



## 2018-2020 Non-Operator Landowner Survey

### ***Justification***

Farmers and ranchers, who own and operate about 61% of U.S. agricultural land, can be leaders in enhancing environment benefits while improving their productivity. But who manages the other 39% of the land and how do we reach them? What barriers do farmers face when they want to implement conservation on their rented lands? Can outreach to landowners help?

Most (80%) of the rented land is owned by non-operating landowners (20% is owned by “operators” – farmers & ranchers). Researchers know surprisingly little about the nearly 2 million non-operating landowners. They are a diverse group that includes retired farmers, farm widows, children, and grandchildren who have inherited farms. Many of these landowners do not live near their farms. They can be generations removed from farming the land they own with less knowledge of the operations. But does less farming knowledge mean they don’t care? For many, their land has been in the family for multiple generations – a point of great pride.

And we know more change is coming—over the next 20 years, about 371 million acres of farmland (41% of American farmland) are expected to change hands as aging farmers retire or leave their land to the next generation and women and non-farming landlords increase in numbers.<sup>1</sup>

Long-term investment in land health is in the best interest of the landowner but may not be the best use of the renter’s time and finances – although both need the land to be profitable. The most beneficial practices are those that regenerate and rebuild life in the soil. Improved soil health makes the land more resilient to flooding and drought, reduces reliance on chemical inputs, and increases profit margins over time. However, soil health practices like conservation tillage and cover crops require long-term investment and patience before more productive soils and greater profits are realized. Many non-operating landowners are unfamiliar with these practices or may not be in a position to discuss long-term goals with their operators. Farmers who rent land may be interested in new conservation practices but are deterred from adopting them due to short-term leases that don’t provide security to the farmer. This dynamic can lead to a lack of investment in the practices that can improve the long-term productivity and resiliency of the land and ultimately lead to more soil erosion and runoff of nutrients.

Despite their growing importance, we know very little about non-operating landowners and more importantly, even less about how best to reach, engage, and motivate them. Limited research indicates that there may be a linkage between rented land and lack of conservation practices on the land, which results in detrimental environmental impacts. Even more troubling, some of the areas with the highest rates of rented land align with those experiencing high rates of nutrient losses. But the potential for positive change is great! Surveys indicate landowners may want more conservation on their land but don’t know how to approach their operators or access resources that could help pay for

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<sup>1</sup> The statistics cited in these first three paragraphs come from The Farmland Information Center’s analysis of data from the 2014 Tenure, Ownership and Transition of Agricultural Land survey conducted by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS). For more information on how these data are derived please visit <https://www.farmlandinfo.org/2014-tenure-ownership-and-transition-agricultural-land-survey-talking-points>. The TOTAL report and data can be accessed here: <http://www.farmlandinfo.org/us-farmland-ownership-tenure-and-transfer>

improvements. They often find it hard to communicate their desires for conserving and improving their land to the farmers who rent their land, feeling they lack the knowledge or authority to talk with their farmer. On the other hand, farmers indicate that they implement more conservation practices on their own land than the land they rent. This is a lose-lose situation that can be turned around!

AFT's work with non-operating landowners has identified a variety of factors that may contribute to fewer conservation practices on rented lands. They include the short-term nature of many leases, lack of knowledge, the absence of landowners in conservation decisions, ineffective communications, insufficient soil health metrics, and an inability to share the cost or risk of investments. We need to better understand landlords and operators and how they interact to develop new solutions to overcome these barriers. Involving landowners in improving soil health may be one of the most important factors in the rapid adoption of new management practices.

### **The Survey**

**Background:** The AFT survey was developed in 2013-2014 by the Non-Operating Landowner National Survey Work Group. This group consists of researchers, practitioners, and policy makers involved in working with and/or researching non-operating landowners (see Appendix A for list of individuals and affiliations). The base of the survey was built from previous surveys of absentee landowners conducted by Agren, Inc. in the Great Lakes Region in 2007 and Dr. Petrzelka, conducted by USU (administered by NASS) in Utah in 2010.

