



ACLT Announces Plans to Farm for Food Banks

The American Chestnut Land Trust's Double Oak Farm Shifts Focus to Donating Crops to Local Food Pantries and Providing Gardening Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Board and staff of the American Chestnut Land Trust is very pleased to announce that beginning this season its Double Oak Farm will be donating the vast majority of its produce to local food pantries. "This new effort is a powerful opportunity for all those involved to touch the lives of their neighbors in very concrete ways," says Pat Griffin, ACLT's Board President. On March 14th, at 9:00AM, ACLT will hold its Annual Membership Meeting at St. John Vianney's Family Life Center in Prince Frederick where leadership will announce the inspiring changes to the purpose of the Double Oak Farm located on ACLT protected land. Both members and non-members are invited to attend to find out more about this and other ACLT activities and to hear Bernie Fowler Jr., founder of "Farming 4 Hunger", offer the keynote address.

For the past five years, the American Chestnut Land Trust, a leading voice for land conservation in Calvert County, has produced crops on its preserved land off of Double Oak Rd in Prince Frederick, Maryland. The property which was acquired by the land trust in 1994 has been managed as a "CSA" - a Community Supported Agriculture facility – and, with the help of volunteer farm managers and work-shares, has offered community members the opportunity to purchase weekly portions of organically farmed fruits, vegetables and herbs. The no-till, organic farming method not only produces considerable volumes of food, but also provides health benefits for the soil and the watershed ACLT so ardently cares for.

This year, however, ACLT staff and leadership have decided to change the purpose of the farm. Rather than offering "Community Supported Agriculture," ACLT's Double Oak Farm will offer "Agriculture Supporting the Community." This new direction will mean that enough fresh fruits and vegetables will be donated to feed approximately 40 families per week. In addition, a special section of the farm has been dedicated to creating a large educational garden that will introduce home gardening, the benefits of native gardening and what we can learn from natural historic farming techniques. Once a month during June, July and August, ACLT will also host a farmers market where the public is invited to explore the farm, take part in workshops and purchase produce. All profits will go back into the farming program. With this new direction, ACLT is excited to further its mission of "connecting people with the land."

The American Chestnut Land Trust is a member supported not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to protect the Parkers Creek watershed and its surrounding natural lands, waterways, and wildlife habitats. Established in 1986 as Maryland's first grass-roots, community based land trust, over 3,000 acres have been protected. ACLT maintains 19 miles of trails which are open and free to the public and offers regular opportunities to canoe on and study the pristine ecosystems of Parkers Creek. Please visit <http://acltweb.org> for more information on events and opportunities and to register to attend the meeting on March 14th.

Images:

Farm Volunteers: <https://flic.kr/p/qumRGU> Beautiful Produce (invitation image): <https://flic.kr/p/rmmm4T>