



National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

2011 Annual Report



The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) is founded upon two unifying priorities:

- researching, developing, and advocating for proposals to improve federal farm and food policies; and
- building the ability of our nation's sustainable agriculture movement to engage in policy.

We've made a lot of progress on these priorities in 2011. Our coalition is stronger than ever, and we've found innovative, effective ways to ensure that the voices of farmers and others who contribute to sustainable local and regional food systems are part of the national conversation. We've been working every day to ensure the best possible new farm bill. We are building momentum for better federal programs that support family farmers, protect natural resources, and increase access to healthy, fresh foods for everyone.

We've been able to make this progress because so many talented stakeholders are coming together. Some farmers contribute to our policies by telling us what aspects of USDA programs are and are not working for them, and offering creative fixes. Others take time away from their farms to speak directly with members of Congress and USDA officials in their states and in Washington, DC. Farmer advocates from NSAC member organizations work together to steer the coalition. They connect their organizations' supporters with key decision makers in the nation's capitol around common coalition messages. NSAC's staff members work long hours to ensure that our coalition's policies are heard and considered on Capitol Hill and that grassroots activists have the best information at pivotal times. Foundations, member organizations, companies,

and individuals contribute so that all of this vital work can take place. Together, we are a powerful force for change.

We sincerely thank everyone who contributed to NSAC's successes in 2011 and look forward to a productive year ahead.

Brad Redlin,
Chair
NSAC Organizational Council

and

Susan Prolman,
Executive Director
NSAC

2012 Organizational Council

Bonnie Bobb, Western Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
Becky Ceartas, Rural Advancement Foundation International – USA
Traci Bruckner, Center for Rural Affairs
Bob Junk, Fay-Penn Economic Development Council
Jeanne Merrill, California Climate Action Network
Julia Olmstead, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Brad Redlin, Izaak Walton League of America
Duane Sand, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
Jeff Schahczenski, National Center for Appropriate Technology
Lydia Villanueva, C.A.S.A. del Llano



NSAC is a working coalition. We convene in-person member meetings twice each year, like this one, held in August outside of Portland, OR. In addition, our four issue committees, Diversity Committee, Grassroots Council, and Organizational Council hold frequent conference calls throughout the rest of the year.

Building the Sustainable Agriculture Movement

NSAC is a coalition of more than 80 organizations. Our members range from local and regional to national in scope. All support our collective vision and most work directly with farmers.

Building the capacity of our members is a core part of our coalition's mission, particularly for newer and lower-resource organizations. Collectively, we work to enhance the ability of these organizations to effectively engage in the crafting and implementation of federal agricultural policy.

In 2011, NSAC provided \$40,000 to members through our Strategic Initiatives mini-grant program. **Strategic Initiative Grants** provide modest financial support to allow groups to engage in grassroots actions to advance our collective policy goals on key issues, in key states, at key times. These grants enable our groups to organize events such as farmer listening sessions, farm



Jeanne and Llew Williams, farmers and members of Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture, an NSAC member organization, hosted a PASA Master Class on their farm, Red Barn Farm, in New Freeport, PA, just a few miles north of the West Virginia border. They shared an in-depth tour of their diversified farm, highlighting the many conservation practices they have implemented to best steward their land and water resources. Representatives from the Natural Resources Conservation Service also attended, to share information about the programs and opportunities available to assist farmers in implementing conservation practices on their land.



Wenatchee High School leadership student Sean Richards shares information about farming and how carrots grow with Washington Elementary students on Taste Washington Day 2011. The NSAC member organization Washington Sustainable Food and Farming Network's three-year Fresh Food in Schools project provides support to 20 targeted school districts across Washington State to encourage them to purchase more Washington-grown fruits and vegetables from local farmers. The program helps schools serve more fresh, local food, which is a win for our farmers and our kids. Funding for the program has been provided by Washington State Department of Agriculture through a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant, the Washington Women's Foundation, the Whatcom Community Foundation, and private donations.

Photo: Kent Getzin

field days, and in-district meetings with members of Congress. They also allow farmers and farm advocates to participate in USDA State Technical Committees, which determine how agriculture conservation programs are carried out on the ground.

NSAC expands the capacity of our member organizations by providing helpful **trainings**. For example, over the last year we conducted lobbying and media trainings for farmers and farm advocates. We held a Farm Bill 101 webinar for the staff of our member organizations and we provided these advocates with communications training and one-on-one communications consultations.