After the work group finalized the survey draft, it was pilot tested with 50 Women Non-Operating Landowners, or WNOLs, in seven of the USDA Production Regions. Petrzelka convened focus groups in North Dakota, Minnesota, Connecticut, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, and Indiana. Once feedback was collected, the survey was revised. After consulting with USDA NASS, AFT expanded the survey to include both male and female landowners.

**Survey content:** The survey findings will help policymakers, natural resource agencies, and conservation groups understand how best to work with non-operating landowners to achieve more effective resource management of rented lands. The research goals listed below are designed to enable more effective outreach to this important audience:

- Learn more about NOLs in general (e.g. age, distance from land, gender, familiarity with farming)
- Identify ways in which to overcome barriers to resource management decision-making and implementation.
- Increase understanding of the land management decision-making processes of NOLs.
- Use the information gained to improve incentive mechanisms and policies aimed at promoting resource conservation.

**Focal States:** AFT surveyed 13 states between 2018 and 2020. Although we are primarily focused on those states with the largest amount of rented lands, we also looked at other factors such as sampling a variety of USDA production regions and areas with farmland most at risk to conversion to development.<sup>2</sup> The 13 states are:

- Arkansas, California, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia and Washington.

**Sampling Methodology:** AFT purchased non-operator landowner lists from Farm Market ID, or FMID<sup>2</sup>. FMID has “owner” lists that do not include anyone who is an “operator.” Thus, the list only contains non-operating landowners. Lists are double-checked using Core Logic along with deed searches. The individuals on the purchased list are considered (through FMID’s analysis) to be the primary decision maker. FMID looks at all activity for all people associated with the farm household including information and historical producer codes provided by USDA. Additionally, they bring in land ownership data, email activity, and transactional history.

For this study, FMID pulled a list of at least 1,500 NOLs who own land in each of the states. For each state, 750 male and 750 female landowners who own 25 acres of farmland or more in the respective state (with an acre range of low to high amounts of acres) were pulled<sup>3</sup>. Names reflect owners and not operators, and the list contains owners of land that is distributed throughout the respective state. FMID split each state into quadrants, pulling the same N from each quadrant, to strive for geographical representation across the state and therefore agricultural representation. Names pulled were from all NOLs who own land in the respective state, no matter where they live (in the state or out).

Two important points regarding the sampling:

1. The sampling intentionally focused on ensuring a 50/50 gender split, given we believe for various reasons female landowners are underrepresented in surveys of agricultural landowners. This is important to keep in mind when interpreting the respondents’ gender breakdown. For example, while 45% of the survey respondents in Illinois are female, this does **not** mean that of the non-operating landowners in Illinois, 45% of them are women. Given there is no study population of NOLs, we cannot say with certainty how representative our sample is to the actual population of NOLs.
2. Trusts were eliminated from our sample. This was done because multiple trusts do not have a name affiliated with the mailing address, thus, would not allow us to identify the gender of the landowner, which was our primary demographic of concern when selecting the sample. The elimination of trusts then, undoubtedly has an impact on the data results.

### **Support and Acknowledgements**

American Farmland Trust gratefully acknowledges funding and technical support from The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), The Nature Conservancy and seed funding support from Rachel’s Network. Technical support from the working group (Appendix A).

### **American Farmland Trust**

For over 30 years, the mission of American Farmland Trust has been to protect farmland, promote sound farming practices, and keep farmers on the land. **AFT is a leader** in working side-by-side with farmers and landowners to accelerate adoption of conservation practices. Women landowners often take a long view of their land and overwhelmingly support policies and programs that encourage new farmers, provide incentives for better conservation practices, and protect farmland. These attributes make women ideal partners in conservation and farmland protection. **AFT’s Women for the Land initiative** is helping to make that happen.

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<sup>2</sup> More information at: <http://www.farmmarketid.com/data/>

<sup>3</sup> The one state where this differed was Iowa, where 1000 names were pulled, 500 female and 500 male. No additional names were needed to be pulled to get to the desired 300 respondents. For all other states, at least 1500 names were pulled.

