An Overview of Our Organization, Mission, and Work
How many of you have heard of The Livestock Conservancy (Formerly the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy)?

How many of you have heard of “heritage breeds”?
Who is The Livestock Conservancy?
Who is The Livestock Conservancy?

- Formerly the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy
- National non-profit 501(c)(3)
- 3,000 members in all 50 states
- Protects 190 livestock and poultry breeds from extinction
- Focusses on genetic conservation
- Works with farmers and others around the country to preserve heritage breeds
- Established in 1977
- Headquarters in Pittsboro, NC
Strengthening the future of agriculture through the genetic conservation and promotion of endangered breeds of livestock and poultry.

- Donkeys
- Cattle
- Goats
- Horses
- Sheep
- Pigs
- Rabbits
- Chickens
- Ducks
- Geese
- Turkeys
Endangered Livestock & Poultry
Livestock are Endangered?

Species

Species = Horse
(Equus caballus)

Breeds

Cleveland Bay

Clydesdale

Akhal-Teke

The Livestock Conservancy conserves endangered breeds.
Why are breeds endangered?

• Modern agriculture favors the use of a few specialized breeds.
• Breeds that don’t “fit the mold” are being lost.
• Breeds that are being lost contain valuable traits and genetics that may be needed in the future.
• Breeds = GENETIC DIVERSITY!
• Loss of Breeds = Loss of Genetic Diversity.
Why does genetic diversity matter?

- Agriculture is like a stock portfolio – **diversifying** secures our assets.
- **Genetic diversity =** Agriculture’s Security and Future
- **Example of not diversifying:**
  Irish Potato Famine (1840s) – The crop was all **one** variety of potato. Blight hit the one variety and the entire crop was lost. Nearly a million people died of starvation.
How does The Livestock Conservancy save heritage breeds?

- Research
- Outreach & Promotion
- Education
- Rescues
- Assisting with Gene Banks & DNA Collection
- Learning & Documenting
South Carolina Goat Rescue

- Discovered an isolated and unique population of Spanish goats in SC.
- Researched history and documented phenotype
- Removed select goats from island and placed in a breeding program.
- Breeding program has produced offspring, now going to farms.
Current Projects

Master Breeder Program

- Through our vast network of national contacts, ALBC has identified old-time breeders who are experts in their fields.
- The Conservancy interviews and records first-hand information from these individuals, documenting information for the next generation.
- The Conservancy publishes the information obtained from Master Breeders, and teaches workshops and clinics to share the information.
Marketing, Outreach, and Promotion

• The Conservancy is working with partners to define “Heritage” as a marketing term for each species of livestock and poultry
• The Conservancy travels to multiple fairs and shows each year. At each event, staff provide lectures and educational seminars on heritage breeds.
• The Conservancy provides free materials and resources to help members and heritage breed producers to market their products.
Current Projects

Saving Endangered Hog Breeds

- The Conservancy is currently working on a national swine project with several university partners.
- Education, research, carcass evaluations, training, and DNA analysis are all part of the project.
- The three-year initiative will produce materials that heritage breed swine producers can use to raise, breed, market, and sell heritage pork to consumers.
Securing Heritage Breeds

✓ Protects our food system;
✓ Ensures genetic diversity for the evolution of agriculture;
✓ Conserves valuable genetic traits
✓ Captures our heritage, history, and culture;
✓ Maintains breeds of animals that are well-suited for sustainable agriculture;
✓ Gives small family farms a competitive edge.
How can I help?

• Become a Livestock Conservancy Member
• Use rare breed products (eggs, meat, fibers, etc.)
• Visit a rare breed farm to get an up-close view of what raising these breeds is all about
• Educate yourself about heritage breeds and their importance
• Support businesses that use heritage breeds (restaurants, fiber artists, etc.)
Membership Levels

- Student - $25
- Basic - $45
- Sustaining - $100
- Group - $100
- Corporate - $250
- Lifetime - $1,500

Included in Basic and above: Newsletter, e-News, Breeders Directory, Directory Listing, Classifieds, Livestock Advice and Guidance, Discounts, Member Logo, Support for rare breed conservation, and more!
Meet the Breeds
The Dominique was the first American chicken breed. (1750s) The Buckeye was the first American chicken breed developed entirely by a woman.
The foundation stock for the Tunis sheep breed came to the United States as a gift from George Washington in the late 1700s. Thomas Jefferson also worked with the breed.
The American rabbit is one of only 6 rabbit breeds developed in the U.S.
Francis Marion, the famous general from the American Revolution, rode Marsh Tacky horses – the ultimate all-terrain vehicles of the day.
Cotton Patch geese were used to weed cotton and corn fields in the South up until the 1950s.
The Pilgrims brought British Devon cattle to New England beginning in 1623. Selection through the years gave rise to the Milking Devon breed.
As a ready source of milk, meat, and hides, these goats were taken everywhere by the early Spanish explorers.
Originally called the “Bourbon Butternut,” they were renamed the “Bourbon Reds” - *Bourbon* for the creator’s home county of Bourbon, Kentucky, and *red* for the rich, chestnut color of the plumage.
Noted for its distinctive white coat with black spots, the Gloucestershire Old Spot (GOS) pig looks like the Dalmatian of pig breeds.
Ancient temple carvings suggest Runner-type ducks existed in Indo China over 2000 years ago.
America’s own George Washington was one of the innovators that helped to develop the AMJ breed.
The Livestock Conservancy

PO Box 477
Pittsboro, NC  27312
(919) 542-5704
www.livestockconservancy.org

Questions and Sharing

The Livestock Conservancy™