

SUSTAINABLE FARMING

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MUDDY WATERS

KEEPING COOL TO BEAT THE BLUES

PLUS
FARM SAFETY
REGENERATIVE OLIVES
LABELING SUPPORT



FARMING FORWARD



We're excited to share that our newest certification, Certified Regenerative by AGW, is now an approved program for Whole Foods Market suppliers. Certified Regenerative by AGW joins Regenerative

Organic Certified, Regenified, and Ecological Outcome Verified as established third-party regenerative certifiers vetted for alignment with Whole Foods Market's regenerative benchmarks. We're eager to drive meaningful change at scale and offer suppliers a rigorous, farmer-focused certification option for making credible regenerative claims.

With the 2025 event season well underway, our team is actively participating in key industry gatherings like SOWTH (GA), PASA (PA), the Regenerative Agriculture Summit—North America (IL), and Natural Products Expo West (CA)—with more to come throughout the year. At these events, we're promoting AGW-certified farms, ranches, and brands through exhibit booth conversations, buyer meetings, and discussions on supply chain and market opportunities. If you're attending any upcoming events, let us know—it helps us plan for the season ahead. And don't forget, we can provide materials, talking points, presentation slides, and more to support your certification promotions!

A big thank you to everyone who participated in our 2024 annual producer survey. Your top three most valued AGW resources are: certification, AGW's technical resources, and this magazine. You also shared important topics for future articles and tech papers, including pasture quality, feeding for optimal meat quality, marketing and content creation, and preparing for a changing climate. We take your feedback seriously—it shapes the resources and services we provide. You make us better at what we do.

In late 2024, AGW's team and board members finalized our new vision statement, which will guide our work. We're proud to share this vision with you (see page 7) and invite you to help make it a reality.

Current geopolitical dynamics in agriculture are a hot topic. While there is new uncertainty in the sector, we're grateful for our friends and colleagues across the globe and look forward to continuing to connect local, regional and global supply chains based on transparency and sustainability. Our shared vision and commitment to a better food system will keep us moving forward.

Emily Moose
Executive Director
A Greener World

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THE WHOLE STORY

Whole Foods Market validates Certified Regenerative by AGW certification

Whole Foods Market has recognized Certified Regenerative by AGW as an approved third-party certification for regenerative agriculture claims. According to the leading natural foods retailer, this initiative aims to enhance accountability and transparency in regenerative farming practices across its over 530 stores in the U.S., Canada, and the UK.

By expanding its list of accepted third-party certifications, Whole Foods Market enables more suppliers to access its shelves and offers existing suppliers additional certification options. This move reflects the retailer's commitment to sustainable agriculture and provides customers with products that meet AGW's stringent regenerative standards.

Developed over five years, including a two-year international pilot with 50 farms worldwide, Certified Regenerative by AGW offers a holistic, rigorous, and pragmatic plan-based approach.



It ensures high animal welfare, promotes soil health and biodiversity, reduces synthetic inputs, and prohibits GMOs, complementing a range of production systems.

Ann Marie Hourigan of Whole Foods Market Quality Standards adds, "We're thrilled to include Certified Regenerative by AGW among our approved certifications. Requiring third-party certification for front-panel regenerative claims ensures the products we sell actually support regenerative agriculture in their practices."

"We applaud Whole Foods Market for recognizing the importance of third-party certification in promoting more sustainable agriculture," says Emily Moose, Executive Director of A Greener World. "We are excited about the opportunities for more farmers and brands to deliver positive outcomes through regenerative agriculture."

For more information, visit agreenerworld.org

IN THE NEWS...

REAL MILK RISING

U.S. dairy milk sales rose by 2% to \$17.1 billion, with whole milk consumption increasing by 3.2%, according to Circana, a leading market research company.

The Chicago-based market research company also revealed that plant-based milk consumption declined by 5.9%. Factors contributing to dairy's resurgence include the higher cost and added sweeteners in plant-based alternatives, as well as a growing focus on protein and healthy fats offered by cow's milk.

SMALL POOP, LOW RISK

A UC Davis study found that small bird droppings pose little risk to food safety, challenging industry concerns about wildlife on farms.

Published in the *Journal of Applied Ecology*, the researchers analyzed nearly 10,000 birds on lettuce farms and found large bird feces carry higher pathogen risks, while small birds' droppings are low-risk. The study suggests habitat removal is unnecessary and that farmers can safely support conservation efforts on their farms while maintaining food safety.



GRAPE EXPECTATIONS

A Greener World attended Wine Paris 2025 in February to promote Certified Regenerative by AGW to the global wine industry.

Representatives Wayne Copp and Rob George met with Michel and Isabel Gassier (pictured), owners of Famille Gassier, the world's first Certified Regenerative by AGW vineyards in the south Rhone valley. With over 52,000 attendees from 154 countries, the event provided a key platform to highlight the role of regenerative certification in sustainable viticulture.

NATURALLY CONFUSED

Most shoppers value "natural" or organic products but are often unsure what these terms mean, according to research from the Acosta Group.

In a survey of about 1,500 U.S. shoppers, three-quarters had purchased at least one "natural" or organic product in the past six months. Yet although Organic is a third-party certified claim and "natural" is not, 40% of shoppers believe the terms are interchangeable, leading to confusion on product benefits and misperceptions regarding taste and price.



IN THE NEWS...

SHUTTERSTOCK



STUDY LINKS FAKE MEAT TO DEPRESSION RISK

A new study from the University of Surrey suggests that vegetarians who consume processed plant-based meat alternatives (PBMA) face a 42% higher risk of depression compared to those who avoid them.

The study, published in *Food Frontiers*, raises concerns about the long-term health impacts of ultra-processed plant-based foods.

Researchers analyzed data from the UK Biobank, a biomedical database and research resource, and found no notable differences in sodium, free sugar, total sugar, or saturated fat intake between vegetarians who ate PBMA and those who did not. The study did find, however, that PBMA consumers had higher blood pressure and C-reactive protein (CRP) levels, a marker of inflammation, and lower levels of apolipoprotein A, a protein associated with HDL, a “good” cholesterol. PBMA consumption was also associated with a 40% reduced risk of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

“The overall findings are reassuring, suggesting that plant-based meat alternatives may be a safe option when part of a balanced diet,” says Professor Nophar Geifman, co-author of the University of Surrey study. “However, the potential link between these foods, inflammation, and depression warrants further research.”

This study adds to the debate over whether PBMA truly offer a better alternative to meat, reinforcing the need for more research and greater consumer awareness.

“A Greener World has long advocated for greater transparency in food labeling, especially for highly processed plant-based products marketed as ‘sustainable’ choices,” says Emily Moose, AGW’s Executive Director. “Consumers deserve to know if plant-based alternatives are truly better—for their health and the environment. Many PBMA rely on industrialized ingredients, intensive processing, and hidden environmental costs, from monoculture crops to energy-intensive manufacturing.”