Visit [www.farmland.org/initiatives/womenlandowners](http://www.farmland.org/initiatives/womenlandowners) or contact Gabrielle Roesch-McNally, national director of Women for the Land Initiative, [groeschmcnally@farmland.org](mailto:groeschmcnally@farmland.org) or 360-631-8489

**Appendix A: Non-Operating Landowner National Survey Work Group**

Dr. Peggy Petrzelka, Professor of Sociology, Utah State University  
Dr. Mike Duffy, Professor Emeritus of Economics, Iowa State University  
Leigh Adcock, former Executive Director, Women, Food and Agriculture Network  
Jamie Ridgely, former President and COO, Agren, Inc.  
Cindy Nickerson, formerly of the USDA Economic Research Service  
Kathy Ruhf, former Executive Director, Land for Good.  
Ed Cox, formerly of the Drake University Agricultural Law School  
Dr. Nelson Bills, Professor Emeritus of Applied Economics and Management, Cornell University  
Dr. Larry Redmon, Professor & State Forage Specialist, Texas A&M  
Ginger Harris, Demographer and statistician, USDA NASS  
Jim Ferrell, President and CEO, Farmers National Company  
Jennifer Dempsey, Director of Farmland Information Center, American Farmland Trust  
Dr. J. Arbuckle, Professor of Sociology, Iowa State University  
Dr. Ann Sorensen, Research Director Emeritus, American Farmland Trust  
John Wyek, Executive Director, Strategies Consulting

**Appendix B: Agricultural Landowner Survey, © 2018 American Farmland Trust**

The questions crafted in this survey come from invaluable input from our Non-Operating Landowner Work Group, as well as previous work done by Agren, Inc. Iowa State University Sociology Extension, and Purdue University Natural Resources Social Science Lab.

# Agricultural Landowner Survey



Please answer all the questions. If you wish to comment on any question or qualify your answers, feel free to use the space in the margins. Complete the questionnaire by putting an **X** in the appropriate boxes or writing in the blanks provided. Thank you for your time and information!

Please check the scenario below that **best** describes your agricultural land ownership situation.

**Q1. On the agricultural land that I own...**

- I am a landowner **and** I lease out some or all of the land to a farm or ranch operator. **(Goto Q2)**
- I am a landowner **and** I lease out some or all of the land to a land management firm. **(Go to Q2)**
- I am a landowner and farm some of the land myself, as well as lease out some of the land to a farm or ranch operator. **(Go to Q2)**
- I operate the entire land myself as a farm or ranch. **(Please return the survey in the enclosed self addressed stamped envelope. Thank you for your time.)**
- My land is not actively farmed at present. **(Please return the survey in the enclosed self addressed stamped envelope. Thank you for your time.)**

**Q2. In 2017, how many acres of farmland did you own?**

**Q3. In 2017, how many acres of farmland did you rent out?**

**Q4. How much experience have you (and your spouse, if applicable) had with farming?**

*(Check the answer that best applies to your situation)*

- I/we have operated a farm
- I/we helped our parents farm
- I/we helped another relative farm
- I/we have worked on a non-relative's farm
- Neither I nor my spouse (if any) have ever farmed

Q5 Which (if any) of your relatives or ancestors have ever farmed? (Check all that apply)

- My parents
- My spouse's parents
- My and/or my spouse's aunts or uncles
- My and/or my spouse's grandparents
- Our great-grandparents' generation or earlier
- Neither my nor my spouse's ancestors have ever farmed
- Not sure

**For the rest of the survey, if you own more than one piece of farmland, please think of your **LARGEST PARCEL OF LAND** that you lease out when answering the survey.**

Q6. Do you live on this parcel of land?

- YES - (If Yes, Skip to Q9)
- NO - (If No, Continue to Q7)

Q7. How many miles do you live from this parcel of land?

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Q8. On average, how often do you visit this parcel to check the condition of the land? (Check one box)

- At least once a week
- Monthly
- Multiple times a year
- Once a year
- Rarely (less than once a year)

Q9. How long has this parcel of land been owned by you or someone in your family? (Check one box)

- Less than 10 years
- 10-30 years
- 31-70 years
- 71-120 years
- More than 120 years

Q10. How did you acquire the parcel of land? (Check all that apply)

- Purchased
- Inherited
- Marriage or Divorce
- Other (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q11. Do you own the land with others?

- NO (If No, Skip to Q13)  
 YES (If Yes, answer below, then continue to Q12)

If YES, How many others?

