Women Caring for the Land℠

Targeted Conservation Outreach to Female Non-operator Farmland Owners
In short order

• Why women?
• Why change?
• How have we changed?
• What happened because we changed?
• How have districts helped?
Percent Land in Farms Rented or Leased, 2012

2012 US Census
Slicing the pie further...

Non-operator landowners

Women/Men?  
Nationally (48 states):  
- 37% of all principal landlords are women  
- They owned 10% of ag lands (25% of rented lands)  
- Women tend to be older

Iowa*:  
- 47% of farmland owned/co-owned by women  
- 61% of the rented land owned/co-owned by women  
- Women tend to be older

*N2007 Farmland ownership & Tenure in Iowa

Nearly 301 million acres of U.S. land—about a third of the nation's land in farms—are now farmed or co-farmed by women.
Rented land
It’s about doing conservation.
Women Caring for the Land℠

• Started by WFAN in 2008 in recognition that women own or co-own half the land but aren’t engaged in conservation programs.

• The women aren’t broken, we need to fix the communication system, and it’s easy.
I think the flow is better if I talk about the audience first, THEN Jean describes the learning circle... What do you think?

Jennifer Filipiak, 7/31/2017
Traditional conservation meetings don’t serve women well.

*How can this be?*
In Iowa, tend to be 65+ in age, inherited land they want to keep, have tenants.
“Add women and stir” doesn’t work.
“Male” conversational style is presentation-based and confers status; can discourage interaction.

Lecture style confers status on the speaker
Facilitate and discuss in a circle
Women will ask more questions and discuss more when men are not present. They also prefer to:

Create connections

Minimize differences
Science, cultural, and gendered conversational styles
The “learning circle” approach builds relationships, trust, confidence.
84% reported increase in confidence

- “I came to learn what I can so I can contribute to conversations about the farm. If you don’t know, you don’t have a voice.”

Delyne, MO
## Likelihood of taking action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Very Likely</th>
<th>Total%</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Look more carefully at the soil on my land</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get information about a topic from the meeting</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit with my farmer about a topic from the meeting</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask my farmer to take or try a new action</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask my farmer to help me improve soil health</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit with other women about improving soil health</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact one of the offices or staff I met today</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for more information on the Internet</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“If I’d known it would be so much fun I’d have brought friends.”

“When advised that I was going to women's land owner meetings and had been to the FSA office, my renter began to do what he KNEW he should have been doing all along.”

50 to 70%

"I've attended several other meetings about this and I really liked how this one was set up ... There were opportunities to ask questions at the others but they were mostly just directed to the speaker. Here we could ask each other and had a discussion ... I learned so much from the other women."

“Thank you for explaining it in a way I can understand.”

“This is great to have discussions instead of being “talked at.”"
Thank you!

NRCS National Conservation Innovation Grant – 7 states 2013-2016
NRCS National Conservation Innovation Grant – 7 states 2016-2019
Kentucky NRCS CIG
Iowa NRCS
Conservation
Collaboration
Grant
Women landowners as conservationists. If they can see it, they can be it.

We help each other try new things and succeed together.

We always have, and we always will.
2018 WFAN Annual Conference

Friday and Saturday, Nov. 2-3, 2018

Des Moines, IA

All women interested in healthy food and farming are welcome!

Visit [www.wfan.org](http://www.wfan.org) to learn more.
Contact Us!

Visit our *Women Caring for the Land*\(^{SM}\) website at [www.womencaringfortheland.org](http://www.womencaringfortheland.org) for more information, and these free downloadable resources for reaching out to women landowners:

- Curriculum guide
- Cover crops brochures and booklet
- *Patchwork* newsletter

We will work with you to hold meetings for women landowners! Contact:

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Women Caring for the Land℠ Funders

2009 McKnight Foundation – WCL pilot project in eastern IA
2010 - 12 North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) – meetings in IA, NE and WI
2010 - 13 NRCS - Conservation Innovation Grant (with Center for Rural Affairs) – meetings in IA, NE, WI, KS, ND, SD and MN
2010 Iowa Resource Enhancement and Protection Conservation Education Program (curriculum guide development)
2010 - 13 USDA BFRDP (land transition, with Practical Farmers of Iowa)
2011 - 12 Iowa Department of Ag and Land Stewardship (Division of Soil Conservation) – watershed mapping
2011 - 13 McKnight Foundation (IA, MN, WI, IL)
2011 Iowa Resource Enhancement and Protection Conservation Education Program (wildlife & hunting ed)
2012 - 13 Audubon Foundation (habitat protection)
2012 - 15 US Environmental Protection Agency (wetlands)
2013 – 15 IDALS Division of Soil Conservation – soil health and testing
2013 – 16 NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant 7 states
2014 – 15 NCR SARE professional development MN, WI, MO
2016 – 19 NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant 7 states
2016 – 19 Iowa NRCS Conservation Collaboration Grant
Related Research & Publications


To discuss or not to discuss?
Where have they been?

• Research to find why they have been left out — Women Land and Legacy (2007), Wells and Eells (2008), Carter (2015).

• Research supporting the Women Caring for the Land methodology -- Bandura, Lave and Wenger and more.

• WFAN White Paper (2013)
Women, Food and Agriculture Network

• Started in Iowa in 1997.
• Nationwide organization, more than 4,000
Demystifying the science is empowering!