



**American Farmland Trust**  
SAVING THE LAND THAT SUSTAINS US



**ANNUAL REPORT | 2022**



**ON THE COVER:** Gaining Ground farm in Concord, Massachusetts, donates 100% of its harvest to households experiencing food insecurity. By shifting to regenerative agricultural practices, the farm tripled the amount of food it can grow on the same amount of land. A Soil Health Support Minigrant from American Farmland Trust helped the farm purchase cover crop seeds to build soil resiliency. The grant was part of American Farmland Trust's Massachusetts Coordinated Soil Health Program, which assists Massachusetts farmers in achieving soil health goals.

Photo by Tony Rinaldo Photography LLC

DUNDEE, OREGON VINEYARD

**AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST** is a member-supported national organization working to save the land that sustains us by protecting farmland, promoting sound farming practices, and keeping farmers on the land.

**FARMLAND.ORG**



ELIYAHU YSRAEL OF LOCAL LANDS FARM, GEORGIA

A close-up photograph of a person's hand on a steering wheel, viewed from the driver's perspective. The background is a blurred farm scene with a red barn and green trees under a clear sky.

**A** GOOD FARMER is one who brings competent knowledge, work wisdom, and a locally adapted agrarian culture to a particular farm that has been lovingly studied and learned over a number of years. We are not talking here about “job training” but rather about the lifelong education of an artist, the wisdom that comes from unceasing attention and practice.

— AUTHOR AND KENTUCKY FARMER **WENDELL BERRY**

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# From the Leadership

People, land, and the planet are all fundamentally connected. How we grow food impacts the health of our planet and every person on it. At the same time, our ability to grow that food hinges on our planet's health.

Yet it is increasingly clear that climate change is stressing the ability of our farms and ranches to meet human needs. Earlier this year, when the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released *Climate Change 2022 Impacts, Adaptability, and Vulnerability*, a major focus of the report was on how the climate, ecosystems, and human societies are all interdependent.

The report warned that in North America, there are grave risks to food security as climate change creates cascading hazards for crop and livestock production due to intensified droughts, floods, pests, and other catastrophic events. Yet the report also offered hope by echoing the message that American Farmland Trust has repeatedly made: Farming *done right* can be part of the solution.

At American Farmland Trust, we know that our role in helping farmers and ranchers grow the food, fuel, and fiber that we need to power the nation—and the world—could not be more important now and long into the future.

As you'll read in the following pages, we take a comprehensive view of how agriculture can work in concert with nature to sustain America and help heal our planet. Together we can build resilient landscapes that support biodiversity, thriving ecosystems, and humans, while contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

This year's IPCC report called for 30 to 50 percent of Earth's land to be conserved so that it can provide essential ecological services, such as wildlife habitat, water recharge, and carbon sequestration.

Working farms and ranches are a major piece of the puzzle. Roughly 60 percent of the land in the U.S. is privately owned, and this privately held land produces almost all of our food. Protecting our farmland and rangeland from poorly

planned development has been American Farmland Trust's goal since our founding in 1980.

But American Farmland Trust has always recognized that far more is needed than solely keeping misguided development off good farmland. We also need to help farmers and ranchers implement better practices—what are now often called “regenerative practices.” Such practices improve the nutritional value of our food, enhance productivity, build farm resiliency in the face of climate impacts, and help mitigate climate change by generating fewer greenhouse gas emissions and sequestering carbon in the soil.

Although climate change news can often seem dire, there is good news: Action taken now *can and will* make a difference in our lifetimes. We just have to work together and get it done!

The many innovative projects and achievements described in this report demonstrate American Farmland Trust's truly collaborative nature. Our ability to talk to and work with people on all sides of an issue has always been a hallmark of American Farmland Trust—and it is especially needed today.

We hope the pages ahead fill you with optimism—as they do us.

At a time of strife and difficulty around the world, our nation's legacy of rich farmland and hard-working farmers will never steer us wrong. Working together, we can rise to the current challenges and create a better future for all.

With your support, we will achieve lasting, long-term health for the nation's farms and ranches, food, people, and the land. Thank you.

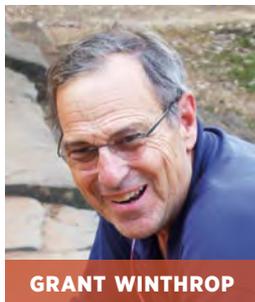
Sincerely,



John Piotti  
PRESIDENT AND CEO



Grant Winthrop  
BOARD CHAIR





**A**GRICULTURAL LANDS in the United States grow an astounding array of food, fiber, biofuels, and other raw materials. This abundance has made the U.S. one of the most food-secure nations in the world. Yet it can also mask vulnerabilities. For too many Americans, it is easy to brush off farmland loss or view it as inevitable. This puts our future at risk.