Q12. Which of the following describes your co-owner(s)? (Check all that apply)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent(s)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other relatives (cousin, niece/nephew, grandparent, aunt/uncle) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child(ren)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-relatives   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sibling(s)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/Partner |  |

Q13. Who is the primary decision maker for land management decisions made on this parcel of land?

(Check one box)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Myself         | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Corporation or Partnership                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child(ren)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other relatives (cousin, niece/nephew, grandparent, aunt, uncle) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sibling(s)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-relatives  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/partner | <input type="checkbox"/> Farm operation I/we rent land to                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent(s)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Farm Management Company  |

Q14. Check all activities that are done on this land. (Check all that apply)

- Crop Production  
 Forestry/timber production  
 Grazing/rangeland  
 Drilling and/or mining for oil/gas  
 Recreational activities (e.g. hunting, fishing, all terrain vehicle activity, hiking, bird watching, horseback riding)  
 None of the above

Q15. Please select the one activity from Question 14 that is done most often on the land you lease to an operator.

- Crop Production  
 Forestry/timber production  
 Grazing/rangeland  
 Drilling and/or mining for oil/gas  
 Recreational activities (e.g. hunting, fishing, all terrain vehicle activity, hiking, bird watching, horseback riding)  
 None of the above

**The next series of questions ask about conservation activities and decision-making. By "conservation" we mean: practices that conserve or improve soil, water, air quality or benefit native species or wildlife habitat such as conservation tillage, cover crops, rotational grazing, buffers or native plantings, etc.**

**Q16. Federal and state agencies and private organizations have programs that help many landowners implement conservation practices on their land. Thinking of the largest parcel of land you lease out, have you enrolled or received financial or technical support for this parcel from any of the following programs over the past 5 years?** *(Check one box in each row)*

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Participated in land set-aside programs, like CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) or WRP (Wetland Reserve Program).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participated in cost-share programs, like EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program) or CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program), that pay some costs of implementing conservation practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Received conservation practice technical assistance from NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) or SWCD (Soil and Water Conservation District) staff on this parcel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developed or updated a conservation plan for this parcel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Received income from a sale of conservation easements on this parcel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Received payments, and/or other assistance with conservation on this parcel, but I don't recall the program's name.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other <i>(Please specify)</i> _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q17. Please indicate your responses to the following statements. As a landowner, when making management decisions about my land I consider:** *(Check one box in each row)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
The neighboring landowners	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The surrounding community(ies)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Endangered species	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Wildlife habitats	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Biodiversity	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Water quality	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**Q18. Please indicate your responses to the following statements. As a landowner, when making management decisions about my land I consider:** *(Check one box in each row)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
Soil quality	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Need for income from the land	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Needs of the farm operator leasing my land	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Keeping land in farming	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Future generations of my family	<input type="checkbox"/>				

***The next set of questions ask about the operator to whom you rent your largest parcel of land.***

Q19. **What type of lease agreement do you have with your operator?** *(Check one box)*

- Cash rent agreement with payment a fixed cash amount
- Cash rent agreement with payment a flexible cash amount
- Crop share agreement
- Both cash rent and crop share agreement
- Rent free
- Other *(Please Specify)* \_\_\_\_\_

Q20. **Is the lease agreement you have with your operator:** *(Check one box)*

- Written
- Verbal
- Other *(Please Specify)* \_\_\_\_\_

Q21. **What is the duration of the lease term?** *(Check one box)*

- Year to year
- Every two year basis
- Every three year basis
- Other *(Please Specify)* \_\_\_\_\_

Q22. **What conservation practices do you have in your lease?** *(Check all that apply or select "None")*

- None
- Cover Crops
- Conservation tillage
- Nutrient Management
- Other *(Please Specify)* \_\_\_\_\_

Q23. **Which best describes your relationship to the person who is farming your land?** *(Check one box)*

- Family member
- Friend of family
- A person who is neither a relative nor friend of the family
- Other *(Please Specify)* \_\_\_\_\_

Q24. **Is the operator you lease your largest parcel of land to male or female?** *(Check one box)*

