



**Spring, 2016**  
**Volume 33, Issue 2**

**Conserving rare breeds since 1977**

# THE LIVESTOCK CONSERVANCY™ NEWS

## Changes in the Conservation Priority List for 2016

By D. P. Sponenberg

As a result of The Livestock Conservancy's work, the last few years have seen many breeds become much more secure. Unfortunately, some breeds have also fallen in their relative levels of security. Most breeds remain in their previous level despite an upward trend in the census for many breeds. Their static classification is only because they have not yet bumped up against the numbers required to graduate to the next category.

Some changes to the list are more in the sense of definition than anything else. "Red Devon" replaces "Devon (beef)" because this is more consistent with the label that is used by the breed association. In a similar vein, footnotes have been adjusted for Colonial Spanish horses to reflect the changes in situations for some of the various strains of this breed. Likewise, the "Belgian horse" footnote now reflects that this includes the Brabant (European) type of this breed alongside the American offshoot. Until about 1940 the Brabant and American Belgian were essentially the same horse. After World War II the Euro-

panean breeders began to produce a thicker-bodied horse with feathered legs. At the same time, the American Belgian breeders were favoring a tall, lighter, clean-legged horse.

### The Irish Draught horse

moves down from Watch to Threatened. This is due to falling registration numbers both in the Irish homeland of the breed as well as here in the United States. This breed faces the unique challenge that crossbred foals bring more financial return than purebred ones, so that purebred breeding stock recruitment is declining. Creative measures are needed to counter this trend for what has been a historically important source of sport horses.

The American Mammoth Jack moves from Threatened to Critical. This breed faces a host of challenges, among them



**Orpington and Wyandotte chickens have successfully graduated from the Conservation Priority List and are no longer endangered. Photos by Jeannette Beranger.**

that its purpose is to produce males for crossbreeding so numbers are always on the low side. Renewed interest in the breed and documentation of breeding stock are positive indicators for the future security of this breed.

Tamworth swine move from Threatened to Watch. This is due to rising registration numbers, but many breeders express caution that the old traditional type of this breed is slowly succumbing to a more modern industrial-and-show-type that may well not be as pure and distinctive as the original hog so highly valued for grazing.

Sheep breeds have seen the Leicester Longwool move from Critical to Threatened, although this breed still faces international challenges in overall numbers and genetic diversity. The breed is also being monitored because the breed population structure has tended to lose bloodlines over the decades.

Poultry present a number of challenges for conservation and for assessing census data. Among the challenges are breed definition, the role of varieties within breeds, and the relative purity of the various flocks



**Falling registration numbers both in the Irish homeland and in the U.S. have caused the Irish Draught horse to move from Watch to Threatened. Photo by Anna Sprecher.**



**The American Mammoth Jack moves from Threatened to Critical. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.**

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## Plan to Participate in International Heritage Breeds Week & Day

The first annual Heritage Breeds Week was held May 17-23, 2015 across the United States to raise awareness about nearly 200 endangered heritage breeds of livestock and poultry. The Livestock Conservancy's national campaign promoting the week-long event encouraged heritage breed farmers, enthusiasts, and the public to spread the word throughout their networks. The week culminated with National Heritage Breeds Day, when many farms and ranches held events such as farm tours, workshops, or lectures to raise awareness in their communities. The event was so successful in its first year that The Livestock Conservancy has partnered with livestock conservation organizations from around the world to host **International Heritage Breeds Week and Day** in 2016.

Find ways that you can join in at our website, [www.LivestockConservancy.org](http://www.LivestockConservancy.org).

**YOUR CARD MAY NEED TO BE UPDATED!** Have you received one of the new credit cards with the "chip" in it? Are you a automatic donor, or have you set up your membership to automatically renew? If so, please contact us with the new number because the original number will no longer work - even if the credit card you previously used doesn't expire until 2017! We will need to re-enter your number, not just update the expiration date, even if the new number is the same as the old one. Each time a card is denied, we have to pay a fee, so we're trying to alert our members and donors so that we can continue to be good stewards of your donations and not have to use the money to pay return fees. You might also want to check with other businesses and/or organizations for which you use "autopay" as we've had a number of members/donors tell us that they have had to do the same elsewhere.

### The Livestock Conservancy News

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Basic annual membership is \$45 and includes the quarterly *Livestock Conservancy News* and the annual *Breeders Directory*. We also accept unsolicited donations. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. Please send changes of address to the Conservancy.

The Conservancy welcomes articles, photographs, letters, and classified advertising for possible publication. Publication of articles or advertisements is not necessarily an endorsement by the Conservancy. Articles from this newsletter

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## Welcome to our Newest Life Member!

The Livestock Conservancy would like to give a special thanks to the following individual who recently chose to support the Conservancy and its conservation programs by becoming a life member. For more information on becoming a life member, please contact Ryan Walker at 919-542-5704, ext. 102, or [rwalker@LivestockConservancy.org](mailto:rwalker@LivestockConservancy.org).

Nathan Peters  
Little Rock, Iowa

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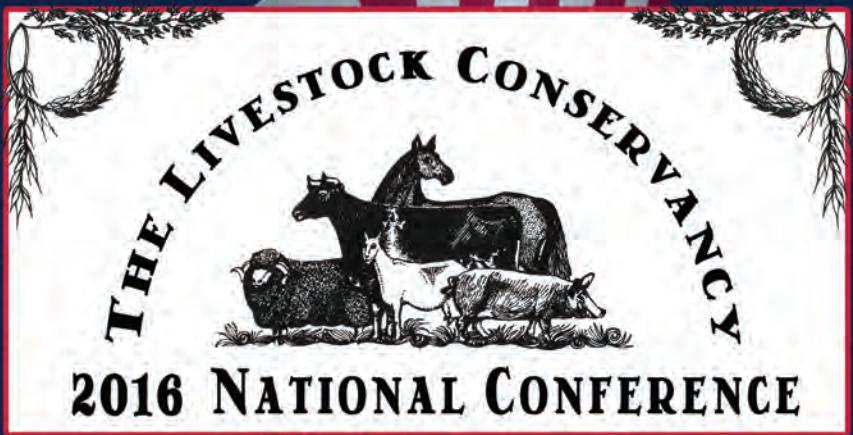
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Ryan Walker, Marketing and Communications Manager

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HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE, AMHERST, MA. NOVEMBER 3–5, 2016



## A UNITED STATE OF AGRICULTURE

### SAVE THE DATE!

The Livestock Conservancy  
National Conference

“A United State of Agriculture”

November 3 – 5, 2016

Hampshire College – Amherst, Massachusetts

In 1977 a diverse group of farmers, environmentalists, historians, and scientists shared a concern for the fate of America's traditional livestock breeds. They realized that if they didn't work together to save the endangered livestock and poultry they saw around them, that the breeds would soon be gone. To address this concern, they formed the American Minor Breeds Conservancy, now known as The Livestock Conservancy.

