



Newsletter Spring 2026

President's Message

Spring is finally raising her sleepy head and it is wonderful to have the sun shining through my window as I write. The bright blue sky is reminiscent of the Kenyan sunshine we experienced this past January and February, as I was fortunate enough to be part of the volunteer contingent visiting our partners in Meru County to further the life changing work of Farmers Helping Farmers in Kenya. This was the largest group of volunteers we have ever sent to Kenya, and an incredible amount of work was undertaken by this talented, eager and dedicated group to improve the lives of small scale Kenyan farmers, women and girls in particular, and thousands of school children. If you have not already, I hope you will take a moment to read the many blogs submitted by volunteers about their work which are featured on our website <https://farmershelpingfarmerspei.blogspot.com/2026/> Of course, you will learn more about all of our endeavors as you read on in this latest edition of our newsletter. Your interest in, and support of, Farmers Helping Farmers efforts at home and in Kenya are greatly appreciated.



Gender Responsive One Health (GROH) Project

We have entered into the 3rd year of our 4 year Gender Responsive One Health (GROH) Project in partnership with Alinea International. At this stage, work plans are well established and we are making great strides in some new project areas such as small ruminant (sheep and goats) health, paravet training and teaching adolescent health topics. We are pleased to introduce Nan Court as the project manager for the GROH project over these next two years. Nan brings a great deal of experience in project management to the role and was able to join the volunteer delegation in Kenya this past winter. Welcome Nan!

School Feeding Program

Farmers Helping Farmers continues to contribute to the feeding of 6000 school children every day through the provision of screened school gardens, gardeners and cookhouses. Upgrades to school cookhouses have been undertaken to improve both handwashing and dishwashing and include stainless steel dishes and sinks and handwashing stations, as well as proper drying racks for the children's plates and cups. This year, volunteers have engaged with schools to teach important food safety lessons around proper dish washing techniques- see Chef Emily Wells' blog for more details on her work in this area.

2025 Holiday Campaign

Our 2025 Holiday Campaign was again very successful and we thank our generous and dedicated supporters for making this happen again this year. 100% of the funds from this campaign go directly to Kenya in the project category the donor specifies. When no category is chosen, Farmers Helping Farmers staff and project committee members find the greatest areas of need not covered by designated categories. This money always goes directly to work with our Kenyan partners, an assurance Farmers Helping Farmers has always been very proud to give our donors.

Looking Ahead

While two years of our current project remain, Farmers Helping Farmers is already looking ahead at ways to continue our meaningful work in Meru. The board of directors and volunteer members of our active and engaged committees provide a strong network of individuals dedicated to seeing the impactful work of Farmers Helping Farmers continue far into the future. If you have interest in joining any of our committees, we can always use new ideas, fresh perspectives and unique knowledge and would love to hear from you. Our Annual General Meeting will take place in July and we welcome all members and supporters to join us to hear about the ongoing work of our organization. The annual steak barbeque will be back again this year, so please mark your calendars for August 8th! We hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter and thank you again for being a valued Farmers Helping Farmers partner.

Warm regards,

Dr. Jill Wood

President, Farmers Helping Farmers

LEARN MORE ABOUT JILL'S WORK IN KENYA [HERE](#)

New Scholarship Recipients by Carolyn Francis

In February 2026, twelve additional students were selected for scholarships based on need (poverty and inability to pay school fees) and good academic performance . The additional scholarships this year were possible due to the generosity of donors to FHF for this initiative. The students were from Kiirua Day Secondary and Mochigome

Secondary schools. Emily Wells and I interviewed each of the twelve recipients. In every case, the student indicated that there was sometimes or often a shortage of food at home. Following is a group photo from each school. We interviewed one school girl to get to know her better and get a better understanding of her situation, which in many ways represents the situation of each of them.



The student interviewed is in Form 2 (grade 10) and her favourite subject is Mathematics. She leaves home to walk to school at 5:40a.m. and arrives about 7:20a.m. to study before classes begin at 8:30a.m. School continues until her departure at 5:30p.m. to walk home. At school, she is a prefect and is responsible for keeping students quiet in class and taking

assignments to the teachers. She speaks Kiswahili, Ki-Meru and English. Her favourite food is githeri and she loves to dance and play volleyball. She has six siblings; three brothers and three sisters. Two have finished school but the others are still in school.

She lives with her mother in a rental unit as their house burnt down. They are not able to have a garden or any animals. Sometimes there is a shortage of food at home. Water is provided as part of their rental.

