

## FARM PRACTICES

**BIODIVERSITY GARDENS AND ORCHARDS** will be managed organically, utilizing green manures, mulching, compost and integrated pest management. The site diversity will be exploited to grow a wide variety of annuals and perennials and where possible we will expand growing spaces using trellises, etc.

**FOREST MANAGEMENT** in eastern half of property will be managed for stream and forest biodiversity. Where possible without negative impacts we will cut firewood and collect wild harvested products for our home and business. Pockets of young succession forests (primarily poplar) which have encroached on former pasture will be cut, chipped and stockpiled for orchard and berry installation and maintenance.

**SILVICULTURE** will increase the productivity of pasture by integrating woody plant material to shade livestock, accumulate nutrients, produce more browse and fodder and firewood.

**PASTURE, WOODLAND PASTURE AND BROWSE-SCAPES** will support organically managed livestock whose lifecycles and nutritional needs will be harmonized with the land characteristics. Our cultural identity as grass-farmers and browse-scapers reinforces prioritization of regeneration of the plants central to livestock production. Wetter areas will be developed for browse either to be harvested directly by animals during dry periods and/or by coppicing.

**SOIL AND FERTILITY BUILDING:** Winter animal housing will use a bedded pack which will be composted together with crop residuals to create a significant resource for gardens and pastures. Utilizing technical assistance from Highfields Center for Composting, we will manage piles with tractor turning and temperature probes and lab test samples to ensure a balanced compost product. Soil compaction will be alleviated by keyline plowing. That, together with a strong pasture management system will increase biological and fungal complexity, enable better water absorption and



## GREEN MOUNTAIN GIRLS FARM

EAT. STAY. FARM.

## FARM DEVELOPMENT

Green Mountain Girls Farm aims to contribute to a regenerative tipping point by being a successful small farm with a modest portfolio of place-based micro-enterprises. Together these produce an alchemy generating wealth to sustain us, the owners and staff; enriches our community; and works with and where possible improves natural systems. We grow delicious food year-round and celebrate this special place. Learn more about the farm via our website [www.eatstayfarm.com](http://www.eatstayfarm.com).

This draft master plan depicts further start-up development (year 3) of the farm and enables integration of the newly -owned neighboring property; all designed to maximize regenerative food production, facilitate experiential geotourism and create a legacy.

## PROCESS

Whole Systems Design, LLC helped the Green Mountain Girls Farm plan and develop the existing site three years ago. This new plan grows out of that foundation, ongoing conversations and a mini-charette consolidating ideas of farmers and experts. Annual pasture and garden planning and business analysis will upgrade this master plan regularly.

## CONTEXT

The site consists of hilly terrain, with well drained soils. The back (eastern) half of the property is forested and graced with small mountain streams. This area will be used for recreation and the forest managed for firewood and biodiversity. Early succession forest blends into the more open western half of the property which we will restore to pasture and woodland pasture. The site gets early sun but a ridge West of the property blocks late afternoon or evening sun.

## APPROACH

Our production builds on natural capital and is regenerative. We aim to:

- Capture and use the site's ample sun;
- Responsibly manage the significant seasonal flow of water using swales to hold nutrients, slow and distribute water across the landscape, and ensure headwaters are kept clean.
- Restore fertility after some decades of extractive agriculture (hay and corn) during the middle of last century followed by clipping and in some areas forest succession, and,
- Exploit microclimates created by the variety of slopes, aspects, hedgerows, buildings, etc.

## SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

**Access:** 2 main circular "roads" (dedicated sod driving path for dry use) restrict compaction yet allow vehicle access to main gardens, orchards & pastures. 1/3 of the length (western edge) is the town maintained Loop Road. A pedestrian way will link the barn with the new farmhouse, following a high contour along the divide between the flatter hilltop gardens and orchard and the open pasture.

**Fencing:** Perimeter electric fencing distributes electricity to all corners of the agriculturally managed property while containing livestock and limiting predator pressure. Additional permanent fence will protect gardens and orchards from livestock. Paddocks for rotational grazing will be maintained in the short term by electric netting which will be moved regularly (daily to weekly) and in the long-term by a growing network of living fence, which will also serve as windbreaks, hold snow, enhance soil building and produce fodder, browse, firewood and other useful non-timber products.

**Water:** A cistern will co-locate with the foundation of the new house at a high point on the property and will gravity feed two main underground pipes and a sequence of frost-free hydrants, co-located with the pedestrian and driving paths.