



American Farmland Trust

SAVING THE LAND THAT SUSTAINS US



No Farms. No Food. No Future.

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

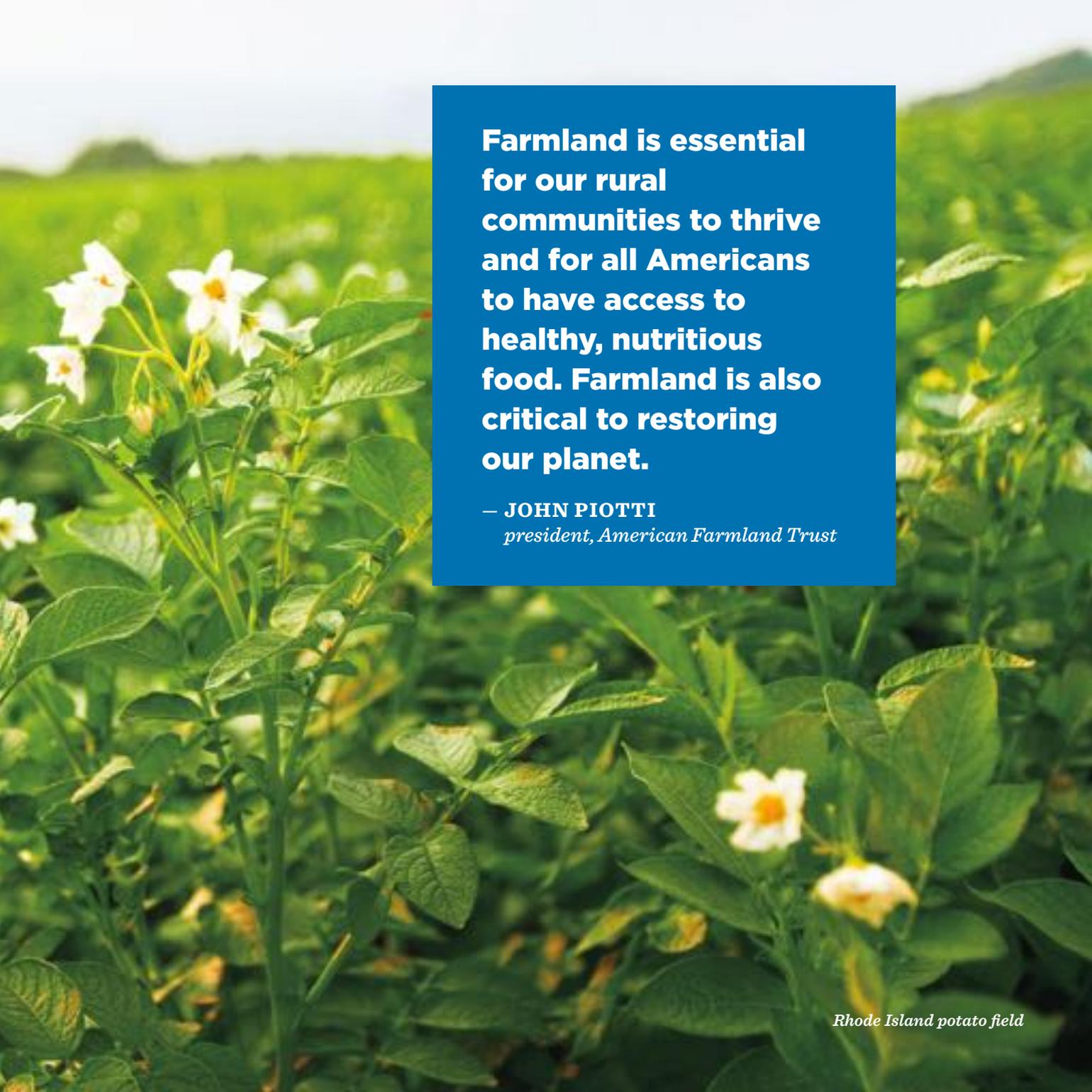
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ON THE COVER: *Dr. Stephen Jones, director of the Bread Lab at Washington State University in Burlington, Washington. Jones presented at an American Farmland Trust “No Farms No Food” speaker series and is a pioneer in breeding wheat and grains to withstand climate change.*

PHOTO BY SHAWN LINEHAN



A vibrant potato field with green foliage and white flowers in bloom. The background is a soft-focus expanse of green, suggesting a large field. The foreground shows individual potato plants with their characteristic leaves and clusters of small white flowers.

