

Unique Business Opportunity

April, 2021



The Farm Store and Creamery at Hilltop Farm

Suffield, CT

Overview

Hilltop Farm, a well-known historical site in Suffield, CT, is offering a business opportunity for an entrepreneur looking to open an ice cream business and an agricultural retail outlet. The Friends of the Farm at Hilltop, Inc (FOFAH) is the owner of this landmark property and is credited with saving the Barn and Farm for the community. Since 2002, FOFAH has been offering programs and events that are well attended.

The retail space, of the Farm Store and Creamery, approximately 1800 square feet, has been constructed recently, meeting all current Building and Health code regulations. The space has been fitted with ice cream and gelato making equipment.

Currently, in addition to owning 8+ acres and a variety of buildings, FOFAH manages approximately 90 adjacent acres of recreation and farming property. Many people walk the trails daily and birdwatchers are in regular attendance along the bridge over the wetlands.

Business Opportunity

After nearly 20 years of tireless work to restore the farm and realize a dream of being a site for the education of children and adults on a variety of farming and environment topics and a place for new business to begin, the Board of Directors at Hilltop Farm is taking the next step forward. The Farm Store and Creamery are to join in a partnership with the right person or persons. We are looking for a creative and energetic partner to take over this business as their own. It is your business! You would run it and pay FOFAH rent for the space and equipment.

Why do we believe this project will be HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL?

Hilltop Farm is one of the anchors of Suffield, CT. There is a constant flow of people who come to the farm daily. People come to the farm to walk, bird watch, take pictures, and attend one of the many programs we offer annually.

The Farm has been on its present location for over one hundred years and has ties to many people in Suffield and surrounding towns. It is located on CT Rte. 159, a highly traveled and visible location. The Farm is less than 2 miles from Six Flags amusement park, which translates to being a heavy traffic area.

Next steps:

- 1)FOFAH expects The Farm Store and Creamery to begin retail sales in the summer of 2021.
- 2) The Hilltop Farm Store will be the preferred ice cream vendor for any events held at Hilltop Farm and sponsored by FOFAH. Annually there are numerous events held on the farm including Farm Fest Day for families – Labor Day weekend, October Fest celebration, Musical events, Monster Tag Sale and educational programs throughout the year.
- 3)Business plans will be reviewed by the Executive Committee of the FOFAH Board of Directors. Please submit all written proposals to the Executive Committee, FOFAH, Inc. PO Box 372, Suffield, CT 06078 by Friday, May 28, 2021.

FOFAH requests that the submitted business plan include
 - Examples of work projects that the applicant has accomplished. Please include an explanation of the complexity and time management strategies utilized to complete these projects,
 - Examples of projects and success with key outcome indicators,
 - Contact information for business references: names, titles, contact with mailing and email addresses,
- 4) If you have any questions, if you would like more specific information and/or you would like to request a tour of Hilltop Farm and the proposed Farm Store and Creamery please call: Howard Orr 860-758-0668 or email at president@hilltopfarmsuffield.org.

We are excited about the next step in the restoration and revival of Hilltop Farm. We are hoping you will join us on the exciting journey and be the next business opportunity to thrive at the farm.

If you are interested in pursuing this business opportunity, please develop and submit a “Business Plan” and schedule a meeting with Howard Orr – President of FOFAH at president@hilltopfarmsuffield.org

Additional information about Hilltop Farm and The Friends of The Farm at Hilltop, Inc. can be found on our website: hilltopfarmsuffield.org

Appendix A - Anticipated Questions and Proposed Answers

Q1 – Who owns the business: “Dancing Cow Farm Store and Creamery at Hilltop”?

Answer: The business owner, owns the business and any of the equipment he/she brings to the building/business. The name “Dancing Cow Farm Store and Creamery at Hilltop” is owned by FOFAH and can be used by the lessee at no cost. It is expected that FOFAH and the business owner will collaborate on what will be sold at both the Farm Store and Creamery. All products sold should be consistent with the mission of Hilltop Farm and the approval of FOFAH.

