

Farm Foundation 2023 Impact Report



Measuring Our Impact in 2023

Farm Foundation leverages the power of collaboration between food and agricultural stakeholders to advance agriculture in positive ways. Our unique approach combines the trust and reliability of a “think tank” with the impact and urgency of a “do tank.” As we complete our 90th anniversary year, we are launching our inaugural impact report highlighting a few metrics and impact stories from 2023 along with highlights from our 90 years.

43 new Next Generation program participants, representing **21** states



4.5/5 program participant event satisfaction



Nearly **70%** of AG101 Bootcamp participants report a significant or transformational increase in understanding of key agricultural topics

Hosted **first** public gala celebrating **90** years



Relaunched awards series with **3** new industry recognitions



Established **national** alliance on mental health services



Held six Farm Foundation Forums, one with nearly **1,000** attendees



Hosted or spoke at **8** international in-person events



3750+ participants across virtual and in-person events across **34** countries



Broke ground
on new Innovation and
Education Center



Launched **2** new
programs: **AG101**
Bootcamps and
Field to Future



Grew donor base to
over **300**



182% growth in
social media audience
over four years



275% growth in
event participants
over four years



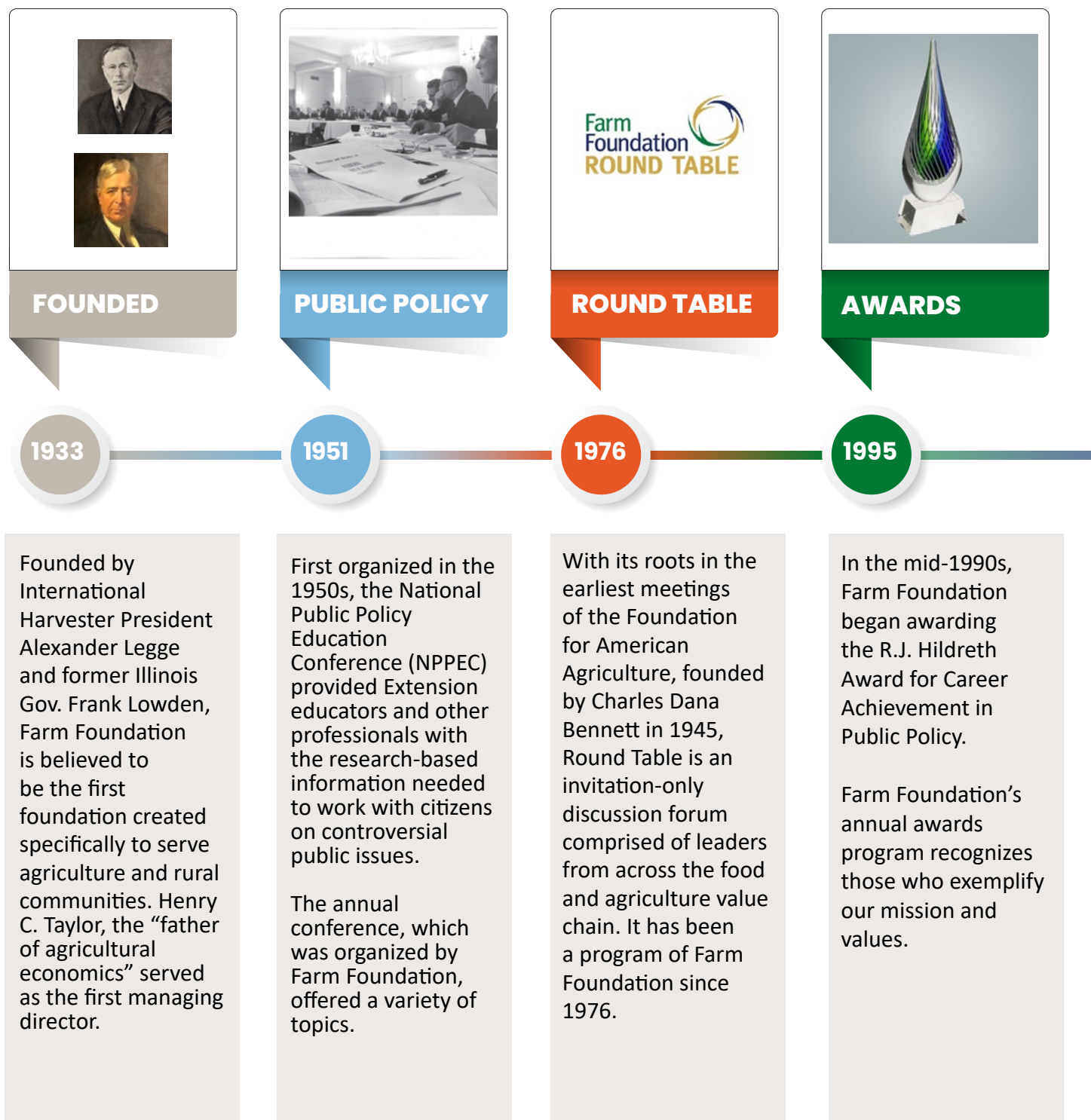
75% growth in
unrestricted donors
over four years



