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The Fierce Green Fire

A Newsletter of the Wofford College Environmental Studies Program



Volume 10, Issue 9

A field trip to Happy Cow Creamery has become a favorite for ENVS 101 students as they learn about local sustainability practices.



Happy Cow Creamery by Perrin Dargan '22

In Dr. Brewitt's ENVS 101 lab, we visited one of the most sustainable places he has visited: Happy Cow Creamery. As soon as we pulled up I saw an open field and cows lounging in the shade out in the open. We later learned that this is what the workers call the maternity ward – the cows were pregnant. These soon-to-be moms get to eat grass and relax till it is time for them to have their babies.

Farmer Tom Trantham, who owns Happy Cow Creamery, rotates his cows through many different fields, where they eat the tops of grass because it increases milk production. Years ago, he was going bankrupt when he learned that when he allowed the cows to graze their milk production went up a substantial amount. This led to him creating his rotational "Twelve Aprils" system. From doing this his milk production went up, increasing income, and he doesn't have to pay for maintenance of the fields, saving money. In every area there is water for the cows and trees for shade.

The cows choose when to be milked by walking up and waiting to enter the milking shed. According to Trantham, the system almost runs itself. One of my main concerns was whether the milking machine is painful for the cows. Far from it! Cows were fighting to be milked next. Our guide explained that it is a relief for them because the machine imitates the feeling of the calf drinking.

Overall, the cows looked like they genuinely enjoyed their lives which is not common in this type of industry. When someone called for them they immediately jogged over and every single one of them has a name. Happy Cow Creamery is one of the last environmentally and animal friendly milk companies in our region, or beyond. Their products are not contaminated or overly processed, like many of the products we consume every day from the grocery store, and Happy Cow builds up a healthy landscape and economy in the Upstate. That is why we should support our local businesses.

Dr. Ferguson was recently featured for his multidisciplinary research team's finding of high levels of platinum in the midlands of South Carolina, which supports the growing body of evidence that an extraterrestrial impact event occurred nearly 13,000 years ago. The group's findings have been published in Nature Scientific Reports. [Read the write-up in the Wofford Newsroom.](#)



Upcoming Events and Opportunities

**These count toward your two required extracurricular events for the semester.*

November 14th
5:00-6:00pm
Olin 101

Environmental Humanities and Degrowth in the Age of Extinction – Insights from Post-2008 Spain*: Dr. Iñaki Prádanos García, Associate Professor of Contemporary Spanish Culture at Miami University, brings together environmental cultural studies and postgrowth economics to examine cultural shifts happening in Spain in the wake of the global financial crisis of 2008. Dr. Prádanos will discuss the implications for Spain of the globalization of an economic culture addicted to growth and cultural sensibilities that are challenging the growth paradigm in the Iberian Peninsula.

December 9th
Application Deadline

Job Opportunity with Clemson Extension: Seeking applicants for an extension agent for their Florence County Extension Office. This person will join the Water Resource Extension team and coordinate the Carolina Clear program in Florence and Darlington Counties. [Job details and application.](#)

Ongoing

Job Opportunities in Conservation and Restoration: [The Great Basin Institute](#) is a nonprofit organization that specializes in conservation and restoration all throughout the West. They are currently hiring for over 60 paid positions ranging from ecological monitoring, wildlife monitoring, trail maintenance, range land management, and fuels reduction.

PROFILE OF THE WEEK:

Columbia University – MA in Climate and Society

An intensive twelve-month MA program in Climate and Society is offered through the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Columbia University and integrates programs in earth sciences, earth engineering, international relations, political science, sociology, and economics.

This MA program, one of seven full-time master's programs offered by Columbia's [Earth Institute](#), is a focused set of courses designed to train students on the impact of climate variability and how it affects society and the environment.

Admission to this highly specialized program is extremely competitive accepting only 35 to 40 applicants each year.

Their website boasts, "Our graduates are prepared to address environmental issues from positions in government, business, and nongovernmental organizations and some continue their academic careers in the social or natural sciences."

[MA Program in Climate and Society – Columbia University](#)