After school, she assists her mother cleaning the house and dishwashing. She also works on a farm on the weekend. She has no free time as she is always working to help the family. Her future goal is to be a surgeon. Her biggest dream is to help others and teach children. She teaches Sunday School now. She would like to visit Canada and the USA. When asked for three awesome qualities she has, she said she likes to help others, gets good grades and is a good role model. Her family would be happy if we were to visit her home. She was accepted to go to a national school but was unable to pay the required school fees

Scholarships represent an invaluable opportunity to continue schooling. Thank you to those who generously invest in these students, which represent the future of Kenya.



Holiday Campaign funds buys water tanks for Nkatha Mwicwiri Self Help Womens Group members

By Teresa Mellish

“No water during this dry season” was the first problem Catherine Mwonjiru told us about when Salome Ntinyari and I met with her and the 40 members of the Nkatha Mwicwiri Self-Help Womens Group. We visited her group in late January, 2026, in Mumui, when we were investigating if Farmers Helping Farmers wanted to work with her group.

Everything was brown; nothing was growing. They had earlier planted crops but they withered and died because there was no rain. This meant no food was being produced on their small farms.

There are 40 members in the group. Each of the women has a farm ranging in size from 0.25 acres to 3.5 acres. They grow maize, beans, black beans, pigeon peas, green grams, cow peas and sorghum plus cotton. Fourteen of the women have a cow which gives enough milk for the family; 20 have chickens; 14 have goats, five have sheep; and 14 have donkeys; of which two are used to fetch water for other families at a price.

They make a living from their farms when there is enough rain to grow a crop. Otherwise, they work at casual jobs including breaking rocks, doing day work on commercial farms, and working in a nearby town washing clothes. Two women who had donkeys fetched water for other people.

When I asked how we might help, they asked for water tanks to harvest and store water. And this is my report on installing one 5000 litre water tank at each members' home to harvest and store rain water. As I write this report, the water tanks have been purchased from the funds donated through the 2025 Holiday Campaign and delivered to each home. The houses are being measured for gutters. The cement bases for the water tanks will be built very soon.



Since we have been there, it has started to rain as you can see in the accompanying photos. So as soon as the tanks, base and gutters are installed, hopefully, they will be able to harvest water and store it in the tanks.



Contrast this with two other womens groups in the same area where we had installed water tanks at womens' homes during the past year from funds donated during the 2024 Holiday Campaign. The members at the Kangai Kanyanga Womens Group and the members of the Wendo Njureta Womens Group showed us their tanks which held rain water. When Kangai Kanyanga Womens Group member Helen got up in the morning, she did not have to go and fetch

water. She told us what a difference it made to have clean water at her home to cook meals for their families. She showed us her grow bag where she grows vegetables using water from her tank. To show her appreciation, Helen gave me one of her chickens. I expressed my gratitude and she allowed me to re-gift the chicken to her granddaughter.

Farmers Helping Farmers has installed well over a thousand water tanks over the years. Every time there is a good rain, these tanks harvest 5,000,000 litres of water! And Margaret, the Chairperson of the Muchui Womens Group, where we first supported water tanks in 2002, reminded me that “there is not a day goes by without me using my water tank. “

Visiting these women is the best day I can spend in Kenya!



LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS VISIT [HERE](#)

Honoring Our Volunteers: A Spotlight on Emily Wells

Farmers Helping Farmers is an incredible organization, and its backbone is undoubtedly its amazing volunteers. These dedicated individuals devote countless hours, years of professional expertise, and an enormous amount of passion to bettering the lives of women and children in Meru, Kenya.

As we look toward the future, our goal is to ensure our volunteers receive the recognition they deserve. Through our newsletters, social media platforms, and personal outreach, we want to share their stories and offer a glimpse into just how much we value their contributions.



We are proud to feature Emily Wells, owner of The Mill Restaurant in New Glasgow, as our first volunteer spotlight. Emily’s commitment to our mission has spanned two decades, and she recently shared her reflections on this long-standing partnership.

In Her Own Words: Emily Wells

"I first started fundraising for Farmers Helping Farmers in 2006, beginning with our Thanksgiving weekend lunches

at The Dunes Café. A friend had told me about the organization, which appealed to me on a number of levels: I loved the simplicity of the name and that it was a local initiative.

