

WINTER 2008

CLIMATE CHANGE AND LAND USE | NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

AMERICAN Farmland

THE MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST

Farms Grow GREEN


American Farmland Trust

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17

For farms, climate change could bring more floods and other disastrous weather events.



19

Ways to support local farms in 2008

Features

11

FARMS GROW GREEN

Can agriculture help solve the climate crisis?

BY KIRSTEN FERGUSON

17

THE CLIMATE CHANGE AND LAND USE CONNECTION

The key to successfully combating climate change lies in efficient urban development that decreases auto use and protects farmland.

BY EDWARD THOMPSON, JR.

19

ESSAY: COUNTDOWN TO SAVING FARMS AND FARMLAND

A list of New Year's resolutions for supporters of local agriculture.

BY LORRAINE STUART MERRILL



11

Corn grown using "no-till" is helping to fight climate change.

Departments

FROM THE PRESIDENT

2

LETTERS

3

AROUND THE COUNTRY

4

INSIDE AFT

8

ART OF CONSERVATION

20

DONORS

22

FARM FRESH RECIPE

23

ON THE COVER:

By "growing green," farms and ranches are helping the United States address its most pressing environmental and resource concerns.

ILLUSTRATION BY ASHLEY HALSEY



IN MANY WAYS, Jim Andrew, who grows corn and soybeans in central Iowa, is a model conservationist. He was the first farmer in the United States to qualify for “Tier III,” the highest level of environmental performance that is recognized by the Conservation Security Program, a federal conservation program that provides financial and technical assistance to our nation’s farmers so they can better protect our soil, water, air, plants and animal life.

Jim achieved this conservation milestone in part by installing miles of terraces in his fields to protect his vulnerable soil from washing away. And when he was still losing soil after big winds and heavy rains, he sold much of his plowing equipment and adopted no-till planting, a practice that further reduces erosion, protects water quality and uses less fuel. He also has been a good friend to wildlife: planting trees around his three farm ponds, stocking them with fish and surrounding them with nesting boxes for birds.

As you’ll read in this issue’s “Farms Grow Green” feature, Jim Andrew is helping to protect the environment in another vitally important way: His conservation efforts are also helping in the fight against global warming. His farm—like farms and ranches across the country—acts as a major “carbon sink,” absorbing large amounts of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, storing it in plants and soil on the farm. By no-till planting, which traps more carbon in the soil than other planting methods, Jim is going one step further to be a critical part of

the solution in the fight against climate change.

In the future, the nation will become ever more dependent on our working lands to solve environmental and resource concerns, from global warming to the need for home-grown renewable energy. But while many farmers would like to achieve the conservation goals that Jim has, they often lack the financial and



technical assistance needed to make the changes to their operations that allow them to “grow greener.”

For this reason, a critical component of AFT’s work the past few years has involved our efforts to shape the 2007 Farm Bill. An omnibus of federal farm and environmental spending, the farm bill can help farmers

who want to grow greener in a number of ways. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program, for instance—which we are seeking greater funding for—helps farmers and ranchers protect the environment and adopt new green technologies.

The 2007 Farm Bill is still under negotiation as I write this, but as we see it through to a hopefully greener conclusion in the New Year, American Farmland Trust will continue its efforts to help the nation’s farmers meet environmental goals, fight against global warming and support the new renewable energy economy.

Once again, thank you for all of your support of our work, and enjoy the holidays.

RALPH GROSSI

AMERICAN FARMLAND

is published four times a year by American Farmland Trust, a nonprofit membership organization founded in 1980 to protect the nation’s agricultural resources. AFT works to stop the loss of productive farmland and to promote farming practices that lead to a healthy environment.

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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RICHARD C. WILSON

Christian Wilson with Christy Wilson and Suffolk sheep, 1956.

Requiem for a Farmer

ONE OF MY FONDEST memories is of my great Uncle Albert. He was a dairy farmer for fifty years in Olive Bridge, New York. He had a beautiful farm at the base of Slide Mountain in the Catskills. He was a very unique and hardworking man, and he kept farming even after he had gone blind. He started the first fire department in Olive Bridge, and his first fire engine was a Massey Ferguson tractor that he named Car 44. He was a very talented musician. He put himself through Ag school by playing in dance bands!

I can still remember the funeral procession through the Ashokan Reservoir. When I looked out the window of our truck I could see the never ending line of cars and fire trucks. He spent his life on his farm in God's country, and now he lies in a small cemetery on a hill looking out over a pasture full of cows. I will always miss him and I wish I could have spent more time with him.

—EDWARD MANN,
MONTGOMERY, NEW YORK

Save the Land for Future Generations

MY LIFE-LONG LOVE of farms and animals was fostered by visits to my grandparents' farm in western Pennsylvania. Laura and Christian Wilson owned Larchland, a 200-acre dairy and sheep farm. The farm had rolling hills, pastures, woods, and a stream. Their collie herded the sheep. Grandpa was proud of using contour farming methods; I read his copy of *Silent Spring* when I was 12.

I appreciate the work that you do, so that future generations of children can have experiences like mine. I wrote the enclosed poem based on my memories of the farm.

—CHRISTY KLIM,
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

To read poems that both letter writers have penned in tribute to their farming relatives, visit www.farmland.org/resources/aftmagazine.

Florida Farms Are Important

PLEASE CONSIDER THE STATE of Florida in your publication: oranges, grapes, cattle, fish (yes fish are farmed—and non toxic to a consumer). Land is being sold which could, and *has* sustained organic crops. Please involve the ranchers and farmers in Florida.

There is a Cree proverb: "Only when the last tree has died/and the last river has been poisoned/and the last fish has been caught/will we realize that we can't eat money."

—EVON LOWERY,
DELAND, FLORIDA



If you submit a letter or photograph that we publish on this page, we will send you AFT's new "No Farms No Food" tote bag OR a stuffed cow—you decide. Kids, you can send farm-related letters, photographs or drawings too! Don't forget to include your name, address and telephone number.



AMERICAN FARMLAND welcomes letters and feedback from readers. Please send your comments, stories or personal reflections on farm life to Kirsten Ferguson, Editor, American Farmland Trust, 1200 18th St. NW, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20036, or email kferguson@farmland.org.



Around the Country

- 4 New Hampshire 6 Florida
- 4 Ohio 6 New York
- 5 California 7 New Jersey
- 6 Oregon

AFT's Steward of the Land Nominated to Top New Hampshire Post

THIS FALL, NEW HAMPSHIRE Governor John Lynch nominated Lorraine Stuart Merrill to be the new agriculture commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets & Foods.

Merrill and her family, who operate Stuart Farm in Stratham, were the 2003 recipients of AFT's Steward of the Land Award. In the early 1980s, Lorraine's parents and aunt became one of the first farm families in New Hampshire to permanently protect their land from development through a conservation easement with the New Hampshire Agricultural Land Protection Program. The easement made it possible for succeeding generations to continue their farm business.

"Lorraine Merrill is an excellent choice for this position," says Cris

Coffin, AFT's New England director. "She has been a passionate voice for New Hampshire agriculture and our region's dairy industry. Lorraine brings tremendous skills to this position, along with a longstanding interest in protecting farmland and sustaining the health of the land through good conservation practices."

For the past 20 years, the Merrill family has given talks about their experience with conservation easements to farmers, community groups and policymakers. They are well-known leaders, speaking out about farmland preservation and sprawl, innovative approaches to agricultural environmental stewardship and family farm business issues.

"There are tremendous opportunities to advance support for New Hampshire farmers, consumers and farmland conservation at the federal level, through the 2007 Farm Bill, at the state level and with local governments. New Hampshire will be well served by Commissioner Merrill's leadership in these arenas," says Coffin.

Lorraine Merrill is also a well-known writer about agricultural topics, penning a regular column in dairy industry magazine *Hoard's Dairyman* until recently. To read her New Year's resolutions for supporters of local agriculture, see page 19.

Ohio Holds Nation's Largest State Summit on Farmland Preservation

THE NATION'S LARGEST single-state farmland preservation conference continues to grow. The 8TH Annual Ohio Farmland Preservation Summit, hosted in November at the Ohio Department of Agriculture, covered the theme, "Growing our Economy through Agriculture."