— JOHN PIOTTI, AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST PRESIDENT AND CEO

*We need farmland not just to feed a growing population but to provide essential ecological services that nurture wildlife, cleanse water, and capture atmospheric carbon. If we remain on our current development path, we will ultimately run out of land to grow our food. But long before that, I fear we will run out of the farmland we need to heal an environmentally degraded planet.*

## Farmland is our future.

For more than 40 years, American Farmland Trust has reminded people of our rallying call: No Farms No Food®.

When American Farmland Trust first launched the agriculture conservation movement in the early 1980s, we brought together farmers and environmentalists with the goal of protecting the most productive, versatile, and resilient agricultural land before it was lost forever.

Farmland and ranchland are vital to all of us. From children eating locally grown food in their school cafeterias to families enjoying clean drinking water, we all benefit from healthy working landscapes and thriving farmers who manage them.

In 2022, we made great progress to ensure a brighter future for farming, farmers, and food. While there is much to celebrate, we are deeply aware of the urgent challenges ahead. Climate change. Degraded soils. A lack of affordable farmland. Threats to farm viability. Pressure from real estate development.

To solve these problems today and for future generations, we need partners and supporters who believe in this truth: No Farms, No Food, No Future. Will you join us?

# Saving Working Landscapes

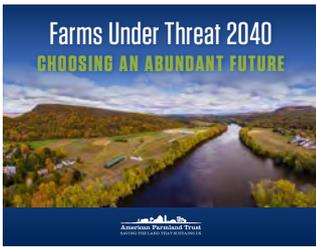
**When farmland disappears, we lose entire ecosystems. Farms are typically a mixture of pasture, fields, and forest that shelter plants and wildlife, prevent floods, sequester carbon, and clean the air.**

We must keep land in agriculture, and not have it subdivided, so that it can continue to protect our food supply and provide economic benefits to communities across the nation.

Our agricultural land not only feeds us but stores carbon too. Farmland protection is a valuable tool for mitigating climate-related natural disasters such as flooding and wildfires.

It's now clear that we can't realize global climate goals only by reducing emissions. We also need to retain farmland and actively manage it to draw down carbon from the air.

American Farmland Trust and our partners have helped to save seven million acres of farmland from development across the nation. But there is still much more work to do.



**SUCCESS** | We expanded our reach in the Southeast by putting down roots in Georgia, after our *Farms Under Threat 2040: Choosing an Abundant Future* report found that Georgia has some of the most threatened farmland in America, with nearly 545,000 acres lost between 2001 and 2016. We hired our first Georgia Program Manager, Mallory O’Steen, to lead a Farms for the Future project that educates farmers about farmland protection.

**SUCCESS** | As one of the first agricultural land trusts in the country, and the only one with a national scope, American Farmland Trust began crafting agricultural conservation easements on threatened farms and ranches over 40 years ago, when few other groups did. Much of our focus since then has been designed to

Every day, the U.S. loses 2,000 acres of agricultural land to development, according to our 2022 *Farms Under Threat 2040: Choosing an Abundant Future* report. We are losing our best agricultural lands at an alarming rate.

help groups do more; yet we remain an agricultural land trust and strategically acquire new land and easements in places where other land trusts aren’t active or where there is an opportunity for innovation. To that end, in 2022, we appointed Alison Volk as deputy director for land protection projects focused on new acquisitions. Volk led the growth and expansion of our Buy-Protect-Sell+ program, which protects farmland, advances regenerative practices, and makes land more accessible for next generation farmers.

**SUCCESS** | Reflecting our commitment to protecting



CARLY WHITMORE/USDA

PEACEFUL BELLY FARM, IDAHO

the nation’s breadbasket, we hired a new Midwest Farmland Protection Manager, Angie Doucette, to coordinate with our national and Midwest teams on accelerating farmland protection goals, including in Wisconsin through a Regional Conservation Partnership Program project and in Illinois by promoting the development of local Purchase of Development Rights programs.

**SUCCESS** | As part of our comprehensive approach to protecting the nation’s farmland and rangeland,



TURNER FARM, MAINE

American Farmland Trust works actively with local and regional land trusts. In 2022, we partnered with Maine Farmland Trust, contributing significant funding to help protect 22 working farms.

**SUCCESS** | Our Pacific Northwest team celebrated a major win

in Idaho after Canyon County commissioners approved a 2030 Comprehensive Plan that, for the first time, contains strong provisions to protect farmland from Boise’s rapid development. Amid fierce opposition from the development community, our Idaho program manager David Anderson led an ambitious and ultimately successful grassroots campaign to pass the historic plan, an unprecedented victory for Idaho’s threatened farmland.

