

grown & grazed

volume 6

a letter from the farm manager

During the winter and the quieter months of the year, I'm able to take a moment to pause. Although there's a pause, my mind continually flows with ideas and passion to lead the farm forward with intentionality. There have been many times in which I stood in the field with the animals after feeding them in the morning and embraced the warmth and grace of the sun. It's a gentle reminder that no matter how much chaos or business fills my mind, there's always a new day to occur. We can keep moving forward and be thankful that the next day, while it may offer unpredictability, it will also offer us hope and refreshment.

The sun will always set, and it will always rise again tomorrow.

In the coming months, I hope to lead with the same passion and drive that has been leading this program from the beginning. While fear and anxiety still remain, there's goodness and joy to come from the moments where we feel overwhelmed. I encourage you all to recognize your fears and walk through them, reminding yourself of why you started what you're doing, who you're doing it for, and how far you've come. We know how important our community is, but the individualism and taking care of ourselves is what makes the community whole and flourishing.



seasonal updates

In our hydroponics, we are currently growing lettuce, basil, parsley, dill, and cherry tomatoes!

contact

Questions, comments, concerns or suggestions may be directed to Olivia! To submit questions for our question corner you can email them to oclair@pvcommunities.org, call in at 717-664-6267 or place a note in Olivia's mailbox.

hydroponics

Although the weather has been unpredictable and inconsistent, the hydroponics has remained steady.

Each week we are still diligently seeding, transplanting, and harvesting our greens and distributing them amongst the community.

Our herbs are continually harvested and sent up to H&H for them to use in their dishes. A simple cutting each week provides them with fresh basil, parsley and dill, emphasizing the farm to table concept.

In addition to our lettuce and herbs growing, our new crop of cherry tomatoes has begun to flower! We are pollinating them as they continue to bloom to ensure we get another ample crop of tomatoes.

During our National Agriculture Day celebration we offered in-person tours of our system, where visitors came and learned about our process and the impact we have on the community. We also showcased our “Journey of a Seed” video, which took viewers through the entire crop cycle, beginning with the seeding of a crop and ending with the harvesting.



animals

It's been a snowy and bitter cold winter, providing our animals with the perfect opportunity to stay hunkered down and wait for spring.

As we know, spring offers new beginnings and a regained sense of hope. The grass has begun to grow and our pastures once again have a green glow to them. Our animals have wasted no time in exploring the pastures and grazing once again. Our chickens have continued to lay regardless of the weather, with a consistent rate of about 85%-90%.

We sell them as fast as we collect them, providing the community with the taste of farm fresh right in their homes.

Similarly to the animals, as we begin to thaw out and become more active in the spring, we encourage you to become a volunteer and work with the animals.

We plan on engaging the animals with the community as much as we possibly can and provide everyone with their therapeutic nature.