Come join like-minded people at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts – the site of the Conservancy's very first members meeting in 1977! – to share new ways in which members can again collaborate to ensure the continuation of the work begun almost 40 years ago. We'll be talking about cooperative strategies for breeding, marketing, and animal management that can aid farmers and bring products and services to eager consumers. We will explore how co-operation, collaboration, and teamwork will be the key to securing the future of rare breeds.

### SPEAK AT THE CONFERENCE!

If you are interested in presenting at the 2016 National Conference in Amherst, Massachusetts, let us know!

We encourage interactive programs that provide opportunities for audience participation. The two types of presentations are as follows:

**Pre-Conference Workshops** are held on Fridays and can be half-day or whole-day programs. For topics requiring more time for hands-on activities and in-depth discussion, an additional day may be added.

**General Sessions** can be a single presenter or panel discussion. They are one hour in length and will occur throughout the day on Saturday.

#### Possible Topics (not limited to these)

- Breeds with strong presence in the Northeast
- Breeding rare breed livestock/poultry
- Meat processing
- Rare breed dairying
- Farm-based education programs
- Business planning/financial management
- Multitasking rare breeds
- Urban agriculture
- Value-added products
- Rare breed co-ops & CSA's
- Fiber production
- Marketing
- Rare breed cuisine
- Animal health-related topics

Presenters will receive a modest honorarium for their presentations that can be used to help cover travel expenses. Speakers not wishing to be compensated may choose to donate the honorarium back to The Livestock Conservancy.

If you are interested visit the “Call for Presentations” page of our website or email Jeannette Beranger at [jberanger@livestockconservancy.org](mailto:jberanger@livestockconservancy.org) by May 27,

### FEATURE YOUR BREED AT THE CONFERENCE!

One of the most memorable highlights for attendees of the national conference is the Friday night kick-off banquet featuring heritage breed meats and products. This is a terrific opportunity to showcase your favorite breed among the diverse group of foodies, farmers, scientists, and others who attend the conference. It is also a perfect way for attendees to learn more about rare breeds and provides a tasty addition to the conference menu.

Rare breed meat and product contributors will be able to send business cards and flyers that can be shared with attendees during the meals. Your name and contact information will also be included in the conference packets that all attendees receive at check-in. If you are interested in contributing to the Conservancy's conference success and promote your farm or ranch through a product donation, please contact Angelique Thompson at [athomspson@livestockconservancy.org](mailto:athomspson@livestockconservancy.org) or 919-542-5704. We look forward to hearing from you!

## Texas Longhorn Leader Passes Away

Enrique E. Guerra, 86, of Linn, Texas, passed away peacefully at his home on Wednesday, March 16, 2016. Mr. Guerra and his wife Lydia began Texas Longhorn cattle ranching in Mexico in 1949. Descended from family who in 1748 were bequeathed a Spanish Land Grant in what is now south Texas, Mr. Guerra, a twelfth-generation Texan, moved his ranching operation back to his ancestral home near Linn, Texas in 1979.

He was a charter member of the Cattlemen's Texas Longhorn Registry, where he served three terms as President, and a charter member of the Cattlemen's Texas Longhorn Conservancy, where he served as the organization's first president for eleven years until his death. He gave many public presentations about the history of Texas Longhorns, including a comprehensive history at the 2014 Livestock Conservancy conference in Austin. Mr. Guerra was a member of the Advisory Board to the School of Agriculture at Texas A&M University and an Advisor to UT Pan American University in Edinburg, Texas. In 2016 Mr. Guerra was an inductee into the Hall of Great Westerners at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. He received The Livestock Conservancy's Bixby-Sponenberg Conservation Award in 2014.



## Online Classified Ads

One benefit of membership in The Livestock Conservancy is the ability to post unlimited free online classified ads. The online classifieds service allows the general public to browse listings of rare breed livestock and poultry for sale, rare breed products such as meats and fiber, and other items that help secure the future of rare breeds. The site is directly geared towards small farmers, breeders, producers, and conservationists, but also serves those interested in biodiversity and sustainability.

The Livestock Conservancy realizes that many livestock and poultry breeds are on the brink of extinction because owners of these animals find it difficult to carve out a niche for rare breed products in our highly industrialized market. The rare breed classifieds serves as a platform to help breeders sell their animals and products in order to increase population numbers.

This project is just one of many ongoing efforts to help members market their animals and products. Anyone may view and respond to ads; however, only Conservancy members may post ads on the site. Please note that the user profile for the classifieds is currently not tied to the online member login of our website. We hope to integrate these in the future. To post an ad or set up your online classifieds account, visit [www.LivestockConservancy.org](http://www.LivestockConservancy.org) and click on the "Classifieds" button on the homepage. ♦

## Contact Information Updates

The address and phone number listed in the **American Kerry Cattle Society** ad on page 7 of the 2016 Breeders & Products Directory are incorrect. The correct contact information is shown on page 67 and is as follows:

American Kerry Cattle Society  
Ms. Dana Wakefield  
PO Box 947  
Potsdam, NY 13676  
315-267-6925, 315-353-6156  
[dana@alchemistress.com](mailto:dana@alchemistress.com)  
[www.KerryCattleSociety.org](http://www.KerryCattleSociety.org)

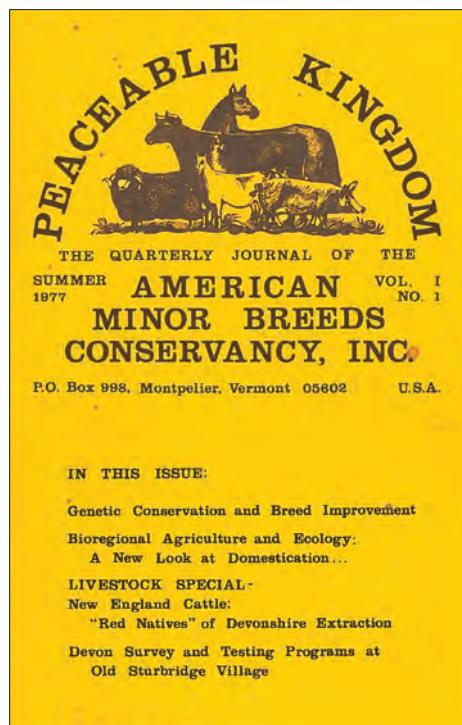
The phone number for the **Karakul Shepherds Alliance** should be 206-371-0995.