**Farmland is essential
for our rural
communities to thrive
and for all Americans
to have access to
healthy, nutritious
food. Farmland is also
critical to restoring
our planet.**

— JOHN PIOTTI
president, American Farmland Trust

Rhode Island potato field



New York vegetable farmer

The mission of American Farmland Trust is to save the land that sustains us by protecting farmland, promoting sound farming practices, and keeping farmers on the land.



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From the Leadership

No Farms. No Food. No Future. American Farmland Trust has spread our “No Farms No Food” message for decades to make people aware just how important it is to save the nation’s farms and ranches, which produce the very food that we need to sustain us.

Lately, we’ve taken to amending our longtime slogan to reinforce the fact that farms and ranches provide not just food, fuel, and fiber—but so much more. Farms are critical infrastructure, as important as roads and bridges—fundamental to a functioning society. Farms also provide so many environmental benefits, ranging from wildlife habitat and clean water to reductions in greenhouse gases.

The phrase “No Farms. No Food. No Future.” makes the point that without healthy farms, we don’t have much chance at a healthy future.

Climate change, for instance, is already impacting our nation’s farmers and ranchers, altering the decisions they make about what crops to grow and adding considerable uncertainty about drought and storms.

In response, American Farmland Trust ramped up our “Farmers Combat Climate Change” initiative this past year to help farmers and ranchers adopt restorative farming practices that capture carbon in plants and the soil while making our food supply more resilient.

Read about this effort and more in the report ahead, which outlines many of our 2018 projects to save the



John Hardin



John Piotti

nation’s farmland while helping more farmers access land and steward it wisely. The more land that we lose, the less we have to provide healthy food, environmental benefits, and climate solutions—a loss we can’t afford.

On behalf of everyone at American Farmland Trust, we thank you for your support and encouragement. We couldn’t do this work without you. We know you recognize, as we do, that our collective future as a nation and planet depends on our farms.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "John D. Hardin".

John Hardin
BOARD CHAIR

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Piotti".

John Piotti
PRESIDENT AND CEO

Saving Farmland and Ranchland

It's a familiar sight: Local farms once on the edge of town sold and replaced by housing developments or strip malls. This needless loss of America's most important natural resource drove the creation of American Farmland Trust in 1980.

