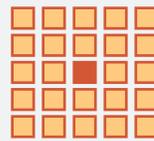


# Increase Support for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Farmers

American Farmland Trust (AFT) understands that achieving a resilient agricultural system depends on equity and inclusion for all groups who have been, and still are, marginalized. Social and racial injustices are entrenched in the history of our nation and our agricultural system, and we cannot fully appreciate either without acknowledging genocide, land theft, enslavement, and other injustices perpetrated against Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) groups. AFT supports policies that we believe will start to rectify the harm that systemic racism inflicted and continues to impact the lives of BIPOC across the region.

New England has a limited number of BIPOC farmers. According to the 2022 NASS Census of Agriculture\* there are 2,071 BIPOC farmers in the region. This is in comparison to the 50,252 farmers who identify as white. Of the region's BIPOC

NEW ENGLAND HAS A LIMITED NUMBER OF BIPOC FARMERS.



**For each  
BIPOC farmer,**  
MORE THAN  
**24 farmers**  
IDENTIFY AS WHITE.

ONLY 1,243 BIPOC PRODUCERS IN NEW ENGLAND OWN FARMS,  
IN COMPARISON TO 23,894 WHITE-OWNED FARMS.

farmers, only 1,243 of these producers own farms, in comparison to 23,894 white-owned farms.\*\* This stark disparity is a result of centuries of land and agricultural policies (including partition and tenancy in common law), planning practices, and other forms of systemic racism that have prioritized white producers.



\* Note: AFT recognizes that the 2017 NASS Census data may be limited in capturing data that accurately depicts the number of BIPOC producers in the state due to numerous factors, including the history of discrimination and distrust of USDA and NASS by many BIPOC producers.

\*\* USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2022 Census of Agriculture. Complete data available at [www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus](http://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus).

## Priorities

- ▶ Support and uplift policies and provisions developed by BIPOC-led organizations and farmers.
- ▶ Encourage State Departments of Agriculture or similar organizations to convene working groups aimed at building and strengthening relationships between historically marginalized producers and public officials, such as the CT Department of Agriculture’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Working Group.
- ▶ Direct priority assistance to BIPOC farmers to increase long-term land tenure. Such efforts would include but not be limited to:
  - Conservation easements, cultural respect arrangements, financing, legal support, collaborative partnerships, racial justice/ equity training for white-led organizations and municipalities, and granting of land to BIPOC producers and organizations.
  - BIPOC-led community-based farmer training programs.
- ▶ Implement the [Uniform Partition for Heirs Property Act \(UPHPA\)](#).
- ▶ Promote policies that increase land sovereignty and land repatriation for Tribal Communities and recognize traditional Indigenous land management practices as powerful tools to enhance climate resiliency and heal the land.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RHODE ISLAND FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

*A new field at Whitehorse Farm for Revelry Greens on Aquidneck Island, Rhode Island*

- ▶ Center and uplift the needs of those with the least access to land and resources in policies and programs (e.g., incentivize leasing to BIPOC farmers and prioritize funding). This includes offering compensation for BIPOC farmers to participate in the legislative process.

## Relevant New England Programming

- ▶ [New England Climate and Agriculture Program](#)
- ▶ [New England Urban Agriculture programs](#)
- ▶ [New England Farmer Microgrants Program](#)
- ▶ [Connecticut Working Lands Alliance](#)