Members of the FHF Board and volunteers gathered food donations from local farms and market gardens, and then helped peel vegetables, serve tables, and wash dishes. As we worked in the kitchen and served food to customers, that sense of community continued as we worked towards a common goal. The second year, Jennifer Murogocho—a farmer, local member of the Meru County Assembly, and longtime associate of FHF—and her two friends joined us from Meru, Kenya, helping with the fundraising lunches during their visit to PEI.

And now, 20 years later, many meals have been served on Thanksgiving weekends. We now offer dinner instead of lunch, and while the prices have adjusted over time, every dollar raised goes to the same worthwhile cause.

Three years ago, I started visiting Meru, joining local staff on their field work and finally seeing where our money goes. Our Thanksgiving funds assist the 23 schools we work with in Meru, contributing to the school meal program, cookstoves, school gardens, teacher workshops and sanitation equipment. It is a grassroots not-for-profit that almost certainly has some of the lowest administrative costs of any organization.

Our focus is in one region and employs a dozen local Kenyan staff. I've seen the immediate impact and experienced the appreciation from teachers, students, parents, and farmers. There is profound satisfaction in seeing the support from so many pockets of our Island community going to support people at every level of the Meru farm community. This relationship is at the heart of what Farmers Helping Farmers means to me: the immeasurable value of local community-minded activism."



We are deeply grateful to Emily for her tireless support and for setting such a high standard for community involvement. Thank you, Emily, for twenty years of helping us grow a better future!

LEARN MORE ABOUT EMILY'S WORK IN KENYA [HERE](#)

Workshop Overview: ACTIVELY ENGAGING ALL STUDENTS IN THEIR LEARNING

February/March 2026

Carolyn Francis lead education workshops for the teachers of Farmers Helping Farmers twinned schools. Here is a summary of the events.

Dual Objectives for the workshops:

- A) To learn and practice teaching strategies that will enhance student engagement in their learning and
- B) To use knowledge of zoonotic diseases, food safety and sanitation and rodent control as the content for the practice of the strategies. This portion addresses specific goals of the Gender Responsive One Health project.

Format of workshops:

Four two-day workshops were offered to the 23 schools which have cookhouses and continue to have support from Farmers Helping Farmers. Each workshop had 23 participants, one from each of the 23 schools, resulting in four teachers from each school having this opportunity for learning. A total of 92 teachers were participants.

The workshops were held at TOSHA House Conference Hall in Kiirua on the following dates: February 11th and 12th, 16th and 17th, 19th and March 2nd, and February 23rd and 24th. The workshop originally scheduled for February 20th was rescheduled to March 2nd due to the sudden death of Julius, Jennifer Morogocho's brother.

Registration and copying of the manuals was completed prior to arrival due to the competent work of Caroline Gitonga in the FHF Kenya office.



OVERVIEW AND SCHEDULE FOR EACH DAY

Day 1 of the workshop focused on practice and discussion of the following teaching strategies:

- a) Think-Pair-Share
- b) KWL (Know-Want to Know-Learned)
- c) Placement activity
- d) Questioning Strategies
- e) Use of Proximity to keep learners attentive
- f) Jigsaw (Cooperative Learning Strategy)
- g) Mind Map (Graphic Organizer)
- h) Use of Exit Slips
- i) Carousel strategy to gather input
- j) Presentations
- k) Role playing and case studies

Each of these strategies and additional ones were described in the manual that was given to each participant at the end of Day 2.



Day 2 - While the area of zoonotic diseases was used as content for the strategies learned in Day 1, Day 2 of the workshop focused directly on the topics of zoonotic diseases, handwashing and dishwashing at schools, and control of rodents.

Leah Kariuki, FHF Kenya staff and a dairy specialist, followed up on the previous day's zoonotic disease introduction with an introduction to the GROH project and an **excellent** presentation on Anthrax, Rabies, Brucellosis, and Rift Valley Fever. The teachers asked many questions and gained additional knowledge about both transmission and prevention of zoonotic diseases.

