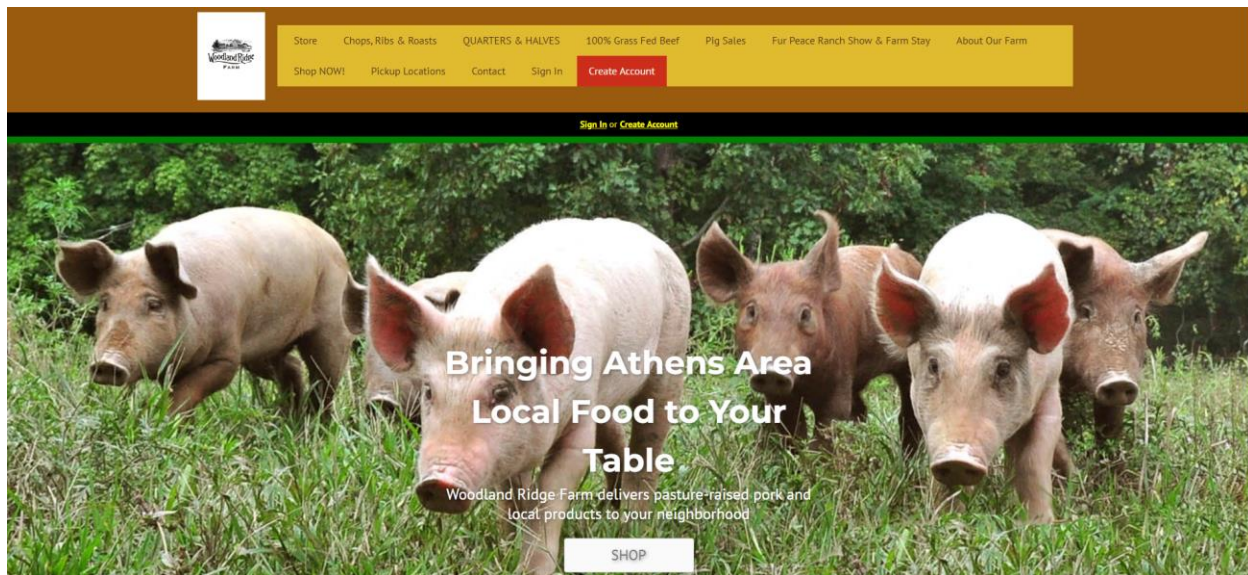
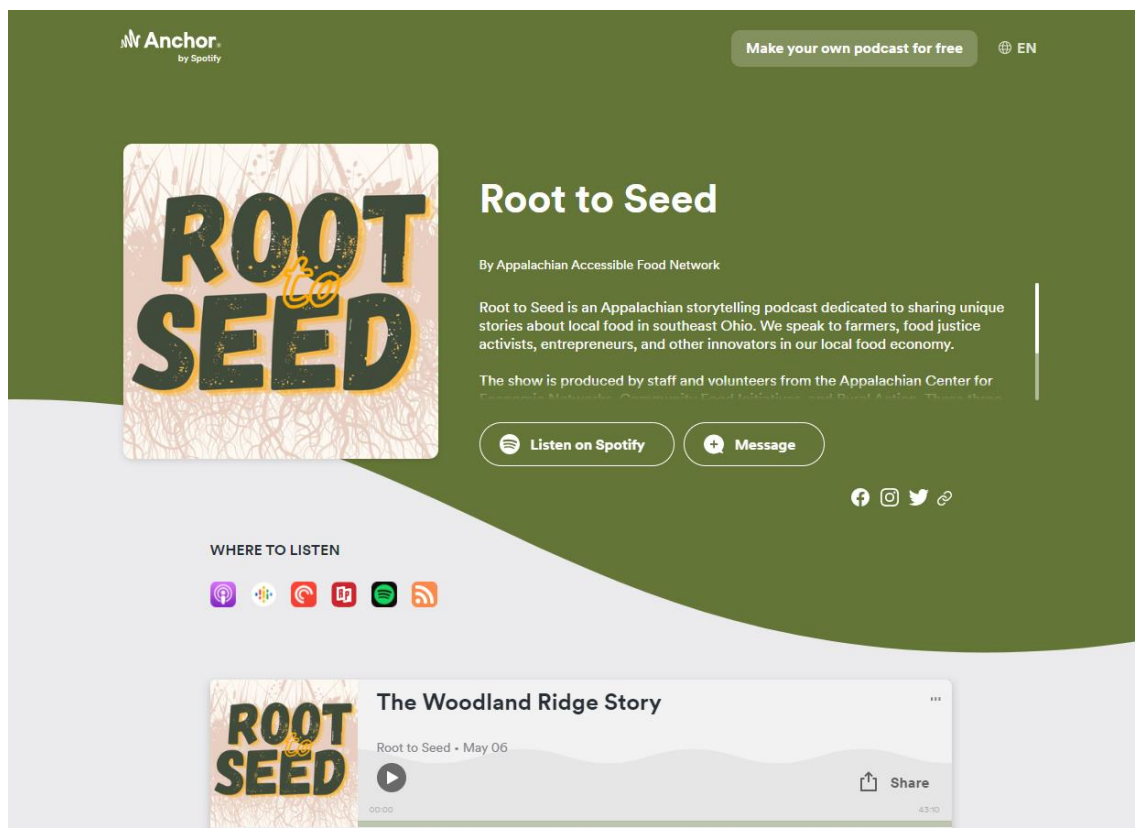


