# ANNUAL REPORT 2014



Objective analysis. Constructive dialogue. Innovative ideas.

### OUR MISSION

Farm Foundation, NFP works as a catalyst for sound public policy by providing objective information to foster a deeper understanding of issues shaping the future for agriculture, food systems and rural regions. The Foundation does not lobby or advocate.



### Message from the President/Chairman

**Conversations come in many forms.** It might be as simple as commenting on the weather to a stranger, or exchanging pleasantries with acquaintances at meetings. But conversations are also powerful engines that can transform one question or comment into actions that drive change.

A Dialogue on Food and Agriculture in the 21st Century is a Farm Foundation initiative centered on conversations. The initiative began last year after Foundation Trustees grew concerned that constructive dialogue on food and agricultural issues was being displaced by destructive shouting and finger-pointing.

The Dialogue Project creates opportunities for stakeholders with a wide diversity of perspectives and viewpoints to have civil, constructive discussions of difficult issues. In the end, civil discussion may not yield 100% agreement, but the parties involved often walk away with respect for the opposing view and appreciation that they have more in common than they expected. We consider that a healthy first step toward building palatable solutions that address the concerns of all parties.

This process of sharing perspectives in a thoughtful and respectful manner is a cornerstone of the work Farm Foundation has pursued

since its creation in 1933. We strive to provide opportunities for public and private decision makers to gain objective information and diverse perspectives on timely issues. Armed with this information, decision makers are better able to make quality decisions on how to address the issues shaping the industry today and into the future.

As you will see in this report's discussion of Farm Foundation programs, the Dialogue Project's charge has manifested itself in diverse ways—all broadening the stakeholder base, broadening the exchange of ideas, replacing shouts with constructive dialogue and moving public and private decision makers toward innovative ideas that will help strengthen the future.

Over the last few years, the Foundation's leadership has spearheaded a shift in our operating model. We have moved away from grant-making to focus on maximizing the Foundation's strengths and capabilities in exploring the critical issues shaping the future of agriculture, food systems and rural America. This shift has lead to the development and execution of larger and more complex staff-led programs.

Two new staff additions this year are due, in part, to this programmatic change. In May 2013, Tim Brennan joined the staff as the Foundation's first Director of Development. He is tasked with building partnerships

with other foundations, NGOs, agribusinesses and individuals to support the Foundation's expanding portfolio of work. Allison Skare joined the Foundation staff in July 2013 as Program Coordinator, to provide leadership in the planning and execution of programs and projects.

As agriculture, the food system and rural America take on new challenges, Farm Foundation remains committed to the constructive dialogue and objective analysis needed to generate innovative ideas to meet the future.



Jay Armstrong Chairman Farm Foundation Board of Trustees

Jay Constrong



Neilson C. Conklin President Farm Foundation, NFP

Mits Clash



### The Leadership

At its inception, Farm Foundation's legal status was as a private trust. In May 2009, a not-for-profit corporation, Farm Foundation, NFP, assumed all programming and operational functions. Farm Foundation, NFP is governed by a six-member Board of Directors. The Farm Foundation Board of Trustees continues to have responsibility for overseeing the mission of the organization, the endowment and for naming members of the Farm Foundation, NFP Board of Directors.

#### Farm Foundation Board of Trustees, FY2014 (May 1, 2013 through April 30, 2014)

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\*\* Resigned March 2014

### Farm Foundation, NFP Board of Directors FY2014 (May 1, 2013 through April 30, 2014)

Jay Armstrong Armstrong Farms Chairman

Barry Flinchbaugh Kansas State University Past Chairman George Hoffman Restaurant Services, Inc.