Please update the information in your directories to ensure you are able to reach the Society and Alliance.

## Early Newsletters Donated!

In a recent issue of our newsletter, we asked for old copies of some of our early publications from the late 1970s and early 1980s. Many thanks to all who responded! Leslie Edmundson sent in some copies of early correspondence between AMBC and the San Clemente Island Goat Club and a copy of one of our early brochures. Nada Butler sent in some early newsletters. Lloyd Johnson sent in several copies of our earliest newsletters, including an original copy of the FIRST ISSUE of our original newsletter! Lloyd, who was one of our first members, kept all of the items we have sent to him over the years and states that he has "enjoyed all the years of [our] work."

These items will be added to our archives and will help document the early days of what is now The Livestock Conservancy. If you have any early documents, photographs, or publications you would like to donate to the Conservancy's archives, please send them to PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312; digital images can be emailed to [rwalker@LivestockConservancy.org](mailto:rwalker@LivestockConservancy.org). ♦



**Member Lloyd Johnson donated an original copy of the first issue of the Conservancy's newsletter to our archives.**

# There be GIANTS here!

By Kathy Rowe with Rich Vaughn

There are few breeds of chickens that raise eyebrows in barnyards and shows like Jersey Giants. It's not uncommon for a rooster to weigh 11 to 15 pounds and stand 26 inches tall. As imposing as that may seem, most Giants have a relatively calm demeanor. They are fantastic dual-purpose meat and egg birds with a history dating back to the 1880s.

Giants got their start in New Jersey, near Jobstown, when two brothers, John and Thomas Black worked to create a large chicken that would rival turkeys as roasting birds. They crossed Black Javas, Black Langshans, and Dark Brahmans to produce a very large bird with good meat qualities and excellent flavor. At that time, feather color was variable, but the general shape of the bird was deep-keeled, straight backed, and wide.

Today, there are three colors of Giants recognized by the American Poultry Association (APA): black (with a beetle-green sheen), white, and blue (with darker blue lacing). A splash variety has yet to be accepted by APA. Black Giants were officially recognized by the APA in 1922, whites in 1947, and blues in 2003.

If you're looking for a fast-maturing bird, Giants probably aren't for you. They take roughly eight to nine months to mature, and longer to achieve full weight. Females generally start laying by six months and can lay up to 160 medium/large brown eggs a year. They don't fly particularly well, and because of their large size, require a different kind of coop set up. To avoid injury to their legs and joints, perches and roosts should be raised no more than 15 inches and nest boxes should be roomy and close to the floor. They are quite cold-hardy, with the exception that frostbite on combs and wattles can affect roosters.

Giants generally get along well with other breeds of chickens (both large and bantam), and even ducks and turkeys. Because of their imposing size (hens can weigh 8 to 10 pounds – 6-plus pounds more than a red-tailed hawk!), aerial predators such as raptors tend to ignore them in favor of smaller prey. Giants adore free-ranging and can cover a surprising amount of ground in search of insects and seeds. Good quality feed and forage are



paramount for achieving best growth.

The Livestock Conservancy currently has Jersey Giants listed in the Watch category of chickens. There was a time in the late 1940s when this stately breed nearly became extinct. With the invention of the broad breasted turkey, Giants fell out of favor as roasting birds. It was only through the efforts of a few devoted breeders that this beautiful bird is with us today.

Where can you get Giants? Many hatcheries offer them, but because they are mass-produced, these birds do not attain the massive size or have the mellow temperament of giants bred by dedicated breeders. So if you're truly interested in adding quality birds to your flock, seek out a reputable breeder. The National Jersey Giant Club of America (NJGC) has been active since 1971 and currently has over 150 members across the country and a few in Canada and overseas.❖

*For further information on this gentle Giant contact the NJGC at: Richard Vaughn, Secretary-Treasurer, 3726 N 61<sup>st</sup> Street, Lincoln NE 68507, email [jerseygiantclub@hotmail.com](mailto:jerseygiantclub@hotmail.com), or find them at: [www.nationaljerseygiantclub.com](http://www.nationaljerseygiantclub.com), Facebook: National Jersey Giant Club.*

**Clockwise from top left, Jersey Giants in color variants White, Splash, Black, and Blue. Photos courtesy of Kathy Rowe.**

**Have an article idea for our newsletter?** To propose an article topic or to submit something you have written, contact Ryan Walker at [rwalker@LivestockConservancy.org](mailto:rwalker@LivestockConservancy.org) or 919-542-5704, extension 102.

# CPL Changes

*Continued from page 1*

within a breed (see “Breeds” – Livestock and Poultry,” *Livestock Conservancy News*, Summer 2013). The breed standards maintained by the American Poultry Association (APA) are key to definitions of breed and variety; however, breeding philosophies vary between exhibitors, producers, hatcheries, and advocates such as breed clubs and the Society for the Preservation of Poultry Antiquities (SPPA). These all serve conservation well, but the differences in philosophy need to be bridged in a constructive way that advances endangered breeds.

Turkey numbers are perplexing for a number of reasons. The initial years following the Livestock Conservancy’s promotion of Heritage Turkeys for special occasions sparked an increase in the numbers of breeding birds, and indeed likely saved some varieties from extinction. Since that early success, though, numbers have generally stabilized and are changing minimally from year to year. This means there are still real threats to the survival of some turkey varieties.