Examples of market access – stories and activities for ACEnet SARE grant


Assistance to Woodland Ridge Farm has included: selling on Graze Cart, promoting farm tours and workshops, blogging to promote events, connecting owner Paul Harper to accounting services provider Big Time Bookkeeping, and featuring Paul and Woodland Ridge on the Root to Seed podcast.




Podcast promotion is on the www.acenetworks.org site as well



Blog post on Woodland Ridge April 2022: <https://acenetworks.org/community-updates/the-three-pillars-of-agritourism-at-woodland-ridge/>




[ABOUT US](#)[OUR FACILITIES](#)[OUR SERVICES](#)[WHAT WE DO](#)[RESOURCES](#)[GET INVOLVED](#)[CONTACT](#)



ACENet > COMMUNITY UPDATES > The Three Pillars of Agritourism at Woodland Ridge

THE THREE PILLARS OF AGRITOURISM AT WOODLAND RIDGE

Posted: April 26, 2022






Paul Harper has been involved in agritourism since before it was cool. This August marks the 9th year of the bed and breakfast at [Woodland Ridge Farm and Learning Center](#). Over those 9 years, Paul Harper has gathered numerous stories, most of them positive and some less-than-positive. The guest house is solar powered with a hot tub and a gorgeous view from the top of a ridge. The farm is also home to pigs, cows, goats, and chickens, all of whom enjoy foraging and grazing in the forests and pastures (and some eventually become the delicious farm raised local meat products that are sold and served on the farm).

When guests visit Woodland Ridge, Paul hopes they will experience and learn about the three legs of the stool that holds up his lifestyle: farm to table food, regenerative agriculture, and farm inspiration.

The first leg, and perhaps the component that city dwellers are most familiar with, rests on Paul's belief that people need to be more connected with their food and the farmers that produce it. Whether it's sitting down for a home-cooked lunch on the farm, harvesting your own salad from the greenhouse or even participating in a "nose-to-tail" workshop where you learn to butcher, process, prepare, and ultimately consume meat from a forest-dwelling heritage pig, there are numerous ways that visitors at Woodland Ridge build a unique connection with their food.

The second leg, regenerative agriculture, focuses on the idea that we should try to imitate nature (or "Mama Naya," as Paul affectionately calls her). When Paul first bought the land for Woodland Ridge in 1995, it was a junkyard - literally. There were broken down cars filling the field where cattle, pigs, and goats now graze. Additionally, parts of the land had been farmed intensively with corn, draining the soil of nutrients. But, over nearly 30 years, nature's way has helped regenerate the land and put nutrients back into the soil. As the animals graze, trample, and poop on the land, they transfer carbon into the soil. This process not only improves the quality of the soil, but also helps reduce the amount of carbon in the air, an important piece of the puzzle in reducing the effects of climate change.


