

Farm Use Guidelines

College of the Environment and Life Sciences
University of Rhode Island

Effective April 5, 2022

Introduction

This document describes procedures for use of the University of Rhode Island farms including Agronomy Farm, East Farm, and Peckham Farm. These farms support teaching, research, extension, and public engagement activities consistent with the university's land-grant and sea-grant missions. These guidelines apply to all facility users including faculty, staff, students, and university volunteers.

Farm Managers and Contact Information

Timothy Sherman, Agronomy Farm, East Farm, and the Greenhouse

- (401) 874-2937 – office
- (401) 533-8587 – mobile
- timothy.sherman@uri.edu – email

Coleman Replogle, Peckham Farm

- (401) 874-4183 – office
- creplogle@uri.edu – email

Emergency Contacts: Please call one of these numbers for help with issues that arise after hours or on weekends.

- Emergency: (401) 874-2121 (all URI farms are designated on-campus by Public Safety)
- URI Public Safety: (401) 874-4910 (Non-emergency line)

Support Staff and Student Employees

Staffing of these farms is limited. It is the responsibility of facility users to provide staffing for their projects. Users must notify the farm manager of new project employees and introduce them to the farm manager.

Farm Manager Responsibilities

- Coordinates daily management of farm operations
- Facilitates research, teaching and outreach activities of faculty, staff, and students
- Maintains communication with facility users on projects and activities
- Provides recommendations to facility users on facility, animal, and field use
- Receives and reviews requests for facility space, animal use, and field space
- Supervises staff and students employed by the farm
- Ensures safety and environmental compliance by all users and staff and notifies supervisors of noncompliance
- General maintenance of facilities and associated equipment
- Serves as primary contact to the URI Facilities Management

Farm and Facility User Responsibilities

- Provide farm manager with advance notification of needs and future requests
- Maintain communication with the farm manager regarding project activity
- Adhere to all safety and use policies
- Ensure that all staff, student employees, and students enrolled in courses complete all required safety training before working or using farm facilities
- Supervise employees, student employees, and students using the facilities under their direction
- Adhere to all operational policies listed below
- Begin using space, fields, or animals only after approval of such request has been granted
- Notify farm manager when the project or course is complete
- Provide materials and supplies needed for research, teaching, or extension
- Manage and maintain experiments, research projects, teaching or extension resources
- Clean up all areas after each activity (classrooms, barns, handling areas, break rooms, laboratories, etc.)
- Dispose of used supplies, animal manure/hair, shavings, and other items into proper waste receptacles

Operational Policies – Farms and Facilities

Security:

Peckham Farm is open to the public for visits during regular university business hours (7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday). It is also open at other times for approved programs and activities. All users, including members of the public, must follow instructions for interacting with the animals as posted on signs at the farm.

Agronomy Farm and East Farm are open to the public for participation in approved programs or activities during regular university business hours (7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday).

All Farms: Users of all farms must consult with the farm manager about after-hours use for teaching, research, and extension activities. No hunting is allowed on university farms. The farm manager will arrange for the removal of nuisance animals on the farm by authorized individuals.

Safety

All farm and facility users must adhere to university safety policies as described on the website of the URI Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Office (see <https://web.uri.edu/ehs/>). The EHS Office manages the chemical safety, occupational safety, biosafety, industrial hygiene, hazardous waste, asbestos, radon, and indoor air quality programs. All required training and documentation must be completed before conducting any activity associated with farm facilities and lands.

Chemical Use

Chemicals may not be brought onto the farms without approval of the farm manager and submission of safety data sheets (SDS). Chemical use requires appropriate safety training. Chemical storage space is limited; approved chemicals should be purchased in the smallest quantity possible and stored in approved storage areas; see <https://web.uri.edu/ehs/chemical/> for approved chemical protocols.

Pesticides

Only licensed personnel may handle or apply pesticides. All pesticides brought onto the farms must be approved by the farm manager. Permission and SDS sheets are required before storing pesticides in pesticide-storage buildings. All containers must be clearly labeled with the owner's name. Pesticide-storage space is limited, which makes material disposal a high priority. It is the user's responsibility to remove and properly process unused pesticides for disposal. This procedure often involves a chemical pick up by URI Environmental Health and Safety. Pesticides being evaluated for industry should be returned to the company sponsoring the project.

Pharmaceuticals

All veterinary pharmaceuticals brought onto a farm must be approved by the farm manager, academic veterinarian, or practicing veterinarian. Pharmaceuticals are subject to inspection by the University of Rhode Island Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Labels must be present, and materials must not exceed the expiration date. It

is the user's responsibility to remove and properly process unused or expired pharmaceuticals at the end of each project or when the expiration date has passed.

