

February 2016



## Farm Link Montana

A national publicity campaign for the [Farm Link Montana](#) site promotes farm/ranch internship and mentorship opportunities! Have you checked out the site yet? If you are a farmer or rancher looking for interns, here are a few perks to **listing your internships** on the Farm Link Montana website:

1. Listings can be cross-listed with an existing **ATTRA** listing so you don't have to provide duplicate information. Answer just a few short questions, share the link to your ATTRA listing, and you're done!
2. Listings will be actively **advertised nationwide** through food-related sites, newsletters, listservs, and colleges and universities, giving you more views and raising the visibility of Montana as a great place to learn how to farm.
3. Farm Link uses a **common application** form, so you get the same information from every applicant. Plus, they have to select specific farms to apply to, so you'll know that they are actively choosing you!



4. We are partnering with the Community Dispute Resolution Center in Missoula (and can connect you with mediators in other parts of the state) so that you can **resolve disputes** with employees and prevent mid-season HR issues.

5. As soon as you're done hiring, remove your listing and you won't get any more applicants until you republish your listing next year!

6. [Learn more about the program](#) and create your listing today. If you want more info on internships available, read below.

## New Tool Connects Prospective Interns to Montana Farms and Ranches

This summer, get outdoors, get your hands dirty, and experience the tough but rewarding work of a farmer as an intern on a Montana farm. In addition to sweeping mountain views, big skies, and grizzly bears, the state of Montana boasts a rich and varied agricultural landscape producing everything from kale to cattle on farms and ranches ranging from half an acre to half a million acres.

Farm Link Montana is a new, free resource that connects prospective interns with Montana farms looking for an extra hand. The website features a map displaying farms with available internships, information about each farm, and a common application form, so that you only need to fill out a single application for all the farms you are interested in. The site also includes resources to help you start your own farm or ranch in Montana, along with tools to connect with mentors and find land.

Although each arrangement is different, farming and ranching internships typically run for the duration of the growing season, from May to October. Start dates vary, however, so get your applications in early to increase your chances of success!

For more information and to apply for an internship, visit [FarmLinkMontana.org/Intern-Program/](http://FarmLinkMontana.org/Intern-Program/)



### **Soil Health Means Health for All**

The Carbon County Resource Council hosted Steve Charter and John Brown during their annual meeting recently in Red Lodge. The two men's talk was based on the work of Nicole Masters who gave a presentation at the Charter ranch last year. Nicole Masters, Integrity Soils, is an agro-ecologist with over 16 years' extensive practical and theoretical experience in regenerative/biological farming practices.

Shepherd, Montana rancher, Steve and friend, John spoke about the importance of soil health in the future of agriculture. "You can't ignore the potential of soil to capture carbon, store more rain water, and produce more crops, all by paying more attention to soil microbiology," said Charter. The talk was as hopeful as it was educational to the 50 guests in attendance.

For more information on Nicole Masters, go to <http://www.integritysoils.co.nz/> or CCRC at

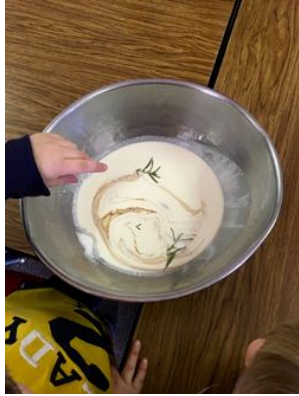
<https://www.northernplains.org/our-local-groups/carbon-county-resource-council/>.

### **Carrots for Kids**

Carrots were January's harvest of the month and students at Mountain View Elementary learned to make a delicious carrot mint salad. Students especially liked the salad's crunch and that it was a little bit sweet. Along with making salad, we also discussed that carrots are a super food that help our eyes, skin, immune, and digestive systems.

At Beartooth Billings Clinic Children's Center, students made rosemary ice cream with rosemary from the Youth Garden. The ice cream was a big hit with students (no surprise!).





At Head Start students learned to make butter. Children took turns shaking small glass jars full of cream and a marble until the cream thickened into butter. Then, we shared a delicious snack of bread and butter.

Lastly, the garden committee met recently and is beginning to plan for spring planting in the garden. The students are also excited to get back out into the garden!

## **Carbonado Farm**

Chris Mullaney interviewed our local producers to find out a little more about who they are, what they are passionate about and why they are involved in the local production and sale of meat or vegetable products.

