We represent, mobilize and engage young farmers to ensure their success.
Network Building

Policy Change

Business Services
Land Access Program

Working to ensure farmland in America remains available, accessible, and affordable to farmers now and for generations to come.
Land Access Program

- **Trainings** – trainings & presentations for farmers & land trusts across the country.

- **Resources** – guidebooks, fact sheets, online land access affordability calculator tool.

- **Policy Advocacy** – working with partners at the federal, state and local levels.
Overview

- Who are young farmers? What are their land access needs?
- What is the context of land use in the United States?
- Why does it matter? What’s the urgency?
- What are the tools? What can we do about it?
Who are young farmers?
BUILDING A FUTURE WITH FARMERS
The majority didn’t grow up on a farm.

DID YOU GROW UP ON A FARM?

- Yes
  - I still farm there: 13%
  - I farm there and somewhere else: 3%
- No: 75%
  - I farm somewhere else: 9%
Young farmers are highly educated

- Bachelor's Degree: 55%
- Master's Degree or Equivalent: 14%
- Doctorate or Equivalent: 1%
- Less Than High School: 3%
- High School: 16%
- Associates or Technical Certification: 11%
The face of farming is changing

Women are leading the future of farming
The face of farming is changing

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES BY RACE

- WHITE: 87%
- MORE THAN ONE RACE: 5%
- HISPANIC OR LATINO: 2%
- OTHER: 2%
- BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN: 2%
- ASIAN, NATIVE HAWAIIAN, OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER: 1%
- AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE: <1%
Using sustainable practices

**How do you describe your farming practices?**

- **Sustainable**: 75%
- **Organic**: 63%
- **Holistic Management**: 31%
- **Integrated Pest Management**: 29%
- **Permaculture**: 23%
- **Conventional**: 16%
- **Biodynamic**: 16%
- **Other**: 8%
Growing on diversified operations & selling directly to consumers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>% of Total Respondents</th>
<th>Product with Highest Sales*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VEGETABLES</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIVESTOCK (TOTAL COMBINED)</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLOWERS</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POULTRY</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRUIT AND NUTS</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOGS</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEEF Cattle</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIELD CROPS</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAIRY: COWS, SHEEP OR GOATS</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HONEY</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSERY, FLORICULTURE OR GREENHOUSE CROPS</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHEEP</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMALL GRAINS</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER LIVESTOCK</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOREST PRODUCTS</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Debt & off-farm income

- 46% cite student loan debt as a significant challenge
- 61% work off-farm to supplement income

“With a pathway out of student loan debt, we could access the financing needed to buy our farmland.”

— Matt and May Williams
Wisber Farm Aurora, WI
The survey respondents currently farming (2,772) were presented with a list of potential factors impacting their ability to farm and were asked to respond to the difficulty each one has presented to them personally. They also selected which challenge was the most significant.

For current farmers, land access was by far the top challenge with 17% of respondents citing it as their most significant challenge. Student loan debt (10%), labor (10%), health insurance (8%), affordable housing (7%), and business skills and/or business planning (7%) were also among the top-ranked challenges.

Multigenerational farmers ranked labor, credit access, product prices, competition, and taxes as their most significant challenges more often than did first-generation farmers. First-generation farmers were more likely than multigenerational farmers to cite student loan debt.

Regardless of geography, experience, or family history, land access is the top challenge cited by young farmers today.
1. Cannot find land

2. Costs more than value of production

3. Can’t find with appropriate resources
LAND ACCESS IS A CHALLENGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY

14% 16% 11% 11%

PERCENT OF REGIONAL RESPONDENTS WHO CITED LAND ACCESS AS A SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE

NATIONAL YOUNG FARMERS COALITION EST 2010
**Land Ownership of Respondents**

- **Own Land Only**: 45%
- **Rent Land Only**: 34%
- **Both Rent and Own Land**: 20%
- **Neither Rent Nor Own Land**: 1%

**Comparative Acreages**

- **National Average**: 434 ac.
- **Survey Average**: 276.2 ac.
- **Survey Median**: 19 ac.
“I was farming in Little Rock, AR within the city limits. After five years of stewardship under a lease agreement, the property owner presented me with an ultimatum—buy the land at an unreasonable price or vacate. I chose to vacate.”

Ryan Boswell, Little Rock, AR
Survey Respondent
“Young and beginning farmers need to own the land they farm and have access to affordable farmland where there are people – not exclusively highly rural areas. This is vital to land health and regional food security.

This is the single largest issue facing us as first generation farmers.

