



SAVING AMERICA'S WORKING LANDS

A National Conference Hosted by American Farmland Trust

DALLAS, TEXAS | APRIL 23-25, 2025

Session: Retaining Farmland by Supporting Farm and Ranch Viability

SPEAKERS



Jimmy Kroon

Chief of Planning

Delaware Department of Agriculture

Jimmy Kroon has served several roles at the Delaware Department of Agriculture since 2003. Currently, as Chief of Planning, he works on agricultural policy and manages the Delaware Agricultural Lands Preservation Program with over 140,000 acres of permanently preserved farms. Jimmy's prior experience at DDA includes apiary inspection, pest detection of crops, nursery stock, and forest pests, coordinating GIS projects for farmland preservation and other programs, and supporting wildland fire response in western states as a GIS Specialist. Jimmy resides in Felton, and holds degrees in biology and environmental science from the University of Maine at Machias, and a graduate degree in geographic information systems from Penn State.



Melissa Adams

Programs Manager, Farm Viability & Agricultural Business Assistance
MA Department of Agricultural Resources

Melissa Adams is committed to helping farm businesses succeed. She manages the Farm Viability and Agricultural Business Training programs at the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. Massachusetts' Farm Viability Enhancement Program was the first program to combine business planning, technical assistance, short-term land protection, and grants, and served as the model to develop similar programs for beginning farmers and protected farms. Melissa developed the Growing Your Farm Business Planning course curriculum for established farms, which has been approved as an FSA certified borrower training for financial management. She has more than 20 years of experience in agricultural and community planning with prior positions including Land Use Program Manager at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, Economic Planner at American Farmland Trust, and consultant to implement Glynwood's Keep Farming community-based planning processes in several regions of Massachusetts. Melissa has a B.S. in Business Management from Syracuse University and a Masters in Regional Planning from UMass Amherst.



David Anderson

Idaho Senior Program Manager
American Farmland Trust

David found a love for the land while working with his grandpa on the family ranch as a kid. He remembers his grandma telling stories about the generations of family that scratched a ranch out of the Lemhi Valley. After college in Arizona, David spent 25 years as a hydrogeologist providing land and water stewardship services to energy, mining, and real estate development clients. In 2019, AFT was asked by Idaho agriculture families to bring support to the state in response to a rapid loss of working lands. David joined AFT in 2021 as Idaho Program Manager and is based in Boise. He is the Board President of the Regenerative Agriculture Network of Idaho and a Board Supervisor for Ada Soil & Water Conservation District. He enjoys every minute outdoors and especially with family and friends.



Facilitator

Cris Coffin

Senior Policy Advisor; Director, National Agricultural Land Network
American Farmland Trust

Cris helps guide AFT's federal and state policy engagement. She also directs the National Agricultural Land Network, which supports state and local governments, land trusts, agricultural service providers, planners, and conservation organizations and builds their capacity to advance farmland protection. From 2015 to 2018, Cris served as policy director for Land For Good, a New England-based organization with which AFT often collaborates. But before that, Cris served as AFT's New England director for fourteen years. She has held several positions in the U.S. Senate, including as professional staff on the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and as chief of staff to Senator Herb Kohl. She has worked for Resources for the Future and the Vermont Department of Agriculture. Cris co-chairs the Massachusetts Food System Collaborative and serves on her town's Agriculture Commission. Cris farms part-time with her husband, running a small, pastured poultry operation in western Massachusetts. She is an alumna of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and holds a Juris Doctor from Georgetown University.