Mark Scholl J&M Scholl Inc. Vice Chairman Joe Swedberg Hormel Foods

Neil Conklin Farm Foundation, NFP Ex officio member



Members of the Farm Foundation Board of Trustees and Farm Foundation, NFP Board of Directors include, standing from left: William Nelson, Gary MacDonald, Richard Morrison, Alan Kemper, Richard Crowder, George Hoffman, Cornelius Gallagher and Phil Ashcraft. Seated from left: Paul Hammes, Jerome Lyman, Barry Flinchbaugh, Steve Irsik, Mary Keough Ledman, Jay Armstrong, David Cleary, Mark Scholl, Carol Keiser-Long and Jack Odle. Farm Foundation, NFP Staff FY2014 (May 1, 2013 through April 30, 2014)

Neilson C. Conklin President

Sheldon R. Jones Vice President, Operations

Mary M. Thompson Vice President, Communications

Timothy P. Brennan Director of Development

Allison Skare Program Coordinator

Vicki R. Liszewski Assistant for Finance

Tom Macciaro\* Project Finance Analyst

Sandy Young\* Clerical Assistant

\*Part-time staff

Pictured clockwise from bottom left: Neil Conklin, Mary Thompson, Tim Brennan, Sheldon Jones and Allison Skare.

## Science, Technology and Trust

The Farm Foundation Leadership Workshop, initiated in 2013 as part of the Foundation's 80th anniversary celebration, is an opportunity for thought leaders to explore and exchange perspectives on evolving issues. The 2014 Workshop topic: Science, Technology and Trust in Today's Food and Agriculture System.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Dominique Brossard, a Professor of Life Sciences Communication at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, whose teaching focus is strategic communication with emphasis on science and risk communication. Providing industry perspectives were David Schmidt of the International Food Information Council, Steve Vernon of J.R. Simplot Company, and Jerome Lyman of McDonald's Corporation.

Key points from the discussion:

- Knowing the audience, their values and motivations, is important in communication.
- Consider how a message is framed. Framing a message around values may be a more successful approach than building it only around science. As one speaker said, "People don't eat technology."
- Trust matters, but fear of the unknown is critical.
- The way technology is described may be a bigger factor in communication than the technology itself.
- Crises need to be anticipated.
- Taste and price are top factors in consumers' food decisions, followed by health, convenience and sustainability.
- Consumers with little knowledge of food production practices may transfer trust to other players in the food supply chain, such as government regulators.
- Once destroyed, trust is very hard to rebuild.

### Program Summary



The primary product of Farm Foundation, NFP is comprehensive, objective information on economic and public policy issues in agriculture, food systems and rural communities. A non-advocacy organization, Farm Foundation brings people together to examine critical issues, discuss perspectives and options and, perhaps, find common ground on which to build acceptable solutions. Workshops, conferences and our Farm Foundation<sup>®</sup> Forums are among the tools we use to foster the constructive debate that is essential to sound public policy development.

Over the past year, a diverse mix of programs has developed as part of the Foundation's **Dialogue on Food and Agriculture in the 21**<sup>st</sup> **Century**. This multi-year initiative creates opportunities for a full range of

stakeholders—from producers to consumers—to deliberate on how agriculture will meet the needs of 9 billion people in 2050 while protecting the viability of natural resources. The Dialogue Project has four areas of focus: goals and priorities of North American agriculture; the role of science and technology in agriculture; adaptability and resilience in agriculture and the food system; and human capital needs in food and agriculture.

**Regional Influencer Conservations: FY2014** saw continuation of the Regional Influencer Conversations begun the previous year. These sessions bring together no more than 40 thought leaders from across the regional agriculture and food value chain. Participants may include farmers and ranchers, input suppliers, educators, health care professionals, economic development experts, representatives of NGOs, food retailers or government representatives—local, state or regional. The conversations challenge thought leaders to examine the big picture of issues shaping the agriculture and food systems in the years ahead, and identify key actions needed or concerns that must be addressed. The intent is for these discussions to help clarify the priorities of the citizenry for the nation's agriculture and food systems. The September 2013 conversation took place at Jefferson's Monticello. Input from that session, previous sessions in Burlington, VT, and Louisville, KY, and sessions planned in the year ahead, will be the basis for a national discussion on food and agriculture priorities.