- Male
- Female

Q25. **How many years has the above person leased land from you/your family?**

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Q26. In 2017, how many times did you communicate with your operator about farming? (approximately)

Q27. In 2017, how many times did you communicate with your operator regarding conservation issues? (approximately)

Q28. Who is primarily responsible for making each of the following types of decisions on the largest parcel of land you lease out? (Check one box in each row)

	My operator	My operator & I together	I am	Outside consultant or management company	Not applicable
Crop inputs (e.g. fertilizer, seed, chemicals)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tillage practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crop varieties/rotations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conservation practices used or not used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintain & repair fences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Livestock decisions (e.g. stocking rate, rotational grazing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q29. How important are the following qualities when evaluating your current or potential farm operators? (Check one box in each row)

	Not at All Important	Slightly Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Trustworthiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to maintain soil productivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reliability in paying rent on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reputation as a good farmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to avoid soil erosion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amount of rent they will pay per acre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to avoid contaminating waterways (chemicals, nutrients, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q30. How important are the following qualities when evaluating your current or potential farm operators? (Check one box in each row)

	Not at All Important	Slightly Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
The length of time they (or their family) have rented from my family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to maintain wildlife habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
That I like them as a person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
That they care about me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
That they care about my land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
That they are financially responsible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
That they are a good communicator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q31. Please indicate your level of agreement with these statements.** *(Check one box in each row)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
I don't have enough time to be directly involved in decision making regarding management on my land.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I don't know enough about farming to participate in many decisions regarding management of my land.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am committed to my operator's continuation as a renter of my land.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am comfortable extending the length of my operator's lease to facilitate implementation of conservation practices on my land.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am comfortable asking my operator to use certain conservation practices on my land.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am comfortable asking my operator to amend or make an addendum to our lease requiring conservation practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I worry that discussion of conservation on my farmland might upset my operator.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**Q32. Please indicate your level of agreement with these statements.** *(Check one box in each row)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
I worry that discussion of conversation on my farmland might upset my family.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I trust my operator to make good conservation decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
It is difficult to find information about government conservation programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Enough soil and water conservation practices have been implemented on my leased land already.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I would be willing to include a lease provision that requires my operator to prepare and comply with a Conservation Plan provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I would be willing to include a lease provision that requires my operator to implement soil erosion control practices to conserve/improve soil health.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I would be willing to include lease provisions relating to specific conservation practices (e.g. grassed waterways, no-till, adaptive nutrient management, cover crops, filter strips and wildlife habitat).	<input type="checkbox"/>				

**Q33. How much do each of the following factors limit your ability to implement soil and water conservation practices on the property you rent out?** *(Check one box in each row)*

	Not at all a limiting factor	Slight limiting factor	Moderate limiting factor	Significant limiting factor	Don't know
Practices do not improve the profitability of my land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My renter's out of pocket expense (i.e. ability to afford it)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A weak farm economy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A strong farm economy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q34. How much do each of the following factors limit your ability to implement soil and water conservation practices on the property you rent out?** *(Check one box in each row)*

	Not at all a limiting factor	Slight limiting factor	Moderate limiting factor	Significant limiting factor	Don't know
I feel conservation "best practices" limit my ability to maximize production.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm not satisfied with the assistance available from my local conservation agency.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't see enough of a need on my farm that it has been a priority.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q35. How much do each of the following factors limit your ability to implement soil and water conservation practices on the property you rent out?** *(Check one box in each row)*

	Not at all a limiting factor	Slight limiting factor	Moderate limiting factor	Significant limiting factor	Don't know
My own physical abilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My lack of familiarity with conservation practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My renter's lack of familiarity with conservation practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of having access to the equipment I or my renter need to implement conservation practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of available information about a practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No one else I know is implementing the practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm not convinced they provide environmental benefits.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q36. How much do each of the following factors limit your ability to implement soil and water conservation practices on the property you rent out?** *(Check one box in each row)*

	Not at all a limiting factor	Slight limiting factor	Moderate limiting factor	Significant limiting factor	Don't know
I worry about disapproval from my neighbors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns that conservation practices would decrease the value of my farmland.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Too much work and time to implement and maintain conservation practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of government funds for cost share.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't want to participate in government programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Too many requirements or restrictions associated with government conservation programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns that conservation practices will interfere with my ability to change land management practices as conditions warrant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Information Activities and Sources