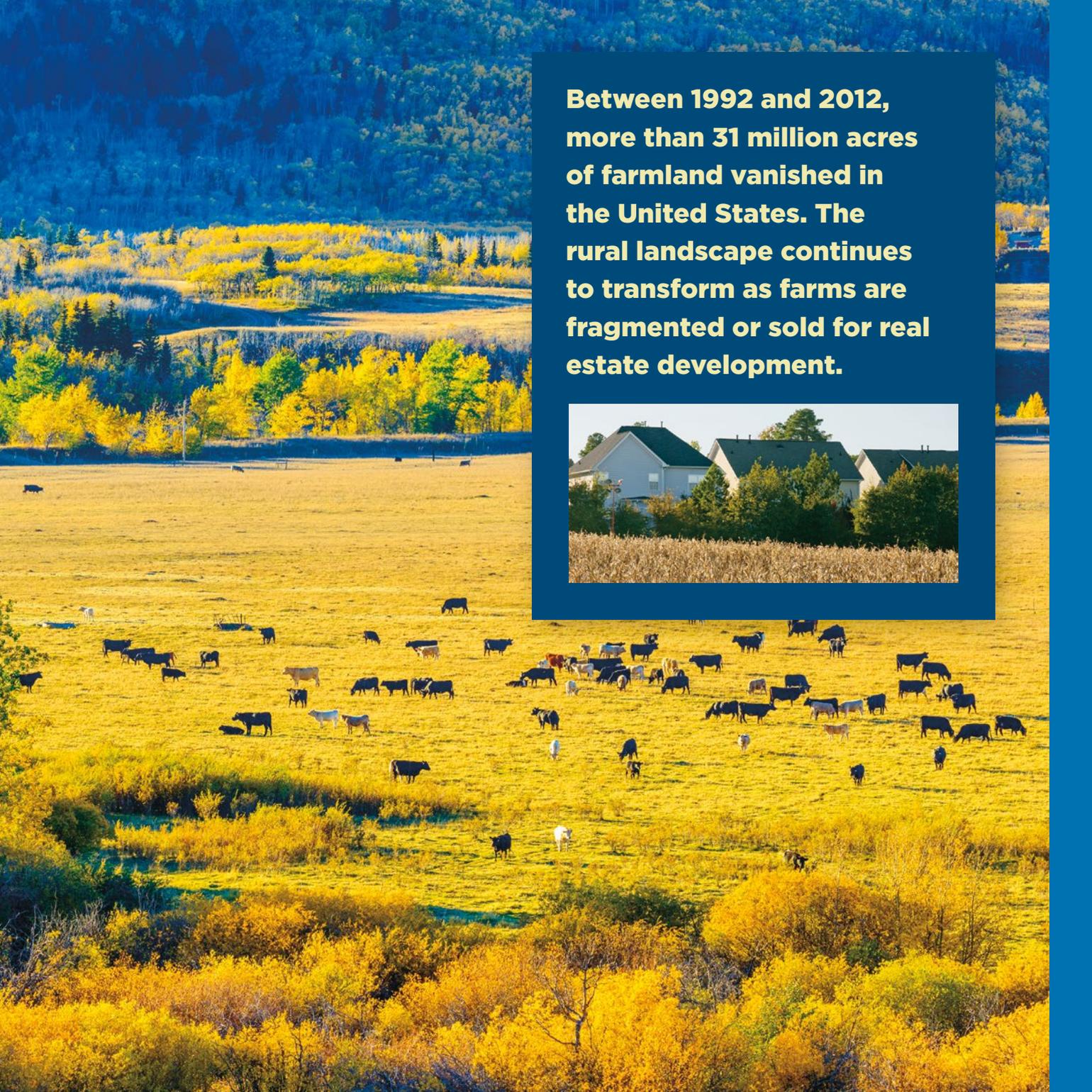
According to our *Farms Under Threat* report, released in its first phase in 2018, America loses more than 175 acres of farmland every hour to poorly planned development. This issue affects us all—whether we live in major cities, the suburbs, or the most rural parts of the country.

Farmland is the foundation of our rural communities, providing jobs, recreational opportunities, and a deep connection to the land. It is also land needed to grow food for an increasing population while delivering environmental benefits and offsetting the impacts of climate change.

Saving farmland and ranchland is at the heart of what we do.



Between 1992 and 2012, more than 31 million acres of farmland vanished in the United States. The rural landscape continues to transform as farms are fragmented or sold for real estate development.



2018 Successes

Our efforts over four decades to build a national farmland protection movement have paid off. Over 6.5 million acres of farmland and ranchland are now permanently protected with agricultural conservation easements, while development pressure decreased on over 300 million additional acres, due to smarter land use planning and tax policies.

These are huge accomplishments, but much more work remains. Some of our achievements in saving America's farmland and ranchland in 2018 include:



CONNECTICUT | American Farmland Trust celebrated a win for farmland protection with the passage of a referendum under Question 2 on the Connecticut ballot that protects state parks, forests, and publicly

owned farmland from being sold, swapped, or given away by the state legislature without public input. The public now has a better say in the fate of state-owned farmland, leading to more secure land access opportunities for all farmers in the state.

MASSACHUSETTS | A bond bill supported by American Farmland Trust passed in the state with many essential wins for farmland protection, soil conservation, and farm viability, including \$1 million for urban agriculture, \$20 million for agricultural conservation easements, and authorization for grants to help farmers mitigate climate change. A provision of the law reduces the estate tax on farmland that remains in agriculture for at least 10 years.