James Mureithi, FHF Kenya staff and nutrition specialist, led discussion on the following areas:

- Handwashing stations – do schools have them in the right locations? Is there soap? Are hands being washed consistently by students and teachers; after using the toilet and before eating? A few schools purchase the ingredients and make the soap. How is it dispensed?
- Dishrack use and utensil hygiene – proper use of the drying rack is important so that dishes dry as intended. Do schools all have enough space on the rack for the number of students?
- Metal plates, cups and spoons – are they being tracked to ensure that they are not disappearing? Are some still being kept in desks?
- Management of metal cups, plates and spoons – concern expressed that the metal dishes and utensils are going missing- how can that be remedied? In some cases, dishes are being stored in the students' desks.
- Cookhouse & storeroom – discussion on the care and maintenance of these areas.
- Pesticide cabinets – must be secured away from students and correct dosages used. Are all schools waiting the required number of days after the use of pesticide before food can be harvested?
- Four tub dishwashing method- 1) clean off leftover food, 2) wash in soapy water 3) rinse and 4) sanitize. This is being successfully done in a couple schools. There needs to be a plan at each school that is workable for the number of pupils and perhaps older students could be assigned some responsibility in seeing that the process is manageable. Individual baskets for each class might be considered. How can this be carried out in schools where there is no running water?

Douglas Gikundi, FHF Kenya staff addressed the topic of rodent control as an emerging concern in school cookhouses and stores. The Carousel strategy was used each day to get input from every teacher.

Long-term Nutrition Teaching Impact by Katie MacNeill



I had the amazing opportunity to return to Kenya this past January with Farmers Helping Farmers for the third time as a nutrition volunteer. During my trip this year, I was working in schools helping deliver nutrition clubs and with many women's groups. Many of these individuals I have worked with previously in Kenya. My favourite part about returning to Kenya with the organization each time is seeing the ongoing progress. I love hearing the stories about how the resources and

education offered by the organization continue to have such an ongoing impact.

In many of the schools, you can see the reach that the nutrition education now has. Many kids express their excitement about being able to go home and share their new knowledge and skills with their families. School children who are not old enough to be in the nutrition club yet explain how they look forward to that opportunity in the future, because they see the sense of joy and empowerment it brings their peers. Many of the women's groups will explain how resources such as the water tanks, grow bags and chicken coops have drastically changed their quality of life. They can spend less time fetching water and have resources that help them provide food for their families. Many can put their children in school because these resources allow them time in the day to now work, and can help increase income in the households.

The stories you hear when you are there are nothing short of remarkable. I feel extremely privileged to be able to help this organization benefit so many people all the way across the world.

LEARN MORE ABOUT KATIE'S WORK [HERE](#)

Empowering the Heart of the Farm: Celebrating the International Year of the Woman Farmer

As spring is upon us and we look toward a new season of growth, Farmers Helping Farmers is proud to join the global community in celebrating 2026 as the *International Year of the Woman Farmer*. This United Nations designation shines a much-needed spotlight on the pivotal role women play in global food security—a mission that has been at the very core of our work for over 45 years.



In many of the Kenyan communities where we partner, women are the backbone of the agricultural economy. They are the primary caregivers, the tillers of the land, and the managers of household nutrition. However, they often face significant barriers, from limited access to land and credit to a lack of technical training.

Through our grassroots projects, we continue to see how targeted support for women creates a "ripple effect" of success. When a woman farmer receives a rainwater storage tank, a high-efficiency cookstove, or a screen house for her vegetable garden, the benefits extend far beyond her fields. Her family's health improves, her children's school fees are paid through increased dairy or crop income, and her community becomes more resilient.

Our recent updates from the field highlight several ongoing initiatives that honor this international year:

- **Sustainable Agriculture:** Training in "More Food, Better Food" techniques, helping women transition to drought-resistant crops and improved soil health.
- **Dairy & Poultry Success:** Supporting women's groups connected to local dairies to improve milk production and animal health.
- **School Twinning & Nutrition:** Partnering with schools to establish gardens and cookhouses that provide reliable, nutritious meals for the next generation of farmers.

As we move through this spring, we invite you to reflect on the vital contributions of women farmers—both here in Canada and across the globe. By supporting Farmers Helping Farmers, you are directly investing in the expertise, hard work, and bright future of Kenyan women.



Together, we are not just growing crops; we are growing hope and equality. For more stories on how your support is changing lives, visit www.farmershelpingfarmers.ca.

Save the Dates!

- **Farmers Helping Farmers Annual General Meeting** July 16th, 6p.m. at the Farm Centre, Charlottetown. Join us for a review of the year and help plan the year to come. Meal available to purchase by Makena Ambassa.
- **Farmers Helping Farmers 42st Annual Barbeque Fundraiser** August 8th, North Shore Community Centre, West Covehead. Join the FHF board members, FHF members, volunteers and supporters for a delicious farm fresh barbequed meal. Buy your tickets [here](#).
- **The Mill Annual Fall Harvest Supper** will be held on October 9th and 10th, 2026. Watch our socials and our website for further details on ticket purchases.

Connect with us

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