

Women Landowner Resource Guide



Women landowners control nearly 50% of the agriculture land in the Midwest and are a powerful population for effecting real change in conservation practices. Their potential, however, is under-recognized and they are often left out of conservation outreach and education. Given these barriers related to gender, it is crucial for agricultural organizations to support women landowners and farmers as active partners in conservation. The following insights were gathered from American Farmland Trust's "Women for the Land" Learning Circles, which sought to determine the conservation needs of women. The program combined research-based, participatory methods to create peer networks for women in agriculture to share their expertise and experiences with one another.

Landowner & Tenant Relationship Barriers & Accessing Resources

Recognizing the necessity for programming focused on women's needs involving peer-to-peer learning can bring important relationships between landowners and tenants to the forefront by encouraging women landowners to engage in post-session conversations about what was learned with land operators. This approach acknowledges that this process is complex and rarely straightforward. Women non-operators have commented that they are trying not to "rock the boat" to maintain long-term relationships with tenants, family and community members. Women have emphasized the pressure they feel to maintain harmony. At times, a landowner may seek to find a new tenant if the parties cannot develop a shared approach for land management. Peer support can enable women landowners to secure technical and financial assistance and overcome barriers such as isolation in their communities. For women landowners, building awareness of practices and relevant programs can boost confidence and help them negotiate to meet their land management goals.

Resources for Women Landowners

If you are a woman landowner looking for conservation resources to support you in adopting prairie strips or other conservation programs, consider the following resources:

- [American Farmland Trust: Women for the Land](https://www.farmland.org/women)
 - [<https://www.farmland.org/women>]
- [Iowa State University Wildlife Habitat Programs](https://naturalresources.extension.iastate.edu/contacts/wildlife-habitat-programs-and-consultation): Contacts to access federal and state financial support
 - [<https://naturalresources.extension.iastate.edu/contacts/wildlife-habitat-programs-and-consultation>]
- [Women Caring for the Land](https://wfan.org/women-caring-for-the-land): Curriculum for reaching women landowners on conservation
 - [<https://wfan.org/women-caring-for-the-land>]
- [Women for the Land](https://wfan.org/women-caring-for-the-land): American Farmland Trust initiative focused on women farmers and landowners
 - [<https://wfan.org/women-caring-for-the-land>]
- [Women on the Wing](https://www.pheasantsforever.org/Participate/Women-on-the-Wing.aspx): Pheasants Forever initiative inspiring women conservationists
 - [<https://www.pheasantsforever.org/Participate/Women-on-the-Wing.aspx>]
- [Women Owning Woodlands](https://www.womenowningwoodlands.net/): Resources to support women forest landowners
 - [<https://www.womenowningwoodlands.net/>]



Navigating the acronyms and requirements of federal and state programs can be challenging. For landowners interested in integrating more prairie on your land, consider engaging with the USDA Farm Service Agency and/or Natural Resource Conservation Service to get federal program resources to help you get started. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources also has a state-level program that can provide you with additional resources.

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA)

- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- Prairie Strips CP-43 (practice code)
- Covers 100% of installation cost
- Maximum \$300/acre annual payment 10-15 years contract
- 30-120 feet wide strips, maximum 25% of the field
- Full or partial border of the field
- Throughout field on contour or in terrace channels
- Must have cropping history
- Approximately 2% of Iowa's acres are in CRP
 - [<http://bit.ly/40vC4aK>]

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- One-time incentive payment (paid on flat rates) for a variety of conservation practices. Wildlife practices aim to provide a one-time payment for approximately 75% of implementation cost
- Landowners incur cost up front and are reimbursed after certification.
- Acceptance of application is NOT guaranteed, competitively ranked.
- Payment rates change every year, below are some averages:
 - a. Native Grass and forb mixes (\$600 to \$800 an acre)
 - b. Brush management (\$100 to \$300 an acre on average, can be higher in different scenarios, \$1,000 an acre for prairie chicken habitat area, \$600 if you are using goats)
 - c. Prescribed Burning (\$25 to \$90 an acre)
 - [<http://bit.ly/3KlgoZl>]
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is another NRCS option for annual payments for implementing conservation practices.
 - [<http://bit.ly/3nCLW3R>]

Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

- Prairie Partners Program
- Partner program, Iowa DNR and Iowa Native Seed Growers Association and Pheasants Forever
- Essentially a 50% off coupon on native prairie seed
- Habitat agreement of 10 years
- Minimum size 2 acres
- Native grass/forb seeds must be purchased from approved partner
- Contact a private lands biologist to apply
 - [<http://bit.ly/3M64ILk>]

Other Resources:

[1]: Women for the Land: Empowering Women in Agriculture

[<https://farmland.org/project/women-for-the-land/>]

[2]: Women Landowners: The Language of Partnership

[<https://openrivers.lib.umn.edu/article/women-landowners/>]

[3]: 'From a Circle of Introductions': Empowerment of Women Landowners

[<https://bit.ly/3FhQhzx>]



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