**W**hen we launched our program in Idaho, many people told me Idaho’s farmland was a lost cause and that it was too late to make a difference. Three years later, we are proving them wrong, and moving Idaho one significant step in the right direction. Canyon County will be an example for other communities in Idaho, and this movement will only continue building momentum.

— ADDIE CANDIB, PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGIONAL DIRECTOR

# Creating Climate Solutions

**The latest IPCC report from the world's top climate scientists confirms what many have observed in recent years: Climate change is already disrupting the world's supply of food and water, and those disruptions will get worse.**

But there is good news. Solutions exist within agriculture that have real potential to mitigate the crisis while helping people and the planet in other ways—if we act now.

Agriculture is not the only solution needed. However, it is a major one. When it comes to the climate benefits of healthy soil, extensive literature and hundreds of field experiments document the ability of regenerative farming practices to store more carbon in the ground.

American Farmland Trust is committed to making U.S.

agriculture become climate neutral or better by advancing the widespread adoption of a diverse set of regenerative farming practices that rebuild soil health, sequester carbon, and reduce emissions. This work is deeply intertwined with our other efforts to protect farmland and keep farmers on the land.

We must harness each of the opportunities available to us to solve the climate crisis. Our nation's farmers and ranchers have been, and will continue to be, essential partners who can help solve the climate challenges we face.



JESSE STRAIGHT OF WHIFFLETREE FARM, VIRGINIA

For America's farmers, climate change is a daily reality. The climate crisis threatens farmers' ability to nourish a growing human population while protecting our nation's air, water, soil, and biodiversity. To meet climate targets and build resilience against a changing climate, our efforts must involve conserving farmland, increasing the amount of carbon sequestered, and reducing agricultural greenhouse gas emissions.

**SUCCESS** | In an exciting win for climate-smart agriculture and Connecticut farmers, Governor Ned Lamont signed a state budget allocating nearly \$14 million to the state's new Farmland Restoration and Climate Resiliency Program, which awards grants to help farmers adopt climate-smart agriculture and forestry practices. The victory, thanks in part to the hard work of Working Lands Alliance—a project of American Farmland Trust—comes at a key moment when climate change is impacting farmers' ability to promote local food security.



**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust was awarded, as the lead partner, a \$30-million grant from the USDA Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities to transition the U.S. beef supply chain to carbon neutral. The eight-state project will help farmers adopt climate-smart grazing practices and expand the production of climate-smart beef at all market levels. We were also a major partner on four other winning proposals, including a \$25 million project to help Organic Valley advance climate-smart dairy and egg farms, and a \$90 million project that will

**H** *Healthy ecosystems are more resilient to climate change and provide life-critical services such as food and clean water. By restoring degraded ecosystems and effectively and equitably conserving 30 to 50 per cent of Earth's land, freshwater, and ocean habitats, society can benefit from nature's capacity to absorb and store carbon, and we can accelerate progress towards sustainable development, but adequate financing and political support are essential.*

— **HANS-OTTO PÖRTNER**, IPCC WORKING GROUP II CO-CHAIR

reach 28 states in an effort to produce grain and dairy products with quantified climate benefits.

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust gave \$1.5 million to farmers for soil and water conservation practices in depleted groundwater basins in the San Joaquin Valley, California, in partnership with area resource conservation districts and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The funds, coupled with on-farm assistance and



conservation planning, promote climate resilience and economic viability for farmers. Our coalition efforts also achieved significant victories in state policy and funding for farmland protection, drought resilience, and climate-smart agriculture.

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust expanded our national climate team by adding scientists with soil and climate expertise, including Bonnie Michelle McGill, PhD, as senior climate and soil health scientist, and Rachel Seman-Varner, PhD, as senior soil health and biochar scientist. One of their first efforts involves advancing sustainable biochar production as a climate-smart tool.

# Building Smart Solar<sup>SM</sup>

Solar energy is projected to supply us with as much as 45% of our electricity by 2050. This dramatic growth is driven by its low cost and state and federal goals to address climate change. Studies estimate the increase in solar development will require eight to 10 million acres of farmland with almost half located on our most productive soils producing food and crops.

Solar energy is an essential tool to reduce greenhouse gases, and solar leases can provide new income for farmland owners, helping to keep their farms viable. But solar development also threatens the high-quality land we need to grow food.

America needs both—solar energy and productive, resilient farms and ranches. American Farmland Trust's Smart Solar approach balances solar energy development, farm viability, and farmland and ranchland protection.



