

Bringing Nature Back to the Farm: A 2050 Vision



Wild Farm Alliance



OUR NATURE-DRIVEN VISION will deliver a diverse food supply with ecosystem health and complexity for generations to come.

Wild nature has increasingly disappeared from our rural landscapes. So-called 'clean' farming systems have converted nearly every square inch of arable and marginal land to agricultural production with profound repercussions for our ecological food webs. Annually, one billion pounds of poisons have been applied in the U.S., making farms unsafe for anything but crops. Our economically driven industrial mindset has ignored the dire impacts of exploiting ecosystems. This must change.

Without a major transformation in agriculture over the next three decades, our world will become too hot and degraded for many plants and wildlife on Earth to exist. In addition, rising temperatures may usher in significant decreases in crop yields, further stressing our agricultural resources.

Bringing nature back to our farms and ranches is our greatest opportunity to avoid a future of increasing climate catastrophes, biodiversity losses, and food insecurity. Doing so aligns with international aims to protect Half-Earth and achieve urgent climate adaptations.



Landscape Transformation: It's All About Habitat

- Today, there are 3 billion fewer birds in North America than in 1970.
Yet, farmers who provide nest boxes and perches for birds benefit from their pest control services, and also appreciate the birds and want to expand their habitat.
- On-farm habitat has disappeared across millions of acres of industrial farms. Historically, Great Britain's hedgerows could have reached the moon and back, a distance of ~500,000 miles, but nearly half are gone.
Yet, hedgerows sequester carbon, and creating habitat for beneficial plants and animals brings them closer to crop fields where farmers need them most.
- About 70% of the riparian habitat in the U.S. has been polluted, drained or scraped bare.
Yet, restoring riparian areas buffer producers' fields against flooding, improves water quality and quantity on the farm and beyond, and also provides habitat for native carnivores and other animals trying to move safely between wild places on the landscape.
- Agriculture contributes significantly to climate change.
Yet, farmers have an immense opportunity to reduce greenhouse gases while improving soil and restoring ecosystem biodiversity.



Inspire a Bold Stewardship Ethic
Cultivate Biodiversity
Grow the Movement

THE PURPOSE OF OUR 2050 VISION is to catalyze a bold stewardship ethic among current and new generations of farmers, land stewards, agencies, nonprofits, policy makers, scientists and educational institutions. We aim to accelerate adoption of practices that cultivate biodiversity and ultimately scale the effort nationally.

We have made significant progress toward building a wild farm movement over the past two decades, identifying critical intervention points and creating on-the-ground models that incorporate habitat into agriculture. What we do with this hard-earned experience — now, and in the coming decades — will be crucial. The preservation of biodiversity, the protection of soil and water, the resilience of our agriculture systems, and the reversal of climate change all depend on it.

Fortunately, WFA has been generating a suite of actions and practices that prioritize ecological literacy and respect for nature.



Our Approach: Visualizing Solutions Modeling Practices Widespread Adoption

OUR POWERFUL VISION is a strategy to rapidly accelerate adoption of on-farm practices that will address the biodiversity and climate crises and boost the integrity of our agricultural lands for future generations.

OUR VISION takes the following approach to implementing solutions:

1.

VISUALIZING SOLUTIONS

Working with exemplary stewards, we will showcase their wild farming practices through field days, presentations and videos.

2. **MODELING PRACTICES**

Using online mapping and educational tools, we will scale up our biodiverse, connected vision within regions and beyond, identifying networks of model farms and key stakeholders, and targeting outreach more effectively.

3. **WIDESPREAD ADOPTION**

By working with farms of all sizes, and advocating within agricultural commodity groups, agencies, and certifiers, we will meet producers where they are, to find common ground for moving forward with conservation practices.

CAMPAIGNS

VISION CONCEPTS

LONGTERM GOALS

5-YEAR ACTIONS



We have seen that participation in habitat provisioning for songbirds and raptors is a powerful gateway for farmers and ranchers to implement and expand conservation efforts.

ONE MILLION NEST BOXES AND PERCHES

Inspire 10% of U.S. farms to be part of a *Farmland Flyway* trail, having an average of 5 nest boxes and/or perches each, leading to 1 million structures.

We use *Flyways* as a starting point because what is "good for the birds" is usually "good for the fish" as well as "good for the farm." Our work will inform, inspire and encourage participation with field days, online classes, interactive mapping that tracks progress and encourages participation, and other technical resources.



When producers recognize the intrinsic value of birds and other biodiversity, they often aspire to plant more enduring vegetative habitat.

HEDGEROWS TO THE MOON AND BACK

Inspire 25% of U.S. farms to plant a *Farmland Wildway*, having an average of 1 mile of a hedgerow or windbreak, leading to 500,000 miles of living field borders.

Building upon the *Flyways* actions, we will provide education and information through online and print selection tools that identify which plants birds prefer for food and cover. We will create resources that describe the capacity of *Wildways* for carbon storage, pest control, and biodiversity.



Producers who have *Waterways* can make an even bigger impact by planting and conserving riparian buffers which disproportionately support a larger number of plants and wildlife than their adjacent farmlands.

RESTORING THE LIFE-BLOOD OF THE LANDSCAPE

Inspire 10% of river frontage on farms to be planted as *Farmland Waterways*, leading to 100,000 miles of riverine habitat.

Building upon the *Flyways* and *Wildways* actions, we will create resources for growers and agricultural professionals about best practices and management tools for establishing riparian buffers that provide safe wildlife corridors and clean water.



Get Involved:
Invest in the Vision
Become a Strategic Partner
Help Grow the Movement

WE NEED YOUR HELP to make this vision a reality. Please join us.

THREE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

1. INVEST IN THE VISION: We need financial support in order to carry out our 2050 Vision. Join with us as a founding funder of this powerful work.
2. BECOME A STRATEGIC PARTNER: We cannot do this work alone. Join with us as a strategic partner to implement these farmland practices on the ground.
3. HELP GROW THE MOVEMENT: Share this vision with others who will be inspired to team up with us and help make it a reality.

ABOUT WILD FARM ALLIANCE

OUR MISSION IS TO PROMOTE healthy, viable agriculture that protects and restores wild nature. We strive for a world in which community-based, ecologically managed farms and ranches are seamlessly integrated into landscapes that accommodate a range of native species and ecological processes. WFA was established by a national group of wildlands proponents and ecological farming advocates who share a common concern for the land and its inhabitants. For more than 20 years, we have been a leading voice for the bridge between the conservation of wild nature and the sustainability of farming systems. Since our inception we have led on-farm biodiversity conservation practice, education and policy. We have deep in-house expertise and a robust network of partners and collaborators.

LEARN MORE AND GET INVOLVED
www.WildFarmAlliance.org
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