2024 IN REVIEW

Written for farmers, food businesses, and advocates, the 16-page report highlights key activities over the last year, including progress on its USDA Climate-Smart Commodities grant, advocacy for clearer food labeling, and contributions to California’s consultation on regenerative agriculture. It also recognizes the vital role of AGW-certified businesses in driving positive change, showcasing their commitment to high-welfare, sustainable farming and transparent food systems.



IOWA AWARD-WINNERS

Wendy Mariko Johnson of AGW-certified Jóia Food and Fiber Farm in Charles City, Iowa, has been honored with the 2024 Iowa Leopold Conservation Award.

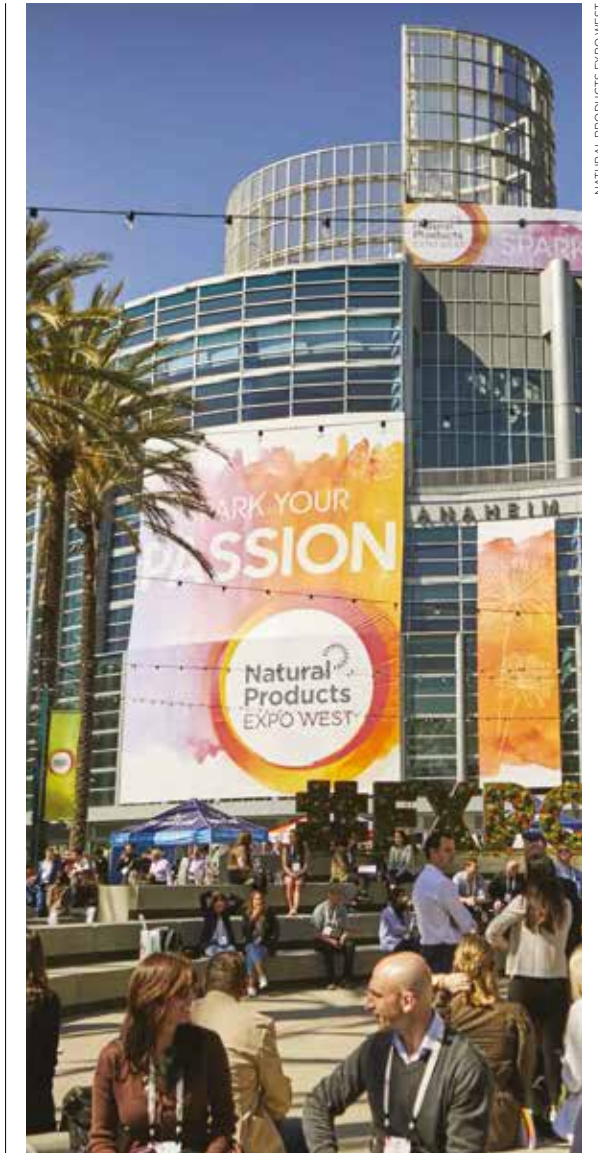
The \$10,000 award celebrates farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners who go above and beyond in their management of soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat on working land. Johnson, who operates Center View Farms and Joia Food and Fiber Farm in Floyd County, was presented with the award at The Big Soil Health Event in Cedar Falls. She employs innovative practices such as no-till farming, cover cropping, and adaptive rotational grazing. Over the past decade, she has planted more than 6,000 trees and shrubs, embraced silvopasture, and restored riparian areas to improve water quality.

“Wendy is an Iowa treasure and a deserved recipient of this award,” says Sally Worley, Practical Farmers of Iowa Executive Director. “Her conservation ethic runs deep. In addition to showcasing phenomenal conservation on her farm, Wendy has also inspired many others, in Iowa and beyond, to prioritize conservation for the long-term good of their farms and communities.”

Visit sandcountyfoundation.org

GO WEST

AGW recently attended Natural Products Expo West 2025 in California, one of the world’s leading sustainable food events, drawing 65,000 industry professionals and 3,000 exhibitors. “AGW showcased high-welfare and regenerative solutions in agriculture,” says Outreach Specialist Ashley Khteian. “With AGW-certified businesses like California Olive Ranch and El Nacho present—and plenty of Zack’s Mighty chips at our booth—we engaged hundreds of attendees on the benefits of third-party certification, supply chain verification, and AGW programs.”



NATURAL PRODUCTS EXPO WEST



VERACRUZ GROWS A GREENER FUTURE

Veracruz Almonds is the world’s first almond producer to be Certified Regenerative by AGW.

Located in Portugal’s Beira Interior region, Veracruz is also the country’s first farm to earn the certification, recognizing its commitment to soil health, water conservation, and biodiversity.

By integrating advanced precision farming with regenerative practices, Veracruz employs cover crops, hedgerows, and integrated pest management to enhance environmental resilience. The company also upholds fair labor standards

and sustainable community development.

“A Greener World stood out as a rigorous, credible, and well-respected global certification body, making it the ideal choice for our journey,” says Francisco Marques, agronomist and R&D leader at Veracruz. “The Certified Regenerative by AGW logo enables us to showcase our commitment to regenerative agriculture throughout our supply chain, reinforcing our position as a trusted and responsible supplier.”

Visit veracruzalmonds.com

SERRNOVIK



ROUGH WEATHER FOR CLIMATE-SMART FUNDING?

The Trump administration has paused billions in federal grant funding, affecting multiple agencies, including the USDA’s Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities program. As of this writing, the \$3.1 billion initiative, designed to support sustainable agriculture, is in limbo, leaving 141 projects without expected funding.

Among the affected programs is A Greener World’s partnership initiative with RAFL, which helps small and underserved farmers adopt regenerative practices and access premium

markets. Many participants had already begun implementing climate-smart strategies, relying on anticipated USDA support. The administration says the freeze is part of a broader spending review. Many agricultural groups, including the American Soybean Association, are urging the release of funds, emphasizing that these funds are crucial for sustainability and farm viability. The withholding of congressionally approved, contractually obligated funds is seen as a constitutional challenge likely to be decided in U.S. courts.

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Opinion

OUR FUTURE

AGW's new vision for integrity in farming

As a nonprofit organization, A Greener World (AGW) is constantly looking for opportunities to deliver our mission. However, not all opportunities are worth pursuing. And as new opportunities to expand our work have emerged, we recognized the need to refine our vision into an aspirational statement that would provide clear direction, alignment, and consistency across all our programs and partnerships.

Refining our vision

In August of 2024, the AGW Board and senior staff began working together to develop a vision statement. From the beginning, we have relied on our mission statement to guide us (which, if you're new to our work, can be found on our website in the 'About' section). A vision serves as a kind of 'check' on the impulse to seize every opportunity and provides a framework to assess when an opportunity may bring you closer to your goals—or distract you from them.

