OUR STATEWIDE VISION

Sustaining a Future for Farming
Washington Farmland Trust protects and stewards threatened farmland across the state. We keep land in production by making it accessible to a new generation of farmers.
Local farms are essential to our daily lives.

Investing in Washington farmland means healthy food for our children, thriving rural economies, and fertile, productive soil. Simply put: healthy farms make our communities better.

But the future of farming is threatened. Over the last four decades, some of Washington's best soils have been irreversibly lost to development. In the next ten years, 70% of local growers will retire without a successor in place, and new farmers face countless barriers to accessing land, from affordability to systemic racism and discrimination. As land prices skyrocket and climate change threatens our landscape, we are working to protect farmland, support farmers, and chart a new path for the future of farming in Washington.
Core Goals

The current needs of Washington’s land and farmers call for a new strategy to create a sustainable, equitable, and resilient future. At Washington Farmland Trust, we aim to:

Permanently protect what is left of our most valuable agricultural lands.

Reduce barriers to land access and create land affordability for a new generation of farmers.

Promote climate resilience in land conservation and stewardship.

Address systemic racism and other social inequities in everything we do.
Our Approach

Farmland conservation sits at the nexus of so many important issues, from rural economic development to local food and climate change. We use a similarly interconnected approach to achieve our mission.
Organizational Strategies

Within each program at Washington Farmland Trust, we have established key strategies that will help us achieve our core goals.
Farmland Conservation

• Conserve priority farmland in a manner that supports local interests, climate resiliency, and land access for a new generation of farmers, particularly those from marginalized and under-represented groups.

• Seek out conservation and partnership opportunities guided by Washington Farmland Trust’s Long Range Conservation Plan.

• Explore opportunities to expand conservation footprint to new geographies across Washington.

• Leverage expertise and capacity to support partners in increasing farmland conservation efforts across the state, and aligning with climate resilience priorities.

In practice: As we grow our conservation imprint across Washington, we are building relationships in Southwest Washington, laying the groundwork to protect priority farmland in Lewis, Clark, and Grays Harbor Counties.
Farmland Stewardship

- Ensure permanence of farmland conservation efforts by maintaining strong relationships and conducting annual monitoring, necessary enforcement, land management planning, and strategic dispositions, as appropriate.

- Support and invest in the sustainable management of soil, water, and habitat on protected farmland to ensure long-term agricultural viability, climate resilience, and broader ecosystem health.

- Leverage expertise and strategic partnerships to advance regional and statewide investments in climate change adaptation, mitigation, and soil health.

**In practice:** By developing stewardship plans with farmers and supporting the implementation of climate resilient practices through our Advancing Farm Sustainability program, we are doubling down on our commitment to enhancing the soil, water, and habitat on protected farmland.
Farm to Farmer

• Launch and convene the Farm to Farmer Network, a collaborative partnership that leverages community expertise to deliver the tools and resources necessary to keep farmland in production.

• Prioritize the needs of Black, Indigenous, and farmers of color, as well as farmers from marginalized communities in program design.

• Invest in relationship building and technological solutions to create tailored, personalized support for farmers and landholders.

• Build a strong statewide network of community-based partners that supports relevant land access and transition efforts across Washington.

In practice: In an effort to serve the diverse needs of Washington’s farming communities, Farm to Farmer is working to provide comprehensive and culturally competent support to those who have historically been underserved, particularly Black, Indigenous, and farmers of color, as well as former military veterans.
Community Engagement

- Cultivate a productive community that is centered on sustaining farmland in Washington for future generations.

- Connect people to their food sources through a variety of hands on, approachable, and inclusive engagement opportunities.

In practice: To honor the myriad ways that individuals connect with their food sources, we are working to identify opportunities to contribute to community goals around food sovereignty and the preservation of traditional knowledge through storytelling, events, and volunteer opportunities.
Advocacy

• Build out an advocacy program in support of WFT’s charitable purpose and organizational program goals.

• Build out an advocacy platform that supports the most urgent needs relating to our mission and work.

• Engage in legislation that supports funding for conservation, reduces barriers to land and capital access, and assists farmers in climate adaptation.

In practice: Washington Farmland Trust is proud to have helped shape a new effort funded by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission designed to address barriers in farmland conservation and access. We look forward to leveraging this program along with our land trust partners in the coming years to help protect at-risk agricultural lands and increase access opportunities for farmers from socially disadvantaged groups.
Organizational Health and Capacity

Governance, Fundraising, and Communications

• Position WFT as a humble leader in conservation and land access across Washington.

• Expand the reach of WFT’s core programs, and support the launch and development of new WFT programming.

• Remain accountable to communities we aim to serve by evidencing our organizational values, commitments to equity, and programmatic goals.

• Secure the financial and human resources needed to effectively and responsibly deliver the goals of the strategic plan and business plan.

• Establish an organizational management and fund development culture that is steeped in the principles of Community Centric Fundraising.

• Create and foster an inclusive workplace that supports staff development, well-being, and retention.

In practice: Since 2019, we have been working with an equity consultant to transform our organizational culture and broaden our impact. Through skill building, deep reflection, and an equity-focused action plan, we are working to create a more inclusive workplace culture, deliver our mission to more communities across Washington, and work everyday to dismantle the racism and white supremacy that has shaped our movement.
Over the last two decades, we have conserved more than 3,000 acres. Today, we are broadening our scope to protect more farmland across the state, connect farmers with the resources that they need, and keep land resilient for the long haul.

Will you join us?