**Q37. Please indicate how interested you would be in the following activities.** *(Check one box in each row)*

	Not at All Interested	Somewhat Interested	Interested	Very Interested
Having access to educational materials developed expressly for non-operating landowners like you.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having access to leasing tools that better account for costs, benefits and timelines of implementing conservation practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working with a private business that specializes in providing conservation services targeted to non-operating land owners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working with a government agency in providing conservation services targeted to non-operating landowners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Belonging to a network of non-operating farmland owners who face similar challenges as you do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participating in free discussions with your peers on a regular basis to compare notes/chat with conservation professionals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other <i>(Please Specify)</i> _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q38. How important are the following sources of information about conservation on your land?**

*(Check one box in each row)*

	Not Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
Spouse/Partner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends/neighbors who live near the land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friend/neighbors who farm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Farm or ranch manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My farm operator/lessee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ag retailers (fertilizer/chemical/seed dealers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q39. How important are the following sources of information about conservation on your land?**

*(Check one box in each row)*

	Not Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
State University Extension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Department of Agriculture and Food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Department of Natural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Farm Bureau	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conservation/Sustainable Ag groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Land Trusts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other <i>(Please Specify)</i> _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q40 What is your most trusted source of information about conservation practices?

Q41. How interested are you in receiving information and/or technical assistance in the following areas?

(Check one box in each row)

	Not at All Interested	Somewhat Interested	Interested	Very Interested
Cover crops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cropland management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pasture and hayland management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Livestock management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conservation tillage (e.g. no-till, strip till)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soil fertility improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water quality improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q42. How interested are you in receiving information and/or technical assistance in the following areas?

(Check one box in each row)

	Not at All Interested	Somewhat Interested	Interested	Very Interested
Wildlife habitat improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negotiating farmland leases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Incorporating conservation provisions into leases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soil erosion control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Government conservation programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conservation easements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Background Characteristics

***Please remember that all information is confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.***

Q43. How many more years do you intend to own this parcel of land that you lease out? (Check one box)

- Less than 3 years
- 3-6 years
- 7-10 years
- More than 10 years
- Don't know

Q44. **Who is likely to be the next owner of this parcel of land?** *(Check all that apply)*

- A relative who will farm the land.
- A relative who will rent the land for agricultural production.
- An unrelated person will farm the land.
- An unrelated person will rent the land for agricultural production.
- Someone who offers the best price for the land, whether or not they are a family member or intend to use the land for agriculture.
- Place into a trust
- Other *(Please Specify)* \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't Know

Q45. **What is your age?**

Q46. **What is your gender?** *(Check one box)*

- Male
- Female

Q47. **What best describes you?** *(Check one box)*

- Farmer
- Former Farmer
- Spouse of former farmer (I farmed with my spouse)
- Spouse of former farmer (I did not have an active role on the farm)
- Other *(Please Explain)* \_\_\_\_\_

Q48. **What is your highest level of formal education attained?** *(Check one box)*

- Less than high school
- High school graduate (or equivalent)
- Some college, no degree
- Associate/Technical degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate or professional degree

Q49. **What is your current marital status?** *(Check one box)*

- Never married
- Married
- Widowed
- Divorced/separated

Q50. **What is your present employment status?** *(Check one box)*

- Employed or self-employed on a **full-time** basis
- Employed or self-employed on a **part-time** basis
- Retired
- Other *(Please Specify)* \_\_\_\_\_

Q51. **What is your approximate net farm income before taxes in 2017?** *(Check one box)*

- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,001-\$75,000
- \$75,001-\$125,000
- \$125,001-\$175,000
- \$175,001-\$225,000
- More than \$225,000

Q52. **Thinking about all of the farmland that you lease out to others, what factors into its financial importance for your household?** *(Check all that apply)*

- Immediate income (primary source of household income)
- Immediate income (not a primary source of household income)
- Long-term real estate investment
- Estate-planning tool

*You have now completed the survey. Please return it in the postage-paid envelope provided.*

*Thank you for your time!*

