

Hello Friends of the Family Farm,

Thank you for signing up to volunteer at the CFF. We are so grateful for your help in keeping our farm growing and thriving even during these challenging times and wintery weather.

If you have not already done so, please watch the brief volunteer videos for some general information about how to care for the bunnies and the chickens. These are on our website at www.clarkstonfamilyfarm.com. Some things have changed since these videos were made, but we hope they are still helpful.

Please call me if you have any questions: Chelsea O'Brien 248 302 6426.

General rules for our farm are as follows:

- 1) Have Fun! Our educational farm is founded on the principals of nature -based education and the knowledge that if you aren't enjoying yourself you probably aren't learning a lot or retaining what you learn.
- 2) Use walking feet- please do not run as it frightens the animals and can be unsafe for you due to the uneven ground and nature debris.
- 3) Use a calming and conversation voice- no screaming around our animals
- 4) Use slow and gentle movements- grabbing, pulling, poking and throwing our animals is simply unacceptable. Our animals love and trust people because our farm team insists that they are treated with love and respect.
- 5) Stay together - Children need to stay with their parents or guardians while at our farm.

Notes for our "Chicken Tenders"

The code for our chicken yard is 6113. During our winter hours and non-visiting days we do keep our orchard and chicken yard locked. The chicken food and water buckets are in the white shed. With the colder temperatures we fill the electric water heaters to keep our animals supplied with fresh clean water. Our farm team should have supplied you with all the food and water you need.

Eggs should be collected daily. The cartons for egg collecting are in the cupboard on the north side of the yellow chicken coop. That is where you can place the filled cartons when you are done. Don't worry if they are a bit soiled, that is normal. It helps if you make sure that the nesting boxes have fresh clean straw in them, though. Fresh clean straw is in the chicken yard.

Please do not take eggs home. We rely on the sale of our free-range heritage breed eggs in our market to help cover the high cost of running an organic farm for kids. I appreciate your understanding and support in this matter. If you would like to purchase some of our amazing eggs just let me know and that could certainly be arranged!

Notes for our "Bunny Brigade"

The bunnies are in their winter home in our newly constructed Healing Hoophouse. We are in the process of creating a frost free water line to better manage winter care of our plants and animals. Watch yourself around the construction. Like all living creatures, bunnies need food, water, shelter and space. We have a large 5 gallon bucket filled with water and electric water bowls to help with the cold temperatures for the essential fresh water. Peter Rabbit's water tends to freeze so you may need to replace his water. Timothy hay should be supplied in abundance (70% of a rabbit's diet) and pellets in the pellet bowls. If you want to bring a small amount of fresh treats like carrot, apple, celery, spinach or radish they will love it! These are sometimes foods though so not too much. If you feel motivated you may help out even more by putting on a pair of gloves and cleaning the cages. The bunny "scat" can go in our marked compost wagons and will help enrich our soil. All of our farm animals contribute in some way!

More Bunny Notes: Don't forget to double check the latches on their hutches. They love to run free in our Hoophouse and they will escape if given the opportunity. You may go in the large hutch (no more than two at a time) to pet and feed (but not pick up) the three year old Rex and the Lop. They love being petted but don't much like being held. You may cuddle the brown and white baby bunny- sitting only not walking around with him. You may pet, and feed through the open door cage Peter Rabbit (Papa Bunny). Do not poke fingers through the cage wire this only encourages the bunnies to nip you as they look for treats. This is a good general rule for all animals- don't poke fingers through cages! Please do not pick up or let loose any of the adult bunnies- they are very quick and will escape.

DO NOT allow all the bunnies- male and female to "play" together. They will mate and this is something we need to manage closely. Thank you for following our rules around free play between sexes.

Please do not put the bunnies in different cages. They are not "fixed" and need to be kept in their separate hutches. Peter rabbit is not allowed to interact with any of the females.

We try to make sure to care for our animals by mid-day if that is possible.

Notes for our Hoophouse Helpers:

Once our water line is completed you may, if you are so inclined, water our raised beds. We still have cold crops growing and are doing our best to keep them alive through the cold dark months of a Michigan winter!

Thank you again for your willingness to be a part of our amazing team of volunteers. Friends of the Family farm are essential to keeping everything thriving, even during our off-season. As we like to say at our farm, we DIG IT and YOU!

Gratefully Yours in Health and Wellbeing,

Chelsea O'Brien, Clarkston Family Farm, Founder and Executive Director

