

LAKE METROPARKS

# FARMIPARK

*Summer*



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FARMPARK IS A LAKE METROPARKS FACILITY.

Farmpark’s mission is to help our urban society understand how farmers raise food, fiber and other products that sustain and enhance human life. *Farmpark Almanac* is published three times a year by Lake Metroparks. This publication is sent free to Farmpark members.

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## Farmpark Resumes Operations Six Days a Week

by Lee Homyock, *Farmpark Administrator*

After a year, Farmpark resumed its regular operating schedule on April 20, Tuesdays through Sundays 9 am to 5 pm (closed Mondays). While many of the health guidelines remain in effect such as requiring masks in buildings, building capacities, and physical distancing, we welcome getting back to some resemblance of normal.

We have re-established many of our events starting in May, with Shearing Weekend and HorseFest. Also, Farmpark will bring a regional lamb show, called “The Spring Showdown” on May 30. In June, Railroads in the Park returns. In July we welcome back FarmFest and introduce Milk and Honey Weekend, which will celebrate these two delicious farm products.

In August, Farmpark will welcome back the Ohio Wine Producers Association’s Vintage Ohio Wine Festival. Tickets to attend Vintage Ohio will be sold online presale only. Farmpark members will have the opportunity to purchase discounted tickets. More information on purchasing tickets is forthcoming.

Unfortunately, the Village Peddler Festival has canceled for 2021, however, organizers have asked to hold their date in 2022. In place of the Village Peddler Festival, Farmpark will extend its fall weekend series to include Sunflower Harvest Weekend on September 18 & 19.

Please refer to lakemetroparks.com and Farmpark’s Facebook page for updates about events and programs. We look forward to seeing you soon!



# LAKE METROPARKS FARM PARK BACK A BREED

Sponsorships make great gifts for children, families and teachers  
and are unique opportunities for classrooms and scouts.  
More information can be found at [goto.lakemetroparks.com/donate](http://goto.lakemetroparks.com/donate).

## Available Breeds



Rabbits\*



Draft horses



Border collies



Goats



Chickens\*



Pigs



Light horses



Cows



Sheep\*



Mini horses

## BACK A BREED SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

### \$150 or more donation includes

- Outreach program onsite or travel\* (if available) with your backed breed OR a large photo of your breed
- Back a Breed tote bag
- Certificate with small photo of your backed breed
- Your name on the donor board in the Farm park lobby
- Lake Metroparks magnet, sticky note pad, pen and trading cards

### \$50 donation includes

- Certificate with small photo of your backed breed
- Your name on the donor board in the Farm park lobby
- Lake Metroparks magnet, sticky note pad, pen and trading cards

### \$25 donation includes

- Certificate with small photo of your backed breed
- Lake Metroparks sticky note pad and pen



Visit [goto.lakemetroparks.com/donate](http://goto.lakemetroparks.com/donate) or  
call the Lake Metroparks Registration  
Department at 440-358-7275.

*\*Please note: Outreach programs are designed for groups—no private functions. Programs are to be scheduled and presented within six months. Travel outreach programs are limited to rabbits, chickens or sheep.*

# Farmpark CALENDAR

## 5 MAY

2 LAKE COUNTY FREE DAY

### SHEARING WEEKEND PAIRING DINNER

May 7, 5 to 9 pm

\$55 per person, pre-registration required at lakemetroparks.com or call 440-358-7275

Farmpark's annual Shearing Weekend Pairing Dinner is an opportunity to enjoy an exclusive evening at the farm with private sheep shearing and border collie demonstrations. After the demonstrations, return to the Farmpark Visitor Center for a pairing dinner with wine from Debonné Vineyards and a gourmet savory leg of lamb dinner, with delicious steamed vegetables and salad from J&J Catering. Finish the meal with mouthwatering desserts and freshly-brewed tea and coffee.

### SHEARING WEEKEND

May 8 & 9

Kick off spring with Shearing Weekend! Enjoy the skill and precision of our border collies, Tot and Robin, herding the sheep and then join us as winter woolly coats are shorn off of the flock to keep them cooler in warmer weather. Learn how artisans take that fleece and turn it into luxurious yarn and fabrics by spinning, felting and weaving. Discover the supreme quality of a wool fiber produced yarn!

