

## 2020 FAP Program Grantee Spotlight:

# Wayward Goose Farm



A photo from Wayward Goose Farm's website ([www.waywardgoosefarm.com](http://www.waywardgoosefarm.com)), shows their herd of Jerseys grazing on pasture. Wayward Goose Farm has been rotationally grazing since 2011 but enrolled in the FAP program in 2020, the first year payments were available for this practice.

### By the Numbers

**19.7 acres in rotational grazing**

**\$492.50 awarded**

**~5.2lbs P reduced from conservation practice implementation**

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– Daniel Brooks, co-owner of Wayward Goose Farm

### Recipient

Wayward Goose Farm is an organic, diversified family farm in West Pawlet VT, owned and operated by Daniel and Laurie Brooks. The Brooks milk 30 dairy cows, raise calves for veal, host a farm stand, and have branched into agritourism with an on-farm AirBnB and farm stay experience. All their animals are rotationally grazed.

### Grant Award

\$492.50 for rotational grazing of 19.7 acres in FY 2020.

### Funding Source

Farm Agronomic Practice (FAP) program

### Grant details

Dan and Laurie Brooks applied to the FAP program in FY 2020 for the rotational grazing practice payment. That year was the first year rotational grazing was eligible for the FAP program and the Brooks' first year applying, although they have rotationally grazed since starting the farm in 2011.

## Impact

Wayward Goose Farm's website home page states their vision as farmers: "Doing what we can to make this bit of earth a better place. Making sure our animals are healthy and content, caring for and enriching our soil, working to build diverse and productive pastures. These are not just ideas, they are firmly connected practices. They are the foundation of our farm."

The Brooks are keenly aware that environmental stewardship is closely linked with the productivity of their farm and feel that rotational grazing is a key part of their efforts to achieve these dual goals. In FY 2020, when they learned that rotational grazing was eligible for the FAP program for the first time, they applied. Although their farm is small, and the payment therefore relatively modest, "I appreciated that we were being recognized for the practices we are doing that are good for water quality," Dan commented.

Dan also appreciated the simplicity of the application process for the FAP program. "The inspector was really easy to get along with and the process to apply was pretty painless," he commented, noting that he didn't feel that there was a huge amount of paperwork. Like many small farmers, Dan does not have the time or interest to navigate large quantities of paperwork for the relatively modest grant payments he would be eligible for, so he appreciated that element of the FAP program.

Wayward Goose Farm intends to apply again for rotational grazing FAP payments in future years and have encouraged other farmers to sign up as well. Dan Brooks also has recommended that grazers in the state look into the other grant opportunities available, which includes funds for fencing infrastructure and waterlines.

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Wayward Goose Farm's Jersey cows rotationally graze during a field check for the FAP program. To be eligible for payment, farmers need to manage their land so that at least 3 inches of residual vegetation remains after grazing, to reduce erosion. Animals must be moved at least twice weekly and fenced out of waterways except at strategic crossing points.