Supplies, General Storage, and Crop Storage

Supplies

Users are responsible for providing their own materials and supplies for experiments, research projects, teaching and extension programs. Contact the farm manager when the joint purchase of common supplies by the farm and faculty may reduce costs.

General Storage

- Request for storage space must be approved by the farm manager.
- Storage for specific projects, experiments, teaching and extension programs will have priority. Student clubs and other groups will be on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Storage space is limited. Project-related storage is available for short periods only and should never extend past the end of the project. Supplies and materials should be purchased in quantities that will be used during the current project.
- Some long-term storage for unique studies may be available. Requests should be directed to the farm manager.
- Materials should be clearly labeled with the owner's name. Unlabeled items will be disposed of or relocated.
- Project materials should be stored in designated locations approved by the farm manager.
- Stored materials must not block access or egress.
- It is the user's responsibility to keep storage areas clean and tidy.

Crop Storage – Cold room/Drying room

- Users should coordinate with the farm manager to determine appropriate crop storage space, and whenever materials are put into or taken out of the cold room or other crop storage spaces.
- Crop storage space is limited and the intent to store crops must be noted on the field request form.
- Materials in the cold room, drying room or other crop storage spaces should be clearly labeled with the name of the owner and the project if possible.

Operational Policies – Animal Use

Animal Availability

Faculty members and other authorized farm users are required to discuss with the farm manager the ability of the farm to provide the animal resources needed for any future grant or course proposals as well as public events.

Animal Handling and Handling Areas

All animal handling for use in research and teaching will be coordinated with the Farm Manager. Animal-handling areas are available for use in research experiments, teaching and extension programs. Consultation with the farm manager is required prior to using these facilities to ensure that equipment is functioning correctly and safely. Users are required to clean up after each use and dispose of supplies, manure, hair, etc. in the proper manner.

IACUC

Research, teaching, and other activities must be included under an approved University of Rhode Island Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) protocol. Approved protocols should be submitted to the farm manager for filing and display at the animal handling area.

Bio-Security

Proper biosecurity practices are essential for keeping Peckham Farm’s animal populations healthy and safe from on and off-farm contamination. The farm manager will oversee the introduction of all new animals to the farm. All new animals must have the relevant permits and health certificates and be associated with an approved IACUC protocol prior to their arrival on the farm. Users should use care to keep water and feed supplies free from manure and other contaminants. Users traveling to or working on other farms should wear separate clothing and footwear or properly sanitize their clothing and footwear before returning to the farm.

Meeting Rooms, Printing/Copying Services

Meeting Rooms

Meeting rooms at the farms may be reserved for teaching, research, or extension-related purposes, with priority given to meetings led by CELS faculty or staff. Rooms may also be reserved for mission-relevant purposes by partner organizations, student groups or university volunteers. In the event of a scheduling conflict, the needs of CELS faculty and staff will take precedence, with effort made to accommodate all parties. Rooms should be requested using the Room and Van Reservation System found on the CELS website (see <https://web.uri.edu/cal/>). Farm Managers will be consulted, as necessary, before room reservations are finalized.

Printing/Copying

Printers and copiers are for authorized farm users only.

Maintenance Shops and Laboratories

Maintenance Shops

Generally, only authorized farm users are permitted to use maintenance shops. Specialized training is required when working in these areas. All equipment fabrication and repair must be approved by the farm manager and work must be performed by trained staff personnel.

Laboratories

Use of laboratories not managed by specific academic departments must be approved by the farm manager. Space should be requested prior to any activity.

Operational Policies – Equipment and Vehicles

Motorized Equipment and Vehicles

Motorized Equipment

Generally, motorized equipment (tractors, utility vehicles and lawnmowers) is for authorized farm users only. Exceptions can be made with authorization of the farm manager. Specialized tractor safety and driving safety documentation must be maintained to use this equipment. Any equipment brought onto a farm must be approved by the farm manager.

Vehicles

Vehicles owned and maintained by farm staff are for authorized farm users only. Use must be coordinated with the farm manager.

Power Tools and Hand Tools

Power Tools

Generally, power tools (grinders, drills, chainsaws, string trimmers, tillers, skill saws, etc.) are available to authorized farm users, in coordination with the farm manager. Exceptions can be made with authorization of the farm manager. Specialized training and personal protective equipment are required to use this equipment. Any power tool brought onto a farm must be approved by the farm manager.

Hand Tools

Some tools are available for general use such as rakes, shovels, hoes, manure forks, and wagons. These should be kept in good condition, cleaned, and returned immediately after use. Tools should not be removed from the farm.

