

Community Agriculture Alliance: Building food resiliency and conservation

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 Community Agriculture Alliance



Jack and Mikinzie Taylor produce fresh veggies, along with grass-fed and finished cattle and sheep, meat and layer chickens, pigs and hay at Mystic Hills Farmstead.
BW Photography Studio/Brooke Welch

In Routt County and throughout the rural United States, young producers are investing in new opportunities on lands with a legacy of agricultural production.

Jack and Mikinzie Taylor didn't move to Routt County with the idea of diving into agricultural production, but a passion for working outdoors and the promise of a growing local food system drew them in. Mystic Hills Farmstead was founded in 2017 by the Taylors out of a simple desire to "produce and consume the highest quality, freshest, and most nutritious food possible."

Mikinzie was growing and raising food to feed their family and began selling what they were not able to consume themselves. What started out as an endeavor of sustenance, quickly grew into a burgeoning business.

Mystic Hills Farmstead moved to its current location in the foreground of Pilot Knob in 2021. The move fell in the middle of one of the busiest years of their lives, but the pair was overjoyed to relocate their home and business to the conserved property in North Routt.

The property, which was conserved in 2014 with support from the Routt County Purchase of Development Rights Program — PDR Program — has been in agricultural production since the 1930s. Having both graduated with degrees in wildlife biology from Colorado State University, Jack and Mikinzie had an interest in conservation but had never been the owners or stewards of conserved land.

For the business, the move meant an opportunity to dramatically expand the operation and focus full time on the farm.

As Jack and Mikinzie grow their operation, they are focused on a vision to sustain a closed loop regenerative operation that produces nutrient dense products for the community.

“We experienced a breakdown of our food systems during the pandemic and see Mystic Hills as an opportunity to increase resiliency in our community,” said Mikinzie.

In addition to farming, Mikinzie sits on the board of the Community Agriculture Alliance and is supporting efforts to grow the CAA Market local food program.

Today Mystic Hills Farmstead boasts a well-rounded farming and ranching operation. With two hoop houses full of fresh veggies, grass-fed and finished cattle and sheep, meat and layer chickens, pigs and hay, there is little that Jack and Mikinzie aren't producing.

You can find Mystic Hills Farmstead products at the CAA Market or by visiting MysticHillsFarmstead.com[↗]. If you are up for a little adventure, you can schedule a time to visit the Taylor Family at the farm and maybe even discover a new nook of Routt County.

Amber Sachs Pougiales works for the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust.



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