We're normally a fairly nuts-and-bolts crew. While we get deep in the literary weeds about standards and policies, refining a vision statement is not in our normal wheelhouse. We were therefore extremely grateful to have the expertise and generous time of Warren King, a friend of AGW and new board member, who has professional expertise in this area. Warren guided us through a deliberate, meaningful, inclusive, and efficient process that incorporated input from a broad range of stakeholders—and ultimately resulted in a vision in which we can all be proudly invested.

This article was written by A Greener World's Board of Directors

Our path forward

With that, we are excited to share our new vision statement:

"We envision a world where farming benefits people, animals, and the environment through integrity and transparency."

The components of our vision are interrelated. We recognize that:

- ▶ Valuing animal welfare can have a profoundly positive impact on agriculture
- ▶ Agriculture must benefit people to ensure lasting positive impacts
- ▶ A healthy environment is foundational for any benefit—whether for animals or humans
- ▶ Transparency and integrity are values that are central to our core, and vital to our mission.

A collaborative approach

We believe that our new vision offers our organization a 'true north' that will guide our programs, partners, and people. We are grateful to our senior staff for their commitment to this process, our Advisory Board for their counsel, and our executive director, Emily Moose, for her leadership and resolve to develop a new vision for our organization.

We also thank you for your role in helping to realize this vision through your continued support and partnership with AGW, as we work to encourage sustainable farming practices that are realistic and achievable for farmers—both now and in the future.

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GROVE NEW WORLD

Olive grower Campbell Mercer discusses the steps he's taking at Manna Hill Estate, Australia to build climate resilience

Humans have grown olives in the Mediterranean for thousands of years—probably since the start of agriculture over 10,000 years ago. Today, they are grown commercially in similar climates worldwide, including California, Argentina, Australia, and South Africa.

Despite being hardy, olive trees have specific requirements for successful production. They thrive in well-drained, neutral to slightly alkaline soils but struggle with high humidity, especially in summer. While they tolerate extreme temperatures, deep frosts can cause significant losses.

Olive trees require temperatures of 15-20°C (59-68°F) and humidity below 60% for successful pollination. They need adequate but not excessive moisture to set fruit, as well as reasonable levels of nitrogen—too much encourages leaf growth, while too little prevents fruiting.

Rainfall during the two-week pollination period in spring or early summer can hinder fruit set, making dry conditions essential. The fruit matures

over six months, with harvest typically in autumn or early winter, often using mechanical shakers or over-the-row harvesters.

A changing climate

Historically, the cool, wet winters and hot, dry summers here at Manna Hill Estate have provided ideal conditions for olive growing, similar to the Mediterranean.

Over the past 30 years, however, the climate has changed dramatically. As early as the 1990s, scientists warned of shifting weather patterns: more summer rain, drier winters, lower annual rainfall, and more extreme weather events, including intense storms, hail, and stronger winds. Unfortunately, they were right—and things are likely to get worse.

We planted our dryland grove in 2002, just as the 'Millennium Drought' began—one of Australia's most severe and prolonged droughts ever recorded. For the next eight years, rainfall

was well below the average 720mm (28 inches), with consecutive years barely reaching 50%. Shade temperatures often exceeded 40°C (104°F), and some days hit 47°C (116°F). The young trees survived with careful management but struggled to thrive, delaying commercial production from three years to ten. Our first harvest finally came in 2012—only for another to be wiped out by a freak hailstorm in 2016.

Extreme weather events have continued. In 2022, we experienced two "one-in-100-year" windstorms within 10 weeks, with gusts reaching 146 km/h (90 mph). In 2023, it rained for all but four days of the pollination period, reducing fruit set by 80%. The La Niña years (2021-2023) brought warm, humid conditions, fueling outbreaks of peacock spot, a fungal disease that can defoliate and even kill trees. Summer heat usually curbs its spread, but in 2023, we had just five days over 30°C (86°F), and persistent humidity. Our once "traditional Mediterranean climate" is anything but.

"In 2022, we experienced two 'one-in-100-year' windstorms within 10 weeks, with gusts reaching 90 mph."

MANNA HILL ESTATE





Trees with mounded rows follow contours of the slopes



Windbreaks at plantation edges (background) slow strong wind



Inter-row cover crops ensures ground is always covered



Mulching and biochar increase soil moisture retention

MANNA HILL ESTATE U&A

A global challenge

Challenges for olive producers extend well beyond our region. In other areas of Australia, some groves were hit by frost, others lost crops to hail, while humid conditions on the East Coast led to outbreaks of olive lace bug. Many groves had too little fruit to harvest. Spain, the world's largest olive producer, has also suffered major drought-related losses in recent years, as did other Mediterranean countries.

But farmers are resilient. During recent heavy rain, a neighboring grain farmer who had lost most of his crop was already out with his seeder. His reasoning? If it was wet enough to ruin his crop, it was wet enough to grow a summer one!

Two major human-induced factors drive climate change:

- **Greenhouse gas emissions (GHG):** These gases trap heat in the atmosphere, warming the planet.

- **Landscape degradation:** Bare soil absorbs heat and radiates it back, intensifying warming. In contrast, vegetation-rich soil converts sunlight into evapotranspiration, effectively cooling the land. Industrial agriculture, with its reliance on bare soil, acts as a heat source, while GHGs form the insulating blanket.

So far, global efforts have focused almost exclusively on reducing GHG emissions (albeit with little success) while largely ignoring the impact of degraded landscapes. In reality, decreasing vegetation cover and soil organic matter adversely changes our landscape and climate, potentially more so than GHG emissions.

“Decreasing vegetation cover and soil organic matter may influence climate even more than GHGs.”

A regenerative approach

Research shows that widespread adoption of regenerative farming can reduce reliance on inputs like fertilizers and pesticides, significantly cutting both fossil fuel use and associated GHG emissions. Regenerative practices also encourage producers to keep soil covered with growing plants year-round, increasing soil carbon sequestration and soil organic matter levels, restoring landscapes, and improving the local water cycle, ultimately resulting in a more climate-resilient system. Rajendra Singh, the so-called ‘Waterman of India’, led a movement in Rajasthan that restored several rivers by increasing local vegetation cover from 2% to 48%, cooling the region by 2°C (35.6°F), and increasing local rainfall. By cutting emissions, increasing carbon sequestration, and regenerating the land, regenerative agriculture can help to mitigate climate change.

Adaptations at Manna Hill

Farmers must develop adaptations to the changing conditions to ensure resilience to extreme weather events. We have implemented several strategies to mitigate key climate impacts.

Frost management

Olive trees suffer damage below -2°C (-30°F) and can die at -10°C (-15°F). Our adaptations include:

- **Strategic grove design:** Planting on north-facing slopes (natural warmth in the southern hemisphere winter) and avoiding frost-prone areas.
- **Grove maintenance:** Keeping the grass sward low over winter encourages frost to flow downhill between trees rather than reaching the canopy.

