For over 200 years, Westtown School has been situated on 600 acres of land in Chester County purchased in 1794 by the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends from James Gibbons, a Quaker farmer. The Gibbons farm in Westtown Township attracted Yearly Meeting members looking for a home for their proposed school both for the resources it offered and the site’s distance from Philadelphia – removed from the influences and illnesses of the city but still reachable in a day’s travel. Throughout the school’s history, the land has been an educational and recreational resource, while also providing sustenance for the school family. Several buildings that dot the campus reflect the school's agricultural history.

The land held resources necessary for some first improvements – clay soil for bricks, approximately 325 acres of virgin timber, plenty of tillable acreage, and an improvable water source. Bricks for the new school building were made from clay on the farm. A mill race was created on Chester Creek for a saw mill which cut lumber for a new barn in 1794, and then a "small building" for the "sawyer" was erected in 1797 near the mill. The sawyer’s home still stands in the north woods of the campus and now serves as a faculty home. That same year a springhouse was erected; it was later enlarged to house the dairy operations and then converted to a family home. It, too, remains standing (on Westtown Road) as a faculty home.

Soon after the Yearly Meeting purchased the site, the tillable land was leased to a tenant farmer who had cattle, milk cows, working oxen, horses, and acres of crops to manage. Edward Churchman was Westtown's first farmer, under agreement from 1795 to 1796, followed by Robert Green, who farmed the land from 1796 to 1800. (The school's archives contains extensive farm records.) In the early years, the school received food staples from the farm, and gardens were maintained on both the boys' and girls' sides of the house, with those on the "offenders" list often enlisted to work in the garden. Fruit for the school family came from an orchard...
planted and maintained on the farm. The assistance of Humphrey Marshall (1722-1801), noted botanist and a member of the first committee appointed by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to have charge of the school, was enlisted to prune and care for the Westtown orchard. Fruit was a staple of the school diet for many years, especially on once-a-week "pie night" when supper consisted solely of fresh fruit pies and milk in the summer and dried fruit pies and milk in the winter.

In 1852, Westtown School opted to manage its own farm operations rather than lease the land. The farmer hired by the school to take care of the livestock and crops also had oversight of the farm house, constructed in 1851 to replace the old James Gibbons home. The previous farm house had been outfitted to serve as a place of lodging for visiting committee members and parents, and so the tradition of hospitality continued with the new farm house. The Westtown Farm House, once known as "an Old Fashioned Country Inn," served school visitors, travelers, and area residents for many years. In 1947, breakfast was served for $0.75, lunch was $1.10, and dinner was $1.50 per person ($2.00 on holidays). Some area residents may remember visiting the Farm House which was open to the public until 1965. This building, too, has been converted to faculty housing. The farm house is located south of the main campus, along Westtown Road.

At the same time the farm house was constructed, the aforementioned spring house built in 1797 (which sits low to the road on the northwest side of Westtown Road where it meets Oak Lane and turns north) was enlarged for the accommodation of the school dairy. Farming and dairy operations continued full tilt at the
school for the next several decades, providing both food stock and revenue for the school. A new barn was erected near the dairy operations in 1870, along with a house for the dairyman. In 1903, the dairy produced 128,694 quarts of milk which were used by the school or shipped to Philadelphia. In 1904, the school farm produced hay, wheat, oats, potatoes, corn, milk and cream, butter, beef, veal, mutton, and pork.

Major improvements to the farm and dairy came around 1910 when facilities were updated to achieve modern sanitation and efficiency. The dairy operations and barn were relocated from the meadow area northwest of Westtown Road to land south of what is now Oak Lane, partly to utilize a "more constant and a colder spring of water" for the new dairy plant, but also to make the approach to the school's main entrance more appealing to visitors both visually and aromatically by eliminating the close pass by the farm. Parts of the old barn were used to erect the storage barn on this new site, and a poultry department, commercial hatchery, and piggery were added there.

The farm was formally added to the educational program of the school in the 1920s through a bequest to support an agricultural course designed to both give boys a thorough preparation in agriculture as a profession and to "keep before the students a sense of the dignity of agricultural pursuits and to give them a vision of the opportunities for social and civic service in country and communities" (Westtown School Catalog, 1928-29). All students were called into service on the farm and in the school orchards during the 1940s when Westtown, like so many other institutions and businesses during the war years, experienced a labor shortage. Student work projects were vital to harvesting the crops (including apples, potatoes, and corn). The school's General Committee minutes of October 9, 1942, note that "School was dismissed on Fourth Day, 10\textsuperscript{th} month, 7, in
order to help harvest crops. Students and faculty husked a 7 acre corn field, picked 1700 bushels of apples at Westtown and on two neighboring farms, took in many bushels of beets and carrots...It was a profitable and enjoyable experience for the whole group." With the help of the students, the school produced fully one half of the food the Westtown family needed in 1943.

The dairy operation of the farm ended in the late 1960s. Glass milk bottles (both pint and quart size) from the Westtown School farm are popular collector's items, the paper caps documenting the progression from tuberculin tested raw milk to pasteurized milk. Crop farming has continued with the school returning to a lease arrangement for its farm land. Today, Peter Flynn of Pete's Produce (on Route 926) works 180 acres of the school’s land.

The school’s outdoor education program keeps students involved in stewardship of the land. A one acre student-run farm offers hands-on experience in planting, harvesting, composting, and seed-saving. Students can choose to participate through an afternoon co-curricular, or they might be assigned to the lunch-time Work Program crew at the farm during growing season. All students, faculty and staff enjoy Westtown-grown vegetables as part of the dining room fare, not unlike their counterparts during the school’s earliest years.