WORKING FARMS FUND

2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

Photo courtesy of Love is Love Farm

THE

Conservation Fund
Communities across the United States are losing 40 acres of farmland every hour. This loss is often centered around large metropolitan areas like Atlanta, which lost 25% of its farmland to development over the past decade. Meanwhile, the average age of a farmer in the U.S. is 58 years old and climbing.

The Conservation Fund’s Working Farms Fund is an innovative program, piloted and launched in metro-Atlanta, and working to address these issues by:

- Permanently protecting farmland threatened by urban sprawl.
- Providing affordable land access and business support to diverse, next generation farmers.
- Growing a healthier, more resilient food system and scaling local food production.
- Building stronger local economies and connections between rural and urban communities.
- Implementing sustainable farming practices for land and water health

The Working Farms Fund is expanding to the Chicago metro-area, with the first farm purchase in that region anticipated in early 2022!

Year One by the Numbers

4 metro-Atlanta counties
4 farms purchased in the first year
355 acres of farmland secured
25 farmers accessing land
20 farm businesses in pipeline
THANK YOU

to all our partners and supporters that helped make our first year a success—we couldn’t have done it without you!

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

Athens Land Trust
C & S Wholesale Grocers
Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta
Emory University
Foodwell Alliance
Georgia Conservancy
The Glenn Family Foundation
GoATL
Individual Donors
Kinship Foundation
Madison-Morgan Conservancy
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Partnership for Inclusive Innovation
Rodale Institute
Searle Funds at Chicago Community Trust
UGA Small Business Development Center
Waterfall Foundation

NEXT STEPS IN 2022

- **Atlanta**—Protect at least 6 more farms in the coming year, securing a minimum of 500 additional acres of farmland, and supporting at least 12 new farmers.

- **Chicago**—Launch the Working Farms Fund program to serve the metro-Chicago region. Secure the first 5 farms, enabling farmers to access a minimum of 200 acres for expanded food production.

We need your help to continue to grow!
FARMER SPOTLIGHTS

LOVE IS LOVE FARM - 69 acres
Our first farm team includes five talented and business-savvy farmers who collectively carry 51 years of farming experience. They recently harvested their first crop of sweet potatoes - 4,400 pounds - and made their first delivery to our partners at Emory University Dining.

We are supporting entrepreneurial farmers by connecting them to institutional buyers and helping them to build a robust network of locally, sustainably sourced farm products and markets.

Learn more about our partnership with Emory Healthcare here.

GLOBAL GROWERS FARM - 21 acres
Global Growers Network supports refugee and immigrant farmers across a network of farm sites, growing fresh food for their families and local marketplaces. The new farm, with numerous amenities ideally suited to a shared farming model, is hosting 15 farmers.

Learn more about Global Growers here.
GOODWIN FAMILY FARM - 175 acres

Dru Goodwin has been looking to grow his burgeoning cattle business for many years, but has been constrained by land values and insufficient acreage needed to establish a larger herd. Dru and his family also own a local restaurant. Their dream is to own and manage enough cattle to supply their family restaurant, while also scaling up to meet the demand for locally-raised grass fed beef in Atlanta’s significantly growing market.

ATLANTA HARVEST - 90 acres

Atlanta Harvest is a rapidly growing farm business in the Atlanta metro area led by Asa Ysrael and his son Eliyahu. Their new farm is providing them space needed to expand crops, triple their livestock production, and add critical infrastructure for their food hub model that supports communities lacking access to healthy, local food options.

We are creating farmland ownership opportunities that support prosperous livelihoods for diverse, next-generation farmers. We have committed to at least 20% of the farmers in our program being minority and socially disadvantaged producers.

Learn more about Atlanta Harvest here.
**MEDIA COVERAGE**

The New York Times

How to Make a Neighborhood Farm for an Entire Metropolis

A program being started in Atlanta helps midsize farmers buy their own land while providing much-needed fresh food to urban consumers.

Recent coverage in the New York Times!

**OTHER NEWS COVERAGE**

USDA awards Emory-Conservation Fund partnership, the Working Farms Fund, $4.8 million

https://news.emory.edu/stories/2021/05/upress_usda_conservation_fund/campus.html

Partnership for Inclusive Innovation Awards Grant to First-of-its-Kind, Statewide Farm Ownership Program


Watch our feature story on Farm Monitor!

Check out our video for more!

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Or visit: www.conservationfund.org/our-work/working-farms-fund