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90 Years of Farm Foundation Impact





FORUMS

2006

Farm Foundation® Forums are designed to engage a full range of stakeholders in informed dialogue on timely food, agricultural and rural policy issues.

In these public Forums, participants examine and discuss current policies, explore and analyze alternative policy proposals, and give voice to new proposals.



NEXT GEN PROGRAMS

2013

In 2013, Farm Foundation established its first Next Generation program, Cultivators.

In 2020, in partnership with the USDA Economic Research Service, we created the Agricultural Scholars program. That same year we launched the Young Agri-Food Leaders and Young Farmer Accelerator programs.



SOIL HEALTH INSTITUTE

2015

To address the importance of healthy soils, the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation and Farm Foundation partnered in 2013 to design and initiate the Soil Renaissance project.

The success of that initiative led to establishing the Soil Health Institute in 2015.



IEC

2024

The Innovation and Education Center will be a state-of-the-art facility for supporting a variety of uses, including gathering program participants to collaborate; community building and engagement; connecting food and agriculture; and providing unique and transformative event experiences that move people to action.

Keystone 2023 Event: 90th Anniversary

An Evening to Remember

Farm Foundation came home to celebrate 90 years of building trust and understanding at the intersections of agriculture and society, hosting its first-ever public gala on June 15, 2023, at The Drake Hotel on the shore of Lake Michigan in Chicago.



The Drake was an important meeting place in the early years of the organization, and provided a nostalgic and posh backdrop for the evening's celebration. In addition to celebrating with participants from across Farm Foundation's programs, the event provided an opportunity to host guests who had never interacted with Farm Foundation before, allowing them to sample the breadth and depth of our network and projects.





From top left: Farm Foundation Board Chair Dan Basse, President and CEO Shari Rogge-Fidler, and Board Member Jackie Joyner-Kersee greet guests; Guests place their bids on silent auction items; Guests enjoying the pre-dinner reception; Chicago's iconic Eli's Cheesecake provided the evening's celebratory dessert; During the auction, the heads or tails game brought the crowd to its feet; Next Generation program participants celebrated an evening to remember.

Facing page: The flower centerpieces echoed Farm Foundation's colors and were generously arranged and donated by The Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences and Joliet Junior College.

Keystone 2023 Event: IEC Groundbreaking



30 donors have contributed to this project to date

Chicagoland's First Food and Agriculture Innovation Hub Breaks Ground

Construction on Farm Foundation's first purpose-built facility, the Innovation and Education Center (IEC), got underway with a groundbreaking ceremony on August 18, 2023.

Nearly 100 attendees participated in the groundbreaking ceremony on Farm Foundation's new farm campus in Libertyville, Illinois. Speakers included U.S. Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois' 10th District, U.S. House of Representatives; Kurt Coffey, vice president of Case IH; and Dan Basse, Farm Foundation chairman. In attendance were also several members of the Casey family, who owned the centennial farm for over 140 years, some of whom also shared remarks about how meaningful the property was to their family.

The IEC will be a state-of-the-art facility focused on experiential learning opportunities about food and agriculture for local, national, and global audiences.

In sharing the vision for the Farm Foundation's farm campus and new building, Farm Foundation President and CEO Shari Rogge-Fidler said, "The seeds of this vision were planted nearly three years ago [...] We at Farm Foundation are rooted in the past as we look to our bright future. This site similarly has a rich history that will serve as a wonderful foundation for us as we advance our future through the Innovation and Education Center."

The 4,000-square-foot single-story building will enable Farm Foundation to bring its mission to life in new and transformative ways. It will feature an immersive multi-media room, gathering space, and a demonstration kitchen to facilitate small group gatherings and cooking demonstrations. It will also be Farm Foundation's new home, replacing the office currently located in Oak Brook.