Keynote speaker Frances Strickland

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

AFT, an organizer and sponsor, stressed the role of farm viability in the farmland protection movement. "Farmers know that the best way to preserve farmland is to make sure farming is profitable," said AFT's Ohio Director Brian Williams while introducing his New York counterpart at AFT, David Haight.

FARM FACT

Farmers participating in AFT's BMP Challenge have, on average, been able to maintain or improve their profits when applying 23 percent less nitrogen on their fields. The challenge gives farmers a way to reduce fertilizer rates on their fields—and implement conservation tillage to help reduce soil erosion and fight climate change—without worrying about a loss to their income. Interested farmers can contact Brian Brandt of AFT's Agricultural Conservation Innovation Center at (614) 221-8610 or bbrandt@farmland.org, or visit www.farmland.org to learn more.



Lorraine Stuart Merrill with Twix the cow

SUSAN LURAKIS

Haight discussed how farmland preservation goes far beyond planning for open space. Instead, he said, planners need to look at the economic benefits of agriculture and then do land use planning that protects and preserves good farmland. Non-farm residents may appreciate the open space, but a strong farm economy may show them just how valuable and productive that green space is.

Frances Strickland, the wife of Ohio governor Ted Strickland, grew up on a dairy farm in Kentucky. In her keynote speech, she showed a keen understanding of the importance of farmland and the value of farming—and the challenge of making changes. Invoking the accomplishments of George Washington Carver with peanuts and other commodities, she spoke of the need for innovation

to add value to farm products.

Jeff Sharp, a rural sociology professor at Ohio State University, has done extensive work on the demand for, and benefits of, local food systems. In his message at the summit, he pointed out that one of greatest concerns of farmers is health care, which is not readily available to farmers and has a major impact on their decisions.



Is California Paving Paradise?

One out of every six acres developed in California since the Gold Rush was paved over between 1990 and 2004, concludes a new AFT report, *Paving Paradise: A New Perspective on California Farmland Conversion*. In all, more than a half million acres were urbanized during this period, almost two-thirds of it agricultural land.

Among AFT's other findings: More than 60 percent of the land developed in the San Joaquin Valley—which accounts for half of California's agricultural production—was farmland of the very best quality. Statewide, development is consuming an acre of land for every 9.4 people. If sprawling development patterns continue, another two million acres of California land will be paved over by 2050. If, however, the state as a whole develops land as efficiently as Sacramento County or the Bay Area did in recent years, a million acres of California's irreplaceable farmland could be saved. To read the report, visit www.farmland.org/california.

Good News for Oregon: Voters Protect Farms and Forests

IN NOVEMBER, A BROAD coalition lined up behind Oregon's Ballot Measure 49. Voters passed the measure, reinstating crucial protections on farms, forests and water that were granted decades ago by Oregon law. Measure 49 was designed to correct the costly, complex and divisive problems created by 2005's Measure 37, which dramatically undercut Oregon's nationally respected Growth Management Program. Measure 37 allowed certain landowners to intensively develop their land or receive payment from the government for their lost market value.

Since its inception, M-37 had generated 7,500 claims for new development in Oregon, with landowners demanding compensation amounting to roughly \$15 billion. The

requested developments—including strip malls, destination resorts and gravel mines—would have covered more than 750,000 acres, fragmenting and destroying some of Oregon's treasured agricultural lands. Measure 49 closes loopholes in Measure 37 that allow such large-scale development, while clarifying the right granted by Measure 37 to develop a few home sites.

A diverse coalition of groups, including American Farmland Trust, Oregon Farm Bureau Federation and the Oregon Environmental Council, supported Measure 49, the product

of extensive debate and compromise in the Oregon legislature.

Long Island Celebrates 30 Years of Saving Farmland

IN THE EARLY 1970S, Long Island's Suffolk County—which covers the easternmost end of Long Island—came up with an innovative approach to stemming the loss of their county's fertile and flat agricultural land. The county decided to purchase the "development rights" to land at risk of being lost from agriculture forever—pioneering the use of

FLORIDA'S MANATEE COUNTY: ANALYSIS OF AGRICULTURE

Where is the project? Manatee County, located on the Gulf Coast just south of the Tampa-St. Petersburg metropolitan area, is an important farming area in southwest Florida.

What kinds of farms are in the region? Tomatoes are the dominant crop, but the county produces many other agricultural products, including oranges, melons, potatoes, livestock, tree nuts and berries.

What is the project? AFT analyzed the state of Manatee County agriculture to help inform future planning decisions in the fast-growing county, which is losing its rural areas to population growth and sprawling development. AFT's report describes the current state of agricul-

ture, how much land remains in farming operations, what is produced, and analyzes recent trends to show where agriculture may be heading.

Why is the project needed? In 2005, 55 percent of the county was farmed. "However, if current trends continue, in a few years less than half of the land area will be in agriculture," says AFT economic planner Carl Mailler. "Despite high development pressures, the county has a strong interest in keeping a viable agriculture industry."

Where can I learn more? To learn more about this project or about undertaking a project like this one in your region, contact AFT's Carl Mailler at (413) 586-9330 ext. 23 or cmailler@farmland.org.





Long Island's Suffolk County pioneered the use of agricultural conservation easements to protect farmland.

agricultural conservation easements to permanently protect farmland.

By 1974, the county had created the first “purchase of development rights program” of its kind in the nation. By 1977, the county closed on its first deals, protecting 3,200 acres. In the years since then, states and communities across the nation have followed Suffolk County’s lead.

Along the way, Suffolk County—one of the top grossing agricultural counties in New York—has dealt with rapidly rising land values and intense development pressure on its farm areas. “We congratulate Suffolk County on this tremendous milestone of saving farmland for 30 years,” says AFT’s New York director David Haight. “Long Island led the way for land conservation in the United States and continues to be on the leading edge in making farmland conservation work for 21st century farms.”

VIEW FROM THE FIELD



Who’s Earl? *American Farmland* reader Rick Steffey of the Hunterdon County, New Jersey, Agricultural Development Board sent in this photo of “his favorite farmland graffiti” from Warren County, New Jersey. To send in your favorite “View from the Field,” see the Letters page for submission information.

A New Year and No New Farm Bill?

AS THE NEW YEAR approaches, it is now unlikely that the farm bill will be completed this calendar year. In November, an impasse over amendments between the two parties brought the Senate floor vote to a halt, losing precious time for farmers and ranchers waiting to learn what programs will be in place for the next planting cycle, and pushing a final vote into the New Year.

“We need a new farm bill, but time is running out,” says Dennis Nuxoll, AFT’s director of government relations. “This is not, and should not, be a partisan issue. Both Republicans and Democrats want a new farm bill. The Senate farm bill was voted out of the Agriculture Committee unanimously with eleven Democrats and ten Republicans supporting it.”

The bill passed by the Senate Agriculture Committee included important gains, such as a new Average Crop Revenue insurance program that reforms the way commodity programs operate—reducing market distortions and providing farmers with a more reliable safety net. The committee bill also made improvements for nutrition, farmers’ markets and local foods. But there are still many unmet needs in the bill. AFT is fighting on the Senate floor for additional conservation funding that currently is well below what’s needed to meet program demand. AFT supports several amendments that will direct additional support to under-funded programs for farmland protection, water quality and nutrition.

Once the Senate gridlock ends, the farm bill will move into Conference Committee to work out the differences between the House

and Senate bills. This is a critical time for the farm bill, with important votes to come early in the New Year. “It is crucial that you help keep the pressure on your legislators to pass a farm bill, so we don’t lose the important progress we’ve made on funding for conservation, healthy diets and subsidy reform,” says Nuxoll. To learn more about the farm bill and to contact your legislators, visit www.farmland.org/farmpolicy.