If done strategically, solar development can minimize the impact to high-quality farmland and rangeland. Even better, agrivoltaics—combining solar energy production and agricultural production on the same parcel—is growing rapidly and has the potential to be revolutionary. However, without proper planning, our best agricultural land may be lost, and climate targets could conflict with our goals to protect our natural and working lands.

AGRISOLAR CLEANINGHOUSE



MASSACHUSETTS ROW CROPS

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust released *Smart Solar* principles to guide new solar projects so they won't harm agriculture. First, direct solar development to where it has the least impact on land well-suited for farming—prioritizing solar on the built environment, brownfields, and marginal lands. Next, safeguard the ability for land to be used for farming with policies and practices that protect soil health. Third, grow agrivoltaics through research and demonstrations. Finally, consider the needs of landowners and the viability of farmers.

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust, Edelen Renewables, and Arcadia announced a partnership to combat climate change through solar energy development while protecting farmland and rangeland. *Farmers Powering Communities* advances community solar projects of 25 to 50 acres to provide green energy to those without access to rooftop solar. The partnership identifies the best land for new solar farms, establishes installations, and links them to local energy providers who provide the power to residents at costs lower than market average.

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust released *Smart Solar Siting on Farmland: Achieving Climate Goals While Strengthening the Future for Farming in New York*, a

practical, forward-looking, and consensus-building report that provides guidance to policymakers, farmers, solar developers, and others on how to expand solar energy generation while strengthening farmland protection and farm viability. As New York strives to meet ambitious renewable energy goals to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, demand is increasing for farmland to host utility-scale solar arrays across the state.

**SUCCESS** | The Midwest is ground zero for potentially demonstrating

how solar uses can be compatible with farming without endangering prime farmland. American Farmland Trust hired a Midwest Solar Specialist, Joel Tatum, who will play a key role in implementing our strategy at the intersection of solar energy generation and farmland protection, primarily in Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa. The New England team also worked to accelerate the expansion of renewable solar energy while maintaining New England's most productive, resilient farmland through several smart solar partnerships.

**SUCCESS** | Several states passed important legislation, advocated for by American Farmland Trust, related to solar energy installations on agricultural land. New York passed A9328,

USDA



VIRGINIA VINEYARD

# Taking Conservation Action

**Our planet's future depends on getting more farmers and ranchers to adopt regenerative practices that protect clean water and soil health.**

Regenerative practices such as no-till farming, cover crops, and sustainable grazing show real promise for the future. In addition to the climate-change benefit of sequestering carbon in the soil, better farm practices conserve water, minimize erosion, protect wildlife, and restore healthy ecosystems.

American Farmland Trust finds common ground between

agricultural and environmental interests in a comprehensive approach that protects clean water and healthy soil.

We help farmers adopt practical ways to care for the environment while operating viable family businesses. And we work with partners to offer training and guidance for farmers to learn about healthy soil and observe better practices in action.

**COVER CROPS ON AN INDIANA FARM**



INDIANA WILD MUSTARD

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust accepted the Partner of Conservation Award for our leadership in the Illinois Vermilion Headwaters Watershed to educate farmers about better practices and serve as a vital source of resources for the area. The Vermilion Headwaters Watershed is a 305,426-acre rural watershed where water from agricultural fields drains to the Illinois River and,



ILLINOIS

American Farmland Trust's Jean Brokish (left) and Kris Reynolds (right) accept a "Partner of the Year" award from the Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District, joined by Lee Bunting, district chair.

Farmers and ranchers care deeply about their land. But farmers have not always been quick to adopt the most innovative practices, in part because farming is so demanding, and farmers operate on slim profit margins. Any unsuccessful change in operations could mean ruin. Older farmers are also sometimes reluctant to change practices they have used their entire lives. And currently, 40% of American farmers are age 65 or older.

eventually, the Gulf of Mexico. Since 2015, American Farmland Trust has leveraged more than \$1.7 million to increase adoption of cover crops, reduced tillage, and other practices that decrease the amount of nutrients and sediment flowing downstream. We led the development of a nine-element watershed plan and hired a conservation technician to work one-on-one with watershed farmers.

**SUCCESS** | With regional partners, American Farmland Trust started the Virginia Grassland Bird Initiative, which works to stop the loss of grassland birds while improving the resiliency of working landscapes. We



also released new, groundbreaking research that outlines a holistic path forward for regenerative agriculture in Virginia. *Regenerate Virginia* outlines

an action plan to protect farmland, promote better practices, and help the next generation of farmers thrive.