18 LAKE COUNTY FREE DAY

### HORSEFEST

May 22 & 23

Discover the magical beauty of horses at Lake Metroparks Farmpark. HorseFest showcases many different breeds, riding disciplines and uses for these versatile animals. The event will include pony rides (\$5), children's activities and much more!

### THE SPRING SHOWDOWN **NEW!**

May 30

Lake Metroparks Farmpark will be host to "The Spring Showdown." Enjoy watching young men and women competitors ages 8 to 18 years old show their lambs and commercial ewe sheep. These shows allow youth to compete by demonstrating their showing abilities and animal husbandry skills. Equipment used to raise show lambs and ewes will be on display along with a description about its use. The show will be operated by Lake County Senior Market Livestock Organization and Lake County Farm Bureau in partnership with Lake Metroparks Farmpark.

## 6 JUNE

### RAILROADS IN THE PARKS

June 5 & 6

The Visitor Center will be filled with operating model trains. Both HO and N-Scale layouts will be on display. Other featured exhibits include G-Scale trains, Lionel O-Gauge trains and Lego trains plus displays on agriculture and the railroad. The wooden train interactive play area lets the youngest railroad enthusiasts play engineer. Children may build a wooden train for an additional \$2 fee.

6 LAKE COUNTY FREE DAY

15 LAKE COUNTY FREE DAY





Farmpark is open year-round Tuesday through Sunday, 9 am to 5 pm.  
Closed Mondays, Christmas & New Year's Day.

Regular Farmpark admission is waived for Lake County residents on  
“**FREE DAY**” (Proof of Lake County residency required). Every day is  
“Free Day” for Lake Metroparks Farmpark members.

For more information about Farmpark programs and events:  
440-256-2122 • 800-366-3276 • lakemetroparks.com

# 7 JULY

4 LAKE COUNTY FREE DAY

## FARMFEST: RIBS, BREW & MUSIC

July 10, noon to 8 pm

FREE Admission for Everyone

This family-gearred event is rapidly becoming a favorite in northeast Ohio for both the young and young at heart. Featuring Ribs, Brew and Music families can enjoy farm activities, music, and much more including pony rides (\$5). From noon to 8 pm pick up dinner or lunch from one of the rib/BBQ vendors while enjoying a glass of beer or wine provided by Debonné Vineyard and Double Wing Brewery, other food and beverages are also available at a reasonable cost. Listen and dance to family-friendly music performances.

## HONEY BBQ PAIRING DINNER **NEW!**

July 16, 5 to 9 pm

\$55 per person, pre-registration required at lakemetroparks.com or call 440-358-7275

Bees are vitally important pollinators for local farming and agriculture. Join us for this inaugural pairing dinner taking place at the newly remodeled Hilltop Area at Farmpark. The evening will feature a honey harvesting talk and tasting. Guests will tour the apiary and gardens with Farmpark horticulture staff. Enjoy appetizers like fig and goat cheese crostini with honey and honey-pretzel bite appetizers. Then enjoy a delicious honey BBQ beef brisket (salmon or vegetarian available), spinach salad with honey dressing and honey pecans, garlic mashed potatoes, honey glazed carrots, and honey pecan pie prepared by J&J catering with drink selections paired by Grand River Valley wineries and Double Wing Brewing Co.

## MILK & HONEY WEEKEND **NEW!**

July 17 & 18

Explore the world of milk and honey. Learn how milk becomes cheese, butter, or delicious ice cream and watch the production process with opportunities to sample some of the products from our dairy. Learn about bees and their role in pollination, how honey is harvested, and pollinator-friendly plants as well as how bees contribute to many products that we use in our daily lives. Demonstrations, garden tours, and sampling will continue throughout the weekend.