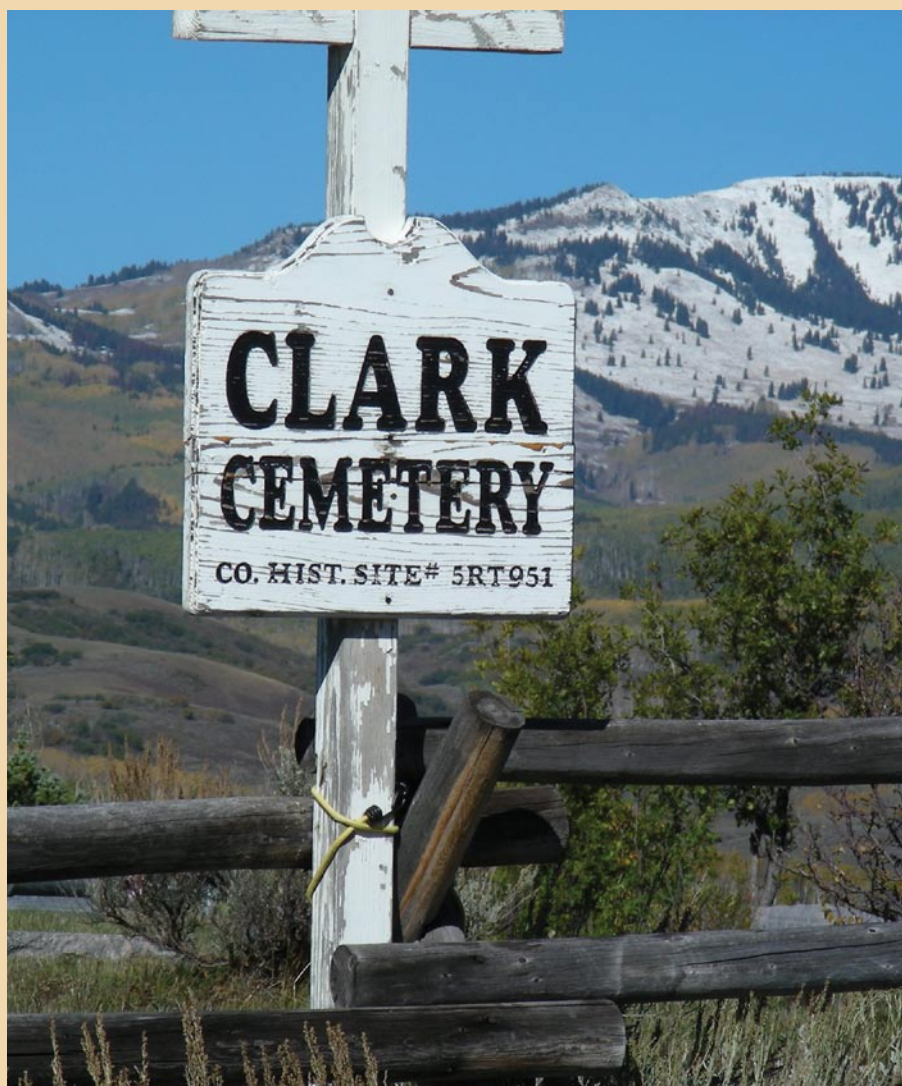
AFT Board Visits the Elk River Valley

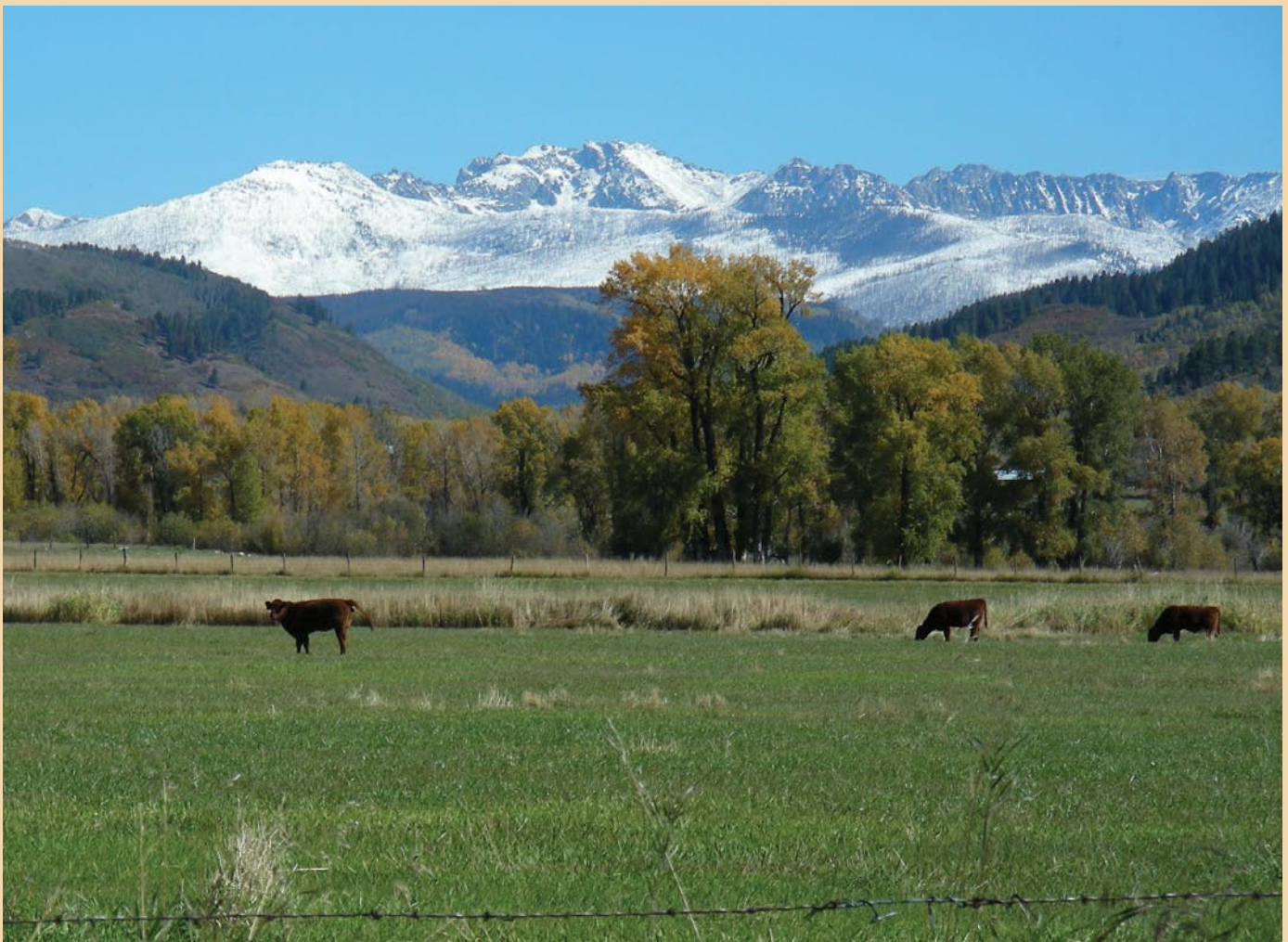
AFT’S BOARD OF DIRECTORS held their fall meeting at The Home Ranch in Clark, Colorado, hosted

by board member and ranch-owner Steve Stranahan and his wife Ann. Stranahan’s ranch is part of the upper Elk River Valley—an active ranching valley with incredible views and pristine rivers. The valley also contains a critical mass of protected ranchland, thanks to ranchers like Stranahan and the Fetcher family, who placed the valley’s first conservation easement on their ranch in the early 1990s with help from AFT.

AFT’s board of directors visited Colorado’s Elk River Valley in October, where they toured projects undertaken by AFT and saw ranch properties that AFT has helped to preserve.

PHOTOS BY KAY MALONE

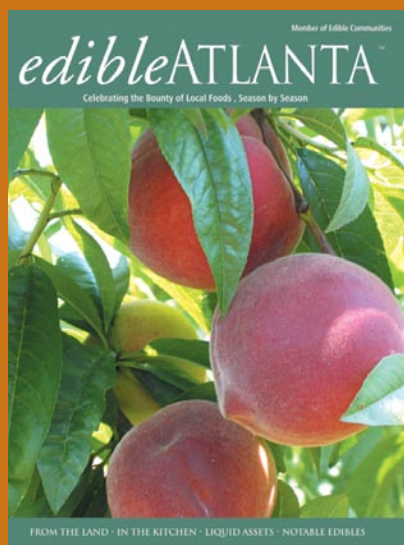




THANKS, AFT CORPORATE BARNRAISERS!