Q2 – Who owns the building that the business is located in?

Answer: FOFAH (The Friends of the Farm at Hilltop, Inc.)

Q3 – What is the financial responsibility of the business owner?

Answer: Paying the monthly rent of the space and equipment as stated in the lease agreement.

Q4 – How will the rents and expenses be determined?

Answer: The monthly rents will be determined using the following factors:

- 1.) Square footage of the barn space used for the Farm Store and Creamery.
- 2.) The value of the equipment provided by FOFAH for the Farm Store and Creamery.
- 3.) Reimbursement of the cost of the metered utilities being paid by FOFAH for the running of the Farm Store and Creamery.

Q5 – What is the responsibility of FOFAH to the business owner?

Answer: Mowing the lawn around the business. Doing external building and roof repair as needed. Snow plowing, as required.

Q6 – What is the responsibility of the business owner to FOFAH?

Answer: Trash removal, care of the building and area around the business, cleaning of tables and outdoor seating used by the business.

Q7 – Who is responsible for insuring the business?

Answer: FOFAH is responsible for insuring the building and any of the equipment that they provided to the building. The business owner is responsible for providing insurance for the equipment and supplies that they bring into the retail sites. In addition, the business owner will maintain their own Workmen's Compensation and Liability insurance and provide a certificate of insurance to FOFAH annually showing that coverage.

Q8 – Who is responsible for running the business?

Answer: Business owner is responsible for hiring, training, scheduling and monitoring all staff to run the business.

Q9 – What hours and months will the business be open annually?

Answer: This will be negotiated and finalized at the time the contract with the owner is signed. It is anticipated that the Creamery will run for 9 to 12 months per year. Timeframes will be determined by FOFAH and the business owner.

Q10 – Will there be a contract between FOFAH and the business owner?

Answer: Yes, a contract / Lease Agreement will be written and signed between both parties on an annual basis or as each term expires.

Q11 - Where is dumpster placed?

According to North Central Connecticut Public Health Department, the dumpster needs to be a certain distance from food preparation and exact site to be determined.

Q 12 - Will tenant be able to have permanent storage space for food/ ingredients/ personal belongings?

Answer: Yes, there have been storage areas for ingredients that has been approved by the North Central Connecticut Heath District.

Q 13 - Will there be assigned parking for employees? Where?

Answer: Employee Parking will be in a designated area in the rear of the store.

Q 14 - Will the store be secure? Can Board members go in when the store is closed?

Answer: The 1800 +/- square foot retail space, that the lessee rents, will be locked and secured by the lessee. No one will be able enter the leased retail space that is not permitted by the lessee or as indicated in the lease agreement.

Q 15 - Where will the customers park?

Answer: There will be a designated customer parking area in the front of the barn, facing the street.

Q 16 - Will there be an area that customers can sit after purchasing products?

Answer: Yes, the customers will be able to use the deck area facing the street and also available picnic tables placed in positions to offer enjoyable scenery.

Q 17- Will there be any sales restrictions of ice cream and retail products when there are events or weddings in the barn?

Answer: When FOFAH schedules events, the lessor will be aware of all FOFAH's scheduling. The lessor will receive a calendar of FOFAH's public events scheduled at the Farm. Most events within the Barn will be private events and therefore not open to the public. However, there may be restrictions on the use of certain areas of the outside space during private events.

Q18 - Will FOFAH help with any of the marketing of the Hilltop Store? How?

Answer: FOFAH will place a sign on Route 159 near the entrance to the Farm Store. In addition, FOFAH will include a reference to the lessee's business in its marketing in e-newsletters (6-8 times/year). FOFAH will include the lessee's retail schedule and news in press releases to the Suffield Observer. FOFAH's website will include a section about the lessee's business.

Q19 – Is the bathroom in the creamery a public bathroom?

Answer: No. It is for employee use.