- **Soil microbial diversity:** Research suggests rhizobacteria and mycorrhizal fungi can improve plant stress tolerance, potentially lowering the frost point by 5–6°C (-10°F).

- **Seaweed foliar sprays:** Products strengthen cell walls, reducing frost and heat damage.

Wind management

Despite the extreme windstorms of 2022, we lost only one olive tree. Our wind mitigation measures include:

- **Grove design:** Planting on north-facing slopes shields trees from extreme winds, which typically come from the south.
- **Shelter belts:** Planting three-row mixed-species windbreaks (from small bushes to large trees) to slow the wind and provide habitat for pest-controlling birds and insects.
- **Agroforestry areas:** Planting other tree species on southern-facing land and non-harvestable land to provide wind protection for olive groves, grazing livestock, timber, biochar, compost material, and domestic firewood.

Rainfall management

Southeast Australia has experienced record-low winter rainfall alongside extreme rainfall events. On one day, we had 230 mm (9 inches)—about one third of our average annual rainfall—in just 20 minutes. To counteract lower rainfall and increased intensity, we have:

- **Grove design:** Planted trees using Keyline principles, with mounded rows following contours. Heavy rainfall flows as far as the next row before moving along the contour, improving infiltration.

“Shelter belts slow the wind and provide habitat for pest-controlling birds and insects.”

- **Soil improvement:** Direct drilled cover crops ensures ground is always covered and mulching and biochar increase soil moisture retention. Soil organic matter (SOM) has doubled to nearly 8%, with infiltration rates exceeding 1,000 mm (3 feet) per hour in some areas.

- **Water holding capacity:** Increasing SOM increases water retention. The USDA estimates every 1% increase in SOM adds 20,000 gallons/acre (-190,000 L/ha). Our soil water storage capacity has increased by 80,000 gallons/acre (-760,000 L/ha), improving drought resilience.

- **Restoring the local water cycle:** Maintaining permanent ground cover enhances local climate stability. In his book, *Ground Breaking: Soil Security and Climate Change*, Phil Mulvey describes how large regenerative farms can influence local weather, forming “square clouds” that drive rainfall. While we are not at that scale, widespread adoption could help mitigate climate change regionally.

Campbell Mercer manages Manna Hill Estate, a family-run, dryland olive grove near Mount Egerton in Victoria's Central Highlands. Established in 2001, the estate spans 90 acres, with 25 acres dedicated to 2,500 olive trees. The farm produces award-winning extra-virgin olive oil, table olives, soaps, and skincare balms. In 2023, Manna Hill Estate became the world's first commercial olive grove to be Certified Regenerative by A Greener World.

Visit mannahillestate.com.au

HOG ROAST

Anna Heaton on preventing heat stress to protect pig health and productivity

Despite the well-known saying, pigs don't actually sweat (aside from their snouts) and can struggle to maintain their body temperature. Without proper management, heat stress in pigs can lead to reduced growth rates, fertility issues, and even death.

First, we need to get our terms clear. Sunburn and heat stress are two different conditions. Sunburn is caused by prolonged exposure to ultraviolet light from the sun, while heat stress is caused by the inability of the pig to cool down in hot/humid weather. Pastured pigs can suffer from both, with light skinned pigs more likely to suffer from sunburn and dark skinned pigs potentially more susceptible to heat stroke as their darker skin absorbs more heat.

Understanding heat stress

Heat stress in pigs can start at much lower temperatures than you might think, and is much more likely when air humidity is high. An additional factor is the temperature range your pigs are used to. Research suggests that pigs adapted to colder conditions can succumb to heat stress even with modest temperature increases.

According to one study, pastured sows started reacting adversely when temperatures reached 68°F, while indoor sows did not react until temperatures reached 72-77°F. However, temperature alone is not the best measure of heat risk—humidity levels significantly impact how pigs cope with heat. Heat stress index charts like the example for sows (see right) are a useful decision tool for management strategies to minimize heat stress risks.

Signs of heat stress

Pigs regulate body temperature through panting and through cooling its skin. Panting increases airflow and evaporates moisture from the lungs, releasing heat. Pigs will also lie on cool surfaces or in shaded areas to help dissipate heat from their bodies, or cover themselves in water or mud, which aids evaporative cooling and provides some protection against sunburn.

If your pigs are lying in the shade, panting heavily, drooling, or appear lethargic, they are

AVOIDING HEAT STRESS

Provide and maintain wallowing areas so pigs can coat themselves in mud for cooling.

Ensure adequate shade through:

- ▶ Natural cover (trees, woodland).
- ▶ Well-ventilated huts with free access.
- ▶ Constructed sunshades.

Choose heat-resistant breeds: dark-skinned, long-snouted, smaller-bodied pigs handle heat better.

Optimize housing by ventilating huts and reducing straw levels in summer. Feed pigs during cooler parts of the day.

Ensure continuous access to clean, cool drinking water.

likely suffering from heat stress. Going off feed is another classic sign. Pigs will markedly reduce their feed intake when too hot, as digestion generates additional heat. This can impact growth rates of market hogs and milk production in lactating sows.

Recent research shows even short-term heat stress (a few hours) can compromise immune function, making pigs more susceptible to disease. Heat stress can also lead to fertility loss in both boars and sows. Boar sperm volume and quality will decrease if the boar overheats—an issue you may only notice when sows return to estrus instead of conceiving. Heat stress in sows can cause early embryo death and reduced litter size. If you experience seasonal fluctuations in fertility, heat stress could be a factor.

Preventing heat stress

The most important action you can take is providing pigs with wallows where they can get a good coating of mud on their skins. If you don't, pigs may move or break water troughs to create their own mud hole. It is far better to keep drinking water clean and wallowing water muddy, so providing two distinct areas is ideal.

A continuous supply of fresh, clean drinking water at all times is essential to pig health. Remember: warm drinking water does not have the same cooling effect as cold water. Think about:

- ▶ Positioning drinkers in shaded areas to keep water cooler.
- ▶ Burying plastic water pipes to prevent heating in the sun.
- ▶ Using insulated water storage to maintain a lower temperature.

Providing shade is just as important as water. This might be:

- ▶ Natural, such as trees and tall vegetation
- ▶ Man-made, such as shade cloths attached to poles or dedicated structures
- ▶ Well-ventilated huts.