773 community volunteer hours were logged on the campus in 2023



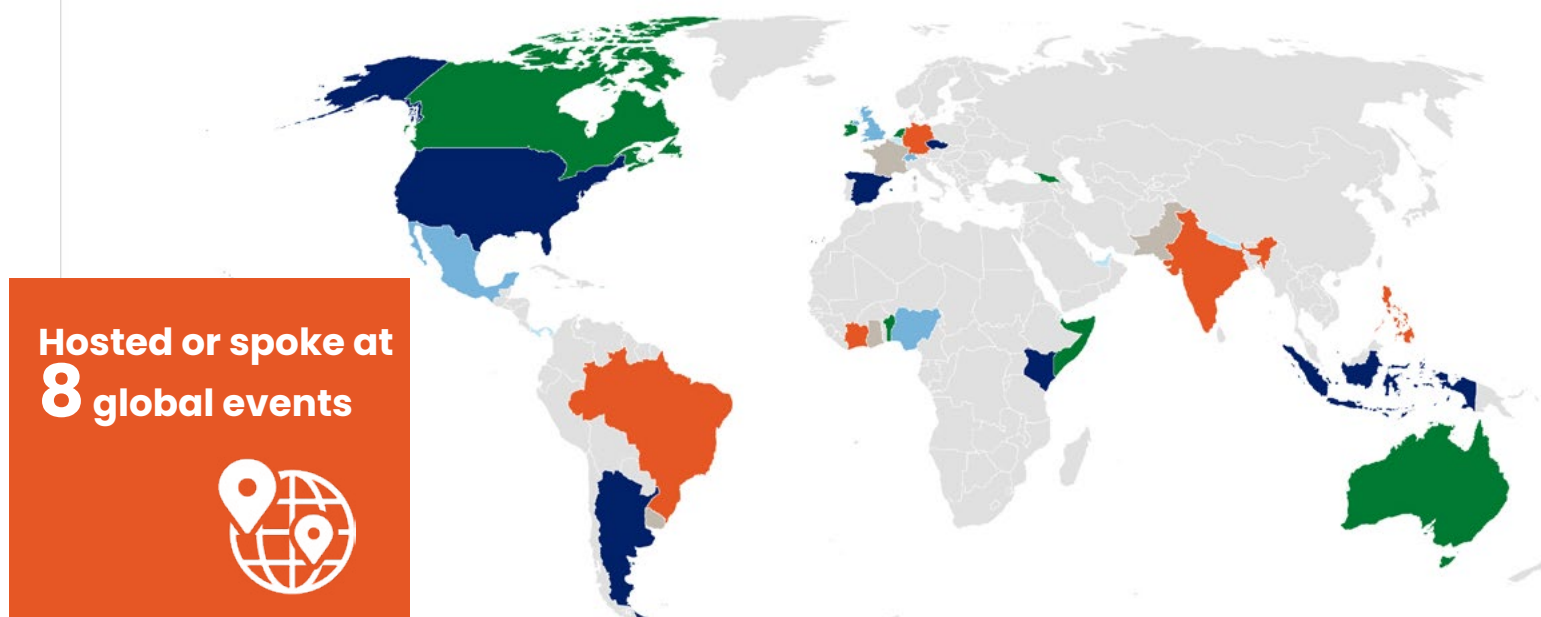


A wide cross section of Farm Foundation supporters came out to our farm campus in Libertyville for the IEC's groundbreaking. Pictured top right: Farm Foundation board members and Round Table Fellows dig into the celebration. Middle: Farm Foundation President and CEO Shari Rogge-Fidler inspires the crowd with the "why" of the project. Bottom left: Farm Foundation Board Chair Dan Basse provides context for the importance of the IEC. Bottom right: Next Generation program participants and Todd Price, vice president of the IEC, check out the artist's rendering.

[Learn more](#)



Impact Story: Global Footprint



Farm Foundation Global Footprint Extends to 34 Countries in 2023

FARM FOUNDATION IMPACT: In 2023, we expanded our impact on agriculture to a variety of stakeholders globally. We reached over 3,750 participants in 34 countries through our virtual and in-person programs, as shown above. We also hosted or presented at eight events outside the U.S.