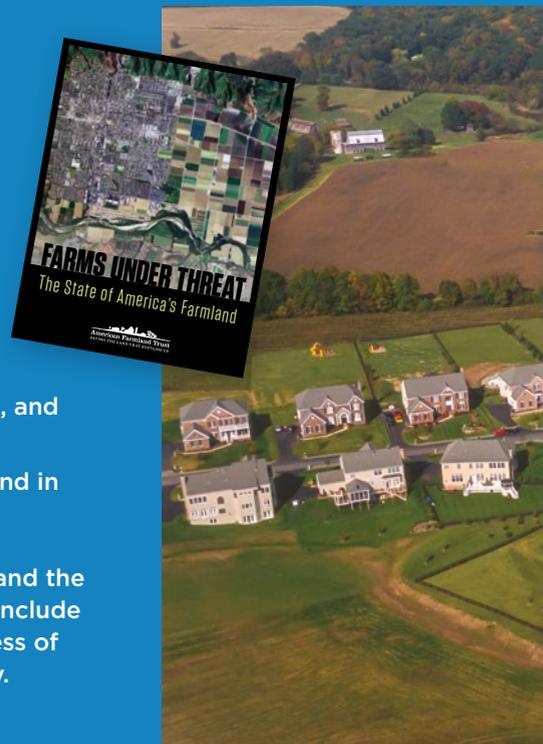
MICHIGAN | American Farmland Trust helped to save two critical farms in Michigan, protected with support from AFT's Owen and Ellen Love Fund, launched after Owen and Ellen Love donated their 660-acre farm outside Climax, Michigan, to American Farmland Trust. The two farms include the 84-acre Crothers Farm in Resort Township and the Bradford family dairy farm in Kent County.

A Landmark Study

In May, American Farmland Trust released the most comprehensive assessment ever of the loss of U.S. farmland. *Farms Under Threat: The State of America's Farmland* found that between 1992 and 2012, almost 31 million acres of farmland disappeared—175 acres per hour. Other key findings:

- The majority of all development (62 percent) occurred on farmland.
- 11 million of the acres lost to development were prime farmland, or land with the best soil, water access, and microclimates for growing crops.
- We are losing farmland both on the outskirts of cities and in rural areas in every state.

This first report underscores the urgency of the situation and the importance of farmland to America. A second report will include state-level maps and scorecards reviewing the effectiveness of states in protecting farmland and promoting farm viability.

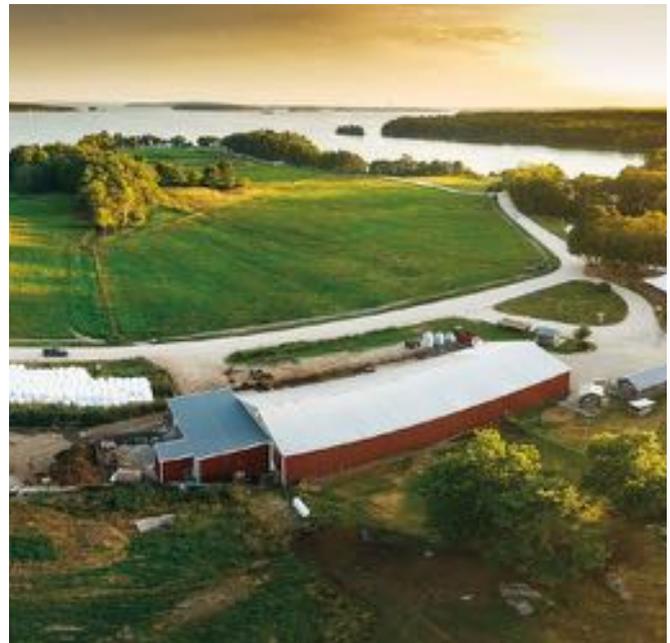




NEW YORK | In a victory in March, a New York appeals court overturned a lower court decision that would have prevented Suffolk County farmers from building farm stands, greenhouses, fences, and other structures on protected farmland. American Farmland Trust supported Suffolk County and local partners in appealing this potentially disastrous decision, which threatened the ability of farmers to adapt as markets and farming conditions change.

NATIONAL | Each year, American Farmland Trust's Farmland Information Center offers direct assistance to hundreds of individuals. Close to half the requests are from farmers and agricultural landowners. Staff provide information on many topics, including finding or leasing farmland, protecting land using agricultural conservation easements, and transferring farms to the next generation. The FIC, a partnership with USDA's Natural

Resources Conservation Service, hosts webinars about federal programs and conducts research, including a nationwide survey of land trusts that protect farmland and rangeland. The FIC analyzes data, like the Census of Agriculture, to understand trends in agriculture and the availability of land for farming. Nearly 100,000 visitors access the FIC's online collection of laws, fact sheets, reports, sample documents, and statistics each year.





