

COLLEGE FARM

An Art, a Science, a Business

In operation since 1894, the College Farm began a transition to sustainable agriculture in 1996. Today, with over 275 acres, a mixture of upland pasture and river-bottom crop fields, the Farm is a model of sustainable farm practice and a laboratory for students' Natural Sciences Seminar projects. It is also a business, producing hormone- and antibiotic-free beef, pork, and poultry that are sold to the public to cover the cost of Farm operations.

Sustainable Practices

- Intensive rotational grazing
- Pasture-farrowing of swine herd
- Grass-finishing beef to produce omega-3 fatty acids and CLAs (cancer-fighting fats)
- Growing crops from non-GMO seed in four- or five-year rotation
- Fencing cattle out of waterways
- Raising pastured poultry
- Operating a weather data station with solar panel and wireless transmission



The Farm's winter feeding shed enables the collection of manure, which is used to fertilize the fields and return nitrogen to the soil.

One of Warren Wilson's greenest acts is to keep all of its farmland in farming. A single acre lost equals thousands of pounds of food the community and its neighbors would have to truck in from somewhere else.



Hurricanes Ivan and Frances submerged parts of campus in 2004.



The Farm is a haven for many species of plants and animals and serves as a field research site for environmental studies students.



The Farm grows crops from non-GMO seed and produces field-farrowed pigs and grass-finished beef for public sale.



In cold weather, sows farrow in the piggery; in warmer weather, they farrow in pasture farrowing huts. The swine operation provides training for pre-vet students, who perform most of the Farm's veterinary work.



The Farm's major field crops are corn, wheat, barley, and oats, grown in rotation to break the life cycles of pests. Crop yields are 30-50% higher than state averages.

Flood Warning System for Western North Carolina

Warren Wilson College is a location for a stream and rain gauge monitoring station of the Swannanoa River. The City of Asheville purchased the system, with support from the National Weather Service, to participate in the national IFLOWS network. The gauge, part of an enhanced flood warning system for western North Carolina, will provide Internet-accessible data to keep the Farm and the entire Swannanoa Valley community informed of watershed events.