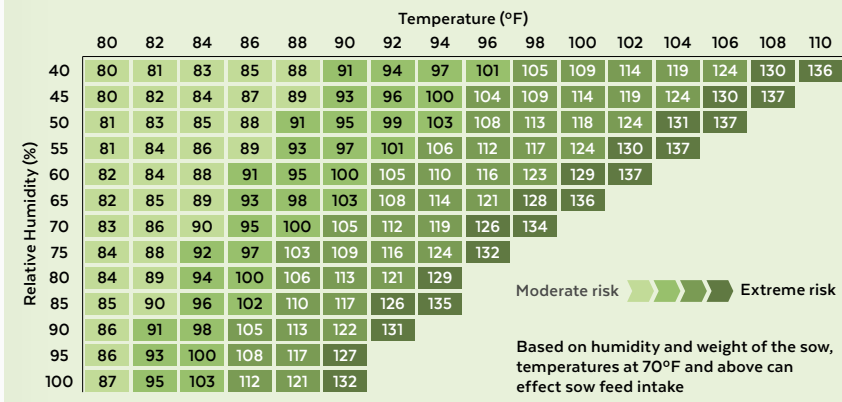
While pigs still need comfortable places to lie down, you can safely reduce bedding quantity in hot weather.

If farrowing huts become too hot, sows may



AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Temperature and humidity chart for sows



BOTL FARM, PIG, ASHFORD, CT

leave their litters to seek relief. If piglets are big enough to follow her you can provide nearby shade on the range. Otherwise, ensuring good ventilation is crucial to welfare.

If high summer temperatures are a regular occurrence, insulated huts that minimize interior heat are a worthwhile investment. Alternatively, Using heat-reflective paint or insulation can help keep interior temperatures down.

Finally, avoid feeding pigs in the hottest part of the day. Instead, feed them in the early morning and/or evening to reduce heat stress.

Pig size, color, and genetics

Larger pigs are more susceptible to heat stress because they generate more body heat. Optimum temperatures vary:

- ▶ Newborn piglets: circa 95°F
- ▶ Three-week-old piglets: circa 80°F
- ▶ Market-weight pigs (circa 75+lbs): circa 60°F

If a pig gets too far above its optimum temperature range it will suffer from heat stress.

Pig color may also play a role. Although there is some concern that darker colored pigs might absorb more heat, in general smaller breeds with dark skin and long snouts are less susceptible, because they have a greater surface area per pound of body weight (meaning greater heat transfer), more pharynx area to allow cooling through panting, and natural pigment for protection against sunburn.

Interestingly, modern genetics have made pigs more heat-sensitive. Research suggests that new pig lines produce nearly 20% more body heat than pigs from the 1980s, making heat management even more critical.

Be prepared

Heat stress can significantly impact pig health, welfare, and profitability. Assess your pigs' access to shade, water, and cooling strategies now before summer temperatures rise. Taking proactive steps now will protect your pigs—and your bottom line.

Anna Heaton was a former Lead Technical Advisor for AGW

STAYING SAFE ON THE FARM

James Carrabba outlines key farm safety risks—and how farmers can protect themselves, their families, and workers

Farming is not just a job: it is a way of life that most people involved truly love. Unfortunately, there are many associated dangers ...

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2022, agriculture had a fatality rate of 20 deaths per 100,000 workers—more than five times the rate for all industries, and far exceeding other industries considered hazardous like mining. There are many unique aspects about agriculture that have led to these alarming statistics. Farm families and workers are exposed to a host of mechanical and environmental hazards every day that increase the risk of injury or death.

Tractor related incidents

Approximately half to a third of all farmer fatalities are tractor-related incidents. Tractor rollovers are the single most common type of tractor fatality. Some tractors have a safety feature called ROPS (rollover protective structures) that will protect the tractor operator in the event of a tractor rollover, limiting the rollover and creating a safe area around the operator's seat.

ROPS are 99% effective if the operator wears the seatbelt. But while all tractors manufactured after 1985 come equipped with a ROPS and seatbelts, current research reveals that approximately 40% of the tractors in the U.S. are still not equipped with ROPS. Hundreds of lives could be saved each year if farmers had ROPS-equipped tractors and wore seatbelts when operating them. The National ROPS Rebate Program helps farmers install these life-saving devices. Some states offer a rebate toward the cost of the ROPS kit, shipping and installation.

Farm machinery

Just about every type of farm uses large, heavy machinery. Common types of machinery-related incidents include runovers, struck-by and crushing incidents, power-take-off (PTO) entanglements, other machinery entanglements and roadway collisions. Farm machinery incidents (other than tractor related) account for another third of farm work fatalities.

When working with farm machinery, always pay attention to the task. Keep young children and other bystanders out of the area where machinery is being used. Always shut off the machinery and wait until it comes to a complete stop before performing any maintenance or repairs. If you have to work under any raised equipment, make sure it is properly locked out or blocked up with appropriate jackstands or mechanical lockouts.

Motor vehicle crashes

Road travel with farm machinery presents a serious occupational hazard for agricultural workers. The busy spring planting and fall harvest seasons are especially dangerous as farmers move tractors and equipment to fields. Thousands of roadway incidents occur each year between agricultural machinery and other motor vehicles. Agricultural equipment tends to be large and moves slowly, usually less than 25 mph. A hazard exists when fast moving traffic quickly approaches slow moving agricultural machinery. Proper lighting of machinery and use of Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) emblems help to reduce risks.

Children

There is no other industry where families live right in the middle of a busy, 24-7 workplace.



Most victims of grain entrapment are minors

CENTRAL STATES CENTER FOR AG SAFETY & HEALTH (CS3)



Slow Moving Vehicle emblems reduce risks

And there is no other industry where young children are routinely performing work with large equipment or live around large animals and other potentially dangerous environments.

According to the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety, a child dies in an agricultural-related incident every three days, while 33 children are injured in agriculture related incidents every day. The leading sources of fatalities among youth on farms were machinery (25%), motor vehicles including ATV's (17%) and drowning (16%). For youth working on farms, tractors are the leading source of fatalities.

Elderly farmers

Unlike all other industries, there is no real retirement age in farming. Farmers generally work for as long as they are physically able. In fact, the average age of U.S. farmers is close to 60 years old.

While this strong work ethic is commendable, older farmers also experience higher injury rates. Senior farmers may have to take medications, work with physical disabilities or have poorer eyesight and slower reflexes. All of these factors contribute to older farmers having a higher risk for work-related injuries.

Health and safety on small farms

Federal safety and health regulations are not always enforced on farm owners and their immediate family members, or on small farms (10 or less employees) because of special enforcement exemptions granted to agriculture. It is therefore up to each farm to make sure it

provides a safe work environment for family members and workers.

Other hazards

Weather, terrain and atmospheric conditions all present daily risks to farmers. Farmers often work long hours in all types of weather and terrain conditions. Floods, droughts and other severe weather cause significant impacts to farms. Many farmers find it necessary to work at a full or part-time job off the farm, which can further lead to fatigue. Large animals, such as bulls, cows or horses have caused many injuries and fatalities. Learning how to work safely around large animals is absolutely essential.

