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NEW FARMER GRANTS PROJECT LAUNCHES TODAY!
FACT's Healthy & Humane Farm Funds to Improve Farm Animal Welfare

Chicago, IL –Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) will celebrate Food Day by kicking off a competitive microgrants initiative designed to empower livestock and poultry farmers across the nation. The **Healthy & Humane Farm Funds Project** officially launches today at FACT's first annual Fund-A-Farmer Party in Chicago.

Tapping into the growing national consciousness about how animals raised for food are treated on farms, FACT will leverage consumer demand for sustainable farms to achieve lasting changes in agriculture. “With the help of American consumers and socially conscious funders, FACT can directly impact on-farm practices and support farmers across the United States who are doing the right thing for their animals,” explains Richard Wood, FACT's Executive Director.

In response to this emerging national consciousness, many prominent voices for change in the food movement have rallied around Food Day. Food Day is a nationwide campaign to promote healthy, affordable food grown in a sustainable, humane way. FACT is excited to launch its new project on Food Day and be part of the growing movement to reform the American food system one farm at a time.

Through this project, FACT will provide small grants to qualifying livestock and poultry farmers who wish to improve animal welfare on their farms. The organization will award grants of up to \$1,500 for projects designed to help farmers (1) transition to pasture-based systems, (2) improve the marketing of their humane products, or (3) more generally enrich the conditions in which the farm animals are raised.

FACT's mission dually emphasizes support for humane farmers and protection of farm animal welfare. The organization believes one of the best ways to positively impact farm animal welfare is to work directly with farmers. Years ago FACT pioneered successful projects working with farmers to create markets for humanely raised veal and eggs produced by uncaged hens.

“Farmers often want to make on-farm changes to improve the welfare of their animals, but sometimes need financial assistance to make it happen,” said Lisa Isenhardt, FACT's Humane Farming Program Manager. “That's where FACT steps in.”

FACT is now accepting applications for the first round of **Healthy & Humane Farm Funds** that will be awarded in June 2012. Applications are due by April 1, 2012 and will be reviewed anonymously by a committee composed of sustainable livestock farmers and FACT's Executive Director, Richard Wood.

To be eligible, farms must raise at least one of the following animal species: pigs, broiler chickens, laying hens, dairy cows and/or beef cattle. Proposed on-farm animal welfare improvement projects must impact at least one of these species. Grants will be made only to farmers for a project on a working, independent family farm.

Jody Osmund, owner of Cedar Valley Sustainable Farm and part of FACT's grant review committee explains, "Farmers are the caretakers of the land and the animals from which we take our sustenance. For centuries, we've relied on them for stewardship and good husbandry. FACT's Healthy & Humane Farm Funds will help farmers, already looking for a better way, take steps toward more humane production that enriches the land and makes animals, farmers, and eaters healthier."

FACT encourages interested farmers to visit www.humanefarmfunds.org and learn more about the project and determine their farm's eligibility. Founded in 1982, FACT is a national nonprofit organization based in Chicago that promotes humane and healthy farms through science-based advocacy, consumer education, and support for humane farmers. For media inquiries, contact Jacki Rossi at jrossi@foodanimalconcerns.org.

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