**Women for the Land Event Outreach & Recruitment Strategies**

AFT’s Women and Land Initiative provides women in agriculture with opportunities to gain the knowledge, skills and confidence to engage with agricultural and conservation service providers including state and federal agencies, tenant farmers, family members, technical service providers and contractors.

Women’s Learning Circles provide flexible, peer-to-peer, facilitated learning experiences in groups built on the idea that every member has something to contribute and that every member has something to learn. Research in adult education shows that adult learners of all genders are most likely to take action when information is offered in settings that are cognizant of flattening power dynamics and accounting for the social and emotional states and needs of learners. This setting can foster comfort with asking questions and sharing information with the group, as opposed to traditional classroom presentation-style methods of information delivery, which can be intimidating and alienating particularly for marginalized people in agriculture.

**Rule #1** – don’t be discouraged! This is hard.

There is a wide diversity of roles that women play on the farm and their level of knowledge about farming can vary widely. Our programming can serve the whole spectrum, from non-operating farmland owners who have been in less visible roles on the farm such as bookkeeping, to independent farm managers running their own operation.

This document provides some tips for recruiting participants Women’s Learning Circles.

1. **Contact and/or partner with allied organizations:** Potential partners can includegrassroots non-profits serving targeted communities or related mission areas, Conservation Districts, USDA County Field Offices for Farm Service Agency or Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Bureau, watershed groups, Future Farmers of America, Master Gardeners, Extension offices, etc. The more you can involve these groups in the planning process, the more buy-in they will have with your effort and be willing to vouch for our programming as valuable to those they hold relationships with.
2. **Create a “Get the Word Out” List:** Develop a list of colleagues and professionals in which you can blast emails to for event dates and registration information.
3. **Publicity:** Advertise through print and social media by creating engaging flyers, social media posts, press releases, and/or articles in local newspapers or interest-group newsletters.
4. **Create Eye-Catching and Relatable Promotional materials**: Think about what imagery and language will help diverse audiences of women and gender non-binary people in agriculture see themselves as welcomed (and non-tokenized), and that might evoke/express the topic of the Learning Circle. Be thoughtful about graphic design principles of visual hierarchy, negative space, and minimal text. Using templates in Publisher or Canva can help with design. Use [AFT’s Visual Standards guide](https://americanfarmlandtrust.sharepoint.com/%3Ab%3A/s/National-Programs/EeV9onymipxOp37TJqTGNPQBpvTtu0kz_gOke1v7EpcTrA?e=QrLPlc) to create consistent branding, but be sure to include logos of partners, as well.
5. **Formatted and Targeted Supporter Email:** Work with AFT National Communications team to create targeted lists from within AFT’s supporter database based on their demographic characteristics, location, or history of engagement with AFT online content. Create visually engaging and information rich emails to send to these lists that include the registration link.
6. **Personal Contacts to Past Participants:** If the new event is relevant to previous participants, reach out with an email or call to let them know about the event.
7. **Online Marketing Ads:** Work with AFT’s National Communications team to set-up paid advertisements on social media.
8. **Niche Media Advertising:** Local or niche TV and radio stations can be great ways to reach underserved audiences or smaller communities, such as immigrants or non-native English speakers.
9. **Community Advertising:** Displaying flyers or connecting with individuals in the community will help spread the message even further. Consider the business, community institutions, and businesses that your target audience might frequent and ask if they can post flyers for your event.
10. **Targeted Correspondence:** Create postcards, save the dates, or hand-written letters to let your target audience know what you are offering and provide a more personal invitation, especially if you already know the individual.
11. **Campus or Community Talk:** Volunteer to speak at a local Master Gardener group, Rotary Club, Ag or Food systems class at a college or university in the target area.
12. **Sneaky Recruiting:** Slip flyers in the front of free magazines at the grocery store
13. **Farmers Market Recruiting:** Reach out to Farmers Market Managers over email to see if they can promote your event to their vendors via email newsletters or bulletin boards at the market, or reach out to CSA farmers to display your flyers at their stall.
14. **Phone Recruiting:** A week before the event, call your target audience or those already registered to remind them of the opportunity and assess if they might be facing barriers to attending that you can help alleviate.
15. **Bookmark Recruiting:** Distribute bookmarks with the learning circle date and registration site.

Remember to **follow-up with the participants** after the learning circle and say THANK YOU!

1. **Promote on AFT and Personal Social Media:** Use the WFL Instagram account and your personal social media accounts to advertise the Learning Circle and to gain attention so that others can spread the word.
2. **Free Radio Advertising:** Call in to your local radio when they’re wanting song requests and pitch in a quick blurb about the Learning Circles!
3. **Send Handwritten Thank You Notes or WFL postcards:** Gabrielle and Caitlin have WFL postcards specifically for this purpose that we can send you ahead of your event so that you can send to your participants afterward. Adding a personal note with it can solidify the relationship, invite them to the next event, or ask for their help spreading the word about future programming.
4. Have yourself and others send out invitations to their own lists to help spread the word even farther and from local professionals.
5. **Facebook Pages of Local Groups:** 4H, garden clubs, niche networks for your target audience(s), etc.
6. **Conservation Field Days/Workshops for Farmers**: Inform farmers at these events about your program and ask them to invite their women farming partners or landowners to your event. Often conservation minded farmers are doing conservation on the owned land and not the rented land, so they often welcome an opportunity for their landowners to learn about the practices they use.

Expect to hear “no” but remember that there are **many others who** might be interested.

1. **Women leaders in your community**: Seek them out, they don’t necessarily have to be engaged in farming. Women who are active in leadership are very supportive of any work to empower women.
2. **Friends and Family!: …**Especially if you are in the community. If you are not, you might still have connections through friends and family – use your networks.