featured event

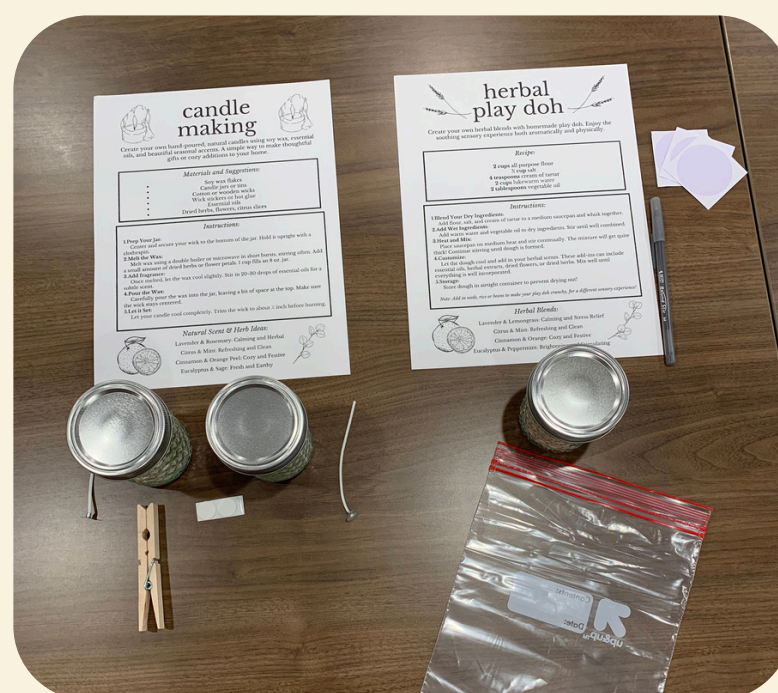
National Agriculture Day 2026

On March 24th, residents and staff members celebrated National Agriculture Day together on campus. Individuals not only participated in hydroponics tours and walking the animals, but also took part in interactive displays and activities. Residents and staff were seen collaborating and conversing about agricultural facts, seeding their own plants, and enjoying delicious farm to table snacks! It was a day filled with fun and education about the agriculture industry within our own community as well as the broader world.



gather & grow workshop

In February, we hosted a candle making and herbal play doh workshop. Residents were encouraged to make their own herbal blends in each of these mediums to create a soothing sensory and therapeutic experience they could take with them.





partnership spotlight

In January, members from the Manheim Central FFA gave a presentation on the popcorn program at this year's Farm Show. They showcased the growing and harvesting at our Hoffer Farm, as well as a demonstration on how to shuck and cook the popcorn.

a glimpse around the farm



get involved!

“gather & grow” workshops

These interactive workshops will touch on different topics in agriculture and include a take home project.

Our workshops are held on the third Thursday of every other month in the Activity Center. So far, residents have experienced the spectrum of growing, from seeding crops to harvesting to preserving them. We plan on continuing to educate and make agriculture accessible!

Please register on WellZesta if interested.

volunteer with the animals!

Are you interested in volunteering with the Hoffer Farm animals? We have opportunities available for volunteers to get involved with our farm friends and increase their engagement on campus!

Reach out to Olivia if you are interested!

sustainability spotlight

We are actively reducing the amount of miles that are put on the food that we contribute to the campus. Our produce travels across campus and stays within our local community, ensuring that the fresh produce that folks receive is locally and sustainably sourced. As we continue to feed our community we are promoting a local food system and a reduction in transmissions to the environment.

crop spotlight

Our Orange Hat Cherry Tomatoes have quickly become a fan favorite amongst the campus.

Although small, these tomatoes pack a delicious sweet taste and a vibrancy that will brighten any dish you make them a part of. They are delightful on a salad, sandwich, or just as a snack on the go!



community impact

“It’s actually quite impactful, and I think it’s very much in demand by people that are coming for food assistance.”

-Central PA Food Bank speaking on the hydroponics program

question column

Q: what’s the most popular thing you grow in hydroponics?

A: Our basil is always sought after, with a vibrant taste and beautiful appearance, it makes it a fan favorite at H&H. The most popular lettuce variety is our green butterhead; offering a tender and buttery flavor, delicious for any dish.

Q: does egg production change throughout the season?

A: As chickens get older, they tend to lay less eggs; however our chickens have yet to slow down! During the frigidly cold days, we did get a few less eggs, but we maintained a steady and productive laying season.

rooted reflection

What has provided you with a constant motivation throughout the winter, so you stay energized for spring?