Planning for safety

Even with all the associated hazards, agriculture is a great way of life and filled with many rewards. Take the time to work safely on your farm and encourage all of your family members and any workers to follow safe work routines. Conduct a safety audit of your farm to identify any potential hazards, such as older tractors without ROPS and seatbelts, missing or damaged PTO shielding, or missing shielding on other types of rotating machinery, unprotected drop-offs or fall hazards. Some organizations can offer on-farm safety surveys and on-farm safety training at no cost to farms. A number of farm safety audit tools are also available on the internet. Your regional Agricultural Safety and Health Center may be able to provide further advice and support.

James Carrabba is Agricultural Safety Specialist at the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH)



Rollover protective structures protect the operator

FURTHER INFORMATION

For information and safety resources, such as personal protective equipment, retrofit PTO shields and SMV emblems for sale, visit nycamh.com or call **800-343-7527**.

For information about the National ROPS Rebate Program, visit ROPSr4u.com or call **1-877-767-7748**

The U.S. Agricultural Safety and Health Centers (10 regional centers) host a YouTube channel with over 90 videos covering personal protective equipment, needlestick prevention, livestock safety, tractor and machinery safety, and more. Visit [@USagCenters](https://youtube.com/@USagCenters) or call **800-232-4636**

The U.S. Department of Labor offer plenty of advice and resources on farm safety and health. Visit osha.gov/agricultural-operations

In Canada, the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association website is a very useful resource. Visit casa-acsa.ca or call **877-452-2272**

SO MUCH CHOICE

Callie Casteel on why a strong food label matters
—and how AGW can help



A strong product label is more important than ever. A recent report by the Food Industry Association and NielsenIQ found two-thirds (64%) of U.S. shoppers would switch from their usual food brand to one that provides transparent product information beyond nutritional facts.

Labels drive purchasing decisions

Food labels are one of the primary ways consumers learn about food products and brands. As an AGW-certified producer, you already meet the highest standards for animal welfare, grassfed production, non-GMO, and/or regenerative markets. Showcasing these certifications on a well-designed label helps you stand out in an increasingly competitive market.

Designing or updating a label can feel overwhelming. But we are here to help!

A quick phone or video consultation is usually the best place to create a plan to support your efforts—and make sure your label is working as hard as you are.

AGW's labeling service

As an added service to AGW-certified producers, we can guide you through any aspect of the labeling process—whether you are designing a new label, updating an existing one, ordering AGW-branded stickers, or pursuing regulatory compliance for label claims in the U.S. and Canada. We will work with you to create a branded, attractive label that reflects your farm values and sets your products apart. Ever better, this service is completely free for certified farms and brands!

The process

► Initial consultation

Get in touch with AGW and we'll arrange an initial meeting at your convenience. During this phone or video consultation, we will gather key information to ensure your label meets regulatory requirements. We'll also discuss your main goals, the claims you want to make (and any required documentation), and whether you need design assistance.

► Integrating the AGW into your label

Once we understand our needs, we will work with

you and a graphic designer (either AGW's designer or your own) to incorporate AGW logo(s) in line with our logo use policy. We can also offer guidance on appropriate marketing claims and design to enhance your label. We can also work with your processor or meat plant to ensure the label meets their printing requirements.

► Submitting for approval

When everyone—your team, your processor or meat plant (if applicable) and AGW's label review team—is happy with the final design, we can submit the necessary paperwork to USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) for their approval or help support compliance with relevant agencies.

Labeling regulations

Most countries regulate food labeling to ensure packaging includes key information—such as ingredients, weight, and safe handling statements—and that all details are accurate, easy to read, and not misleading.

Labeling requirements will vary by country, product type, ingredients, and regulatory agency. It is essential to understand your legal obligations and ensure you can comply with all appropriate regulations to avoid the potentially significant consequences for your business.

► Meat producers in the United States

Meat labeling is regulated by the agency inspecting the plant where the product is processed. If you want to use AGW's logos, you must first register that claim with the appropriate agency.

For state-inspected plants, contact the State Department of Agriculture. Federally inspected plants, contact the USDA's FSIS. If you are an AGW-certified producer, we can do this for you.

► Dairy and egg producers in the United States

Dairy and egg labeling regulations are enforced by individual states and/or the Food and Drug Administration. Your state's Department of Agriculture is the best contact to determine the compliance of your label and advise on the proper use of AGW logos.

If you need any help to connect with the right contact, please get in touch.

LABELING ASSISTANCE GRANTS

AGW-certified producers in North America may be eligible for a labeling assistance grant of up to \$500 to help cover costs of incorporating relevant AGW logos on their packaging. To apply, get in touch!

► Producers in Canada

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) does not “approve” labels or logos, so you are responsible for ensuring your labels are compliant with current legislation. For more information on third-party endorsements on Canadian food labels, visit inspection.gc.ca. If you need help to understand regulatory requirements, contact your local CFIA office, or let us know and we can assist. You’ll find a list of CFIA offices at inspection.gc.ca.

Why labels matter

A food label is more than simply a regulatory requirement. It’s also a key marketing tool. Your label tells your story, communicates your values, and helps customers understand why your product is worth choosing.

Regardless of where you sell—whether it’s direct from your farm, at farmers’ markets, grocery stores or other retail chains—your products are part of a much bigger and ever-changing labeling landscape.

Remember: Shoppers who visit farmers’ markets are still likely to visit the mainstream grocery stores. People who shop at grocery stores also order online. As demand for transparency, sustainability, and high-welfare farming grows, food businesses both large and small are seeking to capitalize on these markets.

So, how do you maximize your label’s impact?

Making the most of your label

A good label helps educate customers about your farm, products, and why they’re worth buying. Thinking about your values and farm management practices, and understanding what your customers care about, will help you shape your messaging.

COMMON VALUES AND LABEL CLAIMS

- High animal welfare standards
- Pasture-/range-based
- Certified Organic
- Regenerative
- Grassfed
- Locally produced
- High quality/artisan
- Raised without routine use of antibiotics
- Raised without added hormones
- Angus, Longhorn, Hereford, and other week-known breeds
- Family farmed
- Non-GMO.

► Define your values

What are the most important values that influence your farming business?

For example, are you committed to high animal welfare and minimizing the impact of your farming on the environment? Are your animals 100% grassfed or pasture-raised? Do you avoid GMOS? What makes your system different from others and why is that important?

Keep things positive and simple. The best messages are clear and easy to understand.

► Understand your customers

What do your customers most care about? Understanding the values of your audience will help shape your messaging and ensure your labels addresses their key concerns: What key values or concerns matter to your customers? What farming practices match your customers’ values? How can you best communicate this on your label?

► Keep it real—and simple

Your label is valuable real estate. A clear, simple marketing message on the front of pack is far more effective than cluttering up your label with too much information.

Use your front of pack label to highlight core values and key selling points. You can share more detailed or complex information about how you farm, your philosophy, and your story elsewhere, such as on the reverse of the package, in a brochure, or on your website.