The third leg of the stool is what Paul calls "farm inspiration." Farm inspiration is best explained through Paul's anecdotes about the guests that come to the farm. Many families come every year and have their own routines on the farm, whether it's caring for the animals, hunting, or just reflecting and relaxing. Particularly during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many other businesses were struggling with social distancing and quarantine restrictions, the bed and breakfast at Woodland Ridge had its most successful year ever. People were anxious to get out of the city, but were also limited by travel restrictions and social distancing requirements. What better place to visit than a farm surrounded by natural beauty?




Visiting the farm also allows people to get offline in a time when Zoom is the new way of being. Paul told me about a boy who visited the farm with his family shortly after starting middle school online during the pandemic. He was going through a challenging transition, made all the more difficult by isolation and a subpar learning environment. But at Woodland Ridge, he found satisfaction by taking care of the goats. Every day, he would feed the goats and walk each of them, one by one. That's the crux of farm inspiration. Paul extends this invitation to anyone with a craving for rural life: "If you don't have a farm but you want one, adopt us and we'll be your farm."

Community Update by ACENet Fresh and Healthy Foods VISTA, Rachel Brunot.

FACEBOOK FEED



Appalachian Center f...
3,159 likes
Multimedia
Like · Comment · Share




Appalachian Center for Economic Networks (ACENet)
5 hours ago
Looking to try something a little different this holiday season?

[DONATE NOW!](#)

[SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER!](#)

FEATURED TENANT: RED BARN CHILI



ACENet featured tenant Red Barn Chili is scaling up their operations, hosting STAR Community Justice Center residents, and utilizing Kiva to expand into retail markets.

[READ MORE](#)

Photos and Instagram posts from Woodland Ridge Farm tours in fall 2021



Woodland Ridge

FARM & LEARNING CENTER

Farm Tour Sept. 25th 10am - 4 pm

**Regenerative Agriculture
with Animals at the Center**

Hosted by Paul Harper



And on-going promotion continues as we have been able to market more in person events



**PASTURE
TO PLATE**
Join Us

Be a part of an unforgettable
hands-on, culinary extravaganza
at our Whole-Hog Workshop.

DETAILS AND SIGN UP IN
COMMENTS.

FOR THE HOG KILLING, 1979

Pork and Pickles promotions 2020-2021

Becky Clark was featured in the January 2021 Ohio Magazine and the Ohio University News in March. Since COVID was still impacting supply chain issues, our meat marketers had more opportunity to grow direct sales. A number of the social media posts are highlighted.



Becky Clark



Becky Clark and her family live for adventure. They're avid hikers, bikers, trail runners, campers and travelers. They also garden and cook, and she and her partner, Chris, recently bought an old ambulance and have been working to convert it into a camper van.

Clark is the owner-operator of local businesses Park & Pickles and Totes Local, executive chef of Little Fish Brewing Company, and a member of Hocking College Agroecology Program Advisory Board. She's also a proud Hobcat alumna, having graduated in 2009 with a degree in geography.

The OHIO alumna lives in Athens with her partner and their three fur babies, dogs Porter and Woody and cat Bernie. Her parents, grandparents, and brother's family all live in the area and they're extremely close.

No two days are similar for Clark, but they all start out with some coffee and a walk with Porter and Woody. Between calls with her mom and FaceTime chats with her nieces during the week, Clark explores at Selk Park with her dogs, helps her family with errands and projects, catches up on some office work, before going into Park & Pickles' production room in Nelsonville or the kitchen at Little Fish Brewing.

"I am extremely proud of the journey I have been on for the past five years since starting Park & Pickles," Clark explained. "I have grown as a leader, as a chef, as a partner, daughter, and friend. I am proud that I have chosen the harder, but more fulfilling path in life. I am also extremely proud that I have finally learned how to strike a work-life balance, and I am now working to live rather than living to work. No matter how much you love your job, you can't let it completely consume your life. I am proud I have learned that lesson."

Clark loves her job not only for the freedom it brings, but also because she's able to mentor her staff. Her young employees inspire her.

"This next generation of young women are heading into their careers with conviction, motivation, and a take-no-nonsense attitude," she said. "These women will lead our world sooner than we know, and I am inspired by them every day. I am in constant awe of this next generation's flexibility and acceptance of all people, and I believe they will make the world a better and more just place to live."

For Clark, International Women's Day is a reminder of how far our world has come, and how much work there is still left to do.