EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

“The Farm Is a Playground for the Soul”

John and Molly Chester talk with Paul Salfen about The Biggest Little Farm Series, their 12-part sequel now streaming free on YouTube, and the sincere hope they say 15 years on the land has given them.

Interview by Paul Salfen · AMFM Magazine

Paul Salfen sat down with John and Molly Chester just before their new series arrived on YouTube. He told them the timing felt right, that people needed a smile. They agreed. “We do feel the timing is important,” they said.

The Biggest Little Farm Series, a 12-part docuseries and the official sequel to the Chesters' acclaimed 2019 documentary *The Biggest Little Farm*, premiered November 8, 2026, and is streaming free on the official YouTube channel, @TheBiggestLittleFarm, with new episodes weekly. John Chester directed the series, which was filmed over 15 years on location in Ventura County, California, at Apricot Lane Farms. FarmLore Films produced it, and the Artemis Rising Foundation is the presenting sponsor. Molly, who was a private chef in Los Angeles before the couple turned to farming, joined John for the conversation.



The Biggest Little Farm Series official key art. Courtesy of FarmLore Films, LLC.

TOO WILD AND TOO FERAL

Was there any apprehension, Salfen asked, about sharing their lives with the world again?

“I think we jumped off that cliff with the first film,” they said. What mattered now was showing that the work remains an imperfect relationship with the natural world. “The first film was really about reawakening an ecosystem. This one is about really answering that question as to whether or not you can create a farm that becomes too wild and too feral. And I think it's important for us to explore that really honestly.”

For anyone coming to the story new, or returning from the first film, Salfen asked what they were about to get into, without spoiling the twists.

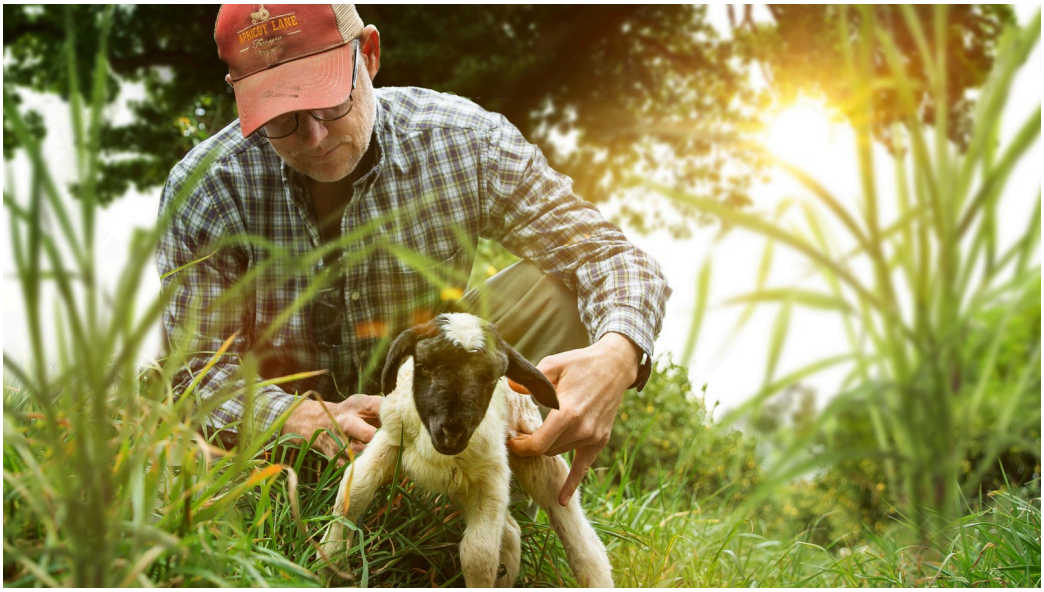
They are continuing to tell the story of a farm that uses the wildlife and the creatures that most people would want off the land. “We bring them on, essentially allow them space to actually help balance the system. So our whole goal is to create this, is to avoid these epidemic level of pests and disease issues. But you have to kind of embrace some of the good and bad that comes with, you know, sometimes creatures that cause trouble.”

The comparison they offered was a familiar one. “I look at it as like tolerating a Thanksgiving dinner with family during an election year. You know, you may not agree with the politics, but maybe your aunt still brings the best mashed potatoes.”

EDDIE, BLUE, AND THE NEW CHARACTERS

Salfen asked about favorite creatures in the new series. There are a lot of new characters this year, they said: an amazing turkey, and their dog Blue, who was in a special they had out at one point and now has a big role. Their son is in it a lot. And if viewers remember Emma the pig from the first film, Emma has a great granddaughter, Eddie, “who becomes a huge hit” and “really sort of steals the series.”

“She's amazing,” they said. “She also runs away and disappears for a while, which makes things a little complicated.”



Official series still. Courtesy of FarmLore Films, LLC.

JUMP OFF YOUR CLIFF

People look up to what they do, Salfen said, and want to do something good in the world and tell their own story. What advice would each of them give, knowing how much can go wrong?

Molly went first. “You gotta, it's about like listening inside yourself and jumping off your cliff. You know, what is your scary thing that you want to face? Because what the world needs is for all of us to come alive, you know, and be the best expression of exactly what we are.”

John picked up from there. “Like Molly says, your threshold of tolerance for what you build should just be true to you, and not try to compare yourself to what we did or what other farmers did. Hopefully you've learned enough from what we've done to not do the same exact thing. Less is more, but really, it's about having the time to connect with the natural world so that you can become an interpreter that decodes the rhythms of nature. And that's honestly the greatest gift that it gives back. And it brings you closer to the expression of life on this planet.”