In 2011, NSAC hosted four successful **farmer fly-ins**. These events allow agricultural producers to

tell their stories directly to members of Congress and their aides, as well as top-ranking USDA officials. They serve to cultivate these farmers as movement leaders, and they provide the opportunity for decision-makers inside the beltway to connect with what is needed in the field. Fly-ins are effective and well-received, as there simply are no better messengers than the farmers and ranchers who use the USDA programs our coalition supports.

NSAC launched in 2011 a year-long project to expand the **media outreach** of our **Michigan** members (C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at Michigan State University, Food System Economic Partnership, Michigan Food & Farming Systems, Michigan Land Use Institute, and Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance). Michigan is a strategic state because one of its senators, Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), chairs the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee. Working with Public News Service, together we have generated stories tailored to a Michigan audience that have reached hundreds of thousands of listeners and readers.

We provide people with the **information** they need to weigh in on pressing policy issues. NSAC serves as a go-to source for our member organizations, reporters, farmers, and other stakeholders. Our blog provides accurate, detailed, and timely information on the latest developments that affect sustainable farmers. Our alerts reach NSAC's action alert network as well as the networks of our member organizations and allies outside the coalition. In 2011, we beefed up our own media outreach by extending our reach to the nation's leading food and agriculture reporters and expanding our presence on popular blogs.

In order to disseminate NSAC information to a larger number of stakeholders, we published grassroots guides for sustainable producers and community-based organizations. This year, we updated NSAC's **Grassroots Guide to the 2008**

Farm Bill, which provides information to farmers, NGOs, and others on federal farm bill programs and initiatives important to sustainable farmers. We completed a Spanish version of the guide. We also recently updated the **Farmers' Guide to the Conservation Stewardship Program**.

The leadership for our outreach work comes from the **Grassroots Council**, which is comprised of leaders from NSAC member organizations plus NSAC's Executive Director and NSAC's grassroots staff. The Grassroots Council meets monthly, creating and putting into action NSAC's short, mid, and long term grassroots plan. NSAC enhanced

our ability to serve members by doubling our grassroots staff in 2011.

Building the Best Possible New Farm Bill

NSAC's **vision** of agriculture is one where a safe, nutritious, ample, and affordable food supply is produced by a legion of family farmers who make a decent living pursuing their trade, while protecting the environment and contributing to the strength and stability of their communities.

NSAC worked diligently throughout 2011 to build the best possible new farm bill. The current farm bill expires on September 30, 2012.



Iowa Farmers Union President Chris Petersen met with Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) to speak about the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) rule. Farmer Aaron Heley-Lehman and lobbyist Kent Hartwig are in the background. Iowa Farmers Union has been working with other NSAC members to push for a GIPSA rule to give farmers and ranchers open, transparent markets for livestock, and greater protections from unfair and deceptive practices by packers.

We kicked off our work in January by convening a **Farm Bill Summit**. This summit brought together 125 participants representing 95 organizations, some from within NSAC as well as allies from outside the coalition. Organizations included farm, conservation, rural development, public health, food system, socially disadvantaged farmer and rancher, faith community, and other groups engaged in furthering the aims of the public interest community in the next farm bill. We identified opportunities to work together and planned next steps toward realizing our visions for better agriculture policy in the upcoming farm bill reauthorization.

The normal farm bill reauthorization process was disrupted when, on August 1, Congress passed the Budget Control Act of 2011 in response to the debate over raising the debt ceiling. This act created a Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (also called the **Super Committee**), tasked with developing legislation to cut at least \$1.2 trillion from the federal budget over ten years. The law stipulates that if Congress fails to pass this legislation by the end of 2011, automatic, across-the-board cuts go into effect, including for most farm bill programs. Leaders of the House and Senate agriculture committees responded with efforts to set farm bill spending for the next 10 years, essentially striving to write the major components of the next farm bill at an unusually fast pace and through an unprecedented process.

NSAC was **prepared to spring into action** because our four issue committees had been developing policy proposals throughout 2011. Our policy staff and staff of our member organizations engaged with top Congressional leaders on a nearly daily basis. We worked to ensure that our coalition's

priority programs were protected to the greatest degree possible and our policy proposals were considered for inclusion. We worked with reporters and editors, farmers, farmer advocates, and other opinion leaders to reach members of the Super Committee and leaders of the agriculture committees through the grassroots.

