



Education · Preservation  
Stewardship  
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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### ***National Association Names Flanders Teacher “Educator-Farmer of the Year”***

**WOODBURY** – Dianne Parmelee, education coordinator and farm manager at Flanders Nature Center & Land Trust in Woodbury, was recently named “Educator-Farmer of the Year” by the Farm-Based Education Association (FBEA) at their annual conference.

The honor is awarded to a farm educator “who has made a significant contribution to the success of their farm program and who shines in the eyes of his or her colleagues, students, and the farm community.”

Parmelee founded the Farm Program at Flanders in 1998. It is based at the North Barn of the Van Vleck Farm Sanctuary in Woodbury, which serves as Flanders’ main campus. “Flanders offers children the chance to experience farm life and connect to the land,” says Parmelee. Among the farm-related programs Flanders offers are weeklong programs during the summer and children’s birthday parties. She also coordinates Flanders Community Garden, which makes plots available to individuals and groups who want to grow their own vegetables, herbs, or flowers. Community Garden participants range from families with young children to seniors. “With the current prices of gas and food, learning to grow our own food is a step in the right direction to reduce the ‘food miles’ involved in what we eat” says Parmelee.

Parmelee’s dynamic approach to teaching young people

about farming and the natural world relies on a wide range of hands-on activities, including storytelling, arts, and crafts. Her background includes 15 years working on a local family farm.

Flanders Nature Center & Land Trust is a nonprofit organization that focuses on environmental education, and on the acquisition, conservation, and stewardship of open space. Through its land trust initiatives, Flanders actively works to protect important natural sites and the area's landscape character and quality of life. Through its land trust, Flanders manages over 1900 acres of preserved land in Woodbury and neighboring towns. Educational programs for children and adults are offered at the Van Vleck Farm Sanctuary, Flanders' main campus in Woodbury. Trails at its major nature preserves are open to the public at no charge from dawn to dusk.

For more information on Flanders programs, including Summer Series offerings, call 203-263-3711. Flanders Welcome Center is located at the corner of Church Hill and Flanders Roads in Woodbury.

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