The Soil Renaissance: What started as a conversation between two people at lunch has evolved into the Soil Renaissance-a national campaign to reawaken the public to the value of soil and soil health. At a meeting of the Dialogue Project Steering Committee, organic farmer Klaas Martens was joined at lunch by William Buckner, who has spent much of his professional career marketing crop protection products. Their constructive conversation identified their common interest in the intricacies of soil and the critical role of healthy soils in vibrant natural resource systems. That two-person conversation would expand to a conversation of 25 thought leaders, all of varied backgrounds but with a common interest in soil. Those thought leaders-organic and conventional farmers, input suppliers, conservation experts, researchers, NGOs and academics-walked away from a two-day conversation committed to building a strategic plan to address four key issues: how to measure soil health, how to understand the economic impact of soil health, research needs and education. The strategic plan was released in June 2014, and work groups have been organized to address the objectives outlined in that plan. Details are available on the project website: www.soilrenaissance.org.

Farm Bill Essays and the Farm Bill Reading Room: Farm Foundation has a long history in public policy education. The Foundation works to inform the debate as legislation is formulated, and to educate the public to the details of legislation when it has been finalized. Passage of the Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2013-signed into law in February 2014was a long and arduous process, heavily spiced with political maneuvering. As an objective organization that does not lobby or advocate, Farm Foundation focused its work on objective information and making diverse perspectives available to review. For the Farm Bill Essay project, experts were asked to write informational articles on selected Titles of the proposed legislation and highlight options and alternatives. These essays were posted to the Farm Foundation website for broad distribution. During the long debate on the proposed legislation, Farm Foundation maintained a Farm Bill Reading Room, posting news reports, analysis and opinion pieces so that interested parties could easily review the array of opinions voiced by the many stakeholders working to shape the final legislation.

### Sustainable Agriculture Educational Inventory Project

In recent years, a plethora of sustainable food and agricultural educational programs, projects and initiatives have been organized by community colleges, private colleges, universities and community-based organizations. Many different and innovative formats are evolving in these programs, yet unlike programs in the Land Grant system, no formal networks or standard formats exist for these new programs. Farm Foundation, NFP is leading a project to inventory these new programs. Information gained will be analyzed for trends, with a specific focus on understanding similarities and differences, including institution size, geographic location, and proximity to Land Grant

institutions. Information gleaned from this analysis will serve as a benchmarking and leveraging tool for non-Land Grant institutions. The second phase of the project is to build a database that will allow students, administrators and employers to assess program offerings. This project is funded in part by a grant from CHS Foundation.

#### Solutions From the Land:

This project focuses on the value of collaborative work among diverse stakeholders to develop land-based solutions to issues involving agriculture and forestry production, as well as natural resources management.



Extensive conversations among diverse thought leaders resulted in the March 2013 report, *Developing a New Vision for United States Agriculture, Forestry and Conservation*. The report identified five broad challenges around which future policies, practices and land management approaches might be constructed, and suggests options to address those challenges. Subsequent work with multiple stakeholders—farmers, ranchers, foresters, community leaders, wildlife enthusiasts, hunters and those interested in water quality—sought to encourage local stakeholders to build similar land-based collaborations and solutions for challenges in their locales. The United Nations Foundation and Conservation International helped organize the original project, with Farm Foundation and The Nature Conservancy. To take the project to the next level of development, an independent non-profit was created in 2014. For details, visit the SFL website, www.sfldialogue.net.

In addition to the Dialogue Project initiatives, work continues in the Foundation's major program areas—energy and agriculture; food, agricultural and trade policy; agriculture in the environment; food quality, safety and consumer perceptions, viability of rural regions; and agricultural and food system productivity, research and technology.



### Farm Foundation<sup>®</sup> Forums

Since 2006, Farm Foundation has organized these public forums to engage a full range of stakeholders in informed dialogue on food, agricultural and rural policy issues. The sessions are open to anyone interested in food, agricultural and rural issues. Topics examined in Forum sessions included:

- Food and Agriculture Issues in U.S.-EU Trade Talks
- Broadband Services in Rural America
- The Evolution of a Farm Bill
- The Future of Conservation Programs
- Implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act
- Geopolitical Uncertainty in Agriculture and Energy Markets

In FY2014, the majority of Forums were audiocast, allowing stakeholders across the country to participate in the live discussions. The audiocasts were made possible through a grant from Farm Credit. The session on the Food Safety Modernization Act was broadcast live on C-SPAN. More than 800 people viewed the archived video.

