



Powell Farm

Vision/Mission Report
December 12, 2024



Forward

Cranberry Township has long been committed to preserving and maintaining green space.

In taking ownership of the former Denton Powell Farm property in March 2023, the Board of Supervisors saw an opportunity to elevate those efforts to a previously unseen level. The acquisition presented a unique opportunity to preserve history and look to the future.

Since then, the Board has carefully considered the 150-year-old, 71-acre farm on Goehring Road to preserve the historic land as a public asset and operational farm while also using it to promote agricultural education throughout the region.

In October 2023, the Board established the Ad-Hoc Powell Farm Advisory Committee to consist of residents and individuals with an agricultural background. In January 2024, the board selected and appointed 10 members of the Committee.

The Committee was tasked with advancing a plan and recommendations for utilizing the property that honors its preservation status, explores educational opportunities that highlight farming and agriculture, provides opportunities to share farming and agricultural activities with the public, and promotes fiscal and operational sustainability. After 10 months of meetings, conversations, and research, the Committee is excited to outline a path forward for Powell Farm.

A successful program for Powell Farm requires a flexible, multi-year vision, which is outlined herein. While stakeholders are eager to get going, each step must be measured and thoroughly considered before implementation. These suggestions are just that – suggestions. However, they are made with much thought and support.

The Committee is thankful for the support and guidance in creating this proposal and looks forward to continuing this professional relationship in the future.

Vision

The collective vision of Powell Farm is to preserve the 71-acre farmstead in perpetuity while actively producing farm-fresh items for sale. The preservation of this asset requires a coordinated approach to land stewardship and agritourism aligned with three specific principles including farming, food, and family. As such, the Powell Farm will be an agricultural facility that thrives on public engagement while generating revenue to sustain the land and its operations.



The Ad-Hoc Powell Farm Advisory Committee

Andy Hack

Resident & Executor of Denton Powell's Estate

Ken Moniot

Butler County Agricultural Preservation Board

Dr. Sean McCarty

Seneca Valley School District Assistant Superintendent

Dana Hadley

Seneca Valley School District Teacher

Andy Zadnik

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Craig Conforti

Penn State Extension

Tim Casey

Township Environmental Advisory Committee

Jim Halstead

Butler County Farm Bureau

Bret Lestor

Cranberry Township

Brian Miller

Cranberry Township

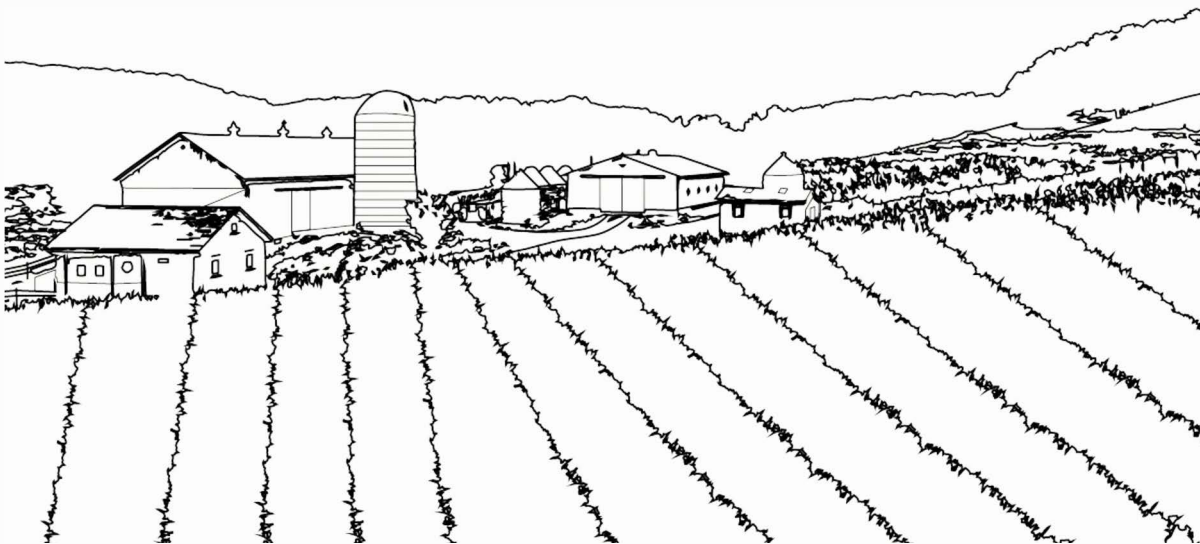


Mission Statement

Agricultural products will be cultivated on 43 acres of tillable fields, allowing for a diversity of goods to be harvested from the land. These crops would be trucked to local farmers' markets and sold to the community to generate public interest and support.

As stewards of the Powell Farm, Cranberry Township will:

- First and foremost, ensure the Powell Farm remains a functional, working farm.
- Financially support the farm and continually refine a sustainable strategy to maintain its agricultural operations indefinitely.
- Encourage sustainable practices and environmental stewardship.
- Build goodwill and public interest by fostering agritourism and relationships with the community.
- Provide local produce and/or agricultural products that are consistent with terms of the agricultural preservation easement.





Principle #1: Farm

The physical farm is the foremost focus, with the acreage and structures serving as the foundation for what follows. The hand-built buildings won't collect dust; instead, they will be used for their intended purpose. The field will bloom with the fruits—and vegetables—of labor, as well as other items that the community can participate in growing, developing, and enjoying.