Turkeys, as all poultry, present an interesting challenge in definitions and approaches to deciding on populations of conservation interest. The approaches are all flawed, because the varieties of turkeys are generally based on feather color, and this is controlled by so few genes that it is possible to quickly regenerate a color variety that has been lost. Buried under that superficial level, though, are several old, distinct and interesting populations that are tough to define and then to target. Among these are old strains of varieties, such as Wishard Bronze turkeys, that have a long history of isolation and would be considered distinct breeds in any other species. How to construct a net that catches that sort of population while avoiding a distinct identity for recently crossed ones has so far eluded success.

A practical solution has been to individually

list the varieties that are recognized by the APA, as a nod to their long-standing acceptance as distinct varieties. In addition, this captures the Royal Palm and the Beltsville Small White, both of which are distinct from the other varieties by being markedly smaller. This reflects genetic differences. Most other color varieties (except the Midget White) are of similar final size, and as breeders delve into new genetic combinations the array of distinct and identifiable color varieties has increased dramatically. While these are each useful and interesting, listing them all would imply larger genetic differences among them than likely exist.

Two of the APA varieties of turkeys have slipped a category, with **Black** and **Royal Palm** both dropping from Watch to Threatened. Moving in the opposite direction, from Threatened to Watch is the **Narragansett**. While stability may imply success, all turkeys are in a fairly precarious state, especially given the need for sizeable populations to make progress in selection for productivity.

Ducks have fewer problems with definitions of breeds, but the last year has seen several breeds move in one direction or another. Ducks, in general, have seen gains across the board with no associated losses in status or numbers, and hopefully this trend continues. Ducks that have gained ground include **Ancona** and

**Welsh Harlequin**, both making the big leap from Critical to Watch. **Cayuga** made the smaller jump from Threatened to Watch. A more modest move from Critical to Threatened was accomplished by **Magpie**, **Saxony**, and **Silver Appleyard**. The **Dutch Hookbill**, a more recent import, has satisfied the criteria for an initial listing. This breed is Critical due to its limited occurrence both here and in Europe.



**Dutch Hookbill ducks have been added to the Critical category.**  
Photo by Jeannette Beranger.



**Icelandic chickens have been added to the Threatened category.** Photo by Jeannette Beranger.

Geese likewise saw only gains and not losses. The **American Buff** moves from Critical to Watch, and the **Pilgrim** and **Pomeranian** move from Critical to Threatened. In a minor name change, “**Toulouse (Dewlap)**” replaces “Toulouse (non-industrial).” This reflects the fact that it is the heavy exhibition bird that is most of interest in this breed.

Chicken breeds present the most challenges in organization and classifica-

tion, not least because there are so many of them! Chickens as a whole have become increasingly popular for both production and as pets, and this has led to heightened demand for a number of breeds.

Two breeds have managed to graduate from the list altogether: **Orpingtons** with nearly 16,000 breeding birds, and **Wyanottes** with over 21,000 breeding birds. These dual-purpose breeds benefit from the popularity of small flocks. Their easy-going nature, particularly for Orpingtons, make them favorites. While not a full graduation, both the **Brahma** and **Cochin** managed to join the ranks of Recovering breeds due to greater numbers.

To offset the graduations are a few breeds that have been added to the list. Some of these reflect a recent trend of importation of new breeds into the United States from a host of countries. In most cases, these are not yet recognized by the APA. Listing them may seem at variance with the strategy outlined for turkeys, but when non-APA breeds are old, established breeds in their home countries, The Livestock Conservancy has opted to incorporate them into our Priority List. As a result, the **Icelandic** and **Spitzhauben** chickens join the list as Threatened.

Other more established breeds have moved around in various ways. The positive moves include several breeds that moved from Threatened to Watch: **Andalusian**, **Buckeye**, **Buttercup**, **Delaware**, **Dorking**, **Java**, **Langshan**, and **Phoenix**. The Buckeye, especially, has benefitted from a targeted program of breed recovery, management, and bird selection that is now being used across other breeds in

*continued on page 12*



## THE LIVESTOCK CONSERVANCY™

### Conservation Priority Livestock Breeds 2016

**Critical:** Fewer than 200 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 2,000. For rabbits, fewer than 50 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 500.

**Threatened:** Fewer than 1,000 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 5,000. For rabbits, fewer than 100 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 1,000.

**Watch:** Fewer than 2,500 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 10,000. For rabbits, fewer than 200 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 2,000. Also included for all livestock are breeds that present genetic or numerical concerns or have a limited geographic distribution.

**Recovering:** Breeds that were once listed in another category and have exceeded Watch category numbers but are still in need of monitoring.

**Study:** Breeds that are of genetic interest but either lack definition or lack genetic or historical documentation.

	Critical	Threatened	Watch	Recovering	Study
Cattle	Canadienne Dutch Belted <b>Florida Cracker</b> Kerry Lincoln Red Milking Devon Milking Shorthorn – Native <sup>1</sup> Randall or Randall Lineback Texas Longhorn (CTLR) <sup>2</sup>	Ancient White Park Pinewoods Red Poll	Ayrshire Galloway Guernsey	Ankole-Watusi Belted Galloway Red Devon Dexter Highland	Chirikof Island Criollo (North Central Mexican)
Goats	Arapawa San Clemente		Spanish	Myotonic or Tennessee Fainting Oberhasli	Golden Guernsey
Pigs	Choctaw Mulefoot <b>Ossabaw Island</b>	Gloucestershire Old Spots Guinea Hog Large Black Red Wattle	Hereford Tamworth		Saddleback
Rabbits	American Chinchilla	American Belgian Hare Blanc de Hotot Silver Silver Fox	Beveren Giant Chinchilla Lilac Rhinelander	Crème d'Argent	Harlequin
Sheep	<b>Florida Cracker</b> Gulf Coast or Gulf Coast Native <b>Hog Island</b> Romeldale / CVM Santa Cruz	Black Welsh Mountain Clun Forest Cotswold Dorset Horn Jacob – American Karakul – American Leicester Longwool Lincoln Navajo-Churro St. Croix	Oxford Shropshire Tunis	Barbados Blackbelly Shetland Southdown Wiltshire Horn	

Breeds unique to North America are printed in bold.