Remember: we are here to help! Get in touch if you need any assistance at any stage.

Callie Casteel is AGW’s Marketing Services Coordinator. Email callie@agreenerworld.org

🌱 Certification news

UNDERSTANDING INPUT REQUIREMENTS

Caitlin Aguilar offers guidance on ensuring compliance with regenerative standards

One of the key attractions of our Certified Regenerative by AGW program is its practical and flexible approach to managing farming inputs. This approach often means that farmers can start their regenerative certification journey without having to overhaul their management practices overnight.

However, this does not mean inputs can be used without limits. According to the standards, restricted inputs may only be used if they are planned and targeted within an approved Regenerative Plan and you intend to phase them out under an agreed written reduction plan.

In this context, it is really important to understand which soil conditioners, feed, fertilizers, and other inputs are permitted, restricted, and prohibited under the program, particularly as you develop your farm’s Regenerative Plan and any supporting documentation.

Resources for understanding input requirements

We offer a number of resources to help you ensure your inputs align with the standards, including *Annex D: List of restricted and prohibited inputs*, *Annex E: List of allowed inputs*, the Certified Regenerative input form, and the Regenerative Plan template. All these resources are available online at agreenerworld.org/certifications/certified-regenerative

AGW’s review panel thoroughly evaluates all submitted inputs, paying special attention to restricted inputs. In some cases, restricted inputs

listed in annex D may be reclassified as prohibited if their use or application timing does not fully comply with program standards.

Supporting documentation must also include details of the preventive practices used before applying a restricted material, as well as the triggers for use, application rate, and frequency.

If you are ever unsure about whether a product is allowed under the Certified Regenerative by AGW program, please ask us to review your plans before using it.

How to submit inputs for review

The easiest—and recommended—way to submit all inputs for review is to use the input form and submit it with your finished Regenerative Plan.

Not only does the form clearly define all required information for AGW’s review panel, but it was developed by a certified business to ensure the necessary input information was easily reportable and practical.

Once you submit your forms for review, the panel will determine suitability of both used and planned inputs with the program standards, and confirm if these inputs are accepted. Annual reporting of inputs is required to track progress in reducing and eventually eliminating restricted materials from management practices.

If you have any doubts about a product’s compliance, feel free to submit it to info@agreenerworld.org for a technical review. We’re here to help.

DID YOU KNOW? The input form was initially developed by California Olive Ranch as part of a Certified Regenerative by AGW pilot project. It was so helpful during the Regenerative Plan review process that AGW adopted it for use by all producers. Thank you, California Olive Ranch!

Caitlin Aguilar is AGW’s Director of Quality



To see more label examples visit agreenerworld.org/farmer-services/labeling-support/agw-label-gallery

INTERNATIONAL PRODUCERS

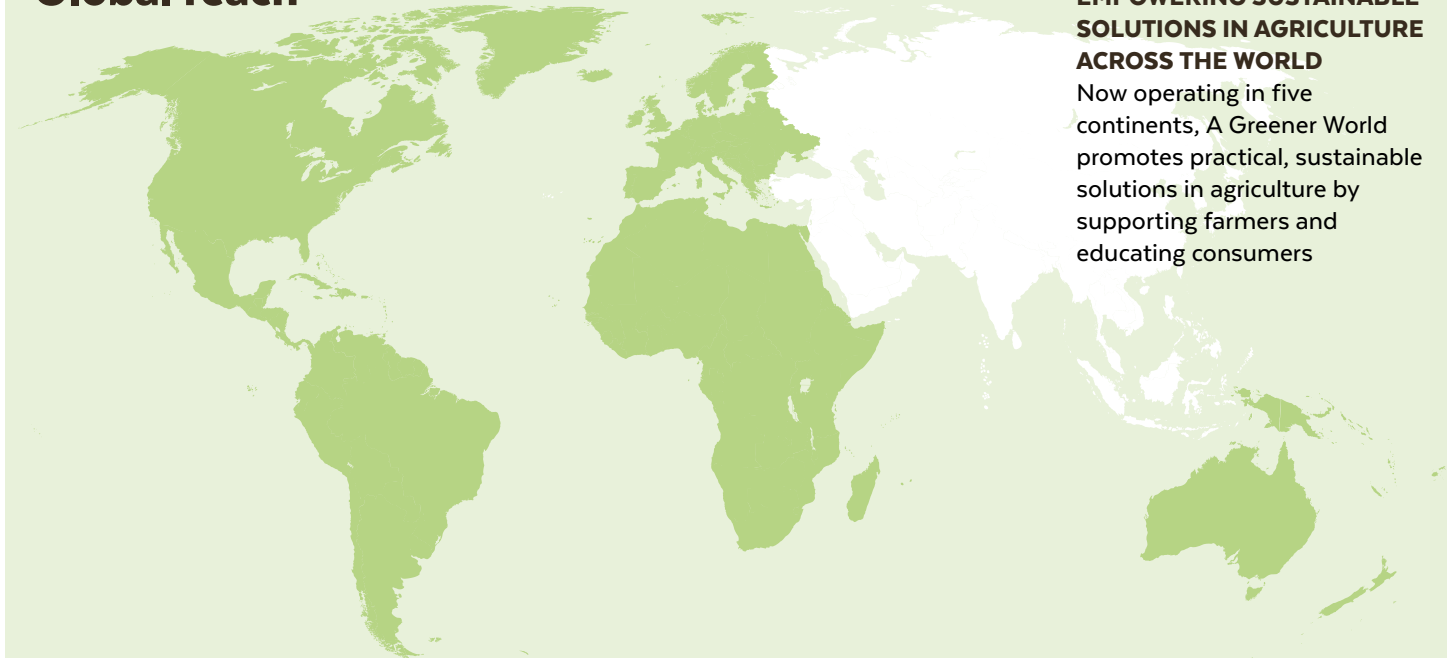
AGW specializes in labeling regulations for North America, but we’re happy to assist with label design wherever you’re located. If you need help ensuring your label looks professional and communicates your values effectively, we’re here to support you!

BRANDS AND RETAILERS

AGW works with a number of brands and further processors seeking certification for their products and supply chains—our standards require approval of the relevant AGW logo(s) on all packaging for credibility and consistency. Please get in touch with any labeling and/or logo-use questions.

A GREENER WORLD

Global reach



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Now operating in five continents, A Greener World promotes practical, sustainable solutions in agriculture by supporting farmers and educating consumers

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ORDER EGG CARTONS

The Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW-branded egg carton is currently available in two colors: blue and green.

The egg carton is made with 100% reclaimed paper and holds a dozen medium, large or extra-large eggs. The low-cost carton features AGW's flagship logo and clear messaging that the eggs are from pastured, high-welfare hens, and includes space for a farm-specific label.