Project-owned and Donated Equipment

Project-owned Equipment

Users are responsible for all costs (parts, maintenance, transportation, and labor) associated with project equipment purchased or acquired and brought onto the farms. Storage of equipment must be approved by the farm manager. Special circumstances where equipment is shared between users and the farm should be discussed with the farm manager before the equipment arrives at the farm.

Donated Equipment

Approval must be received from the farm manager in consultation with the Dean's office before accepting donated equipment for the farm or facility. Costs of future maintenance and use will be considered. The user who facilitates the donation is responsible for submission of required university forms (see [donated equipment](#)) to accept donations.

Operational Policies – Field Operations

Crop Amendments and Protectants

Manure/Compost

Manure supply for use at the farms is limited. Users should notify the farm manager if manure will be needed for research projects. Purchased manure may be stored outdoors for a limited time after consultation with the farm manager. Compost purchases will be the responsibility of the user. Users should consult with the farm manager if bulk orders are to be stored on-farm.

Fertilizer

Fertilizer purchases for specific research projects will be the responsibility of the user. Farm staff will spread fertilizer at the field, not treatment, level. Fertilizer is usually applied through special and/or conventional planters at the farm.

Lime

Lime purchase and application at the field level will be the responsibility of farm staff. If lime is needed for multiple projects, users should communicate with each other and with the farm manager to minimize transportation costs and take advantage of any bulk-order discounts.

Pesticides

Pesticide purchases for specific research projects will be the responsibility of the user. Only licensed personnel are authorized to make pesticide applications. Farm staff are available to make pesticide applications using tractor-mounted spraying equipment. Hand-spraying applications will be the responsibility of the licensed user or their licensed designee.

Field Preparation

Tillage

Farm staff will be responsible for field tillage operations. Users should consult with the

farm manager to ensure the desired tillage tools are available. Properly trained users may also perform tillage operations with permission of the farm manager and/or farm staff.

Mulching

Mulch purchases and hand application for specific research projects will be the responsibility of the user. A stacking site for bulk mulch orders may be available upon consultation with the farm manager.

Cultivation

Farm users are responsible for field cultivation needed to carry out approved activities. If use of large equipment is necessary to perform this function, users must consult with the farm manager to coordinate this service.

Mowing

Mowing for research projects will be the responsibility of authorized farm users. Users should consult with farm managers if large equipment is necessary to perform this function.

Crop Production

Planting

Farm staff will be responsible for planting operations. Properly trained users may also perform planting operations with permission from the farm manager. Multiple planters are available including a grain drill, Brillion seeder, four-row vegetable planter, two-row no-till seeder, two-row transplanter, broadcast spreader, and various hand planters. Users should consult with the farm manager to ensure desired planting equipment is available.

Irrigation

Irrigation hydrants are located at multiple sites on the farms. Irrigation systems are limited, and users should consult with the farm manager to ensure desired equipment is available.

Harvesting

Mechanical harvesting operations will be the responsibility of farm staff. Hand-harvesting operations are the responsibility of the user.

Transportation

Transportation of crops from field to storage is the responsibility of authorized farm users.

Storage

Crop storage is limited. Temporary storage may be available. Users should consult with farm staff in advance of crop storage.

Data Collection and Sampling

Data collection and sampling of research, teaching and extension plots is the responsibility of the user.

Operational Policies – Events

Public Events

University farms may, based on availability, be used to host teaching, research, or extension-related events, with priority given to events hosted by CELS faculty or staff. The farms may also be available for mission-relevant events hosted by partner organizations, student groups or university volunteers. In the event of a scheduling conflict, the needs of CELS faculty and staff will take precedence, with efforts made to accommodate all parties.

An event request form must be submitted no fewer than five business days before the date of the event or earlier if needed to provide sufficient time for review and planning. The Farm Manager and the CELS Dean's Office reserve the right to deny an event request that falls outside mission-relevant purposes or for which the request form is submitted with insufficient time for review and planning.

Student groups wishing to hold events at a farm must have a CELS faculty advisor. The faculty advisor will act as a liaison between the student group and the farm manager and will be responsible for coordinating the event with the farm manager and completing the required forms.

All events not approved by the Dean's Office or the Farm Manager are prohibited. Individuals hosting and attending an unapproved event may be asked to leave the premises.

Request Forms

Crop Services Request Form: must be submitted at least three weeks prior to the desired start of the research, teaching or extension activity or earlier if needed to provide sufficient time for review and planning

Animal Use Request Form: must be submitted at least three weeks prior to the desired start of the research, teaching or extension activity or earlier if needed to provide sufficient time for review and planning

Event Request Form: must be submitted at least five days prior to the date of the event, or earlier if needed to provide sufficient time for review and planning