20 LAKE COUNTY FREE DAY

# 8 AUGUST

1 LAKE COUNTY FREE DAY

## VINTAGE OHIO WINE FESTIVAL AND A LITTLE BREW TOO!

August 6 & 7, 1 to 9 pm

A fun-filled outdoor festival! Sample Ohio wines from world-class Pinot Gris and Cabernet Franc to fun-to-drink fruit wines made of fresh strawberries, blackberries, peaches, and raspberries. There is also scrumptious food, cooking school demonstrations, three stages of live music, artisans and shopping. Plus a kids' tent and Farmpark's regular activities. Special rates and hours apply. Advanced ticket sales only at visitvintageohio.com. Farmpark members receive a discount on advance purchase tickets only. Call 440-466-4417 for more information. Brought to you by the Ohio Wine Producers Association.

17 LAKE COUNTY FREE DAY



# BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP, *Have you any wool?*

by Wendy Vacik, *Livestock Specialist*

It's that time of year again—time for Farmpark's flock of sheep to lose their woolly winter coats in anticipation of the warm and sunny days ahead. The only catch—most of our sheep can't do this alone! They require the help of their shepherd (and possibly you if you're willing) to give them their annual "haircut." That's right...it's time to shear our sheep!

Unlike their wild cousins, almost all breeds of domestic sheep require shearing once a year in order to maintain optimal health. This is because about 6,000 years ago, our ancestors started changing the quality and quantity of wool produced by the primitive sheep they managed.

The "eureka" moment that initiated this change occurred when early people discovered that the little woolly tufts shed by the wandering sheep could be twisted (spun) or rubbed (felted) together to produce a warm and renewable source of clothing! Compared to hides or skins, wool provided myriad of lighter and more versatile textile possibilities. Another important advantage of using wool over hides and skins, was that the animal producing the wool lived on to produce another harvestable crop of fiber (and offspring) the following year. Over time, sheep with better than average wool quality stayed in the flock longer, and were able to produce more offspring than sheep culled earlier for meat.

While this improved the quality of the wool produced, it was the invention of Iron Age shears that changed the still primitive sheep from animals that shed, to animals that kept the wool on their



*This black Finnsheep is just one of more than 40 sheep that will be shorn this spring at Farmpark.*



*The use of hand shears (basically unchanged in design for thousands of years) is demonstrated annually at Shearing Weekend.*

bodies as long as possible. Using shears, people could clip the wool from the sheep all at once—no more wasted time "wool gathering" the little lost tufts. Animals that shed less produced higher yields at shearing, and were very highly valued.

At Farmpark, you can see sheep that showcase this 6,000-year selection process. You'll see Katahdins (the only breed at Farmpark that can shed their wool) right next to fine wool Merinos and Cormos that retain every bit of fiber until it is shorn off for them. You'll also see breeds that fall between, like Navajo Churros that still produce a primitive "double-coated" fleece, and Shetlands, which produce a fine fleece that will partially shed, allowing the wool to be plucked or "rooed" off their bodies as it loosens.

Are you interested in becoming a "shepherd for a day" and helping us shear the flock? **At Shearing Weekend May 8 and 9, guests have the opportunity to help Farmpark staff shear the wool from our sheep.** After shearing, visitors can follow the fibers through the processes of cleaning, spinning, weaving, and felting. It's a close-up and hands on experience not to be missed! This year, some of the weekend activities may be altered somewhat due to COVID-19 requirements, so be sure to check the website for the latest updates!



*Two extremes: the Katahdin (left) is the only sheep that isn't shorn at Farmpark (they naturally shed). The Merino (right) is unable to shed. The current world record fleece, which weighs more than 90 lbs, was grown by an Australian Merino named "Chris."*



# AGRICULTURE: MORE THAN JUST THE FARMER



by Steve Ohmes, *Assistant Farmpark Administrator*

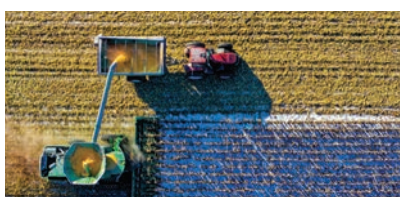
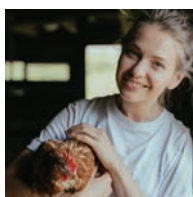
In general, many people hear the word agriculture, and farmer just comes to mind. However, the success of a farmer or rancher depends on a large network of support.