NSAC developed proposals for farm bill improvements to the major working lands **conservation programs** – the Conservation Stewardship Program and Environmental Quality Incentives Program. We shared these with key congressional staffers, who were burning the midnight oil to write the new farm bill. We explored ways to improve and increase the targeting of conservation dollars to solve specific local environmental problems, submitting a detailed recommendation to Capitol Hill for a bigger and better Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative program in the new farm bill. We also pressed for renewed and permanent funding for the Wetlands Reserve Program to assist landowners willing to recreate agricultural wetlands on their farms.

Some of the farm bill programs our coalition has championed over the years are at risk of ending when the current farm bill expires. In order to **continue** these **vital programs**, new funding must be identified, which is particularly challenging in the current budget-cutting climate on Capitol Hill. These programs include the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative, Farmers Market

Promotion Program, National Organic Certification Cost Share Program, and Value-Added Producer Grants. Continuing these programs is a core component of our farm bill advocacy.



In April, over thirty farmers from all over the country met with members of Congress to support funding for NSAC's priority farm bill programs.



Craig Haney, Stone Barns Center's Livestock Farm Manager, led a Growing Farmers Initiative lambing workshop this spring. Stone Barns, an NSAC member organization, received a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program grant to support the Growing Farmers Initiative.

NSAC fought to cut waste in current farm bill spending. We supported the Rural America Preservation Act of 2011, introduced by Senators Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Tim Johnson (D-SD) on June 9. This measure, which would set **strict payment limits** on all commodity farm programs and close loopholes, could save the government upwards of \$1.5 billion over the next decade. It would help to re-establish a true safety net and target assistance to small and medium-sized family farmers.

NSAC worked closely with Representatives Tim Walz (D-MN-1) and Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE-1) and Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) to draft the **Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act** of 2011. It is a comprehensive bill intended for inclusion in

the 2012 Farm Bill. The bill addresses many of the barriers that new farmers and ranchers face such as limited access to land and markets, hyper land price inflation, high input costs, and a lack of sufficient support networks. It also includes support for military veterans who want to get into farming. NSAC brought eleven beginning farmers and ranchers from across the country to Washington, DC in support of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act. They, along with staff from NSAC, Land Stewardship Project, Center for Rural Affairs, and California FarmLink, conducted over forty visits on Capitol Hill in the space of two days.

NSAC teamed with Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Representative Chellie Pingree's

(D-ME-1) offices to draft the **Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act**, a comprehensive bill intended for inclusion in the 2012 Farm Bill. The legislation helps farmers and ranchers by addressing production, aggregation, processing, marketing, and distribution needs to expand access to growing local and regional food markets. The bill also assists consumers by improving access to healthy food. In November, NSAC hosted a Washington, DC fly-in for 50 farmers, ranchers, and other local and regional food advocates to seek Congressional co-sponsors for the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act.

Shortly before Thanksgiving, the chairs of the Senate and House agriculture committees opted not to release their farm bill proposal when the Super Committee process failed. Their proposal represents the **starting point for further farm bill negotiations**. NSAC will advocate tirelessly in the year ahead to promote the interests of sustainable farmers in these negotiations.



Jim Thorpe of JT Land and Cattle in Newkirk, NM was an early participant in the Conservation Stewardship Program. He focuses on biodiversity and wildlife habitat, soil carbon sequestration, open spaces, and healthy watersheds on his ranch. He has spread the word about the program to fellow farmers in New Mexico through the Society for Range Management. NSAC member organization New Mexico Farm to Table has also spread the word about CSP and other USDA programs by providing information at the Southwest Marketing Network conference.



Mark Kruse of Lansing, IA received an Environmental Quality Incentives Program grant to set up rotational grazing paddocks for his organic dairy herd. NSAC member organization Midwest Organic & Sustainable Education Service held a field day at the Kruse farm to teach others about rotational grazing and federal programs available to help convert to a pasture-based system.

Protecting the Gains We Have Made

Much of our attention during 2011 was spent defending NSAC's priority programs from short-sighted and disproportionate **funding cuts**.

When the 111th Congress did not pass the fiscal year (FY) **2011 appropriations bill** by the end of its term, NSAC lost all of the hard-won funding victories that we achieved in 2010. As the 112th Congress worked to reach agreement on FY 2011 funding and avoid a government shutdown, more than 30 farmers and farm advocates from our member organizations in 18 states came to Capitol Hill to defend conservation and sustainable agriculture programs from reckless spending cuts. Fly-in participants told key members of the agriculture, appropriations, and budget committees that slashing programs that support renewable energy, conservation, job opportunities in rural communities, and beginning, organic, and minority farmers would undermine rural economies and the environment for years to come.

