

LEWIS HERITAGE FARM



Photo credit: Lewis Family

It is impossible to care for a piece of land for generations without a vision for the future in mind. In June, the Colorado Cattlemen’s Agricultural Land Trust (CCALT) in partnership with The Trust for Public Land, conserved the Lewis Heritage Farm. The 226-acre farm and its water rights adjacent to the Little Thompson River near Berthoud, Colorado will continue operations as a working farm with added focus on educational opportunities. The ownership of the farm was conveyed to TPL in conjunction with the conservation easement. TPL has leased the farm to the Colorado FFA Foundation, which is expected to take full ownership and management of the Lewis Heritage Farm within the year.

The Lewis Family wanted to ensure this productive and beautiful operation on the Front Range was available for learning and producing food and fiber well into the future. With the use of a conservation easement and creative partnerships, the Colorado FFA Foundation will operate the site as an immersive agricultural experience for youth and the public.

“The FFA Foundation is extremely excited to be a part of this project and expand our mission to offer educational opportunities for people to learn hands-on about agriculture,” said Don Thorn, Executive Director of the Colorado FFA Foundation.



“The patience required to complete a conservation easement requires a vision for the future. The Lewis Family’s vision for the future expands well beyond the boundaries of the farm,” said Molly Fales, CCALT Staff Attorney. “Throughout this transaction, the Lewis Family and all of our partners prioritized the vision of the Lewis Heritage Farm to ensure it is used to connect local students to agriculture, serve as a training ground for the next generation of farmers, and link local communities to food production. CCALT is incredibly proud that the Lewis Family chose to partner with CCALT to make this vision for the future of the Lewis Heritage Farm a reality.”

“We look forward to working with the Colorado FFA Foundation to see this project reach its full potential.” Scott Lewis shared that “today has been a long time in the making, after starting our quest to find the right successor for our family farm in the spring of 2016. The Lewis Heritage Farm, which has been called the jewel of the Little Thompson Valley, has been in the care of just two families for nearly a century. This year marks the 50th year of crop production under our family’s guidance after Scott’s father acquired the farm from the Alvin Stumpf estate. The farm has some of the best soils and native water rights in the region including a majority interest in the most senior decree on the Little Thompson River. We had three major goals at the beginning of this process: to protect the native water rights from being severed from the land, to preserve

the farm as a working/educational farm, and to pass the ownership of the farm on to a tremendous, perpetual steward of the land and water.”

Scott Lewis continued... “We believe we found that steward in the Colorado FFA Foundation. We believe the Colorado FFA Foundation will be able to utilize this farm for hands-on education and training of educators and young farmers to keep them at the forefront of their profession. With over six years and countless hours invested in this project, we are very pleased with the outcome and look forward to following the continued evolution of the Lewis Heritage Farm in the years to come.”

CCALT received a grant for \$2.625 million from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for the conservation easement. The NRCS funds are matched with a substantial landowner donation. Trust for Public Land and the Colorado FFA Foundation received a \$1,500,000 grant from the Great Outdoors Colorado to acquire the farm and its water rights in June 2022. Funds were also matched by \$50,000 from Gates Family Foundation.

