



**President and Chief Executive Officer
Position Specification**



Overview

We bring people together to move agriculture forward. For more than 90 years, Farm Foundation has brought leaders together to build trust, expand understanding, and advance practical solutions.

Farm Foundation is an independent, nonpartisan organization invested in building a vibrant future for food and agriculture. We've been a trusted place for leaders across the sector to exchange ideas, challenge perspectives, and build understanding. **Today, that role is more important than ever.**

Agriculture is evolving quickly, shaped by changing markets, innovation, policy, and global pressures. The challenges are complex and interconnected. Progress depends on people working across differences with clarity, trust, and a shared commitment to solutions.

That's where Farm Foundation comes in. Farm Foundation's **purpose and mission** is to build trust and understanding at the intersections of agriculture and society through leveraging non-partisan objective dialogue, information and training, catalyzing solutions, and creating multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Farm Foundation creates impact by convening leaders across agriculture to engage in informed policy dialogue, build trust across differences, and develop current and future industry leaders. By grounding conversations in research and lived experience, the organization helps turn insight into action.



History

[Our History](#)

Leadership

[Board of Directors](#)
[Executive Team](#)

Financial

[Form 990 2024](#)

Impact Report

[2025 Annual
Impact Report](#)

The Position

Title	President & Chief Executive Officer
Location	Chicagoland (Libertyville, IL) or remote
Reports To	Board of Farm Foundation and Board of The Legge Lowden Farm Foundation Trust
Staff	~10

Position Summary For more than 90 years, Farm Foundation has served as a trusted, nonpartisan organization focused on advancing dialogue, understanding, and leadership across food and agriculture. Through its convenings, leadership programs, and industry relationships, the Foundation brings together stakeholders from across production agriculture, agribusiness, academia, government, and more to explore issues affecting the future of the sector.

Farm Foundation is well-positioned to build on its legacy and expand its impact. In recent years, the organization has expanded its programming, partnerships, and reach. Going forward, there is an opportunity to sharpen its strategic focus and reinforce its role as a trusted convener. The next President & CEO will work closely with the Board, industry-leading Round Table Fellows, staff, and stakeholders to help shape that direction while ensuring the organization remains relevant, financially sustainable, and aligned with its mission.

As the organization's chief executive and primary external representative, the President & CEO will work across the agricultural ecosystem to build relationships, convene diverse perspectives, strengthen organizational sustainability, and advance Farm Foundation's role as a trusted forum for dialogue and leadership development.

The ideal candidate will be a collaborative and externally engaged leader with sound judgment, strong communication skills, and an appreciation for the diverse perspectives that shape food and agriculture. This is an opportunity to lead a respected organization as it defines its next chapter and continues to serve as a trusted resource for the agricultural community. Extensive travel is required.

Role & Responsibilities

- ✦ In partnership with the Board of Directors, drive the strategic direction of the Farm Foundation in pursuit of the organization's mission.
- ✦ Increase awareness of and support for Farm Foundation's mission and programs through public events, media opportunities, and partnerships, including serving as the organization's national spokesperson.
- ✦ Expand existing partnerships and develop new partnerships and opportunities to fulfill Farm Foundation's mission, including appropriately expanding fundraising.
- ✦ Broad knowledge of public policy issues related to food, agriculture and rural communities.
- ✦ Develop an annual business plan and related budget and regularly report to the Board of Directors and Trustees on programmatic accomplishments and financial performance, including accurate monthly financial reporting in accordance with GAAP.
- ✦ Ensure programmatic excellence and rigorous evaluation of quality, including attention to the Foundation's commitment to objectivity and non-advocacy.
- ✦ Lead and coach the Foundation staff in carrying out programs. Maintain an effective performance evaluation system to support employee development and performance.
- ✦ Work closely with the Board of Directors and the Trustees to determine strategic direction for the organization, including the identification of future programming opportunities and appropriate funding sources.
- ✦ Work with the Board of Directors and the Trustees to assure that the governance, organizational structures and business operations serve the long-term mission of the Foundation.
- ✦ Serve as a non-voting member of the Board of Directors and all Board committees.
- ✦ Minimum of ten years of experience in progressively responsible senior management positions in the not-for-profit sector, the private sector, government, or academia. Experience in not-for-profit management desirable.
- ✦ Ability to work effectively with diverse groups of stakeholders and manage dialogue among competing interests on complex and controversial issues.