At the end of the FY 2011 budget battle, some of our **priority programs**, such as the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program and the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative, retained their full funding – a significant accomplishment in this economic environment. Others were reduced. Mandatory conservation programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program, the Wetlands Reserve Program, and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program were hit hard, losing more than \$500 million relative to the level provided in the 2008 Farm bill.

Then in June, the House passed a **2012 appropriations bill** that would cut another \$1 billion from conservation programs. Our coalition mounted a vigorous campaign to fight similar cuts

in the Senate. We helped to shape a letter with 400 organizations against conservation cuts and to organize a national call-in day the last week of June. The Senate agriculture appropriations bill cut mandatory conservation programs in the farm bill by over \$700 million. In the end, the House and Senate agreed to cut more than \$927 million from farm bill mandatory conservation programs. Despite this setback, there are some bright spots, including higher than expected funding levels for some of our priority programs and the incorporation of a provision that ensures that FY 2012 funding levels for mandatory conservation programs will not be used as the baseline for those programs in the next farm bill.



Organic Farmer Dave Bentoski, of D&A Farms in Zebulon, GA, led a Georgia Organics field day entitled “The Organic Farmer’s Toolchest.” NSAC member Georgia Organics organized trainings on organic farms for a total of 150 Georgia NRCS staff members in each of their four regions. These field days provided NRCS staffers with the opportunity to visit successful farms and hear from the farmers how NRCS can better implement the EQIP Organic Initiative. Other field days allowed 100 farmers to learn about NRCS programs and how they are implemented on the farms, and gave them the chance to trade ideas with successful organic farmers.

Ensuring Current Farm Bill Programs are Working Well

Throughout 2011, NSAC worked on implementation of programs that help sustainable farmers. Here are a few highlights.

For Environmental Benefits

NSAC achieved several major improvements to the **Conservation Stewardship Program** (CSP) including higher payments for grass-based pastured cropland, stricter crop rotation diversification rules, and the inclusion of additional conservation enhancements for sustainable and organic practices that can reduce leaching of synthetic nitrogen and sediment runoff from farm fields. NSAC broadly publicized the 2011 CSP sign-up period and provided our member organizations with materials to circulate to farmers and ranchers, including a four-page CSP fact sheet for farmers to help them apply for the program. We have also recently updated and re-published the Farmers' Guide to CSP – the only CSP guide available from any source. As of this fall, CSP has

over 38 million acres enrolled, making it larger in size than the Conservation Reserve Program.

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) honored NSAC and eleven of our members in August 2010 by selecting us to receive a multi-year **Conservation Innovation Grant**. Since then, we have been working to integrate sustainable and organic system perspectives into NRCS conservation practice standards and conservation activities that form the underpinnings for conservation programs, particularly CSP and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. These systems and practices will reduce sediment and nutrient water pollution, decrease water pollution from pesticide run-off, and protect wetlands and other aquatic habitat.

NSAC worked to improve the NRCS **Mississippi River Basin Initiative** (MRBI). This initiative addresses nutrient and sediment loading that degrades water quality within Mississippi River watersheds and ultimately contributes to the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

For Beginning Farmers

NSAC helped pass the **Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program** (BFRDP) in the 2002 Farm Bill and helped secure mandatory funding for the program in the 2008 Farm Bill. The USDA announced 2010 outcomes in June 2011. In this first year, BFRDP projects trained more than 6,000 beginning farmers and ranchers, over 25 percent of whom are socially disadvantaged or farm workers. The skills and knowledge they acquired will help them to grow healthy food for their communities and become important contributors to their local economies.

In 2011, NSAC led a successful fight to end the long delay in implementation of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) **Transition Incentives Program** (TIP). The program encourages CRP landowners who do not intend to extend or re-enroll their acreage in CRP to sell or lease their land to beginning and minority producers who use sustainable or organic farming practices. As of October 2011, CRP-TIP has reached 150,000 acres through 965 contracts.



Young farmers celebrate their season at a mixer event organized by the the National Young Farmers' Coalition (NYFC). At these events, NSAC member NYFC teaches farmers how to get involved in national policy, and encourages them to help win local support for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act. NYFC is also partnering with young farmers around the country to schedule visits with their members of Congress on the needs of the next generation.