CALIFORNIA | Local Area Formation Commissions, or LAFCOs, are California agencies mandated to plan how cities grow their boundaries while protecting farmland. American Farmland Trust published a significant report, *State of the Art on*

Agricultural Preservation, in collaboration with the California Association of LAFCOs, which outlined policies that will protect agricultural land while promoting orderly growth and development.

NATIONAL | The 2018 Farm Bill passed with many of American Farmland Trust's priorities, including a significant increase in funding for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. Over the next 10 years, an additional \$200 million per year will be allocated to ACEP to help save some of the most valuable land in the nation. There were also increases for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, and the Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program.



WASHINGTON | At a food security forum at the Center for Agriculture Excellence at Walla Walla Community College, American Farmland Trust raised the alarm about the importance of protecting farmland. Population and demand for food will only increase, but at current rates, we will lose over 120 million acres of irreplaceable farmland and rangeland by the end of the century. Panelists addressed the importance of protecting the agricultural land base, keeping farmers on the land, and building resilient food systems.

Protecting Natural Resources and Fighting Climate Change

Farmers and ranchers care passionately about their land and want to be good stewards of it. But sometimes they need help to adopt the kinds of restorative farming practices that support wildlife, reduce pollution, build soil health, and fight climate change.

American Farmland Trust recognizes that our planet's future depends on the sound stewardship of our natural resources. For nearly 40 years, we've promoted conservation practices and programs that help farmers and ranchers adopt smart farming practices, including the use of cover crops, crop rotations, reduced tillage, and rotational grazing. Our research and demonstration projects show what works—from region to region and farm to farm.

With climate change and other resource challenges threatening our planet, so much more is needed. In 2018, we amplified national initiatives to protect the nation's water, soil, and biodiversity, while readying farmers to be a bulwark against climate change.



Clover field



“We’re looking at a future where our population is going to continue to expand, and we’re going to have more demands for food, fiber, and energy. Then you throw climate change into the mix—longer droughts, more severe weather, and erosion—and that’s why we are so concerned now.”



— **ANN SORENSEN**, *research director at American Farmland Trust*

2018 Successes

American Farmland Trust works to help farmers and ranchers adopt smart farming practices that protect land, water, soil, and wildlife—contributing to a better environment for all of us. Some of our achievements in protecting natural resources and fighting climate change in 2018 include:

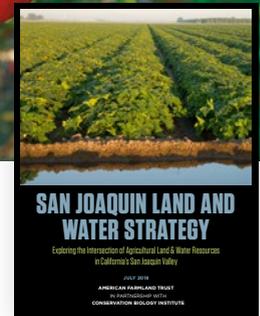


CALIFORNIA, ILLINOIS, OHIO, NEW YORK, VIRGINIA | American Farmland Trust received a highly competitive Conservation Innovation Grant from USDA to study the impacts of soil health practices in six watersheds in five states. The project will provide the quantitative evidence that farmers need to make better conservation decisions while allowing us to explore the economic benefits of soil health in multiple regions and cropping systems across the U.S.

ILLINOIS | Soil is a living ecosystem. Our on-the-ground training for Illinois farmers on soil health is making a difference to protect water, save soil, and reduce climate change. The series of seminars provided over 400 farmers with the latest information about soil health, soil biology, cover crops, conservation best management practices, and how to prevent the runoff of nutrients from the soil.



CALIFORNIA | In partnership with the Conservation Biology Institute, American Farmland Trust released a report identifying the most critical farmland and water supplies to protect in the San Joaquin Valley. Based on the findings of the San Joaquin Land and Water Strategy, American Farmland Trust launched a multi-year program to protect farmland and water resources in San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, and Fresno counties.



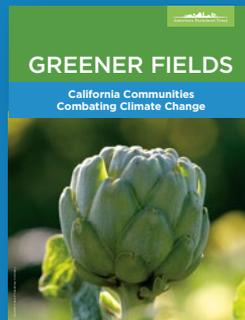
Climate Change Solutions

The world still isn't meeting its climate goals, several years after nearly 200 countries signed the landmark Paris climate accord. According to a 2018 assessment by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the needed climate goals can't be met simply by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Natural solutions, which farming practices can provide, are required to close the gap.

The nation's farmland is a one-of-a-kind tool to fight climate change. When well managed, farmland can act as a natural carbon "sink," absorbing vast amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it in plants and soil.