200 dozen-egg branded cartons cost \$36 plus shipping via UPS. If ordering from Canada, please call +1 541-526-1119.

Visit agreenerworld.org/shop-agw



Promoting A Greener World

AGW is proud to offer low-cost branded promotional materials to help raise awareness of your certification and better communicate the wider benefits of your farming practices. Every purchase also supports our work to educate and inform consumers—and helps keep your certifications affordable.

For more promotional materials—and to place an order (with shipping)—visit agreenerworld.org/shop-agw

From Canada, please call +1 541-526-1119



AGW APRON \$25

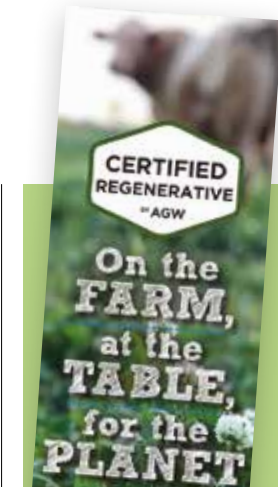
- Perfect for farmers' markets or the kitchen
- 8 oz organic cotton/recycled polyester
- Black fabric with white imprint A Greener World logo
- Adjustable neckline, two front pockets, brass rivets, cotton webbing ties



SHELF TALKER \$5

- Sold in packs of five
- Printed on premium silk stock with wipeable coating
- 4¼" x 2¾"
- EZ-peel adhesive for shelf mounting
- Made in the USA

Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW producers only



REGENERATIVE BROCHURES \$5

- Explains the benefits of certification
- Ideal for farmers' markets, farm stores and other events
- 50 brochures per pack

Certified Regenerative by AGW producers only



CONSUMER BROCHURES \$5

- Explains the benefits of certification
- Ideal for farmers' markets, farm stores and other events
- 50 brochures per pack

If required for educational use, please email info@agreenerworld.org



CERTIFIED ANIMAL WELFARE APPROVED BY AGW STICKER LABELS \$8

- 1" x 1" high-quality stickers
- Long-life adhesive
- 1,000 stickers per roll

Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW producers only



CERTIFIED GRASSFED BY AGW STICKER LABELS \$8

- 1" x 1" high-quality stickers
- Long-life adhesive
- 1,000 stickers per roll

Certified Grassfed by AGW producers only



CERTIFIED NON-GMO BY AGW METAL SIGN \$12

- Ideal for farm gate or barn wall
- Aluminium 10" X 15"
- Full-color embossed imprint
- Corner holes for easy mounting

Certified Non-GMO by AGW producers only



CERTIFIED REGENERATIVE BY AGW METAL SIGN \$12

- Ideal for farm gate or barn wall
- Aluminium 10" X 15"
- Full-color embossed imprint
- Corner holes for easy mounting

Certified Regenerative by AGW producers only



EMBROIDERED BASEBALL CAP \$20

- Our popular styled baseball cap with Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW logo
- 100% Made in USA
- 100% Union made by Workers United

Meet the farmer

FIRST PRINCIPLES

Jerry Kitt (below right, with his family) owns First Nature Farms, a 3,000-acre certified organic farm in Goodfare, Alberta. Specializing in AGW-certified pasture-raised Berkshire pigs and cattle, they also raise chickens and grow vegetables.

How did you get into farming?

Quite by accident—while hitchhiking! Raised in Edmonton with a love for the outdoors, I hitched a ride to Alaska and was picked up by a long-lost cousin who had just bought land in Goodfare. He eventually settled there, and I followed, working at a research station before diving into farming—and straight into poverty! My love of nature led me to organic farming and a holistic management course gave me focus. That was 30 years ago. Today, I farm alongside my son, Donovan, his wife, Lisa, who manage The Homestead (also AGW-certified) on the same land as First Nature Farms.

Describe a typical day

Morning chores are the only consistent part! There's always something happening. The grizzly bear that came by, for example. I stood on the deck playing accordion to it—I don't think he'll be coming back.

How did you hear about AGW?

From TK Ranch in Alberta. They were the first Certified Grassfed by AGW farm in Canada. We were looking for similar recognition and the logo on our packaging is a key benefit!

Sustainable farming: why does it matter?

We feel a great responsibility to our part of the planet. We also want to nourish our customers as well as we can. We need more farmers who are gentle to the Earth.

Who are your customers?

In Alberta, families in the Grande Prairie area and shoppers who visit the stores we supply with our pork in Vancouver, British Columbia. Our Certified Animal Welfare approved by AGW, Certified Grassfed by AGW beef is marketed through The Homestead, managed by Donovan and Lisa, and available by subscription.

What are your business plans for the future?

I want to provide a stable income for the people who work on our farm. I envision a future that is full of small, self-supporting communities.

What is the biggest threat to sustainable farming?

Big business and a changing climate.

What keeps you awake at night?

Too many finished pigs.

What single thing would most improve your life?

Rain.

What do you love most about what you do?

I can look back at my life and know it was worthwhile.



FIRST NATURE FARM (x2)

AT A GLANCE

Farm: First Nature Farms
Certification date: July 2024
Size: 3,040 acres
Soil type: Grey wooded
Altitude: 2,600 feet
Annual rainfall: 13 inches
Enterprises: 350 Berkshire pigs, 40 Galloway cows plus calves, feeders and finishers, 3 acres market garden

firstnaturefarms .ab.ca

A GREENER WORD

Catch up with **Sustainable Farming** articles online via **A Greener World's** blog



FIT OR FAT? — AGW standards require farmers to maintain all animals at a Body Condition Score (BCS) of at least 2, while breeding animals must not exceed a score of 4. But what do these scores actually mean, and how can farmers use BCS as an effective management tool?

<https://agreenerworld.org/a-greener-world/-fit-or-fat/>



A PESKY PROBLEM — Effective parasite management is crucial for both animal well-being and farm productivity. However, every move toward a more ecological approach not only supports animal health but also builds a more resilient, cost-effective, and less labor-intensive farming system.

<https://agreenerworld.org/a-greener-world/a-pesky-problem/>



REGENERATIVE 101 — Unless you've been living under a rock, you've likely noticed the surge in media coverage around 'regenerative farming' or 'regenerative agriculture'. As the latest buzzword in the farming world, 'regenerative' is everywhere—but what does it actually mean in practice?

<https://agreenerworld.org/a-greener-world/regenerative-101/>



CUTTING IT TOO FINE — Modern slaughter facilities, particularly smaller operations, often face significant challenges in delivering efficient services to their customers. By understanding these challenges, farmers and ranchers can help improve facility efficiency and minimize unnecessary delays and costs.

<https://agreenerworld.org/a-greener-world/cutting-it-too-fine/>





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Christy Lohof, LOHOF Grass-Finished Beef, Montana

COVER PHOTO: MIKE SUAREZ

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