

# BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO FIREFLY FARMS

Last updated: 23 Feb 2017

Welcome to Firefly Farms! Below is a brief overview of the various chores and responsibilities that are part of the SAFTA residency experience. If you have any questions, feel free to ask!

## DAILY CHORES

Feed the animals in the morning (grain blends for mammals, goat treat for goat, grain for birds, grain for chicks, & cat food for Simon & River)<sup>1</sup> – check (at least twice a day in the summer) and, as needed, refill water for the animals (both herd and chicks) – open the coop to let the birds out in the morning – close the coop at night and count to check numbers<sup>2</sup> – gather eggs<sup>3</sup> – check the mail – water plants, including the fruit trees near the coop<sup>4</sup>

## TWICE-TO-THRICE-WEEKLY CHORES

Rake the coop and redistribute the shavings across the floor – check and, as needed, sweep basement areas especially near the animal feed – siphon the water out of the duck pond and refill

## WEEKLY CHORES

Bring trash to the curb<sup>5</sup> - check water bottles and trough for mildew and rinse them off/wipe them down

## OCCASIONAL CHORES

Clean chicken coop<sup>6</sup> – check the electric fence for debris, growth, or anything else that could ground it<sup>7</sup> – bake goat treats<sup>8</sup> - strip bed and remove dirty towels upon leaving – assist, if available, with work projects<sup>9</sup>

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- 1 We have recorded a series of how-to videos to illustrate some of the activities you may undertake at the farm, including the feeding process. As an aside, the birds love greens; a couple of handfuls of grass clippings or weeds with each meal is sufficient.
  - 2 The birds may be left in the coop for the day, depending on weather, availability of residents, etc. If they remain "cooped up" (ha ha), then the opening and closing chores are obviously off the list. We currently have 19 chickens and 5 ducks.
  - 3 The chickens will lay eggs mostly in the coop, but you should also check the chicken yard and duck house for misc. eggs. Also, it is helpful to check the sheep section of the barn to see if they have also laid there. You can do the latter once every few days.
  - 4 This chore may be ignored if it has rained.
  - 5 Trash pick-up is late Wednesday morning, so be sure to take the trash can (located on the back porch) up on Tuesday evening. There is no curbside recycling available, but you are welcome to take recyclables to a local center.
  - 6 The coop is usually cleaned every two to four weeks, depending on season. When it begins to smell strongly, that is the cue to clean it.
  - 7 This should always be done after a storm, but keep an eye out in general. When clearing debris, I recommend unplugging the extension cord at the back of the house, which powers the fence network on the front acreage. By the way, the shock is like a strong static shock. It's unpleasant but not dangerous. Water, though, will intensify the effect.
  - 8 The recipe is on the fridge. If baking isn't your forte, or if you have an allergy to any of the ingredients, let us know.
  - 9 We rarely require this, but sometimes it's fun to use a chainsaw or set things on fire.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Please speak with your fellow resident(s) about your writing time needs; if you prefer quiet to work in the morning/afternoon/evening, be certain to communicate this to avoid conflicts or hurt feelings.
- The farm is a shared space. Please be considerate of your fellow resident(s) in terms of noise, cleanliness, as well as understanding communal vs. private space. If someone is disrespecting this policy, try to be kind in communicating this to them. If this continues, contact the owners to mitigate the problem.
- You may rearrange the furniture in your own room, but please move it back upon leaving the residency. Do not move the furniture or art throughout the house without permission from the owners.
- Please feel free to use the resources available at the house, including (but not limited to) the library, computer, printer, letterpress, drafting table, and art/craft supplies.
- If you are the last person leaving the house, please be certain to set the security alarm located in the hallway. The code will be given to you upon arrival.
- Useful phone numbers and WiFi information are located on the dry-erase board near the kitchen.
- We have a landline in case of spotty cell-phone reception. (Sprint seems to have the worst track record in the holler.) For your convenience, all the useful phone numbers on the board are pre-programmed in. On occasion, the landline may receive a call asking for someone who doesn't – and has never – lived at the farm. If you catch one of those calls, instruct the caller to take the number off the list, as it is an artist's residency with no knowledge of that individual's whereabouts.
- The thermostat is generally preset for maximum energy efficiency. During the winter, we recommend using the fireplaces for extra heat. The basement one will generate gentle house-wide heat through the floorboards, while the living-room one will make the front rooms very toasty. If you are uncomfortable or have trouble getting a fire started, let us know.
- On occasion, we may be working on noisy projects. If this happens, we endeavor to let residents know in advance so that they may "escape," if necessary. Please let us know if we are disrupting your writing time.
- Although we instruct residents to provide their own food, we often keep some stock on hand – including a wide array of spices, as well as farm-fresh eggs from our flock. Feel free to use anything in the pantry that on the Community Use shelves.
- Finally, if you have ideas for farm improvements, tell us! We are always looking to make the farm a more awesome place to stay.