Women Caring for the Land℠

Targeted Conservation Outreach to Female Non-operator Farmland Owners
A program of Women, Food and Agriculture Network - wfan.org

3,000 members nationwide
Engaged in all aspects of sustainable ag

Programs for women landowners, women farmers, and food systems advocates

Programming in 8 upper Midwestern states
Women own or co-own nearly half of Iowa* land, and own 61% of the rented land.

*No current figures for US or other states.
Women farmland owners tend to be 65+ in age, inherited land they want to keep, have tenants, and want to learn.
Women are left out as active conservation partners by most publications.

Traditional

Meant for women
WFAN has found that women landowners are active conservation partners when properly informed and supported. Our program: Women Caring for the Land℠
Older women landowners often don’t feel comfortable in meetings with men present. They prefer to:

Create connections

Minimize differences
“Male” conversational style is presentation-based and confers status; can discourage interaction.

Lecture style confers status on the speaker.
The “learning circle” approach builds relationships, trust, confidence.

Technical content is also presented
Meetings are held where tables can be arranged in a circle or U for group discussion and optimum hearing.
Conservation professionals should prepare to share something personal, plus summarize specialty areas. (No PowerPoints!)

Sit down, mix in with participants.
WFAN has created a manual to help agencies and other groups hold women landowner learning circles.

Available at our [www.womencaringfortheland.org](http://www.womencaringfortheland.org) website.
The manual includes 10 hands-on activities with familiar materials to illustrate basic conservation concepts.

Envisioning her healthy farm using quilt squares
Women need to see and hear that all women – just like themselves – can do conservation and protect their land for future generations.

We help each other try new things and succeed together.

We always have, and we always will.
What they are saying:

What a relief to be able to ask “dumb” questions! I’m excited for the future of my father’s land.

Just cannot imagine how it could have been better – unless it was a Day Two.

I know that if I can get conservation information to women, they are likely to act. – Iowa watershed coordinator

I've attended several other meetings about this and I really liked how this one was set up ... There were opportunities to ask questions at the others but they were mostly just directed to the speaker. Here we could ask each other and had a discussion ... I learned so much from the other women.
Thank you!

• Questions?
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Funders</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>McKnight Foundation – WCL pilot project in eastern IA</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010 - 12</td>
<td>North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE)</td>
<td>– meetings in IA, NE and WI</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010 - 13</td>
<td>NRCS - Conservation Innovation Grant (with Center for Rural Affairs)</td>
<td>– meetings in IA, NE, WI, KS, ND, SD and MN</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>Iowa DNR Resource Enhancement and Protection Conservation Education Program</td>
<td>(curriculum guide development)</td>
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<td>2010 - 13</td>
<td>USDA BFRDP (land transition, with Practical Farmers of Iowa)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011 - 12</td>
<td>Iowa Department of Ag and Land Stewardship (Division of Soil Conservation)</td>
<td>– watershed mapping</td>
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<td>McKnight Foundation (IA, MN, WI, IL)</td>
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<td>(wildlife &amp; hunting ed)</td>
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<td>2012 - 13</td>
<td>Audubon Foundation (habitat protection)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012 - 15</td>
<td>US Environmental Protection Agency (wetlands)</td>
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Related Research & Publications


“Women Caring for the LandSM Non-Response Survey Results.” Dahlstrom, Michael and Jean Eells. (pending publication)


Contact Us!

Visit our Women Caring for the Land℠ website at www.womencaringfortheland.org for more information, and these free downloadable resources for reaching out to women landowners:

• Curriculum guide
• Cover crops brochures and booklet
• Patchwork newsletter

We will work with you to hold meetings for women landowners! Contact:
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