**SUCCESS** | When the U.S. outlawed alcohol during Prohibition, Kentucky farmers stopped growing rye, a key ingredient in one of Kentucky's most iconic



KENTUCKY RYE



EASTERN MEADOWLARK

products—bourbon. As agricultural research compelled farmers to explore the benefits of cover crops, American Farmland Trust noticed an opportunity to revive rye. Recently, we launched the Kentucky Commercial Rye Cover Crop Initiative to capitalize on the synergy between Kentucky farmers, the state's bourbon industry, and the drive to slow the impacts of climate change.

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust's Genesee River Demonstration Farms Network showcased the impact

of soil regenerative practices on New York farms—managing more than 48,000 acres—with economic case studies, videos, and on-farm demonstrations. We helped train 20 New York practical soil health specialists to support farmers in making decisions for the health of their soil and their farm profitability. We also drove innovative approaches to improving stewardship on rented farmland to protect water quality in places like the Great Lakes.



MACAULEY FARMS, NEW YORK

A woman wearing a plaid shirt, jeans, and a cap is working with a wire fence in a field. She is leaning over the fence, possibly adjusting it. The background shows a clear blue sky and distant hills.

# Advancing Research and Policy

**American Farmland Trust remains a unique organization for our ability to explore and engage in an issue in multiple ways, including research and advocacy.**

Over the years, we have advanced state, local, and federal policy through research and grassroots efforts, while building and maintaining relationships with political leaders regardless of their party or the current Administration.

At the same time, our staff conducts well-regarded research internally and through partnerships with colleagues in universities,

government agencies, and research firms.

We use research to better understand ways to advance American Farmland Trust's mission and to determine the most effective policy approaches to overcoming obstacles. We also use research to evaluate the effectiveness of our on-the-ground work.

**KELSEY KAROL OF OUTLAW VALLEY RANCH, CALIFORNIA**



EDDIE COTTON, MISSISSIPPI

**SUCCESS** | When President Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act into law, it included a historic investment—nearly \$20 billion—to help producers protect their land and adopt climate-smart practices. Our sustained pressure and advocacy ensured that Congress understood this critical fact: farmers and farmland must be part of the climate solution. The Senate also included an additional \$3.1 billion in debt relief to farmers that are economically distressed and most at-risk of losing their farms, as well as \$2.2 billion for direct assistance to producers who suffered historical discrimination in federal farm loan programs prior to 2021.

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust organized 15 virtual Farm Bill policy workshops in the span of less than two months in each of our seven regions. Together, these events engaged over 300 participants in discussing potential Farm Bill opportunities and their experiences working with USDA programs. This process was invaluable in gathering ground-level insights for our Farm Bill preparations and generating investment into our future policy actions.



REBECCA DROBIS

TRIPLE H FARMS, NEW YORK

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust's Farmland Information Center (FIC) continued to support people working to protect farmland and

ranchland by providing technical assistance through a free answer service, educational resources, and policy research. This year, the FIC tracked farmland protection activity across the U.S. through surveys of state farmland protection programs and land trusts that protect agricultural land. The FIC also partnered with Purdue University to survey farmers and landowners who participated in the federal Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program, the precursor to the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP-ALE). To support ACEP-ALE implementation and help entities and landowners who want to participate, the FIC expanded the ACEP-ALE Toolkit on our website: [farmlandinfo.org](http://farmlandinfo.org).

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust released *Farms Under Threat 2040: Choosing an Abundant Future*, a report vividly



ANN SORENSEN

depicting how Americans can save up to 13.5 million acres of the nation's irreplaceable farmland and ranchland by embracing smart growth and minimizing sprawl. Using high-resolution spatial analysis tools to identify where agricultural land has been converted to residential land uses, the report demonstrates that development choices have a significant effect on the future of farmland and ranchland. It urges Americans to safeguard



ANDRIY BLOKHIN/ALAMY

VIRGINIA LAND FOR SALE

local farms and ranches, bolster the global food system, and improve peoples' daily lives.

**SUCCESS** | The Soil and Water Conservation Society awarded the prestigious Hugh Hammond Bennett Award in 2022 to Ann Sorensen, PhD, American Farmland Trust's longtime research lead and current senior advisor. The Hugh Hammond Bennett Award, the highest honor bestowed on an individual by the society, is given for extraordinary accomplishments in the conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources. Sorensen led research efforts at American Farmland Trust for nearly 30 years, including our groundbreaking series of projects on farmland loss in America: *Farming on the Edge* and *Farms Under Threat*.



# Boosting Women in Agriculture

**The future of agriculture is increasingly female.**

Forty-three percent of U.S. farmland—nearly 388 million acres—is now farmed or co-farmed by women. Many of these women have a strong conservation ethic and are deeply committed to healthy farmland, farm families, and farm communities.