The **farmer and rancher's** main goals are keeping the soil and animals healthy, and producing a safe product for consumers to buy. To accomplish this, it takes a team effort. Here we'll take a look at a brief simplistic sample of what is required. It by no means will encompass all the jobs within agriculture to get the product to the consumer, but in the end remember that being involved in agriculture does not just require owning a farm.

First, the soil is evaluated. Ensuring soil and livestock remain healthy requires collecting samples of feed ingredients or soil sampling for analysis. Samples are collected and sent to laboratories for testing. At the laboratory, **technicians** analyze the samples through a variety of testing methods. Once the information is gathered the data is compiled into a report.

The report is then sent to the proper person. This could be the **producer**, an **agronomist**, a **horticulturalist**, **nutritionist**, or an **extension agent**. This person will interpret the data and make recommendations. A producer is a farmer or rancher. An agronomist is a person who specializes in the science of soil and crop management. The crops they specialize in are corn, soybeans, sorghum, and hay for example. A horticulturalist possesses knowledge in the cultivation and propagation of plants. The crops they specialize in are fruits, vegetables, and ornamental plants. A nutritionist specializes in the dietary needs of livestock. Extension agents are individuals, employed by land grant universities, to assist and help producers. A local example is Ohio State University Extension offices.

Recommendations are communicated to **feed/grain mills**, **fertilizer distributors** and other institutions that sell and mix the components to formulate the feed for the livestock or the application for the soils. The feed is then delivered to the producer and the application to the soil is completed by the producer or an **application technician**.



The soil is ready now what? Next, the producer will study or visit a **seed salesman** and discuss the newest developments in seed and which crops will grow best in the soil conditions and local climate. The newest seed and plant varieties are developed by plant and seed breeders. Their goal is to develop new plants that will be disease resistant and meet the requirements of soils and climates.

In addition to nutrition, we need other tools to keep livestock healthy. **Pharmaceuticals** develop vaccinations, de-worming products and parasite controls to keep livestock healthy. These companies employ **researchers, veterinarians, and salesmen**. Veterinarians also make farm and ranch calls to treat sick animals as well as assist the producer in developing a livestock management plan to ensure herd health.

If all the correct decisions are made, the producer then takes their products to market. There are a multitude of outlets: auctions, products brokered to grocery chains, processing plants, and direct sale to consumers. Jobs within this area include **auctioneers, buyers of raw commodities, grain elevator operators, farmer market organizers, brokers, and meat processing plants**.

**Consumer safety** is very important at this point as the raw commodities are being processed for consumers to buy. **Laboratories** once again are utilized to test grains and milk for quality. These products must meet the proper criteria before they can be made into products. Products can be packaged, bottled, or baked into the final product.

In the **meat processing plants, state or national inspectors** ensure all standards are being met. Individuals are required to correctly package the meat to be sent to grocery outlets.

Every step described requires **equipment**: lab equipment, tractors, combines, trucks, trailers, fencing, planters, etc. Equipment is always being improved, sold, and repaired. This requires developers, distributors, factory workers, mechanics, parts distributors, and salesman to deliver the equipment to the buyers.

By no means is this the all-encompassing list of jobs within agriculture, but more an introduction to the multitude of careers it employs. It is also critical that individuals consider careers in agriculture. As population increases and farmland diminishes daily, we are faced with the task of increasing the production of land and livestock while maintaining sustainability in an environmentally friendly manner. It is through the cooperation of all these disciplines that provides farmers and ranchers with the tools to continue to deliver safe and affordable food to consumers.



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# FARMPARK

## Gift Shop

### UNIQUE COUNTRY GIFTS

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Plus charming country gifts, unique items for the home and garden, Fowler's Mill products, specialty jams, gourmet popcorn, locally harvested honey, Farmpark's own maple syrup and much more!

*No admission charge to visit gift shop, excludes most special events.  
VISA, MasterCard and Discover accepted. Discount for Farmpark members.*



*Located inside Farmpark*

**Serving snacks and meals**

**Opens at 9 am daily, Tuesday through Sunday**

Specializing in wedding receptions, corporate functions  
and boxed lunches—call 440-256-3802

*Free admission if just visiting the café; accepts all major credit cards*