<sup>1</sup> Dual Purpose Milking Shorthorns that qualify for the "Native (N)" designation, identifying them as pure, old line, dual purpose Milking Shorthorns, as verified by the AMSS office

<sup>2</sup> Cattlemen's Texas Longhorn Registry.



## Conservation Priority Equine Breeds 2016

**Critical:** Fewer than 200 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 2,000.

**Threatened:** Fewer than 1,000 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 5,000.

**Watch:** Fewer than 2,500 annual registrations in the United States and estimated global population less than 10,000. Also included for all livestock are breeds that present genetic or numerical concerns or have a limited geographic distribution.

**Recovering:** Breeds that were once listed in another category and have exceeded Watch category numbers but are still in need of monitoring.

**Study:** Breeds that are of genetic interest but either lack definition or lack genetic or historical documentation.

	Critical	Threatened	Watch	Recovering	Study
Donkeys	American Mammoth Jackstock Poitou			Miniature Donkey	
Horses	American Cream Canadian Caspian Cleveland Bay Dales Pony Galiceño Hackney Horse <b>Morgan – Traditional<sup>2</sup></b> Newfoundland Pony Shire Suffolk	Akhal-Teke Colonial Spanish <sup>1</sup> Dartmoor Exmoor Irish Draught Lipizzan	Clydesdale Fell Pony Gotland Mountain Pleasure/ Rocky Mountain	Belgian <sup>3</sup>	

Breeds unique to North America are printed in bold.

<sup>1</sup>Strains include Baca-Chica, Banker, Belsky, Choctaw, Florida Cracker, Marsh Tacky, Santa Cruz, Sulphur/Vaquero, Wilbur Cruce, and numerous other sub strains and composites. Feral horses from the Cerbat, Pryor, and Sulphur areas include some that would meet the criteria as well as some that do not. Colonial Spanish horses are represented by several registries, and several strains have independent conservation breeding programs. Each of these strains contributes to the overall composite breed.

<sup>2</sup> Includes horses whose pedigrees are absent of outcrosses after 1930.

<sup>3</sup> Includes Brabant, the European ancestor of the American breed, that is a distinct type and now globally rare.

## Help Promote Heritage Breed Conservation

*The following items are available to download/print from LivestockConservancy.org*

- The Livestock Conservancy General Brochure (trifold)**
- Conservation Priority Lists - Livestock, Equine, & Poultry**
- About Us (flyer)**
- Membership (form & flyer)**
- What We Do (flyer)**
- How You Can Help (brochure)**
- Membership Ad (half page)**



## Conservation Priority Poultry Breeds 2016

**Critical:** Fewer than 500 breeding birds in the United States, with five or fewer primary breeding flocks (50 birds or more), and estimated global population less than 1,000.

**Threatened:** Fewer than 1,000 breeding birds in the United States, with seven or fewer primary breeding flocks, and estimated global population less than 5,000.

**Watch:** Fewer than 5,000 breeding birds in the United States, with ten or fewer primary breeding flocks, and estimated global population less than 10,000. Also included are breeds that present genetic or numerical concerns or have a limited geographic distribution.

**Recovering:** Breeds that were once listed in another category and have exceeded Watch category numbers but are still in need of monitoring.

**Study:** Breeds that are of genetic interest but either lack definition or lack genetic or historical documentation.

	Critical	Threatened	Watch	Recovering	Study
Chickens	Campine Crevecoeur <b>Holland</b> La Fleche Malay Modern Game Nankin Redcap Spanish Sultan Yokohama	Asseel <b>Cubalaya</b> Faverolle Houdan Icelandic Lakenvelder Old English Game <b>Rhode Island White</b> Russian Orloff Sebright Spitzhauben	Ancona Andalusian <b>Buckeye</b> Buttercup Catalana <b>Chantecler</b> Cornish Delaware <b>Dominique</b> Dorking Hamburg Java Jersey Giant Langshan Minorca New Hampshire Phoenix Polish <b>Rhode Island Red – Non industrial</b> Shamo Sumatra	Australorp Brahma Cochin Leghorn – Non-industrial <b>Plymouth Rock</b> Sussex	Araucana <sup>1</sup> Large Fowl American Game Manx Rumpy or Persian Rumpless Saipan
Ducks	Aylesbury Dutch Hookbill	Buff or Orpington Magpie Saxony Silver Appleyard	Ancona Campbell <b>Cayuga</b> Rouen – Non-industrial Swedish Welsh Harlequin	Runner or Indian Runner	Australian Spotted
Geese	Cotton Patch Roman Shetland Steinbacher	Pilgrim Pomeranian Sebastopol	African <b>American Buff</b> Chinese Toulouse (Dewlap)		Gray
Turkeys	Beltsville Small White	Black Royal Palm White Holland	Bourbon Red Bronze Narragansett Slate All Other Varieties <sup>2</sup>		

<sup>1</sup> Breed identity in poultry breeds is challenging. Many breeders of all kinds (exhibition, production, hatchery) are diligent to breed standard-bred birds. Other breeders in each category resort to crossbreeding to achieve their goals, and yet promote their birds as standard-bred. The Livestock Conservancy is unable to validate each breeding program, so buyers are encouraged to ask if birds offered for sale are pure-bred and meet breed standards.

<sup>2</sup> Varieties that are distinct but not APA recognized include Chocolate, Jersey Buff, Midget White, Lavender, and a host of other distinct color varieties. Does not include broad-breasted varieties, because they are not endangered.



## Ossabaw Odyssey: Part 2

By Jeanette Berranger

Before beginning my journey from North Carolina on my “Ossabaw Odyssey,” I was able to reach the Executive Director of the Ossabaw Island Foundation, Elizabeth Dubose. She is at the forefront of the Foundation’s mission to “inspire, promote, and manage exceptional educational, cultural, and scientific resources that are designed to maximize the experience of Ossabaw Island, while minimizing the impact on its resources.” I told her

of my involvement with the Ossabaw hog studbook and my interest in visiting the island. As luck would have it she was traveling to the island the day after my daughter and I visited with Marc Mousseau and his Ossabaw hogs at Island Creek Preserve (see part 1 in the previous newsletter). Elizabeth was very gracious and invited us to join her. That day she was hosting a number of art students that were interested in photographing the rare architectural structures found on the island. She said we

*A small herd of Ossabaw hogs foraging among the palmettos and live oaks.  
Photo by Jeannette Beranger.*

were welcome to wander the island while they did their photography. She could not guarantee we would see pigs because they are hunted and leery of people walking into the more remote areas of the island. Nevertheless, we were quite excited for this rare opportunity!