Our national Women for the Land initiative works to address the gender and racial discrimination that women farmers and landowners often face when accessing financial, technical, and informational resources to support their farming operations.

American Farmland Trust believes that women can be ideal partners in protecting farmland and implementing regenerative practices on our working lands, and that we need to do more to reach them. Our Women for the Land Initiative is working to close these gaps.

CARRIE, ERIN, AND ELENA MARTIN OF FOOTPRINTS IN THE GARDEN FARM, NORTH CAROLINA

REBECCA DROBIS

Women farmers and landowners often face gender-related barriers to managing their land for long-term sustainability. And while women increasingly are the primary decision-makers on farms, they remain underrepresented in their utilization of federal and state conservation programs that support farm viability and better practices.



VIRGINIA LEARNING CIRCLE

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust significantly expanded our Women for the Land program in the Southeast. We hired a Southeast Program Manager, Nicole Gwishiri, to build relationships and expand our capacity. We partnered with the Black Family Land Trust to advance our work with African American women farmers and other historically underserved communities in North Carolina, Kentucky, and Virginia. And we found a groundswell of interest in programming that helps women access resources to support their ongoing stewardship of farmland.

**SUCCESS** | We celebrated the passage of California’s Women in Agriculture Resolution, championed by American Farmland Trust and sponsored by Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry. The first of its kind in the nation, the resolution cites women’s critical presence as farmland stewards, farm laborers, urban agriculture producers, and tribal producers. It notes that women-led operations are often marginalized, and it directs the California legislature to address the need for equitable access

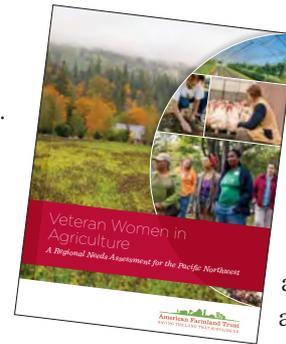


CALIFORNIA

American Farmland Trust’s Caitlin Joseph with Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry

to resources for women in agriculture.

**SUCCESS** | Our Veteran Women for the Land project—a partnership among American Farmland Trust, Farmer Veteran Coalition, and regional partners—hosted listening sessions, learning circles, and other educational opportunities to provide veteran women



in the Pacific Northwest with the skills and training to be successful in agriculture. The project conducted a regional needs assessment and developed educational materials to help farmland and ranchland owners understand the emerging solar development field and its potential to impact agricultural land.



OREGON LEARNING CIRCLE



CALIFORNIA LEARNING CIRCLE

*was in an interview with a disabled woman veteran of color who kept saying how important it was to be seen and to see people who look like her and can relate to her story. For women like her, seeing their journey and acknowledging their role in such a forum can go a long way in moving the needle forward to create a more equitable and just agricultural system. We know we have more work to do to create policy levers that can better support women and BIPOC women in their agricultural work.*

—**GABRIELLE McNALLY, PHD**, WOMEN FOR THE LAND DIRECTOR

A photograph of a man and a woman smiling and holding large bunches of kale. The man is wearing a green cap and a light blue shirt, and the woman is wearing a black top. They are standing in front of a green background, likely a farm.

## Supporting Next-Generation Farmers

**The U.S. is on the verge of a major shift in farmland ownership, with the future of farms hanging in the balance.**

More than a third of farmers are 65 or older. At the same time, there is growing interest from a new wave of farmers, who face barriers to finding affordable land.

Agricultural land values have risen across the country for decades, a trend that is just one of the barriers to land access for new and beginning farmers, especially those of color or without family land. Farmers on the margins continue to rely on rented farmland,

which often prevents them from making investments or planning into the future.

Efforts to help new farmers enter agriculture must be inclusive, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, or other personal qualities.

Although we still have a long way to go, American Farmland Trust is working toward a future where there are meaningful opportunities for everyone in farming and ranching.

The average age of the U.S. farmer is 57.5, and many farmers have no heirs to take over the family business. An estimated 371 million acres of farmland could be in transition in the next 15 years, due to the age of farmland owners. Much of that land could be lost to agricultural production unless we can find a way to get it to the next generation of farmers and ranchers.

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust, together with healthy meal delivery company Daily Harvest and the California Certified Organic Farmers Foundation, launched a multi-year partnership to extend assistance to historically underserved California farmers—especially Latinx and other farmers of color—while boosting the amount of the state’s farmland used to grow organic produce.