Delivering our Farm Foundation Forums through a digital platform has allowed us to reach more stakeholders globally than ever before, building trust and understanding about agriculture. We also continued besting our participation records, with 953 registrants for the September Forum on the farm bill. In 2024, we will be hosting an in-person Forum in Washington, D.C. later in the year ahead of the election.

Our project work with the USDA also has expanded our reach as we worked together on trade and sustainability issues impacting agricultural supply chains such as packaging regulation and deforestation free supply chains. Farm Foundation convened stakeholders in France, Belgium, and Finland on this work. We worked with the USDA to advance understanding of U.S. agriculture abroad on issues that matter to farmers and ranchers.

Facing page, top: GFFPI members present at the Forum for the Future of Agriculture in Brussels. Bottom: Martha King, Farm Foundation vice president of programs and projects, co-hosted the “Carbon farming in France and the United States, between hope and reality” event in Paris with the agridéas think tank.

[Learn more](#)



The Global Forum on Farm Policy and Innovation (GFFPI), our collaboration with other independent organizations like ours, focused its work on trade and sustainability, holding its first workshop in partnership with OECD in Paris in October 2023. The insights from that gathering are published in a report, *Advancing the Role of Trade and Agricultural Sustainability*. Enhancing food systems and trade through outcomes-based approaches to sustainability, and intensifying global cooperation in support of coherent policies and a global framework for sustainable agriculture are two key points highlighted in the report. GFFPI is moving toward plans for its second workshop in 2024.

In conjunction with our partner, Solutions from the Land, Farm Foundation's CEO participated in a farmer delegation to Dubai for the 2023 UN Climate Conference (COP28). The farmers gathered each morning to highlight key events where farmers should be present and to hear feedback on the negotiation processes, with the opportunity for feedback and input.



2023 Farm Foundation Events

- Forum: Greening the Fertilizer Industry
- Conference at Virginia Tech: Agricultural Productivity Growth: Measurement, Drivers, and Climatic Effects
- Forum: Water Rights and Policy in Agriculture Today
- Part of U.S. Delegation to Brussels for "The Future of Packaging: Innovations and Challenges in Advancing Sustainability"
- Forum: Ownership and Investment in U.S. Farmland
- Forum: What to Expect From the Farm Bill Now
- Event at U.S. Embassy in Paris: Carbon farming in France and in the United States, between hopes and realities
- Virtual conference: U.S. Farm Households' Social and Economic Needs and the Future of Agriculture
- Building Beta Data Management Protocols for Soil Carbon GHG Quantification virtual "event storming"
- EU Deforestation Regulation Lunch and Breakfast Roundtables in Brussels
- Inaugural October 26-27 GFFPI workshop on trade and sustainability
- Forum: Innovation in Gene Editing and Plant Breeding: A Look at Scientific Advancement and Consumer Perspectives in Food and Agriculture
- Forum: Defining Sustainability: Industry Leaders on Actionable Goals

Impact Story: AG 101 Bootcamps

New Program Launches to Educate Food and Ag Sector

FARM FOUNDATION IMPACT: Intimate and intensive program unlocks key agricultural topics for professionals in the food and ag value chain, creating immediate and actionable growth in understanding that will help them in their career and in their ability to support agriculture.

Launched in mid-2023, AG 101 Bootcamps focus on accelerating participant understanding in five broad subject areas related to agriculture. Farm Foundation determined that individuals professionally involved in the food and ag sector, from all levels of the organization, might not have a fine-grained understanding of certain topics or even first-hand experience with agriculture.



Nearly 70% of AG101 Bootcamp participants report a significant or transformational increase in understanding of key agricultural topics



To help fill this critical gap, over a day and a half AG 101 Bootcamps participants learn about the production ag sector, soil health and climate, food and ag policy, innovation and investment, and the future of food and ag.

Critically, the closed small-group setting and instruction provided by farmers and other first-order professionals in the field allows participants an unparalleled opportunity to deeply engage with the subject.

Each bootcamp features customizable learning modules tailored to the group, as well as in-field learning opportunities, and networking time on our beautiful farm campus.

[Learn more](#)



Impact Story: Farm Foundation Awards



Revitalized Award Program Kicks Off New Decade



FARM FOUNDATION IMPACT: Expanding the portfolio of Farm Foundation awards with three new recognitions creates additional pathways for leaders not already involved with our programs to connect with our network and projects.