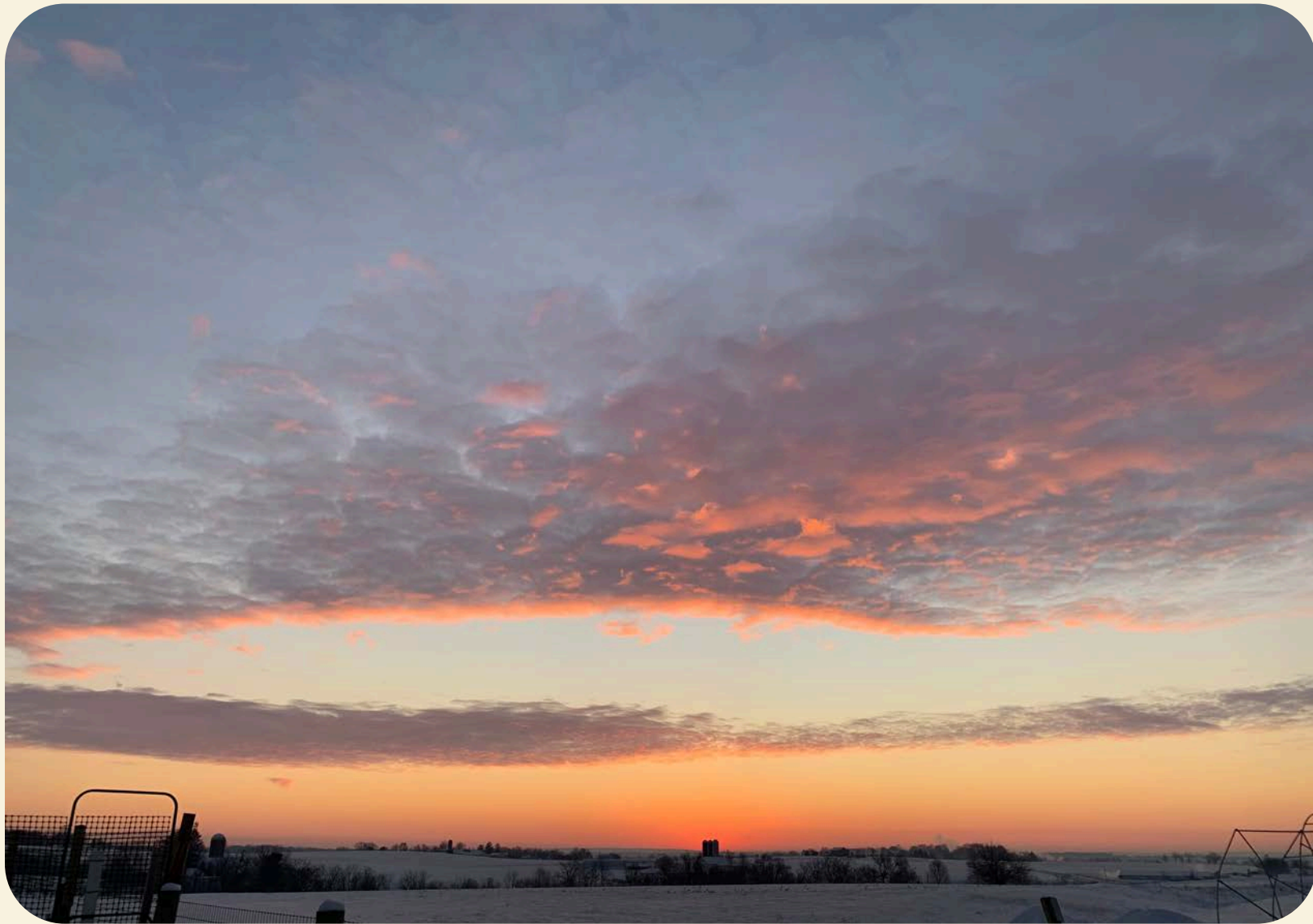
quarterly stats

(January-March)

There have been **2,310** seeds sown in hydroponics.

There have been **1,728** eggs collected.

There has been **24.6** pounds of basil harvested.



farm funnies

what do you call a cow with no legs?

Ground beef!

what's a scarecrow's favorite fruit?

Straw-berries!

word search

- WINTER
- LAMBS
- SPRING
- BASIL
- POLLINATION
- AGRICULTURE
- VOLUNTEER
- SUSTAINABLE
- POPCORN
- WORKSHOP

U	D	F	J	P	K	L	W	G	Z	A	S	S	B
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