Edible Atlanta

Edible Atlanta is a community-based magazine that connects readers with farmers, chefs, restaurants and other food-related businesses that harvest, sell and prepare fresh seasonal foods in the greater Atlanta area. The magazine is sold throughout Atlanta at various retailers, including grocery stores, restaurants, markets, farms, kitchen stores and specialty food shops. Retailers have the opportunity to donate a portion of the proceeds from the magazine



to American Farmland Trust and two other organizations: Georgia Organics and the Atlanta Community Food Bank. Publishers Robert and Amanda Manning chose AFT and the other organizations based on a "commitment to promoting and preserving local foodways." Visit www.edibleatlanta.com to learn where you can pick up a copy of the magazine.

Old Grove Orange

Old Grove Orange is one of the few remaining old-growth citrus farms in the inland valley east of Los Angeles—considered the Napa Valley of the navel orange. Bob Knight and Aki Nakamura and their young children run the fourth-generation farm, named after their 97-year-old trees. They started the Inland Orange Conservancy, which rapidly became California's largest CSA by supplying 1,200 southern California families with their own "world's best oranges." Old Grove Orange is AFT's 2007 Bounty of the Land partner. Their fruit was shipped this fall to members of AFT's Barnraiser's Society, whose



generous gifts of \$1,000 or more annually help to keep America bountiful and beautiful. Old Grove also grows white and ruby grapefruit and can be contacted at www.oldgroveorange.com.

American Farmland Trust's Corporate Barnraisers Society advances AFT's mission through promotions, sponsorships and philanthropic gifts. By making contributions of \$1,000 or more, companies demonstrate that partnering with AFT is good business. To learn more, visit www.farmland.org or contact Emily Hryniewicki at (202) 378-1269 or ehryniewicki@farmland.org.

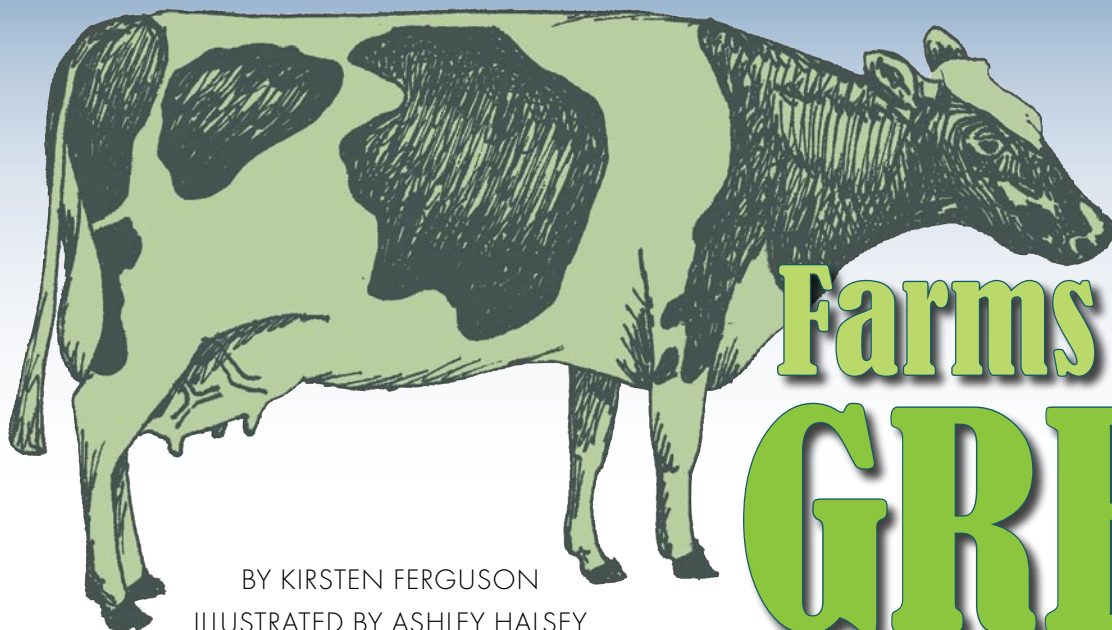


Mel Coleman, Jr.

Mel Coleman, Jr. Joins AFT Board

MEL COLEMAN, JR. became the newest member of American Farmland Trust's board of directors this fall. Coleman is the chairman of Coleman Natural Foods, a producer and marketer of natural and organic meats.

He is a fifth-generation rancher from Saguache, Colorado, and is the force behind the Coleman Eco-Project 2015, a decade-long conservation program with a goal of raising awareness about the link between conservation, healthy land, healthy products and healthy people.



BY KIRSTEN FERGUSON
ILLUSTRATED BY ASHLEY HALSEY

Farms Grow **GREEN**



Can Agriculture
Help Solve the
**CLIMATE
CRISIS?**

HELMAN PHOTO

Corn grown using the "no-till" technique, which helps in the fight against climate change.

Fall is typically a dry season in the Midwest, but in Iowa's rural Greene County this October, it was raining for well over a week. For corn and soybean farmer Jim Andrew, that meant he couldn't do much but work on paperwork and wait for the rain to subside. While other parts of the country were suffering from severe drought, the Iowa wet spell delayed not only Andrew's corn harvest but the crop harvests of farmers throughout the Midwest. "That was highly unusual," Andrew says. "If anything, we're usually worried about fires at that time of year."

While Andrew couldn't know for sure whether the unusual weather was the result of global warming, it did reinforce his belief that he and other farmers have nothing to lose—and everything to gain—from opportunities to manage their farms in ways that could help fight climate change while also producing many other environmental benefits, from cleaner water to healthy soil.

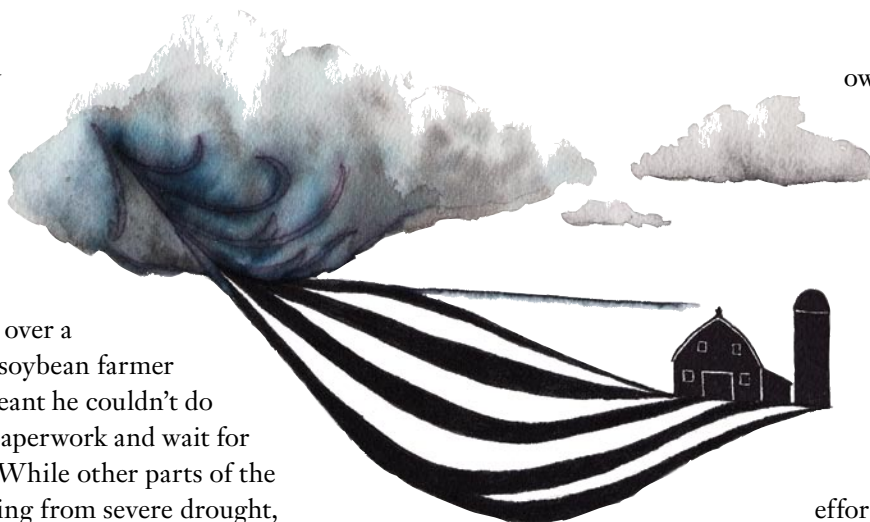
Last year, Andrew enrolled more than a thousand acres of his farmland in a ground-breaking, privately run program that pays farmers, ranchers and private forest

owners to use conservation practices that could help in the fight against global warming. The nation's working lands, which make up nearly 50 percent of the land in the continental United States, increasingly are being viewed as a critical asset in the effort to reduce the heat-trapping greenhouse gases linked to global warming. That's because farms and forests act as natural "sinks," absorbing vast amounts of carbon dioxide, a major greenhouse gas, from the atmosphere, storing it in plants and soil.

Andrew, who was named "Conservationist of the Year" by the American Soybean Association this year, is on the cutting edge of this growing movement. Last year he signed a contract with AgraGate Climate Credits Corporation, a subsidiary of Iowa Farm Bureau, to farm his land in ways that can help offset the greenhouse gas emissions of other industries. Andrew grows his crops using "no-till," a planting technique that disturbs the earth much less than traditional plowing methods. No-till traps greater amounts of carbon in the soil, a process known as carbon sequestration.

