

SAVING AMERICA'S WORKING LANDS

A National Conference Hosted by American Farmland Trust

DALLAS, TEXAS | APRIL 23-25, 2025

Session: Scaffolding to Support Farm Transfer and Succession

SPEAKERS



Mike Ghia

Vermont Field Agent

Land For Good

Mike grew up on farm and has been involved with agriculture since childhood. He farmed full-time for 10 years on leased land and continues to run a part-time maple syrup operation. In addition to doing work for Land For Good for over 15 years, Mike also contracts to do work for the University of Vermont Extension Farm Viability Program as a Farm Business Planner and consults for other UVM programs. In addition to his extensive experience working with farmers and property owners on farm tenure, succession and transfer, Mike's expertise also includes grazing, soil, and pest management. Mike is also a trained mediator and does mediation for the VT Agricultural Mediation Program.



Addie Candib

Pacific Northwest Regional Director
American Farmland Trust

Addie oversees AFT's programs in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. She has worked at the intersection of agriculture and the nonprofit sector for over 10 years. She has direct experience working on farms and is a seasoned grassroots advocate. Addie co-founded the Washington Young Farmers Coalition in 2010 and served on the Board of Directors for Tilth Alliance from 2012-2017. Addie began her career in farmland protection at the Community Farm Land Trust in Olympia, Washington, and she has been passionate about farmland access and affordability ever since. Addie is trained in mediation and conflict resolution, and volunteers as a facilitator and mediator with a community-based dispute resolution center. Addie holds a Bachelor of Arts from Swarthmore College and a Master of Public Administration from The Evergreen State College, where her capstone work explored financing strategies for farmland protection.

**Liya Schwartzman**

Senior Program Manager
California FarmLink

Liya Schwartzman has been working in partnership with farmers on behalf of California FarmLink since 2010. She has supported hundreds of farmers and ranchers in accessing land, securing strong tenure agreements, exploring financing, and facilitating farmland and business succession plans. Liya also directs farmers to a variety of resources from FarmLink, its partners, and service providers nationwide. She is a frequent speaker at workshops and conferences on topics of importance to beginning and retiring farmers and ranchers. Liya was born and raised in the suburbs of Los Angeles and graduated from UC Davis with a B.A. in Nature and Culture. She now resides in America's Farm-to-Fork Capital, Sacramento, and enjoys all the fruits and vegetables that California has to offer.



Facilitator

Deborah Nares Paredes

California Senior Manager

American Farmland Trust

Deborah joined the AFT team as the California Senior Manager in March 2022 where she is co-leading and managing CA programs. Deborah is a 3rd generation Californian born and raised in the beachfront town of Oceanside, CA. Her passion for farming started on her grandparent's small diversified vegetable farm in Aguanga, CA where she first learned to drive a tractor. Deborah has 2 decades of technical assistance and non-profit management experience centering the Latino farming community on the Central Coast of California. She specialized in soil health & water quality planning for many years. Then in 2017, she shifted her focus to supporting small-scale farm business with access to capital, land and markets as a farm business advisor with CA Farmlink, Kitchen Table Advisors in CA, and Kitchen Table Consultants in PA. Her current goal is to continue to build out more farm viability and land access programs for underserved farmers throughout California. She loves all things beach and water; dance and music; friends and family; food and farming. She is the mother of 2 smart and silly girls who keep her active and laughing. She invites you to reach out to her on LinkedIn or by email to learn more about how to advance the work of supporting the next generation of farmers.