After a 20-30 minute boat ride from the mainland, we arrived to find a cloudy but calm day on the island. Upon our arrival, we couldn’t help but be moved by the beauty of the wild areas and the diversity of life on and around the island. We started our visit at the old boarding house where many visitors and students stay when working on the island. There, Elizabeth gave us an overview of the island’s history and how the Foundation works in its public-private partnership with the state of Georgia to manage the island and create opportunities for scientists and students to take advantage of what may yet be learned there. We then walked up the road a bit and came to a row of three tabby construction slave quarters on the north end of the island. Tabby construction employs the use of oyster shell, lime, water, and sand for the foundation and walls of the building. These structures are from the original island plantation’s antebellum period, and were constructed between 1820 and 1840. They are some of the best preserved specimens of slave settlement architecture in the Southeast. The visiting art students’



*Elizabeth Dubose, Executive Director of the Ossabaw Island Foundation, and Roger Parker, a past island manager, on Ossabaw Island. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.*

focus was on these buildings, so we left them to their work and continued to a section of the island where we were most likely to encounter Ossabaw hogs.

It took about 30 minutes of quiet strolling on the remote paths of the island to come across a small herd of hogs foraging among the palmettos and live oak. Acorns seemed to be their meal for the day and there were plenty of them. We stayed quiet and downwind so that we could get within 50 to 100 feet of the hogs before they saw us and took off. We finished our walk after about an hour and rejoined Elizabeth so that we could head to the other end of the island near the home of the island's longest resident, Sandy Torrey West, who has lived there full time since 1987. She lives in what they call the "main house" – a beautiful Spanish revival home. Sandy's family owned the island for many years until in 1978 when she and her brother made a deal (brokered by then-President Jimmy Carter) for the state of Georgia to purchase the island and preserve it for perpetuity.

When we arrived near the main house, we were greeted by current West family Sardinian donkeys. All of these animals descend from donkeys Sandy adopted in 1965. They were eager for attention and all strolled over to say "Hi." Mrs. West, who just turned 103, was not well enough to have visitors that day, but we were able to visit next door with Roger Parker. For many years, Roger managed the island for the Torrey and West families. He had many stories to tell about "back in the



**A Sardinian donkey stands outside Mrs. West's house. All of the Sardinian donkeys descend from donkeys she adopted in 1965. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.**

day" with the hogs. He trapped and sold thousands of them over the many years he was caretaker. Today he still traps some on occasion and will, at times, even roast a hog for special events like Mrs. West's annual birthday party. The donkeys were very fond of Roger and, while we were talking, one opened a door and invited herself into his house to steal some goodies out of the pantry.

After our visit with Roger, we headed back to the tabby cabins to collect the art students and visit another side of the island where there were more structures to see. Along the way, our driver pulled over to point out examples of old Native Ameri-

can shell tools and shell mounds from long ago. Along the route we stopped at an old 'gator hole to look for the massive resident, who had left wide travel paths wherever she ventured away from the water. I can tell you my daughter was not too happy to see her mom trek off in search of a massive alligator, but alas, the old girl was nowhere to be seen that day.

On the way back to the boarding house our group caught one last glimpse of an Ossabaw hog along the road as a final memory of the time spent on the island.❖

*To learn more about Ossabaw Island and the work of the Foundation visit [www.ossabawisland.org](http://www.ossabawisland.org).*



**These original structures from the island plantation's antebellum period, constructed between 1820 and 1840, served as slave quarters. Their "tabby construction" employs the use of oyster shell, lime, water, and sand for the foundation and walls of the buildings. Photos by Jeannette Beranger.**

# The Conservancy's Conservation Breeding Program for Poultry

By D.P. Sponenberg and C.J. Christman

*This article is excerpted from A Conservation Breeding Handbook, Chapter 11. The book is available for purchase at [www.LivestockConservancy.org](http://www.LivestockConservancy.org).*

## Elements of a Poultry Conservation Program

The objectives of a poultry conservation program are the management of an individual flock so that genetic diversity is maintained and the flock best serves the conservation of the breed. Production

traits are an important part of a breed's genetic heritage, so selection for production should be an element of conservation programs for all but the very rarest breeds.

Conservation programs for chickens, ducks, and turkeys are similar, as they can be mated in small groups, with sires easily rotated among the groups. Conservation of geese is somewhat different, because geese form pair bonds and live in stable groups of one male with one to three females.

When several breeders are working together, collaboration can be an advantage for successful conservation. For example, the larger numbers of eggs from several farms may make it worthwhile to purchase a higher quality incubator, and exchange of breeding stock becomes more practical.

## Multiple Sire Mating with Selection

This program uses a large proportion of males, multi-sire mating, and selection for soundness to maintain the genetic viability of the population

All females are kept in a single flock, which eases management and provides a stable social environment. The males are divided into three or more groups of three to five birds each, and each group of males is kept in its own pen when not with the females. When the breeder is ready to begin reproduction, the small flocks of males will be rotated sequentially through the flock of females.

The first group of males is put in with the females. The breeder should wait for about a week to establish fertility, and then collect eggs for up to two weeks. The first batch of eggs is then ready to be incubated.

The first group of males is removed and eggs are not collected for at least one week. This period can be adjusted longer for the incubation needs of the breeder. The second group of males is placed in the pen. Then, eggs are collected for two weeks, and the second incubation begins. The third group of males is managed likewise.

Using this method, each group of males makes up its own hatch. Upon hatching, chicks can be identified by leg bands, wing bands, or toe punching. This assures an even contribution from all male groups from one generation to the next.

Representation from all sire groups is especially important when total numbers are small.

## Use of Distinct Lines

If a flock has originated from distinct foundations, the breeder has to decide whether to blend these lines together or to keep them separate. When the breed has several relatively weak, inbred lines, blending the lines together can increase the health and production traits of the resulting flock.

Alternatively, a breeder may choose to maintain distinct bloodlines. This approach is appropriate when the distinct lines available are viable and productive.