AgraGate determines, using "conservative" estimates by all accounts, how much carbon dioxide Andrew is helping to keep out of the atmosphere by sequestering it in the soil. The resulting "carbon credits" are then sold to companies that voluntarily agree to offset their own greenhouse gas emissions. "We are the country elevator of carbon credits," explains Dave Miller, who runs the AgraGate program. The company is an "aggregator," acquiring carbon credit contracts from agricultural producers across the country and then bundling them together to be traded on the Chicago Climate Exchange. The exchange is the first, and currently only, greenhouse gas emissions registry and trading system in North America.

About three and a half to four million acres of U.S. agricultural land are currently involved in carbon credit trading through AgraGate and similar programs run by the National Farmers Union and the Delta Institute in Chicago, Miller estimates. "The response in the agricultural community has been very good," he says. "Producers see this as an added incentive for good environmental performance. They recognize that their conservation work provides multiple benefits for society."



New Opportunities in Conservation

Are you an owner of farm or forest land interested in learning more about selling carbon credits? Farm, ranch and forest landowners of all sizes, in all parts of the country, are getting involved in carbon credit trading. Conservation practices that qualify include maintaining continuously no-tilled fields; establishing new grasslands or committing rangeland to an improvement program; reforesting land or planting new trees on forested land; and managing methane with digesters. To learn more, contact one of the following carbon credit trading programs:

AgraGate Climate Credits Corporation:
(866) 633-6758 or www.agragate.com

The National Farmers Union's Carbon Credit Program:
(800) 366-8331 or www.nfu.org

The Delta Institute:
(312) 554-0900 or www.delta-institute.org



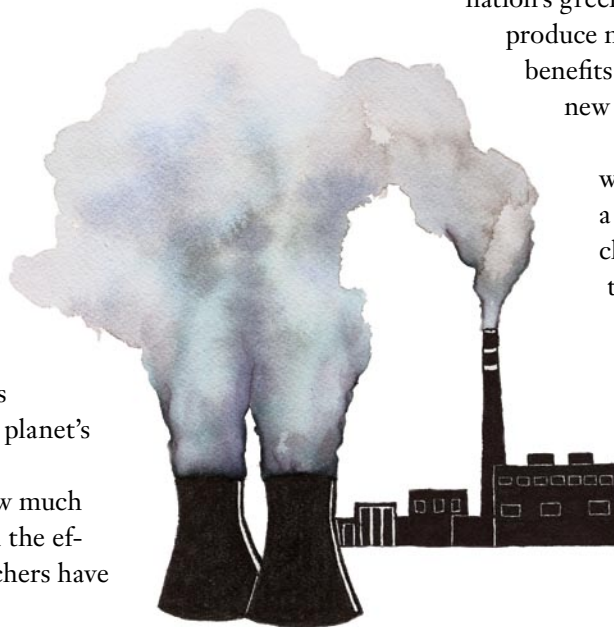
AFT's Dr. Ann Sorensen: "Agriculture is a critical part of the overall strategy to combat climate change."

AgraGate and programs like it represent a new and growing opportunity for the nation's farmers and ranchers to capitalize on sound environmental stewardship. Andrew was already growing his crops using no-till, because the technique provides other environmental benefits as well: reducing soil erosion, minimizing water pollution and cutting down on machinery use and fuel. So the AgraGate program, after Andrew took care of the relatively minimal paperwork needed to sign up, was an added bonus for his environmental performance. "If we're already doing the right thing, we might as well take advantage of it," he says. "It's money on the table. And it helps me a lot as a conservationist, because I feel like I'm doing my part. I think we're on the cusp of a real possibility for the future. I hold my head high that we're doing our part."

Farms and Climate Change Solutions

Mainstream scientists are now convinced that human activities, from deforestation to the burning of fossil fuels, are changing the composition of the atmosphere, increasing the level of greenhouse gases that trap heat in the atmosphere and could, if no action is taken, lead to drastic changes in the planet's climate.

Scientists don't know for sure how much the climate could change or what all the effects would be, but farmers and ranchers have



Iowa corn and soybean farmer Jim Andrew: "I think we're on the cusp of a real possibility for the future."

particular cause to be concerned. Agriculture is especially vulnerable to the types of weather extremes that could occur as a result of global warming, including more frequent and potentially disastrous droughts, floods, fires, heat waves and storms. In addition, climate change could alter growing seasons, affecting what crops producers could grow, and could lead to increased conflicts over water use and greater problems with weeds and pests.

But while agriculture has much to lose from the future effects of global warming, it also has much to gain from being part of the solution to fighting it. "Increasingly, agriculture is being looked to as a critical part of the overall strategy to combat climate change," says Ann Sorensen, director of American Farmland Trust's Center for Agriculture in the Environment, which is researching ways that farmers and ranchers can help reduce the

nation's greenhouse gas emissions—and produce many other environmental benefits for society—while generating new sources of farm income.

Sorensen points to several ways that agriculture can play a role in mitigating climate change. For one, agriculture—like all industries—is a source of its own greenhouse gas emissions, generating approximately seven percent of the total greenhouse gas emissions in the United States by some estimates. That's due in part to the release of nitrous oxide

Six Ways Farmers Are Growing Green



Farms and ranches have a major role to play in helping the United States address its most pressing environmental and resource concerns—including

climate change and energy stability. By “growing green,” farms and ranches can help the nation while harvesting new sources of income that keep their agricultural businesses sustainable and secure. In addition to food and fiber, the farms and ranches of the future may be providing multiple new “commodities,” including:

SEQUESTERED CARBON.

Energy industries are beginning to purchase carbon credits in the open market, paying farmers to help mitigate climate change by planting grasses, trees or using no-till planting techniques that leave the soil largely undisturbed and trap carbon in the ground instead of releasing it into the atmosphere. If federal legislation establishes caps on greenhouse gas emissions for industries in the future, the carbon credit market could become a huge opportunity for the nation’s farm and forest landowners.

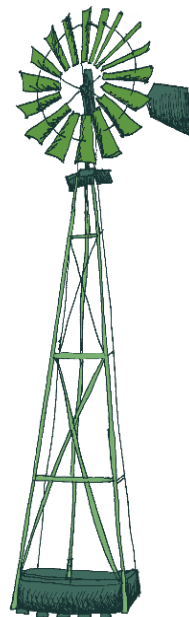


ENERGY CROPS. Farms are among the best potential suppliers for renewable energy and could help the United States reduce its dependence on foreign oil. Agricultural crops can be used to produce biofuels, which can substitute for a portion of the fossil fuels currently used for energy. Ethanol from corn and biodiesel from soybeans are currently the most common biofuels, but with new technology, new crops such as switch grass—and even left-over plant stalks and leaves—may provide a major opportunity for the agricultural sector to address climate change and energy security in a profitable way.

ELECTRICITY FROM MANURE. Animals raised for agriculture in the United States release 28 percent of the nation’s methane—a powerful greenhouse gas. Some dairy and livestock farmers are capturing the gas, which is released from

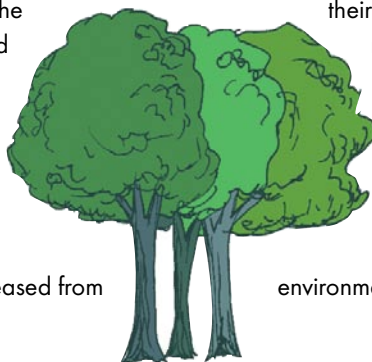
the digestive systems of ruminant animals and also from livestock waste. Methane digesters burn waste methane and use the heat to power a generator, which can provide on-farm electricity or power sold off the farm, while destroying the greenhouse gas.

WIND AND SOLAR POWER. Farms and ranches have used wind power for centuries to pump water and grind grain. Small wind power turbines, which have become more efficient with new technologies, can provide farms with a reliable source of clean energy to be used on the farm or sold into the electrical grid. Solar power is also being used on farms to pump water to livestock, charge electric fence batteries, light and heat buildings and dry crops, saving farmers money while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions.