American Farmland Trust's "Farmers Combat Climate Change" initiative accelerates the use of climate-smart farming practices. In recent achievements:

- American Farmland Trust president John Piotti talked about how "farming done right" can benefit our planet at the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco, California.
- American Farmland Trust staff joined with other experts to help states begin to develop climate change strategies at a learning lab organized by the U.S. Climate Alliance.
- The California Greener Fields project informed the first state climate plan to link the protection of agricultural land to climate change mitigation.



NATIONAL | American Farmland Trust accepted an invitation from the U.S. Climate Alliance to be one of their first Impact Partners. American Farmland Trust joins a select group of organizations helping the Alliance and its 24 member states accelerate the implementation of ambitious climate action. American Farmland Trust is uniquely positioned to support states in integrating agriculture and working lands into their climate plans.



OHIO | In November, American Farmland Trust was awarded funds to launch a new project advancing best farming practices in the Upper Scioto River watershed of central Ohio, which provides drinking water for the city of Columbus. The project brings together farms and municipalities to find mutually beneficial, long-term solutions that protect local drinking water and improve water quality down-river in the Gulf of Mexico.

Women for the Land

There are nearly one million women farm operators and over half-a-million additional women landowners who lease their land to farmers. There is a considerable demand among these women for access to information and assistance, but few resources devoted to meeting the needs of this traditionally underserved group.

That's why American Farmland Trust aggressively advanced our Women for the Land initiative in 2018. This initiative combines research and on-the-ground projects to empower women landowners and farmers to conserve and protect their land.

The initiative hosted successful learning circles in California, the Midwest, the Mid-Atlantic, and New York that provided women with the opportunity to meet other landowners, share successes and challenges, access technical assistance, and gain advice on talking with their family and farm managers about adopting conservation strategies.

Learning circles bring together women who already



San Joaquin County rancher Rosie Silva and her family

own, co-own, or may soon be purchasing or inheriting agricultural land.

"I came home after the circle and told my husband about everything I had learned. It was

an inspiration to start leaning more about the resources available to us," says San Joaquin County rancher Rosie Silva, who attended one of the first California learning circles.

Farms Save Bees

Bees and other wild pollinators are a vital component of our food supply. Bees alone pollinate approximately 75 percent of all the fruits, nuts, and vegetables in the United States.

However, populations of bees and other pollinators have been in significant decline over the past two decades, due to various factors including pesticides, parasites, viruses, loss of foraging habitat, and a changing climate.

American Farmland Trust's Farmland Pollinator Protection Project supports populations of managed honey bees and wild pollinators by increasing high-quality pollinator habitat and forage resources on protected farms.

"I see this program as a benefit for everyone," says participating farmer Rob Manigold of Peninsula Township, Michigan. "The wild flowers



Rob and Lois Manigold

provide nice aesthetics for people driving by. It's good for tourism and the farming community. We're all about being good stewards of the land. This program fits in perfectly."

To get involved or support the program, please contact Brian Brandt at bbrandt@farmland.org.

NEW YORK | American Farmland Trust selected 20 participants for "Practical Soil Health Specialists," a training program for private and public service providers working with farmers and farmland owners to promote healthy soil. The three-year program of workshops and field visits will strengthen the network of agricultural professionals across New York who can help

farmers make positive real-world decisions to improve their soil.



NATIONAL | Well-managed farmland produces numerous environmental benefits, from cleaner water to wildlife habitat. American Farmland Trust released a collaborative research-based guide, *Handbook for Conservation Districts on Environmental Markets*, that helps conservation districts around the country work with farmers and ranchers to protect water quality and generate additional income by participating in water quality trading.



Supporting Farmers, Healthy Food, and Communities

American agriculture faces a demographic tidal wave unlike anything ever seen. Over a third of America's farmland and rangeland is expected to transition to new owners within the next 15 years, putting both family farmers and the land they steward at risk. Farmland is the most vulnerable to development when it changes hands.

At the same time, many Americans want to become farmers. However, acquiring the right farmland to rent or buy often isn't easy. Success for the next generation of farmers and ranchers depends on whether they can secure suitable land to start and expand their operations.

To encourage the next generation of farmers and ranchers, American Farmland Trust has made a national commitment to protecting our irreplaceable agricultural land and getting new farm families on the land.