> *“What the world needs is for all of us to come alive.”*



John and Molly Chester. Courtesy of FarmLore Films, LLC.

A NEW JOURNEY

Salfen asked Molly for a Hail Mary moment, the kind of turn he also explores in his book *Going For It!*

“We've actually kind of jumped off another cliff for ourselves, which you will find out in the series,” she said. It is not a spoiler, she added, because it is there from the beginning, though the series fills in the why. “Here we are at the beginning of a new journey where we're learning things about solar energy and a totally different climate.” What they learned at the farm, she said, is really a lens. “You learn how to see the natural world as an ecosystem, and when you go to another place, you realize that those same principles, that same beauty that drives you, are there too. And yet you have to adjust to all the little details of what it brings you. Good life lessons.”

A PLAYGROUND FOR THE SOUL

Mindset is part of it, Salfen said. The work can be frustrating. What do they keep in mind that keeps them on the right path?

“There's no such thing as a perfect harmony,” John said. “And you have to begin to understand the importance of that imperfection, and those sort of trials and innovations that don't work. You really don't learn anything and develop a sense of self-worth or confidence until you have fixed something at a very deep level, and that builds on the next problem and the way to solve that problem. And that's where you begin to sort of develop a little bit more of an understanding of the rhythm and flow of life. And so I think that alleviates anxiety.”

“And that really is honestly the greatest therapy is, you know, become a farmer. It'll work it all out of you.”

Would Molly say the same thing? She would. “A mentor of ours said that the farm is a playground for the soul. And it's really true, because as you go in, you just get led to the deeper and deeper layer. It's never ending, and it teaches you resilience. It teaches you to stay in the moment. It teaches you all the things that help you get through those hard, hard things and keep you going.”

> *“The farm is a playground for the soul.”*

THE GREATEST SOLUTION IS ALREADY HERE

Salfen mentioned EarthX, the Dallas conference, and asked, at what he called Half Earth Day, what people can do better for the world.

We are facing a long problem, about 260 years, they said, in which people have become more and more detached since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. “We can't expect to solve it in one generation. But I think the lowest hanging fruit, the greatest opportunity we have, is to actually focus on kids and give them the lens that we didn't get to grow up with. Help them to be more curious about the system, less afraid of it, because they will become the innovators and the problem solvers that build us back to true coexistence in the future.”

Adults put so much pressure on themselves to solve that 260-year problem, they said. “But we have right in front of us these children that have a return on that investment. Over the next 50 years, they will become essentially the greatest solution that we could have ever hoped for.”

That is also why the series is on YouTube. Molly said a free curriculum, in association with the Rodale Institute and American Farmland Trust, is coming in 2027 for third through 12th graders. Official notes for the series date that release to January 2027, in collaboration with the Rodale Institute, American Farmland Trust, the Artemis Rising Foundation, and FarmLore Films. “It's part of why we put it on YouTube, the actual series, because we wanted to get out to as many people as possible,” she said. The curriculum is about supporting children “to feel validated for what they already know, that we live inside this ecosystem where everything is important.”

Every episode also comes with a free discussion guide that parents, homeschoolers, or teachers can download now, John said. “And then, like she said, in 2027, the free curriculum releases to schools, third through 12th grade, which we're really excited about.”

FIND THE CHANNEL

What do they hope people take away, Salfen asked, besides the fact that it was fun?

“I think, honestly, we both feel after 15 years that we have more hope, like sincere, legitimate hope with reasons for the future and where things are going when it comes to our understanding of how to live and coexist and even heal the natural world.” Viewers, they hope, will walk away with the same thing. “They'll see that this system is so incredibly diverse. There is just infinite possibility for ways for it to work out. And it almost, you know, creates this, I think, confidence that we could actually help bridge that gap for it even faster than it could alone.”

Before they signed off, Salfen asked if there was anything else people needed to know. The simplest way to find the show, they said, is to Google “the biggest little farm channel,” or search it in a browser, and it will take you to the YouTube channel, where the episodes are being released weekly for free.

And please share it. “We chose to go outside of the big streamers, so we don't have that marketing budget. And we are relying on those that love the film to be able to take this and share it far, far and wide. We want everybody to be able to see this and get a little more connected.”

Salfen told them AMFM would share it, thanked them, and said he looked forward to talking again soon.

“Thank you, Paul,” they said.

FIND JOHN AND MOLLY CHESTER

The Biggest Little Farm Series: A 12-part docuseries, the official sequel to the 2019 documentary *The Biggest Little Farm*. Premiered November 8, 2026, streaming free on YouTube, with new episodes weekly. Channel: @TheBiggestLittleFarm

Trailer: youtube.com/watch?v=dpUIpuAbvFc

Presented by: the Artemis Rising Foundation. Production: FarmLore Films, LLC. Director: John Chester. Filmed over 15 years in Ventura County, California.

Also discussed: Free episode discussion guides, available now. A free environmental curriculum for grades 3 through 12, coming January 2027, in collaboration with the Rodale Institute, American Farmland Trust, the Artemis Rising Foundation, and FarmLore Films.

Paul Salfen is Managing Editor of AMFM Magazine and a veteran interviewer of film, television, music, and sports figures. He is the author of Going For It!, a collection of Hail Mary moments from the artists and athletes he has spent two decades putting on the record.