CLEAN WATER. Much like carbon credit trading, water quality trading is a new opportunity for farmers. Environmental regulations have greatly reduced nutrient emissions into the nation’s waterways, but many watersheds face high costs for making further improvements—creating a market for nutrient reductions made by farmers. Industries and municipalities that discharge nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus into waterways are now purchasing nutrient credits from farmers who, in turn, adopt practices to reduce the run-off of nutrients from their fields.

OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES. In the future, many environmental or “ecosystem” services provided by agricultural landowners may find willing buyers in private markets. For instance, developers may offset the impacts of their development by paying farmers for restored or newly created wetlands; water districts may pay farmers for maintaining flood plains to trap flood waters and prevent downstream flooding; while municipalities might pay for improvements in air quality, wildlife habitat or other environmental benefits.



AFT and the Presidential Climate Action Project

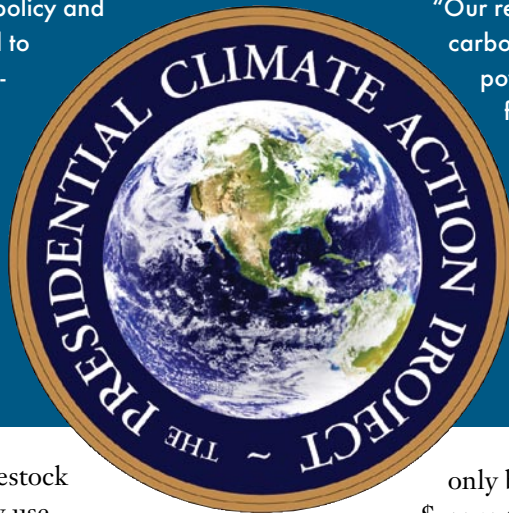
American Farmland Trust is playing a key role in a national initiative to develop a bold and decisive climate action plan for the next President of the United States. This winter, the nonpartisan Presidential Climate Action Project released a comprehensive menu of policy and program recommendations intended to help the 44th President provide effective federal leadership on climate change, at a critical time.

This new Presidential Climate Action Plan—supported by the Johnson Foundation and facilitated by the University of Colorado—proposes specific action items in the areas of energy

policy, national security, natural resource stewardship, agriculture, the economy, public health, transportation and the built environment. AFT was invited to draft the detailed policy recommendations related to agriculture.

“Our recommendations in areas such as carbon sequestration, solar and wind power, and methane capture on farms stress the important role that agriculture will play going forward and how policies can enhance that role,” says Ann Sorensen of AFT’s Center for Agriculture in the Environment.

To learn more, visit www.climateactionproject.com.



from fertilizer, methane gas from livestock and carbon dioxide from farm energy use. But agriculture can take—and in many cases already has been taking—immediate steps to reduce those emissions through management practices that are relatively low cost compared to changes needed in other industries.

Agriculture also has the potential to help the United States meet future emissions goals by offsetting, at least for the time being, greenhouse gases produced by other industries. A study from the Pew Center on Global Climate Change called *Agriculture’s Role in Greenhouse Gas Mitigation* determined that changes in agricultural practices, paired with the foresting of marginal agricultural lands, could offset up to one fifth of current U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, the nation could reduce emissions by 10 to 25 percent by replacing fossil fuels with biofuels made from agricultural crops.

“Agriculture alone cannot stabilize the climate, but it can buy us 30 to 50 years in the fight against global warming,” says Sorensen. “Scientists are looking at land management as a bridging strategy that can help us meet emissions targets by sequestering carbon until other industries can acquire the technology and energy sources needed to become less carbon-intensive.”

One recent report, *Harnessing Farms and Forests in the Low-Carbon Economy*, by Duke University Press, noted that land management projects could offset almost 1,500 million metric tons of carbon dioxide per year by 2025—around two-thirds of the reduction that climate models predict will be needed to avoid dangerous climate change. The report estimated that such reductions will

only be possible if carbon offsets are worth \$15 per ton of carbon dioxide, motivating enough landowners to participate. At a price of \$50 per ton, so many landowners would have the incentive to participate that farms and forests could provide nearly the total required cut in emissions.

But right now, Jim Andrew and other farmers are receiving only about \$5 for each metric ton of carbon dioxide they keep out of the atmosphere. That translates into about two dollars per acre each year for Andrew, an extra payment and “no-brainer” for him since he had already invested in the equipment needed to switch to no-till farming. But for other farmers, the changes they’d need to make are more formidable. “The trick is that conservation tillage doesn’t work for everyone,” Sorensen says. “New equipment is costly, it represents a new way of doing business, and crop yields may drop. Carbon credits need to be up in price for a lot more farmers to be able to participate.”

The New Low-Carbon Economy

Greater incentives for farm and forest owners may be on the horizon. The United States has yet to mandate that industries reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, so companies purchasing carbon offsets on the Chicago Climate Exchange are doing so voluntarily. (Some believe philosophically in reducing their “carbon footprint” while others want to market themselves as “green” and environmentally responsible.) This keeps the market, and thus the prices, for carbon credits weak.

“A federally uniform carbon policy—an adoption of a cap and trade program with offsets—would be a stimulus

Helping Farmers Grow Green

As the caretakers of America's landscape, farmers and ranchers produce significant environmental benefits—from helping to fight global warming to protecting the nation's water, air, wildlife habitat and soil. And they can do even more, given the financial resources and technical assistance.

American Farmland Trust has been working on multiple fronts to help make "growing green" a reality for farmers and ranchers by:

PROTECTING FARMLAND AND FIGHTING SPRAWL.

Without farm and ranch land, the nation loses a critical asset in the fight against global warming. Efforts to protect the nation's agricultural land base from development lie at the heart of AFT's work, from guiding state and local governments in permanently protecting their land to helping communities fight sprawl through farm friendly planning. This will be ever more critical in the future, as farms are depended on for everything from environmental services and renewable energy to local food.

PROMOTING CHANGES IN FARM POLICY. The farm bill is a major piece of legislation that impacts everything from the environment to nutrition. The farm bill funds conservation programs that can help the nation's farmers sequester carbon and provide other environmental benefits. AFT has been working to strengthen existing working lands conservation programs like the federal Conservation Security Program, while promoting new opportunities for farmers to receive "green payments" that reward environmental performance.

FINDING NEW MARKETS FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES. Throughout the farm and environmental communities, there is increasing interest in monetizing—both through public and private dollars—the many ecosystem services that farms and ranches provide. In pilot projects in places like the Mississippi River and Great Lakes watersheds and the Chesapeake Bay, AFT is helping farmers adopt new conservation practices while setting up private markets to purchase the resulting environmental benefits.

HELPING FARMERS ADOPT CONSERVATION PRACTICES. Most farmers are concerned about excessive use of fertilizer, soil run-off and greenhouse gas emissions—but some fear they are putting their crop yields and income at risk if conservation farming practices are adopted to reduce those threats. AFT's Agricultural Conservation Innovation Center is addressing this challenge by pioneering the use of conservation risk management tools to protect producers from financial loss when they implement healthy farming practices.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT WWW.FARMLAND.ORG

to the development of this market," Miller says. In Europe, farmers began receiving more than five times what their American counterparts make for carbon offsets after the European Union signed on to the Kyoto Protocol, which required participating countries to reduce their emissions to pre-1990 levels by 2012. The United States never ratified the treaty and currently has not passed federal legislation mandating greenhouse gas reduction.

But many view it as only a matter of time before U.S. greenhouse gas emissions go from being voluntarily managed to being regulated by laws. And although the federal government has yet to take action, more than 700 mayors nationwide have signed a pledge to reduce their cities' emissions. In addition, many states and local governments have made Kyoto-like commitments, from California with its Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 to seven Northeastern states that have joined to form the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

"We need to get agriculture involved so it can take a proactive role in the development of the nation's climate policy," Sorensen says. "Farmers can't do this all by themselves. Our climate policies need to make it profitable for farmers to adopt the needed practices, to make biofuels production economically and environmentally attractive and to support needed research."

To involve farmers in the climate change discussion, AFT, the Iowa Farm Bureau and other groups held a forum in Des Moines, Iowa, in July to talk with farmers about the factors that make them more willing to get involved in the carbon market. "One farmer stood up and said to the others—'It's a lot easier if we just think of carbon as another commodity,'" Sorensen relays. "We need to recognize that farmers need to make a living. AFT and the Iowa Farm Bureau see this as an opportunity. This is a service that farmers can perform—and it could be critical to their future."

