



# NESAWG

## It Takes a Region

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# The land access challenge

- Top challenge identified by new and young farmers in 2 national surveys (*AFBF & NYFC*)
- 70% of U.S. farmland will change hands in the next two decades
- Land tenure has always been an issue; expressed differently in history and by region.
- Farmland ownership increasingly concentrated, and held by older farmers and landowners.



# Challenges, continued

- Cost and competition.
- Discrimination and prejudice (various populations)
- Insecure tenure: undermines environmental stewardship, investment, viability, and community-building.
- Farming opportunity *and* meaningful legacy.
- *Traditional methods of acquiring land are no longer sufficient*



# Connecting the dots...

Food security requires  
farmer security.

Farmer security requires  
land security.

*“Land is the basic building  
block of sustainable,  
regional food systems.”*



# The land access challenge: A systems change perspective

- Policy
  - No overarching federal policy on farmland access and tenure
  - Inadequate attention and incentives at all policy levels
- Economics
  - NBFs more likely to succeed without land debt, while government programs encourages it
  - Farmland: means of production and an appreciating asset
- Culture
  - property ownership; “real farmers” own their land
  - Land has strong emotional component: *where farmers live*
- Service
  - Inadequate programs and services to meet the challenges



# LFG's response

- Direct assistance: seekers, farmers, owners
- Educational programs and materials
- Professional network development
- Policy
- Research
- Innovation
- Partnerships and collaboration



# Land must be...

- **Available**
- **Affordable**
- **Appropriate**
- **Secure**
- **Equitable**
- **Findable**



# Who plays a role?

- Established farmers
- Non-farming landowners (private, institutional, public)
- Service providers (agency, NGO, private)
- Land trusts and other conservation orgs
- Communities (officials, civic leaders, neighbors, consumers)
- Policy makers



# Responses

- Non-traditional tenure models
  - Paths to ownership
  - Shared ownership
  - Non-ownership
- Improved assistance
- Better public policies
- Community engagement





**Thank you!**

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