Farm Foundation's annual awards program recognizes those who exemplify our mission and values. In its first decade, the award program recognized 10 leaders in public policy education. After a hiatus, the awards program has been revitalized for a new era. Awards were presented at the 90th Anniversary Gala at The Drake Hotel in Chicago.



The R.J. Hildreth Award Public Policy Award was expanded to include those in the field of public policy, through government service, as educators, or those researching agricultural policy. The 2023 recipient was Round Table Honorary Life Fellow Joe Outlaw, Regents Fellow, Professor, and Extension Economist, Texas A&M.

Three new awards joined the roster in 2023. **The Farm Foundation Innovator of the Year Award** recognizes a change maker that is an integral part to solving some of the most influential challenges we face today in the agriculture and food industries. The 2023 recipient was Philip "PJ" Haynie III, owner and CEO of Haynie Farms and Arkansas River Rice (pictured top left).

The Farm Foundation Emerging Leader Award recognizes an emerging young leader who is on the trajectory to make transformational change within the agriculture and food sectors. The 2023 recipient was Emily Metz, president and CEO of the American Egg Board (pictured bottom left).

The Farm Foundation Transformational Leadership Award honors an individual who has demonstrated innovative and transformational leadership in food and agriculture. The 2023 recipient was John Foraker, co-founder and CEO of Once Upon a Farm.

[Learn more](#)



Impact Story: Round Table

A Venerable Program Stays Fresh and Energized

FARM FOUNDATION IMPACT: Beyond world-class programming, the Round Table affords a non-partisan, off-the-record, invitation-only environment which engenders a rich and deep discussion of topics unlikely to be achieved anywhere else in the industry. It also offers an unparalleled networking opportunity, especially for guests and Farm Foundation Next Generation participants.

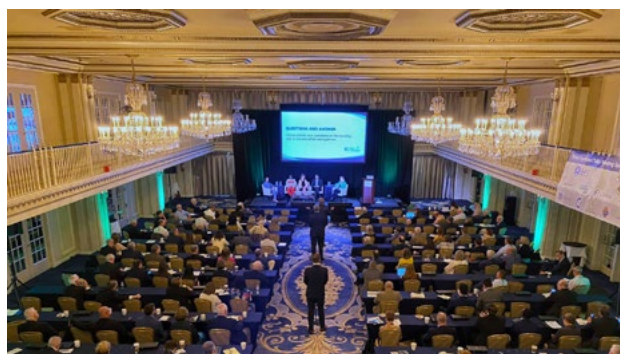
Closely tied to our 90-year reputation as a respected and trusted think tank, the Farm Foundation Round Table is our premier program. The twice-yearly gathering of top industry leaders across food and agriculture features high-quality speakers in a new venue for each meeting. Moving the location allows participants to experience new local agricultural enterprises firsthand through a day of tours and provides context for the meeting's theme.

The January Round Table, held in Savannah, Georgia, focused on international trade. Farm Foundation was honored to host U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack as the keynote speaker, as well as four former Secretaries of Agriculture, including Dan Glickman, Mike Johanns, Ed Schafer, and Ann Veneman (pictured top right). The five held a candid fireside chat, which delighted the audience with its candor and insight. The June Round Table, held in Chicago, coincided with Farm Foundation's 90th anniversary celebration and focused on the future of food and agriculture.

In 2023, we saw a remarkable growth in sponsorship for Round Table, driven by the hire of a dedicated manager of annual giving. The interest from industry illustrates the intrinsic value of the event. In addition, sponsors have been so impressed with Farm Foundation's mission and vision after attending a Round Table that several have pursued additional and deeper ways to partner with us.



**4.5/5 Program
Participant Event
Satisfaction**



**Attracted 15
Sponsors**



Impact Story: Next Generation Programs

Providing a Seat at the Table

FARM FOUNDATION IMPACT: The suite of Farm Foundation Next Generation programs is differentiated in the ag industry through peer-to-peer learning, long-term relationship building, meaningful engagement opportunities with senior leaders, and access to a diverse, multi-stakeholder, multi-generational network that fosters meaningful, lifelong connections and valuable development opportunities.

Farm Foundation Next Generation programs give participants an opportunity to affirm their career choice while forging durable connections with each other and the food and ag industry. In 2023, Farm Foundation Next Generation programs served **43 participants**, representing **21 states** and **16 universities**. The overall 2023 cohort also identified as **46% female** and **46% BIPOC**.