Photo: Becky Warner

For Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers

NSAC's **Diversity Committee** met twice in person and several times through conference calls in 2011. Together, and with input from allies in the field, we crafted a set of proposals for the farm bill reauthorization that support socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Some of these measures are incorporated in the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act and the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act. We hope to support a minority farmer bill once it is drafted and introduced.

For Local and Regional Food Systems

The **Value-Added Producer Grants Program** (VAPG) is a critical component in the USDA

portfolio to promote local and regional food systems and support farm income and rural development. NSAC's comments campaign resulted in a substantially improved VAPG final interim rule, released in February 2011. Because USDA did not release VAPG funds in FY 2010, we successfully pushed for a 2010 and 2011 combined cycle totaling over \$35 million that was made available in June 2011.



The California Climate and Agriculture Network, with a grant from Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, provided three professional development workshops in 2011 for farmer advisors from USDA's NRCS, Resource Conservation & Development, and Cooperative Extension on the topic of climate change and agriculture. This workshop featured a tour from Scott Schmidt at Farming D near Fresno, CA that explained conservation tillage practices and the benefits for water conservation and carbon sequestration.



Farmer Matt Starline met with sustainable agriculture champion Congresswoman Marcia Fudge (D-OH-11) when he traveled to DC to give testimony before a Congressional committee.

The Center for Rural Affairs, a coalition member, led a comment campaign with assistance from NSAC that resulted in improvements to the interim final rule for the **Rural Micro-Entrepreneur Assistance Program**.

In April, the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Department Operations, Oversight, and Credit held a hearing to review **credit conditions in rural America**. NSAC helped to identify and prepare the only farmer witness at this hearing, Matt Starline. Starline is a young farmer and owner of Starline Organics in Athens, Ohio and a member of Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association, an NSAC member group. Starline spoke about the credit needs of beginning farmers and urged the FSA and other lenders to learn more about servicing diversified, local agriculture.

For Research that Supports Sustainable Farmers

The **Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education** (SARE) program was NSAC's first big policy victory back in the late 1980s and is now in its third decade of being the keystone sustainable agriculture program at USDA. NSAC works hard to ensure the SARE funding base is secure each year, and NSAC member organizations work with the SARE program at the regional level on an on-going basis. As part of a periodic check-in on the relationship between the program and the movement it serves, NSAC launched a stakeholder review of SARE in each of the four regions of the country. NSAC provided small grants to member organizations to analyze and evaluate SARE funding patterns and to conduct regional surveys of farmers and other end users of SARE research and extension. We provided a report and verbal presentation to the national SARE committee for review and consideration. The overall assessment was positive, with some areas for improvement flagged including: research and extension on quality of life; new, beginning, and minority farmer issues; and improved outreach to grant applicants that are not colleges and universities.

For Food Safety

NSAC has been drafting a series of comments to FDA on the **Food Safety Modernization Act** to ensure that the eight amendments we helped to pass are addressed correctly and effectively during the rule making process.

In July, NSAC filed comments on the proposed **National Leafy Green Marketing Agreement**, urging USDA to withdraw the proposal. NSAC member organizations and their supporters submitted well over 1,000 comments opposing the agreement.

For Farm to School

NSAC helped to score a major victory in 2010 when the Farm to School Competitive Grants program was included in the *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act*. This year, we submitted recommendations on the program to members of **USDA's Farm to School Team** and we've maintained regular communication with the team to track progress.



NSAC member organization Food System Economic Partnership (FSEP) is an agricultural economic development non-profit in southeast Michigan focused on connecting small and mid-sized family farms to consumers by providing technical support and facilitating Farm to Table programs with K – 12 schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, and other institutions. This student at Hunt Elementary, a public school in Jackson, Michigan, is enjoying “asparagus day” as part of the FSEP’s Farm to School program. FSEP also provides business development services to new food and farming businesses and facilitates the development of alternative distribution systems through farmer cooperatives, food hubs, and partnerships.

Photo: FSEP

In July 2010, USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan announced a new **Fresh Produce Pilot Program** for schools in Florida and Michigan. Along with our members in these states, NSAC engaged in conversations with key USDA officials as they started developing the program specifications in August 2011, urging inclusion of local agricultural producers to the maximum extent possible.

