



## Monadnock Localvores

### Jeffrey P. Smith Farm Scholarship Program

#### **Background:**

The Jeffrey P. Smith Farm Scholarship endeavors to connect young people with agriculture and the natural world around them. We hope to inspire the next generation of local farmers and local food supporters by giving regional children an opportunity through summer camp to experience sustainable farming practices first-hand and watch their efforts bear fruit.

During his lifetime, Jeff Smith, a former member of the Mondadnock Localvore Steering Committee, was an enthusiastic supporter of sustainability and local agriculture. He firmly believed in the connection of all living things, and stressed the importance of working in harmony with the systems of the universe. Seeing himself as a “steward” instead of an “owner” of the land, he felt the earth was entrusted to us for safe keeping during our lifetimes, so that it could be passed along intact to generations yet to be born. With an eager and vibrant sense of life, his every activity was geared towards improving the lives of others and the environment through giving freely of his time and efforts. To keep alive that vision, the Jeffrey P. Smith Farm Scholarship Program was initiated in August 2009. The program’s purpose is to send children to an area farm camp to discover the inherent rewards that come from cultivating with one’s hands and heart.

#### **Case Statement:**

Children have a natural inquisitiveness and curiosity about the world around them; yet so many young people miss out on the wonders of life because they do not stray far from the computer or TV screen. Bringing them into contact with the real world outside, opens up a whole new and exciting realm for them to explore and engage in. At farm camp they will be encouraged to plant, observe, nurture, problem solve, value, and celebrate where their food comes from. Putting these skills into action is rewarding, empowering, and satisfying. It builds patience, flexibility, decision making, knowledge, co-operation, confidence, and self-esteem. It also restores connection --- connection to the earth and the rhythm of natural systems, and connection to community...the world of relationships where we all grow together. Just as a tiny seed produces abundantly, they will see that their small efforts can make a huge difference, and that they are a part of a much larger whole.

*“There are but two lasting bequests we can give our children.  
One is roots, the other, wings.”*

Anonymous