In this program, the birds are divided according to their bloodlines and then managed in separate pens. Each season, female offspring replace their mothers in the same pen, and male offspring are rotated to the next pen. A minimum of five females are needed per pen, and ten is better. The table below provides an illustration.

## Poultry Conservation Program Using Four Lines

Year	Female line	Male line used	Offspring produced
1	A	A	A
	B	B	B
	C	C	C
	D	D	D
2	A	D	A
	B	A	B
	C	B	C
	D	C	D

Rotation continues in Year 3 and beyond.

This program maintains the distinct genetics of each strain. A disadvantage of moving males in a circular rotation through all of the bloodlines is that eventually the flock becomes inbred in the same direction. This can be minimized, if males are available from another source every few generations.

Birds may be banded or toe punched to identify their bloodline and then the females, or all the birds, managed together as a flock until reproduction begins. At that point, the males and females are sorted into pens according to their bloodlines. When reproduction is completed, the hens are put back together as a single flock while the chicks grow to maturity. Males will fight if reunited into one large flock, and they will need to be carefully managed

## CPL Changes

*Continued from page 6*

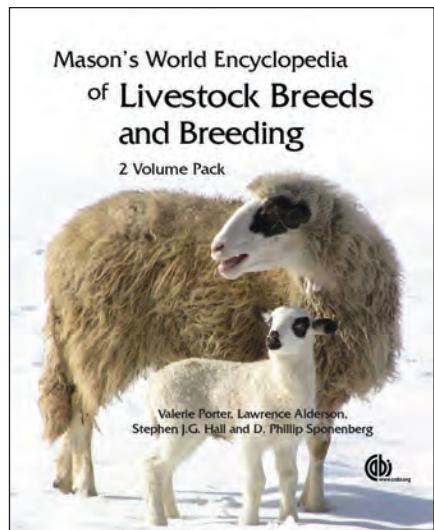
hopes of achieving similar success in recapturing historically productive types.

Jumping all the way from Critical to Watch are the **Chantecler** and **Sumatra**. Making the less dramatic jump from Critical to Threatened is the **Russian Orloff**.

Losing ground by moving from Recovering to Watch is the **Rhode Island Red**. This move acknowledges the complexity of chicken breeds, because this breed includes many birds that are not bred to the standard. Equally, many birds promoted as being this breed are likely not purebred. The task of sorting through these issues is important for this useful breed, and will serve as a model for other similar breeds in the future. Moving from Watch to Threatened are the **Aseel**, **Houdan**, **Old English Game**, **Rhode Island White**, and **Sebright**. Making more troubling moves to Critical are the **La Fleche** (from Watch), and **Malay** (from Threatened).

The CPL changes year to year, and this year has seen more than a few changes. Most of these have been within poultry breeds. This reflects the recent census that has shed light on the plight of many of these breeds. The short life-span and changing demand for these birds makes census a challenge, and that in turn makes the setting of priorities a difficult exercise. In the coming year we hope that additional breeders will weigh in and provide their own census figures to make sure the breeds are accurately placed on the *Conservation Priority List*. ♦

## BOOK REVIEW



### Mason's World Encyclopedia of Livestock Breeds and Breeding

This substantial work (over 1100 pages in two volumes) presents easily accessible information on domestication (including wild ancestors and related species), potential domesticants, genetics and breeding, livestock production and markets, cultural and social aspects of livestock farming, genetic conservation, and the use of livestock for conservation grazing. Written by renowned livestock authorities, this Encyclopedia draws on the authors' lifelong interest and involvement in livestock breeds of the world, presenting a unique, comprehensive and fully cross-referenced guide to cattle, buffalo, horses, pigs, sheep, asses, goats and camelids, placing them in a practical agricultural context.

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or kept in their small groups until they are retired.

### Selection and Conservation

The breeder's goal is to hatch enough offspring so that birds for the next generation may undergo some selection based on health, soundness, vigor, and breed characteristics. Production qualities are essential to production breeds, and these must be conserved if the complete genetic heritage of the breed is to survive. Selection practices for chickens and turkeys can be found on The Livestock Conservancy website. ♦

## Our Podcast – Season Two

The Livestock Conservancy's podcast has now kicked off its second season. If you are not currently aware of them, podcasts are FREE radio/television-like shows that center around topics like science, green lifestyle living, business, kids and family, news, politics, and many others. They are produced by professionals and posted to the Internet for download. You can easily listen or watch them on your computer, smart phone, iPad, iPod, or any portable media player. The name derives from the combination of "iPod" and "broadcast".

Our podcasts can be downloaded individually at <http://HeritageBreeds.org> or subscribed to so that each new episode of the podcast is automatically downloaded to your computer. You can subscribe to them directly at the iTunes Store, Stitcher, or any of the other podcast streams that are available.

This podcast series is a way of connecting people worldwide with each Heritage Breed. Currently there are over 575 mil-

lion active subscribers on iTunes and that number is growing daily.

**Would you like to have your farm or heritage breed featured on a podcast?** Contact C. S. Wurzberger, The Green Up Girl, the show's producer and host, to discuss being interviewed for a show. You can email her at: TLC Podcast@TheGreenUpGirl.com

### A Special Partnership

The Livestock Conservancy has partnered with eFowl (a source of live poultry and supplies for small-to-mid sized farms) to bring you a three-part audio and video series titled "Selecting and Raising Happy, Healthy Heritage Chicks." You'll discover how to select the heritage breed chicken that's right for you, how the chicks get from the hatchery to your house, and how to prepare for your chicks' arrival. Plus, eFowl is giving you 10% off your live poultry purchase. Just enter the discount code: HBCHICKS. Learn more by going to: [www.efowl.com/podcast](http://www.efowl.com/podcast). ♦



### A Five Breeds Dinner

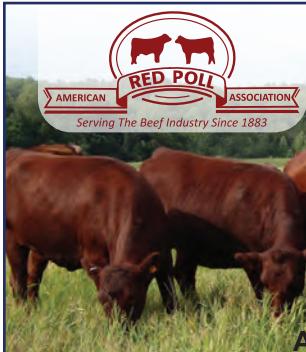
The Livestock Conservancy would like to extend a huge thank you to Slow Food Ventura County, Charles Barth, Pedalers Fork Restaurant, and the many others who helped to host a fundraising dinner for the Conservancy recently in Calabasas, California. Around 85 attendees enjoyed pork from five different breeds, wine pairings, and great company.