Young Farmer Accelerator and Young Agri-Food Leaders

Road trip through Illinois to attend the 2023 Farm Progress Show in Decatur. On the way, they stopped for tours of our Innovation and Education Campus in Libertyville, Historic Wagner Farm in Glenview, Elawa Farm Foundation in Lake Forest, and the University of Illinois Student Sustainability Farm in Urbana. Participants also met monthly via Zoom and attended the June Round Table meeting.



Agricultural Scholars

Attended January Round Table meeting, Ag Outlook Forum, June Round Table meeting, Agricultural & Applied Economics Association annual meeting, the European Association of Agricultural Economists Congress in Rennes, France, a roundtable discussion on carbon farming at the U.S. Embassy in Paris, attended the World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) briefing, and gave capstone presentations at USDA ERS Kansas City office.



Cultivators

Presented at the January and June Round Table meetings.



[Learn more](#)



Impact Story: Data Interoperability

Continuing the Collaborative Work of Fixing the Soil Health Tech Stack

FARM FOUNDATION IMPACT: Farm Foundation with its partners developed a fully digital event storming/hackathon model which democratizes and widens access to the process. It has been applied to several information flows, including soil health data interoperability.

To assist USDA in initial designs for their “Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Quantification Program,” Farm Foundation and its partners hosted the Building Beta Data Management Protocols for Soil Carbon GHG Quantification virtual “event storming” on October 24, 2023. The goal was to form a community-led understanding of data management surrounding the measurement of soil carbon content and to identify common pain points. The resulting post-event report (see QR code) is in use by the National Resources Conservation Service.



One of the resulting Miro boards with virtual sticky notes.

[Learn more](#)



Impact Story: Agricultural Economics Fellow

Sustainability in an International Context Focus of Ag Econ Fellowship

FARM FOUNDATION IMPACT: The Farm Foundation Agricultural Economics Fellowship nurtures an early-career ag economist, while their expertise enriches Farm Foundation programs and projects.

Dr. Trey Malone, an agri-food economist on faculty at the University of Arkansas, served as the 2023 Farm Foundation Agricultural Economics Fellow for Sustainable Food Systems. His dynamic year included several trips to Europe to engage in various dialogues. He presented on perceptions of sustainability at the European Association of Agricultural Economists (EAAE) Congress in Rennes. After attending the inaugural GFFPI workshop in Paris, he cowrote the *Advancing the Role of Trade and Agricultural Sustainability* report. He also cowrote the Farm Foundation Issue Report, *Limited Understanding and Differing Perceptions of Agricultural Sustainability Point to the Need for More Consumer Education*, which provides an overview of the lexicon of sustainable agriculture.



Trey Malone speaking at EAAE.

Impact Story: Farm Family Wellness Alliance

Joining Forces to Support Farmer Health

FARM FOUNDATION IMPACT: Farm Foundation gathered a landmark coalition of agriculture and farmer-serving organizations to be able to launch free, anonymous, national access to online mental health and wellbeing services for farm families nationwide.



Farm Foundation has been working towards the goal of improving farmer access to mental health and other wellness services for several years, with the Farm Family Wellness Alliance pilot starting in 2020 after the derecho in Iowa. A desire to expand services nationwide at no cost to farm families led to a focused search for partners in this effort. As 2023 came to a close, the Farm Family Wellness Alliance coalition included Farm Foundation, American Farm Bureau Federation, Farm Credit, CoBank, Iowa Farm Bureau, CHS, Land O'Lakes, National Farmers Union, 4-H, FFA, Agriculture Future of America, Togetherall, and Personal Assistance Services. This made it possible to launch national services in January 2024 at the American Farm Bureau Federation convention.

[Learn more](#)



Impact Story: Farm Foundation Seeders

Growing Our Network of Partners

FARM FOUNDATION IMPACT: The Seeders program provides corporations and foundations a path to meaningful engagement with Farm Foundation. Seeders meet for quarterly discussion summits, serve as mentors to Next Generation participants, and speak at Farm Foundation events. The program has fostered greater collaboration on program and project work, as well as provided Farm Foundation with unrestricted resources.



[Learn more](#)



Message from Leadership

A Vision for the Next 10 Years

As we wrap up our 90th year, we are casting our vision for the impact we want to have by our 100th anniversary. We are experiencing a time of energy, growth and momentum and hope that as you have reviewed this impact report, you might be inspired to join us!