Andrew views his early involvement in "carbon farming" in similar terms. "Pressure is building worldwide to address global warming," he says. "As we see federal legislation or the United States signs on to a treaty, there will be no choice. Farmers will have to get involved then. I prefer to be proactive and take advantage of what is already out there. When it does come about, I'll say, 'What took you guys so long?'"

KIRSTEN FERGUSON is the editor of *American Farmland*.

A photograph of a red tractor partially submerged in a flooded field. The tractor is in the foreground, with its front end and one wheel visible above the water. The water reflects the surrounding green trees and the sky. In the background, there are rows of crops in the field, also partially submerged. The scene is set during what appears to be late afternoon or early morning, with a soft, golden light.

The Climate Change and Land Use Connection

The key to successfully combating climate change lies in efficient urban development that decreases auto use and protects farmland.

BY EDWARD THOMPSON, JR.

Climate change could increase the likelihood of disastrous weather events, including floods.

ALAN HEARTFIELD/ISTOCKPHOTO

Agriculture will be profoundly affected by climate change and can do much to help reduce its impact on us all. But it is in our cities and, particularly, how they continue to grow that most solutions to global warming must be found. The biggest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in this country is the automobile. (Yes, that includes SUVs and pickups.) In recent decades, both the number of autos and the average number of miles they are driven have steadily increased, with a corresponding increase in greenhouse gas emissions. A growing and increasingly affluent population is partly responsible for this. But there is another cause that is less apparent: urban sprawl.

For the past half century, the predominant pattern of development in America has separated residential, commercial and other land uses, spreading people out and forcing them to get in their cars to go just about anywhere. The result has been that the average “vehicle miles traveled” per household—and greenhouse gas

emissions—has risen faster than both population and the number of vehicles on the road. Not coincidentally, sprawl has also been responsible for increased traffic congestion, polluted air and the needless loss of millions of acres of farmland and wildlife habitat.

Nowhere has this phenomenon had a greater impact than in California, the place where sprawl was invented. Here, state lawmakers recently passed legislation (AB 32) mandating a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020. This represents an 80 percent decrease over current levels. Without effective action, California greenhouse gas emissions are expected to increase 70 percent during the same period. Governor Schwarzenegger’s blue ribbon Climate Action Team has put together a strategy to achieve this goal, establishing specific greenhouse gas reduction quotas for every source of emissions. By far, the greatest reduction in greenhouse gas emissions—30 million metric tons of carbon dioxide—is expected to come from improved auto



A traffic jam on a California freeway

TIM MCCAIG/ISTOCKPHOTO

technology, particularly electric and hydrogen powered vehicles. The second highest reduction—18 million metric tons of carbon dioxide—is to come from “smart land use and intelligent transportation,” i.e., curbing urban sprawl.

Scientists have established a clear link between the efficiency of urban development—how many people and jobs are accommodated with each acre developed—and vehicles miles traveled as a source of greenhouse gas emissions. For example, in Sacramento, California, neighborhoods that have fewer than four dwellings per acre generate twice the vehicle miles traveled as those with more than 10 residences per acre. Local governments in the Sacramento metropolitan area have adopted a “blueprint” for future growth that takes this into account in planning land use and transportation systems in order to minimize greenhouse gas emissions as well as municipal service costs and the loss of farmland.

American Farmland Trust has been at the forefront of the movement to combat climate change—and, of course, save farmland—by encouraging smarter, more efficient land use patterns that don’t rely exclusively on the auto to get around. In California, for example, we have joined with other nonprofit organizations to form Climate Plan (www.climateplanca.org), a coordinating committee for all of our efforts to persuade developers and state

and local governments to build neighborhoods closer to schools and businesses, revitalize downtowns with mixed-use transit-oriented development, and preserve open land within and around communities. Nationally, AFT was one of the founders of Smart Growth America a decade ago. Smart Growth America recently teamed with the Urban Land Institute to publish *Growing Cooler: The Evidence on Urban Development and Climate Change*, a must read for anyone interested in the subject.

Though climate change has become the defining issue of our time, the solutions to global warming are not new. Indeed, more efficient, livable urban development is part of the solution to many of the challenges facing our country, from the loss of farmland and habitat to the growing tax burden of servicing far-flung development. It is AFT’s hope that this new, undeniably urgent issue will also help call attention to the need to preserve farmland—which may itself become even more important if the globe continues to warm and the impact on agriculture is as predicted. As one of my colleagues has said, “It’s the same nail. But with climate change, we may now have a bigger hammer.”

EDWARD THOMPSON, JR. is the California director of American Farmland Trust.

Countdown to Saving Farms and Farmland

A farmer's list of New Year's resolutions for supporters of local agriculture.

BY LORRAINE STUART MERRILL

LET US COUNT the many ways to foster a vibrant farm economy and save farmland. As a farmer, I offer a list of New Year's suggestions for anyone who wants to support local farmers and farmland—from new converts to the cause of local foods to seasoned advocates of farming and ranching. When it comes to supporting local farms, each individual can make a real difference. Resolve to turn over some new leaves in 2008—like trying a new variety of fresh leafy greens from your own garden or from a local grower.

Explore localvore!

- Patronize your favorite local farms and farmers' markets.
- Find at least three new sources of locally grown or produced foods.
- Shop at local retail food markets that promote fresh, locally produced foods.
- Invite family and friends for a localvore potluck—brunch, picnic lunch or supper. Ask everyone to bring a dish featuring foods from local or regional sources. Don't worry about being purist (spices, coffee and tea are ok). The goal is to discover and share the flavors of your own region.
- Join or start a local foods organization or blog.
- Increase the percentage of your diet that comes from local sources.

Look for other local or regional products and businesses.

- Look for locally or regionally grown plants, flowers, Christmas

trees and other seasonal and regional specialties.

- Patronize local farmers who may sell farm-made compost, aged manure and other resources for home garden and landscaping projects.
- Seek out restaurants, cafes and other vendors that feature and promote locally and regionally produced foods and products.

Help save farmland—and keep it in farming and ranching.

- Write a letter to the editor in support of local efforts to conserve farmland.
- Volunteer to serve on—or start—a local open space or land conservation committee.
- Join your local land trust and renew your membership in American Farmland Trust.

- Support (or spearhead) local efforts to fund land conservation in your community.
- Call or write your representatives in state and federal government when funding for agriculture and land conservation is at stake.
- Support efforts to keep agriculture as the primary objective on locally conserved or public-owned lands.
- Support “current use” and other forms of property-tax relief for farmland and forest owners.
- Educate yourself about our food supply. Choose healthy, nutritious foods but avoid panic over every scary sound-bite and marketing ploy.

Get involved in local government decisions that make a difference.

- Speak up for local farms and agriculture.
- Help start a local agricultural commission or committee to promote farming in your town, city or county.
- Sign up for American Farmland Trust's e-newsletters at www.farmland.org.



Lorraine Stuart Merrill with her cows, Flower, Brigita, and Louisa

SUSAN LIBAKIS

- Read the American Planning Association's Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning at www.planning.org/policyguides/food.
- To conserve land, fight to reduce lot-size and setback requirements for new homes.
- Support denser and mixed-use village, town center and infill development in order to conserve open lands.
- Check your local government regulations for "farm-friendliness" and spearhead an effort to make needed changes.
- Learn about the backgrounds and views of candidates for local office—and vote.

Welcome farming in your community.

- Understand that farm noises, smells and messes can be a nuisance, but without them we could not sustain ourselves, nor could we maintain precious open space.
- Be patient when you get stuck traveling behind a slow-moving tractor or piece of farm equipment.
- When a neighboring farmer spreads manure on a field near your home or workplace, remind yourself and others—that's the aroma of natural, organic fertilizer. Those recycled nutrients are keeping your view green.
- Planning a graduation party or outdoor wedding reception? Let your farm neighbors know in advance so they can adjust manure-spreading schedules!
- Respect farmers' property. Privately-owned farms are not public parks, and can have very active businesses occurring on site. Ask permission to walk, ride, hunt, ski or observe wildlife—out of courtesy to the owners and for your own safety.
- If the farm family next door or down the street faces a crisis, ask them how you can help. They would do the same for you.