If you are interested in hosting an event benefitting The Livestock Conservancy, please contact Alison Martin at [amartin@LivestockConservancy.org](mailto:amartin@LivestockConservancy.org) or 919-542-5704, ext. 105.

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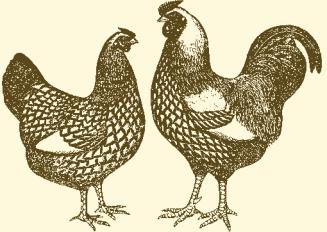
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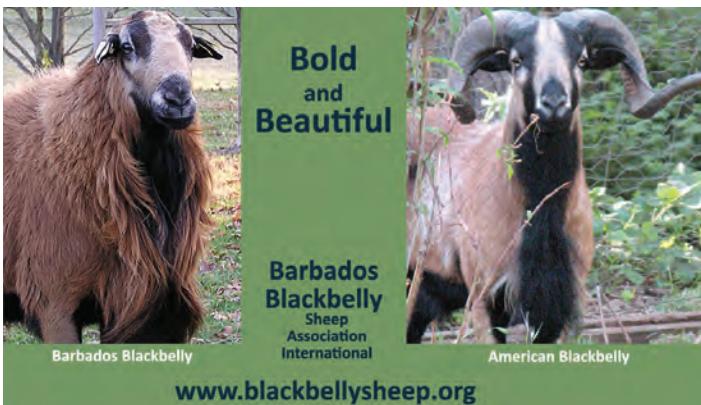
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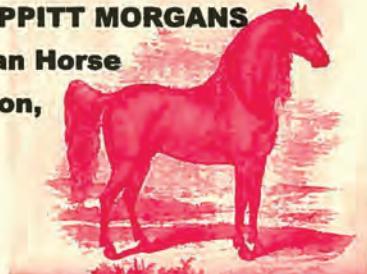
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## CALENDAR

★★ denotes Livestock Conservancy event  
★ denotes Conservancy participation  
*See the Conservancy website for a more extensive list of events. The Livestock Conservancy encourages event organizers to submit events related to conservation, farming, sustainability, rare breeds, and more to the Conservancy's Calendar. Send your submission to [rwalker@livestockconservancy.org](mailto:rwalker@livestockconservancy.org) or mail to PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312.*

### May

**★★ May 15-21 – International Heritage Breeds Week** will be held across the globe to raise awareness of endangered heritage breeds of livestock and poultry. Visit [www.LivestockConservancy.org](http://www.livestockconservancy.org) for ideas of how you can be involved!  
**★★ May 20-21 – “From Service to Stewardship” workshop for military veterans** will be held in Remington VA. Visit [www.livestockconservancy.org/index.php/news/internal/veterans-workshop](http://www.livestockconservancy.org/index.php/news/internal/veterans-workshop) for more information.

**May 21 – The SoCal Kunekune Pig Show & Sale** will be held in Chino, CA. The show will benefit The Livestock Conservancy and Heritage Breeds Week/Day. Visit [www.americankunekunepigregistry.com](http://www.americankunekunepigregistry.com) or contact Mrs. Lori Enright at 951-505-5230 or [americankunekune@yahoo.com](mailto:americankunekune@yahoo.com) for more information.

**May 21-22 – The Kentucky Sheep and Fiber Festival** will be held at Masterson Station Park in Lexington, KY. Visit [www.kentuckyshoepandfiber.com](http://www.kentuckyshoepandfiber.com) for more information.



### May 22 – The Garfield Farm Museum

**Rare Breeds Show** will be held in Campton Hills, IL. Breeders from around the Midwest display rare and historic livestock. Individual breeders may offer livestock, poultry, and byproducts for sale. Visit [www.garfieldfarm.org](http://www.garfieldfarm.org) for more information.

**May 27-28 – The Middle Tennessee Fiber Festival** will be held in Dickson, TN. Visit [www.tnfiberfestival.com](http://www.tnfiberfestival.com) for more information.

### June

**★ June 3-5 – The World Pork Expo** will be held in Des Moines, IA. Each year, 20,000 pork producers and other professionals make

World Pork Expo the world's largest pork-specific trade show. Visit [www.worldpork.org](http://www.worldpork.org) for more information.

**June 10-12 – Oxen in the Blue Ridge** will be held at Blue Ridge Farm Museum in Ferrum, VA. This weekend of hands-on workshops explores the essentials of buying, haltering, training, driving, and working oxen, with activities for all skill levels, novice to experienced and multiple oxen teams to work with. On-site lodging and meal packages are available. For more information, visit [www.ferrum.edu/campus\\_life/events/2016\\_oxen\\_in\\_the\\_blue\\_ridge\\_driving\\_workshop.html](http://www.ferrum.edu/campus_life/events/2016_oxen_in_the_blue_ridge_driving_workshop.html) or contact Rebecca Boone Austin at 540-365-4412 or [rbaustin@ferrum.edu](mailto:rbaustin@ferrum.edu).

**June 11 – The SVF Visitors Day** will be held in Newport, RI. Take self-guided tours through the historic Swiss Village, peek into the state-of-the-art facilities and meet the SVF staff, visit Chip, a rare Tennessee myotonic goat born from a frozen embryo, and much more. Visit <http://svffoundation.org/index.php?id=98> for more information.

**June 16-19 – The American Dexter Cattle Association National Show and Sale** will be held at Salina County Fairgrounds in Salina, KS. Daytime events and seminars are open and free to the public. For more info see [www.dextercattle.org](http://www.dextercattle.org).

### July

**July 2-9 – The American Dairy Goat Association National Show** will be held in Harrisburg, PA. Visit [www.adga.org](http://www.adga.org) for more information.



### 2016 Mother Earth News Fairs

- ★ **Albany, OR:** Jun. 4-5, 2016
- ★ **West Bend, WI:** Jul. 9-10, 2016
- ★ **Seven Springs, PA:** Sep. 23-25, 2016
- ★ **Topeka, KS:** Oct. 22-23, 2016

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