

AGRICULTURE IS THE ORIGINAL green enterprise. Farmers and ranchers take energy from the sun and convert it into food, fiber and fuel. It makes sense, then, that agriculture would be relied on to help reshape our nation's economy into a more sustainable and secure "green" one—an economy that creates green jobs and sustainable economic growth while addressing environmental pollution, global warming and resource depletion.

Through the decades, farmers and ranchers have shown a great capacity to respond to new environmental and technological challenges as they arise—whether adopting new soil conservation techniques following the Dustbowl or working with scientists on the latest innovations in crop hybridization. This ability to adapt will serve the nation's farmers and ranchers well as they tackle some of the greatest challenges to face agriculture—and humankind—in modern times: a rapidly growing population, a changing climate, global economic uncertainty, dwindling fossil fuels and threatened natural resources.

In the years to come, American farmers and ranchers—whether small or large, organic or conventional—will be reshaping their operations to meet the challenges ahead. But with those challenges come great opportunities. In this issue of *American Farmland*, you'll read about how farmers and ranchers around the country are already participating in a green economy—harnessing their own ingenuity and the power of the sun, wind and land to create renewable energy, grow local and abundant food, and help solve vast environmental problems.



During our 30 years of work to protect and improve the nation's working lands, American Farmland Trust has long recognized the untapped potential in our farm and ranch land. That's why it is no stretch for us to envision farms and ranches as the cornerstone of a new green economy—using innovation, technology and the regenerative power of nature to produce a range of green

goods and services in a manner that is productive, sustainable and profitable.

But a lot needs to happen before this vision becomes reality. Farmers and ranchers need help adopting the conservation practices of the future. They need an advocate to make sure the maze of environmental regulations and policies enacted in coming years work for both farmers

and the environment. They need continued help protecting the farm and ranch land that provides the foundation for all of our food, energy and environmental needs.

That's where American Farmland Trust comes in. Until now, no single national organization has stepped forward with the willingness, vision and leadership to lead agriculture into a greener 21st century. But it's a role that American Farmland Trust has been preparing for throughout our 30-year history. With your continued support, American Farmland Trust will seize this great opportunity to chart a new course for a healthy, sustainable future. Thank you.

JON SCHOLL
PRESIDENT

AMERICAN FARMLAND

is published three times a year by American Farmland Trust, a nonprofit membership organization founded in 1980 to protect the nation's agricultural resources. The mission of American Farmland Trust is to help farmers and ranchers protect their land, produce a healthier environment and build successful communities.

Basic annual membership dues are \$25. Membership benefits include a year's subscription to the award-winning magazine, *American Farmland*, and a 10-percent discount on all AFT publications and merchandise. Membership contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

AFT occasionally exchanges its membership mailing list with others. If you wish to be excluded from such exchanges, call Member Services at (800) 431-1499. A copy of AFT's most recent financial report can be obtained by writing to American Farmland Trust, 1200 18th St. NW, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20036.

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