Forum participants examine issues, explore and analyze policy options and give voice to new proposals. Speakers provide brief topic summaries with the majority of the two-hour sessions devoted to discussion. Audio of all sessions is posted to the Foundation website after each Forum.





### Expanding the conversation with social media

Social media expands opportunities for communication and conversation in the agriculture and food systems. Farm Foundation, NFP uses Twitter to push the word out about events as they occur, and Facebook to encourage thought and discussion on timely issues.

The Foundation's blog, AgChallenge2050, provides thought leaders a platform for challenging ideas with new perspectives and viewpoints. Our YouTube site (www.youtube.com/thefarmfoundation) features interviews with program speakers, including Forum presenters.

All these tools expand the Foundation's ability to encourage and deliver constructive dialogue, objective analysis and innovative ideas.

### Farm Foundation® Round Table

A program of Farm Foundation, NFP, the Farm Foundation<sup>®</sup> Round Table is an invitational discussion forum comprised of agricultural and agribusiness leaders from across the food chain and across North America. These leaders meet twice yearly to examine current and developing issues. Programs are designed to explore ideas, analysis and insights that participants may use in their own work. Recent Round Table program topics have included: the politics, science and economics of public lands; competition for water resources; sustainable agriculture; trade issues; rural development; infrastructure; fostering innovation to feed the world; and the nexus of fossil fuels, renewable fuels and agriculture.

Farm Foundation has administered the Round Table since the 1983 retirement of its founders, Charles Dana and Edith Thoman Bennett. The Bennetts originally helped bring together a diverse group of agricultural leaders to advise the Eisenhower Administration on agricultural policy development. Recognizing the value of exchanging ideas and discussions on timely policy issues impacting the business of agriculture, the leaders continued to meet on an informal basis. Those meetings evolved into the Round Table.

Six graduate students from Land Grant universities were invited guests at the June 2013 Round Table meeting. Recognizing the value of the participation by these young people, the Round Table Steering Committee recommended formalizing the program.

Thanks to a generous grant from the CHS Foundation, up to six upper class or graduate–level students from accredited North American colleges or universities participate as "Cultivators" in each Round Table meeting. The students are selected from a competitive pool of applicants. Each student is required to present information about their specific area of study. Round Table members volunteer to serve as a mentor for each student, further broadening the interaction of students with the diverse professionals at the meeting.



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\* Duane Acker TALYCOED II Atlantic, IA

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# Audited Consolidated Financial Highlights (\$000s)