I visited with William Barnes to find out more about the Carbonado Farm in Joliet. William and Melanie raise Katahdin sheep. William told me Katahdin sheep were developed in in Maine and named after Mount Katahdin, the highest mountain in that state. They are bred for quality meat production, not wool. They do not produce wool but are a haired sheep that shed their winter coat in spring and summer.

**FPC: How did you get into the business of selling local products? William:** Years ago Melanie got a ewe who was pregnant with twins from a friend in Montana, and she just decided to buy more every year. We were living in California at the time and we would come up to Montana to visit our sheep which were being raised on a ranch outside of Joliet. After our accident (Melanie and William were in a motorcycle accident in 2010) we decided to move back and look for a place to keep our sheep. We found the farm in Joliet and moved. We sell our meat on our website and at Farmers' Markets.

**FPC: What separates your product from mass produced? William:** Our Katahdin breed and small operation make us unique in our products. We do not give them growth hormones or antibiotics. The sheep spend their days eating grass and enjoying the clean living in Montana.

**FPC: What's your favorite part of the day? William:** Right after feeding in wintertime. They've been waiting all night and once they are fed they are content. 2<sup>nd</sup> favorite is enjoying the hottub on a cold windy evening.

**FPC: What's your favorite thing to do when you have time to yourself? William:** Reading and listening to music. I like country and Jazz.

**FPC: What's your favorite product from another local producer in our area? William:** I like the quality of Gallagher's meats, both the beef and pork. I like veggies from the Laurel Farmers Market and Wholesome Foods.

**FPC: Is there a local restaurant using your products you would like to recommend? William:** We are not selling to any local establishments. We come pretty close to selling out at retail prices by selling on the Rocky Fork Food Hub, the Red Lodge Farmers' Market and through our website.

**FPC: Is there a question you wished I would have asked?** William: What is your least favorite thing? Dealing with website issues!

You can purchase Carbonado Farm lamb on the Rocky Fork Food Hub at rockyforkfoodhub.com. You can find out more about William and Melanie at their Website: <http://www.mtlamb.com> and don't forget to like them on facebook to receive updates on their farming life.



## **KAMUT® Growers Wanted**

Bob Quinn is an organic farmer southeast of Big Sandy, Montana. He has been involved in growing an ancient grain similar to durum wheat, KAMUT®. On his Facebook Page, he has stated the following plea:

We looking to develop more organic KAMUT® growing areas. Help us get the word out to the farmers in Montana, Saskatchewan, Alberta or North Dakota or bordering regions. Not a farmer yourself but know of one? Share this with them please! Or just send us a message and we will connect them with Wes Gibbs

our full time organic field and crop consultant. Thanks so much we appreciate your help.

<https://www.facebook.com/bobquinnorganicfarmer/photos/a.435009963324995.1073741828.411293889029936/575394505953206/?type=3&theater> If you know of any growers who might be interested, please share this posting with them.

## **Words from SMALL FARM FUTURE Blogsite**

*By Janet Peterson*

I was recently sent a link to an article from the UK that is so appropriate for any farmer anywhere that I thought it was worth sharing. These wise words are from Chris Smaje of Vallis Veg, a small farm in the southwest of England.

### **So you want to be a farmer? Thirteen words of wisdom from me to myself**

I gave two talks recently at the [Oxford Real Farming Conference](#). One concerned peasant agriculture, which I'm planning to come back to on this blog later in the year as part of a series on constructing a neo-peasant agriculture for contemporary times. The other was at a session inaugurating the College for Real Farming and Food Culture, brainchild of science writer and ORFC founder Colin Tudge. Colin asked me to describe my experiences establishing a small, ecologically-minded farming business, the obstacles we'd faced and how we'd overcome them. I only had a few minutes of the floor, and I didn't want to present my own fumbling efforts to learn how to farm as any kind of blueprint for others to follow, so I decided to present the talk in the form of thirteen maxims I'd like to have been able to pass on to my younger self at the point I started my switch into the agrarian life.

1. Make sure you live on the land you farm, however you do it, whatever it takes, **LIVE ON YOUR LAND!**
2. Run a small, mixed farm – we need maybe 2 million farmers in the UK, equating to an average farm size of 50 acres or less depending on how you crunch the numbers with permanent pasture,

so if you think your farm needs to be bigger than that you need to be able to convince someone else why theirs has to be smaller.

Read more at <http://smallfarmfuture.org.uk/?p=948>

### **Want to get More Involved?**

FPC has several projects or initiatives in the works at the same time. You can get involved in whatever interests you. Contact Martha Brown at [mbrown.mt@gmail.com](mailto:mbrown.mt@gmail.com) or call (406) 445-7214.