A man with a goatee and sunglasses, wearing a blue button-down shirt, is smiling and sitting on a green tractor. The tractor is heavily loaded with large, dark brown piles of mulch. The background shows a field with green plants, likely an avocado orchard. A dark brown text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

American Farmland Trust research shows that 371 million acres—over one-third of all the agricultural land in the United States—is expected to change hands within the next 15 years as elderly farmers retire.

2018 Successes

Nationally, our Farmland for the Next Generation initiative trains and supports professionals from across the nation who help next-generation farmers and ranchers secure the right land and start their new businesses. Our Farmland Information Center continually compiles and updates resources to help beginning farmers. Also our Farm Legacy Program provides options for aging farmers and landowners who want to see their land stay in farming.

Some of our achievements in supporting farmers, healthy food, and communities in 2018 include:



NATIONAL | American Farmland Trust launched a nationwide network of Land Access Trainers who support beginning farmers and ranchers in their communities as they sort through the financial, legal, and technical challenges of gaining access to land. Our first group of 18 land service providers underwent extensive training as they worked with American Farmland Trust staff to develop, test, and refine a much-needed curriculum focused on land transition. Eighteen LATs were certified and will continue to build the network to help us train more service providers throughout the country.

NATIONAL | Supporting local farmers markets is a way to keep small farms viable. American Farmland Trust encouraged this support with the 10th annual Farmers Market Celebration, which showcases and celebrates the markets that make

communities proud. This year's 2018 People's Choice Award went to the Winter Garden Farmers Market in Winter Garden, Florida, with runners up from Swarthmore, Pennsylvania; Charlottesville, Virginia; Clarksville, Tennessee; and Williamsburg, Virginia.





NEW JERSEY | American Farmland Trust selected participants for Farmland Advisors New Jersey, an advanced training program that builds statewide capacity and strengthens the expertise of professionals who work with farmers, so they can better assist farmers in accessing land and successfully transferring farmland to a new generation. In New Jersey, the state with the second-highest farmland prices in the nation, it's particularly tricky for beginning farmers to find suitable land at a price they can afford.

NEW YORK | In partnership with the state of New York, we launched Farmland for a New Generation New York, a new program that connects farmers seeking land with landowners looking to keep their property in farming. The program offers a staffed resource center, a website (nyfarmlandfinder.org), and an online platform for farmers in search of land and landowners looking for someone to farm their land. The program also supports a network of partner organizations that provide support for farmers and landowners.





Samantha Kennah

Next-Gen Farmers

Samantha Kennah and her family were about to give up their farming dreams before finding the land they needed through Hudson Valley Farmlink, a four-year-old American Farmland Trust program that connects new farmers with retiring farmers and landowners. In October, American Farmland Trust unveiled Farmland for a New Generation New York, which expands the program throughout the state.

NEW YORK | To strengthen the economic security of farmers and the health of all New Yorkers, American Farmland Trust

organized the New York Grown Food for New York Kids Coalition that fought for and achieved record state funding to help K-12

schools buy more foods grown and produced in the state. In a report, American Farmland Trust and partners also found that increasing the availability of local produce on State University

of New York campuses could improve the health of over 430,000 students and create \$54 million of economic activity.





The Farm Legacy Program

Owners of farmland or rangeland face many questions about the future. Who will someday buy the land? Will it still be farmed? Or will it go to the highest bidder?

Landowners like Jennifer

McComas, who donated her 560-acre Kentucky farm to American Farmland Trust, are finding the answers to such questions through American Farmland Trust's Farm Legacy Program.

Giving a family farm or ranch to the Farm Legacy Program ensures the land's long-term protection and availability for farming while supporting American Farmland Trust's mission.

"That farm was the best thing I ever had. I have no qualms about my gift to American Farmland Trust," says McComas. "I know I've done what's right—to give the farm a chance to continue being a working farm. I think farmland protection is important for our environment and the future of our world. I hope someone will take that to heart because development is not the answer."

To learn more about the Farm Legacy Program and conservation options for farmland and rangeland owners, please contact Jerry Cosgrove, Farm Legacy Director, at (518) 281-5074 or jcosgrove@farmland.org.