Farm Foundation's vision is to build a future for farmers, our communities, and our world. Our mission is to build trust and understanding at the intersection of agriculture and society. As a 501 (c)(3), non-profit, non-partisan organization, we accelerate practical solutions for agriculture using three key levers: education, policy, and innovation. We do this by bringing together diverse leaders and organizations to increase understanding, trust, and action.

Accelerating people and ideas is at the heart of our theory of change. People are the change agents and they are fueled by powerful ideas supported by a rich and passionate community. As you have seen throughout this impact report, the people involved in our programs create a rich, lifelong community for engagement, support, and collaboration. A core part of our impact is through affecting people, adding to their network, understanding, and opportunities.

Looking at the next ten years, we anticipate continuing to grow our impact. It can be hard to pinpoint the future, but here is some of what we anticipate to achieve in the years to come:

- Upon the completion of the Innovation and Education Center, we expect this dynamic cutting-edge space for collaboration will inspire new projects and programs, such as our AG 101 Bootcamps.
- Our people programs are at the core of who we are and what we do, so we will keep investing in the people leading our food and agriculture sector.
- We look forward to increasingly robust partnerships with agricultural organizations around the world as we seek to find actionable solutions to our shared challenges and collaborate on mutual opportunities.

We hope that you will come to us with your ideas and questions, and will see Farm Foundation as a trusted colleague as we all pursue an ever brighter future for agriculture.



Dan Basse
Chair
Board of Directors

Shari Rogge-Fidler
President and CEO
Farm Foundation

About Farm Foundation

Moving With Speed, Purpose, and Agility

Farm Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit with a fiercely nonpartisan approach. This means we are uniquely able to address issues with objectivity and inclusivity, bringing together diverse perspectives from influential people and organizations to discuss and develop solutions.

Our Mission: To build trust and understanding at the intersections of agriculture and society. We provide the necessary space for agriculture to respond to the evolving needs of the communities we serve, and for those communities to understand and support the essential work of those throughout the food and ag value chain.

Our Vision: To build a future for farmers, our communities and our world. We believe that building a future for our communities and our world starts with building a future for farmers. We move with purpose to help farmers preserve their critical role in providing food, fiber, and fuel while enhancing efficiency, productivity, and profitability.

Farm Foundation Board of Directors



Left photo, from top left: David Gilmore, Deere & Co.; Dan Basse, AgResource Co.; Todd Van Hoose, Farm Credit Council; Brad Lubben, University of Nebraska; Jimmy Kinder, Kinder Farms; Todd Price, Farm Foundation; John Foltz, The Ohio State Univ. (retired); Shari Rogge-Fidler, Farm Foundation; Steve Coulter, Koch Agronomic Services; Sylvester Miller II, FMC; Mike Torrey, Michael Torrey Associates; Mary Snapp, Microsoft Philanthropies; Kristin Kroepfl, Quaker North America; Christine Hamilton, Christiansen Land and Cattle; Gregg Hillyer, Progressive Farmer; Michael Doane, The Nature Conservancy.

Not pictured: Cheri De Jong, Natural Prairie Dairy & AgriVision Farm Management; Andrew LaVigne, American Seed Trade Association; Chuck Ahlem, Charles Ahlem Ranch; Jewel Bronaugh, Former United States Deputy Secretary of Agriculture; Angela Caddell, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad; George Hoffman, Restaurant Services Inc.; Mike Johanns, Former United States Secretary of Agriculture; Robert Jones, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Jackie Joyner-Kersey Foundation; A.G. Kawamura, Orange County Produce; Thayne Larson, Bestifor Farms; Klaas Martens, Martens Farm and Lake View Organic Grain; Cristina Rohr, S2G Ventures; Nathan Rudgers, Farm Credit East; Ryan Schohr, Schohr Ranch.

Farm Foundation Staff



Right photo, from left: Naomi Millán, Marketing and Communications Manager; Jenna Wicks, Programs Manager; Morgan Craven, Senior Manager, Events; Katie Merkle, Programs and Events Specialist; Amanda Martin, Ph.D., Manager of Annual Giving; Martha King, Vice President, Programs and Projects; Shari Rogge-Fidler, President & CEO; Ellen Prather, Marketing and Design Coordinator; Amy Keane, Vice President, Finance; Tim Brennan, Vice President, External Relations; Elizabeth Wilkin, Administrative Associate; Todd Price, Vice President, Innovation and Education Campus.



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Ways to Connect

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