This year, NSAC shifted from a January to December fiscal year to one that begins in September and ends in August. As a result, 2011 is an unusual year. The January–August 2011 revenue and expenses, shown below, do not reflect a full year, nor do they reflect our fiscal year 2010 budget surplus.

January–August 2011

Revenue	
Donations	\$49,213
Grants	\$523,471
Dues & Registrations	\$21,425
Other Income	\$13,208
Total Revenue	\$607,317
Expenses	
Salaries and Wages	\$280,389
Employee Benefits	\$100,131
Temporary Employees & Interns	\$26,719
Consultants	\$36,680
Strategic Initiative Grants	\$40,150
Subcontracts	\$34,441
Meeting Expenses	\$55,682
Staff Registrations	\$1,305
Travel (including farmer travel)	\$36,513
Supplies & Equipment	\$10,407
Publications & Subscriptions	\$17,175
Postage	\$348
Printing	\$3,681
Telephone & Conference Calls	\$6,587
Office Space	\$46,357
Other Expenses	4,728
Total Program Expenses	\$701,293
Grant Administration	\$68,278
Total Expenses	\$769,571

Under the guidance of our Organizational Council, NSAC has established a reserve fund to ensure our coalition's long-term financial stability. Membership dues and two percent of foundation grants are directed into this reserve fund, which reached \$49,050 by the end of fiscal year 2011.

2011 Donor List

Agua Fund
BFK Foundation
Cedar Tree Foundation
Clif Bar Family Foundation
Farm Aid
Helianthus Fund
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
The Kresge Foundation
Krehbiel Family Foundation
McKnight Foundation
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
New Belgium Brewing
Newman's Own Foundation
The New World Foundation
North Pond Foundation
Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation
David & Lucile Packard Foundation
Patagonia
Presbyterian Hunger Program
Tikva Grassroots Empowerment Fund
Vervane Foundation
Walton Family Foundation
....and many generous individuals whom we greatly appreciate, because we can't do this work without your support!

Staff

Susan Prolman, Executive Director
Ferd Hoefner, Policy Director
Ariane Lotti, Legislative Specialist
Martha Noble, Senior Policy Associate
Greg Fogel, Policy Associate

Helen Dombalis, Policy Associate
Juli Obudzinski, Policy Associate
Julie Hudson, Director of Development
Sarah Hackney, Grassroots Director
Shavaun Evans, Grassroots Associate



National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition staff members, from left to right: Greg Fogel, Ferd Hoefner, Martha Noble, Ariane Lotti, Sarah Hackney, Shavaun Evans, Juli Obudzinski, Helen Dombalis, Susan Prolman.

NSAC's mission is to create, advance, and promote federal policies and programs that:

- Rebuild local and regional food systems;
- Increase access to nutritious, sustainably-produced foods, including to low-income consumers;
- Encourage agricultural practices that conserve soil, water, wildlife habitat, and energy resources;
- Expand cutting edge on-farm research and extension for sustainable agriculture;
- Revitalize rural economies and encourage new entrepreneurship;
- Ensure opportunity and fairness for small and medium-sized family farms and ranches;
- Enhance the ability of beginning farmers and ranchers to succeed; and
- Provide needed support for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, including minorities, immigrants, and women.

Members

REPRESENTED MEMBERS

Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association – Salinas, CA
Alternative Energy Resources Organization – Helena, MT
California Certified Organic Farmers – Santa Cruz, CA
California FarmLink – Santa Cruz, CA
C.A.S.A. del Llano (Communities Assuring a Sustainable Agriculture) – Hereford, TX
Center for Rural Affairs – Lyons, NE
Clagett Farm/Chesapeake Bay Foundation – Upper Marlboro, MD
Community Alliance with Family Farmers – Davis, CA
Dakota Rural Action – Brookings, SD
Delta Land and Community, Inc. – Almyra, AR
Ecological Farming Association – Soquel, CA
Fay-Penn Economic Development Council – Uniontown, PA
Flats Mentor Farm – Lancaster, MA
Florida Organic Growers – Gainesville, FL
Food Animal Concerns Trust – Chicago, IL
GrassWorks – Hudson, WI
Illinois Stewardship Alliance – Springfield, IL
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy – Minneapolis, MN
Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation – Des Moines, IA
Island Grown Initiative Vineyard – Haven, MA
Izaak Walton League of America – St. Paul, MN/Gaithersburg, MD
Kansas Rural Center – Whiting, KS
The Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture – Poteau, OK
Land Stewardship Project – Minneapolis, MN
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute – East Troy, WI
Michigan Food & Farming Systems – East Lansing, MI
Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance – Lansing, MI
Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service – Spring Valley, WI
National Catholic Rural Life Conference – Des Moines, IA
The National Center for Appropriate Technology – Butte, MT
Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society – Ceresco, NE
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance – Deerfield, MA
Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society – LaMoure, ND
Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides – Eugene, OR
Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Association – Columbus, OH
Organic Farming Research Foundation – Santa Cruz, CA
Rural Advancement Foundation International – USA – Pittsboro, NC
Sierra Club Agriculture Committee – Nationwide
Union of Concerned Scientists Food and Environment Program – Cambridge, MA
Virginia Association for Biological Farming – Lexington, VA
Wild Farm Alliance – Watsonville, CA

PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network – Birmingham, AL
Angelic Organics Learning Center – Caledonia, IL
California Climate and Agriculture Network – Sebastopol, CA
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association – Pittsboro, NC
Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems – University of Wisconsin – Madison, WI
Center for a Livable Future – Johns Hopkins University – Baltimore, MD
Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources – Washington State University – Puyallup, WA

Central Appalachian Network – Berea, KY
 City Seed – New Haven, CT
 Community Food Systems and Sustainable Agriculture Program – University of Missouri – Columbia, MO
 Conservation Districts of Iowa – Earlham, IA
 C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems – Michigan State University – East Lansing, MI
 Family Farm Defenders – Madison, WI
 Farm Aid – Cambridge, MA
 Farm to Table – New Mexico Food and Agriculture Policy Council – Santa Fe, NM
 Farmers Market Coalition – Charlottesville, VA
 Food System Economic Partnership – Ann Arbor, MI
 Friends of Family Farmers – Molalla, OR
 Future Harvest – CASA (Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture) – Fairplay, MD
 Georgia Organics – Atlanta, GA
 Heifer USA – Little Rock, AR
 The Humane Society of the United States – Washington, DC
 Innovative Farmers of Ohio – Powell, OH
 Iowa Environmental Council – Des Moines, IA
 Iowa Farmers Union – Ames, IA
 Just Food – New York, NY
 Land for Good – Keene, NH
 Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture – Iowa State University – Ames, IA
 Maine Rural Partners – University of Maine – Orono, ME
 Michigan Land Use Institute – Traverse City, MI
 Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture – University of Minnesota – St. Paul, MN
 National Young Farmers’ Coalition – Tivoli, NY
 Nebraska Wildlife Federation – Lincoln, NE
 Northeast Organic Farming Association – Interstate Council – NY, MA, RI, VT, CT, NH, NJ
 Oregon Tilth Corvallis, OR
 Organic Farmers’ Agency for Relationship Marketing, Inc. – Brussels, WI
 Organic Valley – LaFarge, WI
 Partners for Rural America Nationwide
 PCC Farmland Trust – Seattle, WA
 Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture – Millheim, PA
 Pesticide Action Network North America – San Francisco, CA
 Practical Farmers of Iowa – Ames, IA
 Roots of Change – San Francisco, CA
 Slow Food USA – Brooklyn, NY
 Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture – Pocantico Hills, NY
 Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota – Princeton, MN
 Tilth Producers of Washington – Seattle, WA
 Wallace Center – Winrock International – Arlington, VA
 The Washington Sustainable Food and Farming Network – Mount Vernon, WA
 Wisconsin Farmers Union – Chippewa Falls, WI
 Women, Food, and Agriculture Network – Ames, IA

AFFILIATED REGIONAL PROGRAMS

Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
 Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group

Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
 Western Sustainable Agriculture Working Group



Jim and Alison Deutsch bought their 160 acre farm, just east of Osseo, WI, in the spring of 2010 after completing a beginning farmer training program offered by Land Stewardship Project. Jim and Alison have been raising hogs outside in deep-bedded pens and on pasture since 2006. Their children, Lou and Lily, enjoy spending time with the naturally raised hogs as well. About half of their Animal Welfare Approved farm is certified organic, and the other half is in organic transition and will be certified in 2012. Land Stewardship Project, an NSAC member organization, was able to provide Jim and Alison with training because of a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) grant. BFRDP is one of NSAC's priority programs.



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The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition is an alliance of over 80 grassroots organizations that advocates for federal policy reform to advance the sustainability of agriculture, food systems, natural resources, and rural communities.



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