While activity on the farm will continue to reap rewards, the space itself will become a monument to the importance of farming in creating the community. As such, the Powell Farm will become a landmark for agricultural preservation and a champion of the Cranberry Township and Butler County farming community.





Principle #2: Food

Seeds sown on the Powell property will create crops with a direct pipeline to Township tables. Regardless of the chosen strategy, items grown on the farm's 43 tillable acres will be made available directly to the community. It takes the concept of "farm to table" further by letting the community see and potentially participate in creating the foods they consume. Additionally, having access to healthy food options addresses food insecurity in the greater regional community.



Principle #3: Family

While what grows out of the ground at Powell Farm is a major focus, the growth of the farm's importance throughout the community is necessary for success.

By creating a family-like relationship between the farm and the community, Powell Farm further becomes ingrained in the fabric of Cranberry Township. Be it a volunteer "Friends of Powell Farm" committee, the region's active farmers, preservationists, partners in education, or a farmers market customer, the Powell Farm "family" will grow by bringing together diverse partners from various backgrounds. The shared purpose creates a critical component of the Farm's success.



Timeline

1-3 Years

- Identify and work with the current farmer to implement a cover crop for the winter of 2024.
- Establish a 2025 operation budget and search for the caretaker position.
- Establish an advisory committee and set a meeting schedule.
- Perform an inventory of materials and equipment and create a plan to fill potential needs.
- Update the conservation plan and determine the appropriate short-term uses of the fields with the help of the Natural Resources Conservation Service resources.
- Plant the initial crops and identify immediate operational needs.
- Determine the correct way of implementing livestock into the equation.
- Submit required documentation and work with the Butler County Agricultural Preservation Board to review any proposed changes to operation and maintenance.
- Develop a volunteer network and “friends of the farm program” to aid in the maintenance and programming efforts.
- Develop formal partnerships and internship opportunities.
- Explore educational opportunities.
- Identify land stewardship priorities and begin to implement environmental restoration projects.
- Continue public outreach and provide progress updates on an annual basis.





Timeline cont.

4-6 Years

- Complete a feasibility study and establish a capital plan for the next decade and beyond.
- Look at diversifying the items being farmed, including orchards and other large-scale crops.
- Advance educational goals and partnerships to involve community stakeholders in established agricultural operations.
- Examine alternative energy sources and environmental best practices.

7-10 Years

- Continue to evaluate what has and has not worked at the facility and further develop a plan for public outreach.
- Evaluate the potential of living and working on the farm and if the capital investment in the residence and infrastructure will advance the mission listed above.
- Evaluate the development of a 501c3 board to oversee all activity at the farm.
- Continue to facilitate active production on the farm, as required by agricultural easements and further the develop the agritourism potential on the property.



Powell Farm
preserving farm, food, and family

9600 Goehring Road | Cranberry Township, PA

Proposed Caretaker Job Description

The farm caretaker will collaborate with Township staff and the Advisory Committee to plan, implement, and supervise crop projects, education initiatives, and special events. The caretaker will also coordinate all volunteer efforts and be responsible for the daily organization and supervision of operations and maintenance.

Required Responsibilities

- Collaborate with Township staff in planning short- and long-term agricultural goals, including annual planting plans, work schedules, and event planning. Manage daily operations of agricultural systems, including vegetable and orchard production.
- Perform onboarding of seasonal staff and volunteers.
- Have an understanding and ability to implement agricultural practices including:
 - Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
 - Sustainable practices and recordkeeping
 - Soil fertility management
 - Direct seeding and transplanting
 - Field planting and preparation
 - Weed management
 - Irrigation
 - Harvesting and post-harvest handling
 - Crop rotation
 - Equipment usage and maintenance scheduling
 - Health and safety
- Work closely with the Advisory Committee and Township Staff in planning and implementing agricultural production and educational opportunities.
- Communicate with stakeholders and community partners to sell and distribute produce.
- Engage with professional networks and professional development opportunities to continuously improve our agricultural systems.



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Proposed Caretaker Job Description

Required Responsibilities cont.

- Purchase raw materials and ensure that all inventories are stocked.
- Conduct tours for external individuals or groups.
- Prepare production reports, both internal and external.

Desired Competencies and Attributes

- Experience working with adult learners, especially farmers and/or entrepreneurs
- Strong communication skills
- Positive managerial experience of people and programs
- Flexible and adaptable to quickly changing needs and conditions
- Dependable, consistent use of good judgment
- Determined, focused and strong team player
- Conflict mitigation/resolution skills
- Ability to work independently with attention to detail



Farm



Food

Desired Qualifications and Experience

- Demonstrated background with intensive farming systems and business management, especially organic and small-scale farming.
- Experience with using appropriate farm tools and infrastructure, including but not limited to tractors, high tunnels, hand tools, drip and overhead irrigation, and wash-pack stations.
- Experience developing/administering educational programming.



Family



**We thank you for your continued support
in our efforts to contribute to Powell Farm.**

Cranberry Township Board of Supervisors

Mike Manipole, *Chairman*
Bruce Hezlep, *Vice Chairman*
Bruce Mazzoni
Karen Newpol
John Skorupan



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Contact

Powell Farm
9600 Goehring Road
Cranberry Township, PA 16066

cranberrytownship.org/powellfarm 