



COMMUNITY AT THE CONFLUENCE

Friday, September 15th
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Pittsburgh Airport

When Farm Aid comes to town, food and farm leaders from the festival region get to connect with each other *and* with leaders from across the country who join us each year. As concert day nears, we will:

- **Establish a sense of place and context** by celebrating and elevating key issues faced by farmers and food system leaders in Western Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia.
- **Foster a sense of community** among farmers, organizational leaders and other food system champions from across the country.
- **Debrief from Thursday evening** and **exchange ideas, strategies and lessons** for our shared work.
- **Have fun!**

8:30 am **Check-In & Credentials** **Salon B**

9:00 am **Breakfast Connect** **Salon B**

9:45 am **Thursday Evening Debrief & Field Reports** **Salon B**

With the farm crisis advancing in parts of the country, the turmoil of the post-election period and ongoing Farm Bill negotiations, we will give folks in the room space to do a popcorn style reflection on priorities, thoughts, stories that they want to share with other leaders in the room, and to highlight key takeaways from Thursday's forum.

10:15 am **Breakout Sessions: Choose Your Own Adventure!**

Farming a Just Transition

For decades, the communities of Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Appalachian Ohio were known as Coal Country. But like many communities across the country, this region is facing an economic transition and is fraught with competing visions for economic development that often pit communities and industries against one another. This breakout will explore the commonalities between folks here and in communities across the country as rural and urban communities grapple with the threats to farming and land rights by extractive industries, and bring forward a vision for true prosperity that's rooted in the soil.

Facilitators: Mick Luber, Bluebird Farm, Cadiz Ohio
 Veronica Coptis, Center for Coalfield Justice
 Rachel Zatterstrom, Western Organization of Resource Councils

Fighting for our Dairy Farmers

Dairy farming is an inextricable part of Pennsylvania’s economic and natural landscape, and remains a vital industry for farmers throughout the greater concert region. As farmers endure a multi-year slump in prices, America has lost 2,500 dairies per year over the last five years. This breakout will engage in collective strategizing for the policies and programs needed to support dairy farmers and how to activate the public to reform the dairy pricing system.

Facilitators: Arden Tewksbury, ProAg
TBA

Growing Power by Learning to Grow

The collapse of the steel industry hit Pittsburgh hard. Today, its population is half the size of its peak in the 1950s and many of its 90 neighborhoods still struggle with an economic depression left in steel’s wake. But today, the city shows hopeful areas of new growth—neighborhoods revitalized by food and farming in urban spaces that once housed industry. This breakout will explore how hands-on opportunities to grow food are renewing a sense of place and pride in cities across the country, empowering urban communities, and creating economic, environmental and social benefits alike.

Facilitators: Jake Seltman, GROW Pittsburgh
Lisa Freeman, Manchester Growing Together Farm

Organizing in These Times

Empowering your local community through organizing is a tried-and-true, effective strategy for building power and achieving structural change. But organizing in this polarized political era has its own challenges. This breakout will explore these challenges and focus on how to effectively engage dialogue with people from diverse backgrounds and build campaigns.

Facilitators: Mark Shultz, Land Stewardship Project *Pending*
Rhonda Perry, Missouri Rural Crisis Center

Farm Advocates: Navigating the Farm Crisis

Like many farmer organizations, Farm Aid arose out of the 1980s Farm Crisis. One of the key strategies to the collective work to keep farmers on their land was farm advocacy. What is *farm advocacy* and why is it an essential complement to organizing as we work to advance structural change and support farmers of all kinds? How do we bring this critical work forward as farmers navigate the most severe economic downturn since the 1980s?

Facilitators: Scott Marlow, RAFI-USA
Monica Rainge, Federation of Southern Cooperatives
Joe Schroeder, Farm Aid

11:30 **Report Back**

Noon **Adjourn**

12:15 pm **Farm Tours Depart**