Vegetable grower in PA, NYFC 2017 Survey
Farmers need land that is: available, accessible, appropriate, affordable, equitable, and secure.
AFFORDABLE LAND

– Farmers can make lease or mortgage payments on a farming income
– Land payments leave farmers with enough to invest in establishing business
– Accessible to *working* farmers

from Equity Trust
Building blocks of land access

• EQUITY

– Fair sharing of rights & responsibilities
– Farmer has ability to retain & recapture value from investments on the farm

from Equity Trust
• **LAND SECURITY**
  – Ability to develop & grow market for products
  – Provides opportunity to tailor business to location
  – Enables access to financing
  – Stewardship of land & buildings possible

*from Equity Trust*
1.9 billion acres of land in the U.S.
Developed land on the rise

Developed Land, by Year
Millions of Acres

- 1982: 71.9
- 1987: 77.9
- 1992: 85.2
- 1997: 95.9
- 2002: 104.9
- 2007: 111.1
- 2012: 114.1

- Large Urban and Built-Up Areas
- Small built-Up Areas
- Rural Transportation

Column totals may not exactly match sum over type due to rounding.
Over a third of land in the US is rented, mostly for use as cropland. This land is mostly owned by white, older individuals. 

“45% of landlords have never farmed.”

“25 million acres of ag land, approximately 2%, are in foreign ownership.”

Of all private U.S. agricultural land, white operators own 95% of farms, account for 98% of the market value, and operate 93% of the acres.
Within the next two decades, two thirds of U.S. farmland will need a new farmers.

- USDA Census 2012

In the next five years, 10% of agricultural land in the contiguous U.S. will change hands. Only 2.3% of that land is expected to be sold to non-relatives.

- USDA TOTAL 2014

Between 1982 and 2007, the U.S. lost over 23 million acres to development. Land was lost in every state and prime soils were disproportionately affected.

- American Farmland Trust
In 1951, if ag rents were the sole source of return from farmland, it could pay for itself in 14 years. In 2007, it would have taken more than 33 years.


The ratio of farm production value to farm real estate value is 16% – the lowest it’s ever been – $1 in real estate generated $.16 in production.

- Ag Economist, 2017

Farmland inflation rates have increased by nearly 150% over the past 15 years, rising to well over $10,000 per acre in some states.

- USDA TOTAL 2014
Challenges

Real estate values have doubled in the last decade.
Young, beginning farmers with $100,000 or more in income from farming are less likely to own their land compared to farmers of similar age who do not make as much for their farm businesses.

Source: USDA ERS Report, 2018
A Time of Transition

- Land is transitioning – who will own it?
- Farmers can’t afford to own the land
- Farmland is becoming increasingly consolidated and production is shifting to larger farms
- Land is a limited resource
- Real estate—who owns it and how it’s valued, matter:
  - Land and buildings accounted for 82% of farm sector assets in 2016
What can we do?

- Define values
  - Resource protection, farmer security, food security, food justice

- Understand needs—farmers need help:
  - Competing in the marketplace for land
  - Affording land on a farming income
  - Staying on the land
  - Retiring farmers need help leaving the land

- Determine what resources you have to help
What are the tools?

- Finding land & making connections
  - Events
  - Farmlinking & matching
  - Listing properties
  - Transition resources

- Help navigating the legal pieces
  - Farm Commons
  - Conservation Law Foundation
    - Legal Food Hub
  - Cost sharing
  - Transition resources – Annie’s Project
What are the tools?

- Navigating the financial component

https://findingfarmland.youngfarmers.org/calculator
What are the tools?

- Help affording on a farming income & getting land off the market
- Farmland conservation
- Working farm easements
- Incubator properties
- Ground leases
- Lease-to-own

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Open-market value</th>
<th>Value after rights sold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easement</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value after rights</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are the tools?

• Zoning
• Ag planning
• Thinking outside the ag box
  • Education
  • Affordable housing
  • Health care
Think about what resources you have to put towards this challenge

Help demystify the process as much as possible

Understand the history of land use and oppression

Be an active part of the conversation that reimagines the tools we have

Study how other countries manage their farmland resources
Individuals

- Vote for candidates who will change – make land access a political issue
- Join your local zoning board
- Join organizations like NYFC that are giving a voice to this challenge

- If you own land...
  - Consider selling it to a farmer
  - Give long-term security to a farmer
  - Consider putting a working farmland conservation easement on it
Policy Change

- Federal
  - Working farm easement funding & prioritization
  - Buy-protect-sell authorization in ACEP
  - FSA loan reform – direct farm ownership loan limit
  - CRP-TIP reform
  - Funding for 2501
  - Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grant for cooperative development
  - Tax reform – capital gains tax
Policy Change

- State & Local
  - Working farm easement funding & prioritization
  - Tax incentives for land and asset transition
  - Capital gains tax
  - Current use tax
  - Access to state and other public land
  - Support legislation that addresses partition of heirs property
CA FarmLink Website:
www.californiafarmlink.org/resource-library
Farm Commons Resources:  
www.farmcomomons.org

- Financing a Farmland Purchase: Legal Basics for Traditional and Non Traditional Purchases
  - Financing Farmland Through an Effective Land Contract, includes a model contract
  - Financing Your Farmland Through Personal Loans, includes a model promissory note.
Other Resources

www.landforgood.org

www.equitytrust.org
Reports & Resources:

www.youngfarmers.org

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