ALANIZ FARM, CALIFORNIA

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust’s Brighter Future Fund, powered by Tillamook Creamery, awarded



BETH McROBERTS

NIGHTFALL FARM, INDIANA

\$1 million in grants to over 200 farmers. The grants will help improve farm viability, enable farmers to access, transfer, or permanently protect farmland, and support regenerative agricultural practices. In 2022 the Brighter Future Fund prioritized support for farmers identifying as Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC), LGBTQ+, female, or beginning. The grants were awarded to farmers in 44 states as well as Puerto Rico.

**SUCCESS** | Farmland for a New Generation New York is a nation-

leading effort to connect farmers seeking land with farmland owners who wish to keep their land in farming. Our two-pronged approach included a comprehensive Farmland Finder website and a network of Regional Navigators who provide direct support to farmers and landowners. Since 2014, we have led programs that helped more than 250 farmers find land across New York.

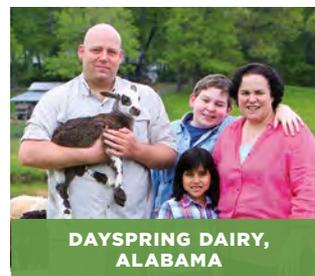
**SUCCESS** | Our New England Farmer Microgrants Program received over 350 applications and granted over \$462,000



IRIDESCENT EARTH COLLECTIVE, NEW YORK

**W**e appreciate our many supporters who made it possible for us to help more than 200 farmers across the country. These grants will improve the lives of farmers across America.

— **ASHLEY BRUCKER**, AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST’S NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR THE BRIGHTER FUTURE FUND



DAYSPRING DAIRY, ALABAMA

to 96 deserving farmers across six states. Now in its third year, the program addresses some of the key barriers faced by farmers in the region, including access to land.

# Spreading the Word

For more than 40 years, American Farmland Trust has spread a simple yet important message with our iconic *No Farms No Food*<sup>®</sup> bumper sticker.

America's farms provide an unparalleled abundance of fresh, healthy, and local food, but they are rapidly disappearing.

Today, we continue spreading this valuable message—and not just with our bumper sticker. Our efforts to reach the public have grown. Here are some of the ways we spread the word in 2022.

PRESTON KERES/USDA

JANET AND MARTIN RODRIGUEZ AT THE CORONA FARMERS MARKET IN QUEENS, NEW YORK

# AMERICA'S FARMERS MARKET CELEBRATION

**SUCCESS** | America's Farmers Market Celebration, presented by American Farmland Trust and Farmers Market Coalition, was our biggest event in years. More than 2,000 farmers markets across the country participated, while more than one million people joined in by voting and engaging with the celebration on the web and social media. We gave away over \$15,000 in prizes to benefit the winning markets. Since 2008, the celebration has



COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

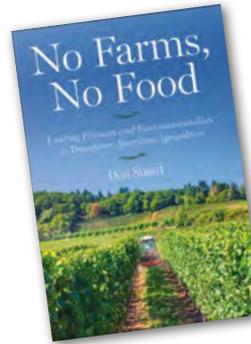
highlighted the important role that farmers markets play in communities and our larger food system.

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust launched a Diversity in Agriculture partnership with AGDAILY to showcase diverse voices in American agriculture. We sponsored interns to tell important stories related to social justice and economic issues. The partnership led to groundbreaking content, providing a place for perspectives on important issues such as Heirs Property.

**SUCCESS** | American Farmland Trust launched a new monthly podcast series, "No Farms, No Future," with Heritage Radio Network. Each episode illuminated a pressing issue faced by farmers and ranchers: How can we protect farmland against threats like development? How can we promote equitable access to farmland,

especially for BIPOC and female farmers? And why is farmland a solution to the climate crisis, but only if we get farming right?

**SUCCESS** | Since 1980, American Farmland Trust has brought farmers and environmentalists together to work for healthy land and a sustainable food system. We worked with Seattle author Don Stuart on his new book, "No Farms, No Food." Released by Island Press, a publisher of books about social change, "No Farms, No Food" traces the development of American Farmland Trust's powerful coalition,



which has been responsible for landmark achievements in protecting farmland and promoting better farming practices.

**SUCCESS** | Our series of Free Range Conversations gave people who are interested in our issues the opportunity to speak directly with American Farmland Trust experts and have questions answered live. The conversations delved into some of the most important issues facing



**H**ow do we continue to eat and continue to exist as a sustainable planet? American Farmland Trust is so important because the organization is addressing that closely related set of problems.

—DON STUART, AUTHOR OF NO FARMS, NO FOOD



CHRISTOPHER WILLIS/USDA

USDA SEC. TOM VILSACK

farmers and ranchers today. California experts answered queries about the deepening water crisis. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack joined to share updates on U.S. farm policy. And listeners learned more about the growing role of veteran women in agriculture.