FINANCIAL POSITION:	A = :::   00, 0014		
ASSETS	April 30, 2014	April 30, 2013	April 30, 2012
Cash and equivalents	1,116	1,069	858
Receivables, net Investments (mkt.)	25 24,924	110 24,341	125 23,231
Prepaid expenses	7	17	11
Equipment, net	19	3	5
Total	26,091	25,540	24,230
LIABILITIES			
Accounts payable and accrued expenses Short-term grants payable	223	170	159 8
Deferred revenue	172	191	559
Total	395	361	726
NET ASSETS			
Unrestricted	25,663	25,179	23,504
Temporarily restricted Total	33 25,696	25,179	_ 23,504
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	26,091	25,540	24,230
ACTIVITIES:			
	Fiscal Year 2014	Fiscal Year 2013	Fiscal Year 2012
REVENUE			
	20.4	200	004
Contributions Program	294 320	388 802	224 560
Program Investment return	320 2,170		560 164
Program Investment return Other	320 2,170 1	802	560
Program Investment return	320 2,170	802	560 164
Program Investment return Other Satisfaction of program restrictions Total	320 2,170 1 11	802 2,685 - -	560 164 –
Program Investment return Other Satisfaction of program restrictions	320 2,170 1 11 2,796	802 2,685 - - 3,875	560 164 –
Program Investment return Other Satisfaction of program restrictions Total EXPENSES Program Management & general	320 2,170 1 11 2,796 1,411 901	802 2,685 - - 3,875 1,549 651	560 164  948 1,271 595
Program Investment return Other Satisfaction of program restrictions Total EXPENSES Program	320 2,170 1 11 2,796 1,411	802 2,685 	560 164 _ _ 948 1,271
Program Investment return Other Satisfaction of program restrictions Total EXPENSES Program Management & general	320 2,170 1 11 2,796 1,411 901	802 2,685 - - 3,875 1,549 651	560 164  948 1,271 595
Program Investment return Other Satisfaction of program restrictions Total EXPENSES Program Management & general Total	320 2,170 1 11 2,796 1,411 901 2,312	802 2,685 - 3,875 1,549 651 2,200	560 164 - - 948 1,271 595 1,866
<ul> <li>Program Investment return Other Satisfaction of program restrictions Total</li> <li>EXPENSES Program Management &amp; general Total</li> <li>INCREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</li> <li>CHANGES IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS Contributions</li> </ul>	320 2,170 1 11 2,796 1,411 901 2,312 484 44	802 2,685 - 3,875 1,549 651 2,200	560 164 - - 948 1,271 595 1,866
<ul> <li>Program Investment return Other Satisfaction of program restrictions Total</li> <li>EXPENSES Program Management &amp; general Total</li> <li>INCREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</li> <li>CHANGES IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS Contributions Satisfaction of program restrictions</li> </ul>	320 2,170 1 11 2,796 1,411 901 2,312 484 44 (11)	802 2,685 - 3,875 1,549 651 2,200	560 164 - - 948 1,271 595 1,866
<ul> <li>Program Investment return Other Satisfaction of program restrictions Total</li> <li>EXPENSES Program Management &amp; general Total</li> <li>INCREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</li> <li>CHANGES IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS Contributions Satisfaction of program restrictions Increase in temporarily restricted net assets</li> </ul>	320 2,170 1 11 2,796 1,411 901 2,312 484 44 (11) 33	802 2,685 - - 3,875 1,549 651 2,200 1,675 - - - -	560 164 - - 948 1,271 595 1,866 (918) - - -
<ul> <li>Program Investment return Other Satisfaction of program restrictions Total</li> <li>EXPENSES Program Management &amp; general Total</li> <li>INCREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</li> <li>CHANGES IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS Contributions Satisfaction of program restrictions Increase in temporarily restricted net assets</li> <li>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</li> </ul>	320 2,170 1 11 2,796 1,411 901 2,312 484 44 (11) 33 517	802 2,685 - 3,875 1,549 651 2,200 1,675 - - - 1,675	560 164 - - 948 1,271 595 1,866 (918) - - (918)
<ul> <li>Program Investment return Other Satisfaction of program restrictions Total</li> <li>EXPENSES Program Management &amp; general Total</li> <li>INCREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</li> <li>CHANGES IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS Contributions Satisfaction of program restrictions Increase in temporarily restricted net assets</li> </ul>	320 2,170 1 11 2,796 1,411 901 2,312 484 44 (11) 33	802 2,685 - - 3,875 1,549 651 2,200 1,675 - - - -	560 164 - - 948 1,271 595 1,866 (918) - - -

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Farm Foundation, NFP leverages its financial and human resources by partnering with private- and public-sector decision makers to explore challenges and opportunities. The Foundation blends its leadership with the intellectual capital of industry, government and academic professionals across the country to develop innovative approaches to address timely issues.

The Foundation's primary funding source is its endowment established more than 80 years ago by founders Alexander Legge and Frank Lowden. As demand for Farm Foundation's work grows, we expand our impact through an annual fund drive and project-specific funding.

Since its founding in 1933, generation after generation has protected and advanced the legacy of Farm Foundation. Building on the work of our founders, each subsequent generation has strengthened Farm Foundation in thoughtful and, at times, game-changing ways.

We acknowledge the generous support of all donors.

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