



February 14, 2010

To whom it may concern:

The FARM Institute is pleased to support the 2010 Youth Summit for Sustainable Development on Martha's Vineyard, a project of the Stone Soup Leadership Institute. We have been invited to serve on the Summit's advisory council and will gladly participate in the process of planning to empower young people on Martha's Vineyard as emerging community leaders who will soon be responsible for charting a sustainable future for our Island.

The Stone Soup Leadership Institute has proved itself to be a powerful catalyst for energizing and motivating young people to help build a better world. Over the past thirteen years, through the creation and dissemination of *Stone Soup for the World*, its inspiring and thought-provoking book and curriculum for sustainability-in-action, the Institute has demonstrated an effective strategy for involving today's youth in pursuing solutions for the challenges faced by their local and global communities. The Institute recognizes groups and individuals whose impressive achievements and accomplishments serve as proof that by making a positive personal contribution to community life, each person can directly influence the course of world events.

As an educational institution whose mission is to foster both understanding and participation in a sustainable future for agriculture and resource management, The FARM Institute is eager to provide both support and opportunities to Youth Summit participants as they determine and pursue priorities for sustainability-in-action projects. We can provide a context for exploring the issues and questions involved in designing healthier and more responsible means of food production and land management, as well as a vehicle for initiating projects that delegates undertake to address those challenges. We will be honored to join the delegates for their Youth Forum with Island leaders and can promise a sustained source of support as the participants' dreams for a better future get forged into real life commitments. In my 30 years as an educator on Martha's Vineyard, I have consistently been amazed at the results achieved by teenagers in this kind of experiential learning situation where they are given both the freedom to dream and the support to act as leaders and full participants in the life of their community.

Martha's Vineyard has an opportunity to invite and empower capable young members of its island community to step up and create the future. All too often, our organizations and institutions fail to recognize the value of involving young people's ideas and energy in the mix of cooperative effort that is required to make positive change. The Youth Summit for Sustainable Development could not appear at a better time for both the youth of Martha's Vineyard and the Island community as a whole. The FARM Institute pledges its on-going support for the Stone Soup Leadership Institute and the 2010 Youth Summit for Sustainable Development.

Sincerely,

Sidney Morris
Education Director