.

Isabella Rosselini, an actress and model, raises heritage goats, sheep, pigs, and chickens. She also grows organic vegetables and produces honey. She has published the children’s book My Chickens and I and completed a Master’s degree in Animal Behavior and Conservation. Local school groups often visit her Long Island farm, called MAMA Farm, where Rosselini teaches them about animal conservation.

Antoinne Westermann, an acclaimed French chef, maintained a three-star Michelin rating at his Le Buerehiesel restaurant for more than 31 years. He currently owns and operates the restaurant “Le Coq Rico” in Paris and opened a second location in New York City in 2016, highlighting the flavor diversity of oft-overlooked heritage breeds of poultry through simple dishes, expertly prepared.

Our newest Ambassador, Katya Ekimian is a young knitwear designer who focuses on rare breed sheep wool. Her interest in this fiber led her to work on a farm where she was exposed to every step of the production process, from caring for and shearing sheep to knitting the finished spun product. For her farm to fashion work with heritage breed sheep, Katya received the prestigious 2019 Woolmark Scholarship.

“By bringing together game changers from all walks of industry and diversifying making at every step, we are creating garments resulting in a demand for these sheep and their fiber. Fighting for agricultural diversity through cultural diversity.”

~ Katya Ekimian
VOLUNTEERS

THANK YOU to our volunteers who generously give their time to The Livestock Conservancy. Your expertise and passion for rare farm animals continues to inspire members and the general public across the United States.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Many members of The Livestock Conservancy enjoy sharing their love of farming and heritage breeds with others. In addition to their daily farm chores, they volunteer as active members of their breed association, as local FFA or 4-H teachers, and as fiber arts instructors. We know how hard our members work, so we are incredibly grateful when they make time to promote The Livestock Conservancy to the public.

In August 2019, Shannon Sillanpaa of Sillanpaa Family Farms in Maine took The Livestock Conservancy’s traveling display on the road. She and her Hereford hogs (*top photo*) attended the Skowhegan Fair, self-billed as “The Nation’s Oldest Consecutively Running Agricultural Fair.” Aside from hauling her hogs to the fairgrounds, Shannon set up The Livestock Conservancy display, answered questions, handed out brochures and Conservation Priority Lists, and promoted the benefits of rare livestock and poultry.

Shannon became a Livestock Conservancy Member in 2019 and has already participated in the American Milking Devon Project and become a fiber provider for the Shave ‘Em to Save ‘Em Initiative. On her multigenerational family farm, Shannon raises Hereford pigs, American Milking Devon cattle, Dorset Horn sheep, Miniature Donkeys (*bottom photo*) and several breeds of heritage poultry. Sillanpaa Family Farms sells breeding stock, meat, eggs, and fleeces.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

- David Anderson
- Julie Atwood
- Hannah Baljeu
- Rodrigo Barrios
- Diane Barrows
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- Don Bixby
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- David Kendall
- Letty Klein
- David LaCount
- Gina Lawler
- Lucy Leaf
- Denise Luttrell
- Catherine Marguerat
- Patrick Martins
- Kevin Matthews
- Mary Carter McConnell
- Kristine McGuire
- Oogie McGuire
- Alan and Amy McKamey
- Ed McMillan
- John Metzer
- Joni Mickna
- Grace Mitchell
- (photo below)
- Lauren Nicholas
- William Phelps
- Mark Podgwaite
- Joe Putnam
- Callene Rapp
- Frank Reese
- Christy Reich
- Heidi Reinhardt
- Deborah Robson
- P. Allen Smith
- Allison Stapleton
- Ryan Sweeney
- Paula Waggoner
- Cliff Williamson
- Judy Wollen
- Bud Wood
FINANCIAL REPORTS | SPONSORS | STAFF

FINANCIAL REPORTS 2019-2020

SUPPORT AND REVENUE
- Contributions - $352,921
- Foundation Grants - $353,843
- Membership - $87,210
- Sponsorship - $25,400
- Conference/Program Services - $73,916
- Merchandise Sales - $3,407
- Other Revenue - $7,224

EXPENSES
- Program/Outreach - $480,793
- Fundraising - $41,498
- Management & General - $280,369

THANK YOU to our Sponsors, who generously support efforts to keep endangered breeds of livestock and poultry from extinction.

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Michele Brane, Donor Information Manager
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TECHNICAL ADVISOR: D. Phillip Sponenberg, DVM, Ph.D.