**SUPPORT AND REVENUE**

Individual Contributions	\$21,832,282
Foundation Grants	3,517,894
Government Grants	7,886,662
Operating Investment Return	924,708
Non-Operating Investment Gain & Other	(6,195,968)
Donated Farm Property, Equipment & Other Contributions on Land Projects	1,330,137
Other Income	451,362
<b>Total Revenue and Support</b>	<b>\$29,747,077</b>

**EXPENSES**

National and Regional Programming	\$16,793,304
Public Education	3,706,407
Outreach and Communications	1,616,536
Other Programs	1,821,926
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>\$23,938,173</b>
Management and General	794,820
Fundraising	3,245,846
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$27,978,839</b>

**NET ASSETS**

Beginning of Year	\$57,336,000
End of Year	59,104,258
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$1,768,258</b>

*Complete financial statements are available upon request.*

# Summary of Activities

for the fiscal year ending  
September 30, 2022

BENNETT BRODALE ON HIS UNCLE'S FARM, IOWA

# 2022 by the Numbers

## PROGRAMS WITH PROVEN IMPACT

6,838,211

ACRES OF FARMLAND  
PERMANENTLY PROTECTED  
CUMULATIVE TOTAL TO DATE

2,904

FARMERS TRAINED  
OR OFFERED DIRECT SUPPORT,  
INCLUDING:

746

WOMEN FARMERS AND  
LANDOWNERS

408

UNDERSERVED  
FARMERS

## OUR ROLE IN THE CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE MOVEMENT

8,901

CONSERVATION  
PROFESSIONALS  
TRAINED

830

MEMBERS IN OUR  
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL  
LAND NETWORK

## A THOUGHT LEADER IN AGRICULTURE

4.5 billion

REACH SCORE

4,326

PRESS MENTIONS

1 million

SOCIAL MEDIA  
IMPRESSIONS



ORVILLE FISK HAY FARM, WASHINGTON

SHAWN LINEHAN



AMANDA CATHER AND MARK WALTER,  
PLOW AND STARS FARM, MARYLAND

# Contact Us

## NATIONAL OFFICE

1150 Connecticut Avenue NW  
Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20036  
(800) 431-1499  
[farmland.org](http://farmland.org)

## FARMLAND INFORMATION CENTER

(800) 370-4879  
[farmlandinfo.org](http://farmlandinfo.org)

## REGIONS

Addie Candib	<b>Pacific Northwest</b> Regional Director	acandib@farmland.org
Linda Garrett	<b>New York</b> Regional Director	lgarrett@farmland.org
Jim Habana Hafner	<b>New England</b> Regional Director	jhafner@farmland.org
Jamie Mierau	<b>Mid-Atlantic</b> Regional Director	jmierau@farmland.org
Kris Reynolds	<b>Midwest</b> Regional Director	kreynolds@farmland.org
Sarah Fulton-Smith	<b>Texas</b> Regional Director	sfultonsmith@farmland.org
Tom Stein	<b>California</b> Regional Director	tstein@farmland.org
Courtney Owens	<b>Southeast</b> Regional Director	cowens@farmland.org

## NATIONAL INITIATIVES

Brian Brandt	<b>Agriculture Conservation Innovations</b> Director	bbrandt@farmland.org
Cris Coffin	<b>National Agricultural Land Network</b> Director	ccoffin@farmland.org
Jerry Cosgrove	<b>Farm Legacy</b> Director	jcosgrove@farmland.org
Jennifer Dempsey	Director of <b>Farmland Information Center</b>	jdempsey@farmland.org
Nathan L'Etoile	<b>Farm Viability</b> Director	nletoile@farmland.org
Tim Fink	<b>Policy</b> Director	tfink@farmland.org
Erica Goodman	<b>Farms for a New Generation</b> Director	egoodman@farmland.org
Ben Kurtzman	Director of <b>Land Protection Projects</b>	bkurtzman@farmland.org
Gabrielle McNally	<b>Women for the Land</b> Director	gmcnally@farmland.org
Bianca Moebius-Clune	<b>Climate Initiative</b> Director	bmoebius-clune@farmland.org
Joy O'Shaughnessy	Senior Director of <b>Corporate Relations and Engagement</b>	joshughnessy@farmland.org
Michelle Perez	<b>Water Initiative</b> Director	mperez@farmland.org
Ethan Winter	<b>Smart Solar<sup>SM</sup></b> Director	ewinter@farmland.org

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Join us in the fight to save the land that sustains us. Visit [farmland.org](https://www.farmland.org).



  
**American Farmland Trust**  
SAVING THE LAND THAT SUSTAINS US