The Person

Pivotal Experience & Business Impact

Strategic Vision

A proven track record of developing and/or implementing a strategic plan and enhancing an organization's capacity and impact. Ability to align on policy priorities and issues related to food, agriculture, and rural communities.

Palpable Connection to the Agricultural Mission

Combines strategic acumen with a genuine passion for Farm Foundation's mission: to build trust and understanding at the intersections of agriculture and society.

Elevating External Visibility

A compelling ambassador and relationship builder who can elevate Farm Foundation's profile, strengthen its reputation, promote strong partnerships, and effectively engage stakeholders across agriculture, philanthropy, government, academia, and industry.

Team Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement

Proven success leading an organization of relevant size and stature, driving operational excellence, setting and measuring goals, and navigating through change. Aptitude to engage the Board and senior leadership team in setting strategy; ability to foster a respectful, nimble, empowered, results-oriented and collaborative working environment.

Financial Acumen and Revenue Growth

Demonstrated ability to increase fundraising streams and partnership opportunities from a variety of sources. Possesses the financial acumen to steward organizational resources effectively, align revenue enhancement strategies, and ensure long-term financial sustainability.

Programs



Convening

- ✦ **Round Table:** an invitation-only discussion forum comprised of over 200 leaders from across the food and agriculture value chain and across North America. The Round Table meets twice yearly to provide a forum for discussion and interaction among thought leaders and invited government, academic, agribusiness and other interest group leaders.
- ✦ **Young Agri-Food Leaders**
- ✦ **Field to Future**
- ✦ **Farm Foundation Awards**
- ✦ **Farm Foundation Forums**



Academia & Policy

- ✦ **Ag 101 Bootcamps:** Designed for seasoned leaders as well as those new to the food and ag sectors—including cross-departmental teams, board members, or your key clients—our bootcamps are taught by industry leaders, academic researchers and other subject matter experts.
- ✦ **Agricultural Economics Fellowship**
- ✦ **Agricultural Economics Trade Fellowship**
- ✦ **Agricultural Scholars Program**
- ✦ **Congressional Fellowship**
- ✦ **CAFE Student Workshop**
- ✦ **Cultivators**



Farmer Pathways

- ✦ **FarmPath:** a national, multi-year program designed to make farming more accessible and achievable for aspiring and beginning farmers navigating today's rapidly changing agricultural landscape. Now in its first three-year cycle, FarmPath launched with more than 650 applicants from 46 states and U.S. territories.
- ✦ **Next Generation Farmers**
- ✦ **Young Farmer Accelerator Program**

2025 Engagement and Reach

21

Events
Virtual &
In Person

2,300+

Event Attendees
Virtual &
In Person

30

Countries
Global Reach

39,458

Total Subscribers
Across Email &
Social Media

Campus

The Farm Foundation Campus is a welcoming place where anyone can come explore how food is grown, how systems connect, and why agriculture matters to all of us.

Through hands-on experiences, guided programs, and real-world demonstrations, visitors can see agriculture up close and gain a clearer understanding of the people, land, and decisions behind it. Whether you are new to agriculture or simply curious, the Campus offers a chance to learn by doing, ask questions, and leave with a deeper connection to the food system that touches every part of our lives.

Innovation & Education Campus

The [Farm Foundation Innovation & Education Campus](#) is a dynamic space designed to bring together food and agriculture leaders, innovators, and educators. Whether you're hosting a strategic retreat, launching a new initiative, or conducting hands-on research, our campus provides the resources and environment to foster collaboration and progress.

Located on former Casey Farm in Libertyville, Illinois and surrounded by the 5,000-acre Liberty Prairie Reserve, this centennial farm is an ideal location to honor the history of farming in the region and create a space that continues to educate and inspire the community on the importance and potential of agriculture.



Engagement Team

Farm Foundation has engaged the Social Impact Practice at Heidrick & Struggles to conduct the search for its next President and Chief Executive Officer.

Jackie Zavitz, Partner
jzavitz@heidrick.com

Jimmy Prencipe, Partner
jprencipe@heidrick.com

Meghan Ashbrock, Principal
mashbrock@heidrick.com

Sean Meyer, Associate
smeyer@heidrick.com

Compensation for this role will be determined based on experience and skill set, with an anticipated base salary range of \$250,000 to \$300,000.

Applications, inquiries, and nominations can be directed to: FarmFoundationCEO@Heidrick.com.