Nurture our future conservationists.

- Volunteer to help coordinate farm-to-school efforts like sourcing local foods for school lunches and snacks, arranging farm visits and classroom learning opportunities, and helping children grow food in school gardens.
- Make sure local schools offer fresh milk and produce in vending machines instead of soda and junk foods. Work with school boards and staff for positive change.
- Bring the children in your life to a farm to learn where food really comes from.
- Give the gift of gardening—help a child plant and tend their very own "yardstick garden" of vegetables and flowers, or hill of pumpkins or gourds.
- Take a child berry-picking and apple-picking at a "pick-your-own" farm. Teach them how to select and carefully pick ripe fruit and observe nature.
- Read to children. Choose books and poems like Donald Hall's *Ox-Cart Man* that recount and celebrate the rhythms and cycles and relationships of agriculture.
- Go for a walk or hike with children and teens to explore their environment.

LORRAINE STUART MERRILL has been nominated to be the new commissioner of New Hampshire's Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food. She and her family operate Stuart Farm in Stratham, New Hampshire. AFT honored them with the Steward of the Land Award in 2003.

WEATHERED BARNs ALONG roads leading into the historic New England town of Hatfield, Massachusetts, have taken on a new purpose in recent years. Each summer since 2005, a roadside barn has doubled as a public art space celebrating the town's rich agricultural heritage. The colorful barn murals are the work of students at Smith Academy, the local public high school, under the guidance of art teacher Julie Muellejans. The Hatfield Agricultural Advisory Commission conceived the "Art of Farming" project as a way to promote local farms through public art depicting agriculture and farm life.

Hatfield was a leading grower of tobacco and onions in the early 1900s, and today the town's farms produce many local foods, from cucumbers and strawberries to dairy products. Students research different aspects of local farming before creating each new mural, explains Bob Wagner, who chairs the commission (and is also AFT's managing director of field programs and policy development). "Given the enthusiastic response of the students each year, we believe that in addition to this being a fun artistic experience, the students value the knowledge they gain about local farming and take pride in their contribution to promoting a future for Hatfield agriculture," Wagner says.

Muellejans agrees that the project has had a number of positive effects on the students, teaching artistic concepts, such as perspective and the use of color to make an immediate and lasting impression, while also generating a sense of pride in the town's agricultural legacy. "It's been wonderful for our students," she says. "About a third of our students are involved directly in farming. Two-thirds of our students have

Art of Conservation



some connection to farming—either through their parents or grandparents or from working on a farm in the summer.”

When the students created the first mural in 2005, they wanted to recognize all the main farm products of

Hatfield, Muellejans says. “The first year, we tried to include everybody. It was really important that everyone was covered. The hands in the center of the mural were a literal way of saying, ‘Welcome to Hatfield. We farm here.’” In the second year, the students

painted fruits and vegetables—and one lone cow—in a bright and “whimsical” design. And, this past summer, the mural took a broader view of the land, with students imagining farms from an “ant’s eye view.”

Members of the community are invited to a mural unveiling each year, and the project has succeeded in drawing greater attention to the area’s farming industry, Muellejans says. “People are looking for them. How can you be looking for them and not be thinking of farms? There’s a lot of pride among the people involved in the project. It has a rippling effect. I’ve been in the strangest places and people have mentioned it. Now people are just waiting to see what we will do next.”



The Hatfield barn murals: 2005 (top), 2006 (center) and 2007 (bottom)

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"top-rated charities." AIP is a nationally prominent charity watchdog service whose purpose is to help donors make informed giving decisions. For more information, visit www.charitywatch.org.

A CHEF, RESTAURATEUR and food educator, Ann Gentry has spent 25 years raising the standard of vegetarian cooking in America. She founded and continues to run Real

Food Daily—restaurants in the Los Angeles area that serve a vegetarian/vegan menu using foods grown exclusively with organic farming methods. By combining seasonal, vegetarian

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

farm fresh

Acorn Squash Stuffed with Sweet Rice, Currants and Vegetables Smothered with Golden Gravy

(Serves 8)

- 4 small acorn squash (each about 12 to 14 ounces), halved lengthwise and seeded
- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- ½ teaspoon sea salt, plus more for seasoning
- Freshly ground black pepper, for seasoning
- 2 ¾ cups water
- 2 cups uncooked short-grain brown rice, rinsed well
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 6 celery stalks, chopped
- 3 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano
- 2 tablespoons tamari (soy sauce)
- 1 cup currants
- ¾ cup chopped fresh basil
- 1 cup pepitas (roasted pumpkin seeds), toasted and coarsely crumbled

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Cut a very thin slice off the rounded side of the squash halves to help them stand firmly on the plates and not topple over. Brush the squash bowls with 1 tablespoon of oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Arrange the squash bowls, bowl side up, on a heavy large baking sheet. Roast for 45 minutes, or until the flesh of the squash is just tender. Keep the squash warm.

Meanwhile, combine the water, rice and ½ teaspoon of salt in a 4¼-quart pressure cooker. Lock the lid into place. Bring the pressure to high over high heat. Decrease the heat to medium-low and simmer for 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and let stand for 10 minutes, or until the pressure reduces. Carefully unlock the lid and remove it from the pot. Fluff the rice with a fork.

Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil in a heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion, celery, carrots and oregano. Sauté for 12 minutes or until the vegetables are tender. Stir in the tamari, then the currants and basil. Stir in the cooked rice. Season the rice mixture to taste with salt and pepper.

Divide the rice mixture among the hot baked squash. Sprinkle the pepitas over the stuffing and serve.



REAL FOOD DAILY

organic vegan cuisine

farm fresh

Golden Gravy

(Makes 4 cups)

- ½ cup nutritional yeast
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- ⅓ cup canola oil
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme (or 1 teaspoon dried)
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh sage (or 1 teaspoon dried)
- 4 cups water
- ¼ cup tamari
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon sea salt

Stir the nutritional yeast and flour in a heavy skillet over medium heat for 5 minutes, or until pale golden and fragrant. Set aside.

Heat the oil in a heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add the onions and sauté for 10 minutes or until tender and beginning to brown. Add the garlic and herbs and sauté for 30 seconds, or until fragrant. Whisk in the flour mixture. Whisk in the water, tamari, pepper and salt. Bring the gravy to a simmer, whisking frequently. Continue simmering until the gravy is thick and creamy. Strain the gravy into a bowl and serve.

The gravy will keep for 2 days, covered and refrigerated. To re-warm, bring the gravy to a simmer in a saucepan over medium heat, stirring occasionally.

"This gravy originated at one of our annual Thanksgiving feasts and immediately ended up on the menu," explains Gentry. "Toasting the flour and nutritional yeast in a skillet until they become a pale golden color gives this delicious gravy a rich, deep flavor."

RECIPE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

cooking with a richness influenced by her Southern upbringing, Gentry developed an original cuisine that Bon Appétit calls "as interesting and delicious as it is healthful."

After years of requests from customers, Ann has written her first cookbook, *The Real Food Daily Cookbook*, in which the following recipe appears. "At any table, on any cold weather occasion, this dish is always popular," says Gentry. "You can substitute butternut or kabocha squash for the acorn. This dish is satisfying as is; however, adding the gravy deepens the textures and flavors."

"This gravy originated at one of our annual Thanksgiving feasts and immediately ended up on the menu," explains Gentry. "Toasting the flour and nutritional yeast in a skillet until they become a pale golden color gives this delicious gravy a rich, deep flavor."



Ann Gentry

AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST

The mission of American Farmland Trust is to stop the loss of productive farmland and to promote farming practices that lead to a healthy environment. As the nation's leading advocate for farm and ranch land conservation, AFT works with communities and individuals to protect the best land, plan for agriculture and keep the land healthy.

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www.farmlandinfo.org

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Each year, American Farmland Trust benefits from the generosity of our members, who love the land and care about our nation's farms. Here are a few ways to become a new member or renew your existing membership:



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