Jennifer McComas (inset) and her Kentucky farm, donated to American Farmland Trust



Vermont orchard

Summary of Activities

For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Individual Contributions*	\$10,519,398
Foundation Grants	2,413,612
Government Grants	1,875,945
Operating Investment Return	901,761
Non-Operating Investment Gain & Other	1,566,436
Farm Legacy Contribution	819,000
Other Income, Gains, and Losses	80,180
Total Revenue and Support	\$18,176,332

* includes bequests

Additional financial statements are available upon request.

EXPENSES

National and Regional Programming	\$6,068,568
Public Education	1,812,571
Outreach and Communications	459,640
Other Programs	500,719
Total Program Services	\$8,841,498
Management and General	556,970
Fundraising	1,941,763
Total Expenses	\$11,340,231

NET ASSETS

Beginning of Year	\$26,507,030
End of Year	33,343,131
Change in Net Assets	\$6,836,101

IN MEMORIAM | **DR. WILLIAM B. DELAUDER**

American Farmland Trust mourns the recent passing of former board member Dr. William B. DeLauder. Dr. DeLauder served on American Farmland Trust's board from 2006 to 2013. While on the board, he served as chair of the Nominating and Search committees. Also a champion for higher education, Dr. DeLauder served as the president of Delaware State University for 16 years. During his tenure, he led the transformation of Delaware State College to a full research university. Dr. DeLauder received the USDA's Justin Smith Morrill Award in 2015 for his leadership in furthering science and agriculture at land grant universities. We thank Dr. DeLauder and his wife, Vermell, for their service to American Farmland Trust.





Combined Federal
Campaign
Number 10631

IN MEMORIAM | STEPHEN STRANAHAN

Stephen Stranahan, a former board member of American Farmland Trust, leaves a far-reaching legacy in conservation.

Steve's efforts protected thousands of acres of land in the Elk River Valley, north of Steamboat Springs, Colorado, including at his ranch and resort, The Home Ranch, which he owned with his wife, Ann.

Steve and his ranching neighbors worked with American Farmland Trust to develop a vision for how ranching and carefully planned development could fit together, calling for housing where it would not harm the vast landscapes and ranching tradition of the area.



PHOTO CREDITS: Front cover: Shawn Linehan; Page i: Design Pics Inc/Alamy; Page ii: Preston Keres/USDA (farmer), Johnny McClung/Unsplash (greens); Page 1: Keith Mellnick (John Piotti); Page 2-3: Don White/Alamy (ranch), Shutterstock (inset); Page 4: Design Pics Inc/Alamy (rooster), Jerry and Marcy Monkman, Ecophotography.com/Alamy (zucchini field); Page 5: Todd Parker (Michigan farm), Rob Crandal/Alamy (development); Page 6: Lindsay Morris (farm stand), Jacob T. Beck (Wolfe's Neck Farm); Page 8: GomezDavid/iStockphoto (Brussels sprouts), US Bureau of Land Management (Capitol), David Cobb/Alamy (wheat field); Page 8: Melissa Jenson, Alamy (clover); Page 9: Preston Keres/USDA (inset); Page 10: USDA NRCS (soil structure); USDA NRCS (hand); Ed Young/Alamy (nectarines); Page 11: Malcom Wood (Columbus); Page 13: Gary L. Howe (Manigolds), Jennifer Bosvert/Alamy (bee); Pages 14-5: Lance Cheung; Page 16: David Haynes (Winter Market); Page 17: Rabbitti/Shutterstock (sunflowers), Deitrich Gehring (vegetable farmers), Lawrence White (goat farmer); Page 18: Nancy J. Parisi (grapes); Page 20: Natalie Stultz/Alamy; Page 21: David Kay/Shutterstock (peaches), Holye/iStockphoto (sheep); Page 22: Shawn Linehan (radishes), Mira/Alamy (blueberries), James Brey (corn); Page 24: John D. Invanko/Alamy; Page 25: Shawn Linehan (indigo), Shutterstock (eggplants), Shawn Linehan (cherries); AlisonPerryPhotography/iStockphoto (pumpkins); Page 27: Shawn Linehan; Back cover: Design Pics Inc/Alamy

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American Farmland Trust

SAVING THE LAND THAT SUSTAINS US

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JOIN US IN THE FIGHT TO SAVE OUR NATION'S FARMLAND. VISIT WWW.FARMLAND.ORG

Montana sainfoin