

Farm Aid 2023: Media Backgrounder

Farm Aid 2023 will take place Saturday, Sept. 23, at Ruoff Music Center in Noblesville, Indiana, marking the third time that Farm Aid has brought its music and food festival to the state. Farm Aid 1990 was held in Indianapolis and Farm Aid 2001 took place in Noblesville.

The festival includes performances by:

- Willie Nelson & Family, Farm Aid President and Founder
- Neil Young, Board Member and Co-Founder
- John Mellencamp, Board Member and Co-Founder
- Dave Matthews, Board Member, and Tim Reynolds
- Margo Price, Board Member
- Bob Weir & Wolf Bros featuring The Wolfpack
- Lukas Nelson
- Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats
- Allison Russell
- The String Cheese Incident
- Particle Kid



Farm Aid 2023 is sold out! More information on how fans can enjoy Farm Aid 2023 performances and behind-the-scenes looks from home will be available soon.

Farm Aid 2023 includes:

- **Farmer Climate Champions:** Farm Aid 2023 highlights the role farmers can play to help mitigate climate change by farming in ways that build soil health, safeguard our water and capture carbon. These climate resilient agricultural practices include organic production, cover cropping, rotational grazing, agroforestry and more. These and other innovations make family farmers and ranchers leaders at the forefront of climate mitigation.
- **Generous Artists:** A unique blend of artists from many genres donate their performances and come at their own expense to shine a spotlight on family farmers and celebrate the many benefits they bring to all of us.
- **HOMEGROWN Concessions®:** Farm Aid's HOMEGROWN Concessions® features a diverse, fresh menu with ingredients that are sustainably produced by family farmers using ecological practices with a fair price paid to the farmers. Backstage, artists and crew enjoy HOMEGROWN Catering with the same criteria. Farm Aid uses all compostable serviceware and promotes and supports composting in the venue with a goal of zero waste.
- **HOMEGROWN Village:** Farm Aid's HOMEGROWN Village features hands-on activities about the climate, soil, water, energy, food and farming. Festivalgoers can hear farmers and artists discuss pressing issues and share inspiring stories on the FarmYard Stage, as well as attend demonstrations to learn agrarian skills and celebrate the culture of agriculture in the HOMEGROWN Skills tent.

Festivalgoers can access the entire Farm Aid experience through the **official Farm Aid 2023 mobile app**, which will be available in September for iPhone and Android devices. Fans will be able to use the app to engage in several ways: they can preview the HOMEGROWN Concessions® menu; learn the stories of Indiana farmers; and make a personalized festival-day schedule of music, workshops and conversations between artists and farmers.

Farm Aid's Ongoing Commitment

- Farm Aid 2023 will showcase the true diversity and strength of family farmers in this country. A thriving movement — especially of young farmers; Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) farmers; and women farmers — is leading the way for conversations, strategies and change to create a more democratic farm and food system that can sustain us.
- Now more than ever, people are aware of the fragility of and injustices embedded in our farm and food system, and the urgency to build a democratic, diverse and resilient family farm-centered agriculture system.
- Family farmers play an essential role as an economic driver and cultural foundation for America's rural communities. They provide practical solutions to some of our most pressing challenges, with the potential to improve and sustain rural economies, mitigate climate change, steward our soil and water, and provide good food for our health.
- Farm Aid galvanizes family farmers, artists, activists, advocates and eaters in support of a farm and food system that is good for the soil, water, people and communities — not one focused on the corporate profits of a few.
- Since 1985, Farm Aid has stood with and for family farmers, providing resources in times of need and growing a network of advocates committed to keeping family farmers on the land. Farm Aid helps farmers:
 - Navigate challenges by connecting them with the people and resources that support farmers in crisis;
 - Who are just beginning to get started on the land;
 - Employ sustainable and regenerative practices that care for the soil and water; and
 - By standing with BIPOC farmers against discrimination.
- Farm Aid has raised more than \$70 million to help farmers thrive through direct services like our farmer hotline; to expand the reach of the Good Food Movement by making connections between farmers and eaters; to change the dominant system of industrial agriculture through policy advocacy and organizing; and to promote food from family farms through the annual Farm Aid festival, publications, our website, videos and more.

Farm Aid and Current Issues

Climate Change

- Situated on the frontlines of climate change, family farmers are all too familiar with the consequences of a changing climate that increases the frequency and severity of natural disasters like floods, droughts, wildfires and hurricanes. Decreased reserves of fresh, clean water are a consequence of these changing patterns.
- Average temperatures in the Midwest and Great Plains have become 1.5°F warmer over the last century and precipitation has increased, a trend that is expected to continue. In the future, scientists project heavier downpours during spring and winter months, accompanied by hotter, drier summers. These intense precipitation events lead to flood damage and strained drainage infrastructure, reducing clean water availability.
- As of 2022, Indiana had the most miles of rivers and streams deemed too polluted for swimming of any state and 99% of the state's lakes and reservoirs are unfit for consumption.¹
- The U.S. must do more to respond to the climate crisis. The good news is changes in farm and food policy can prevent the worst impacts of a changing climate, and well as protect our food and fiber production, build up our climate resilience, safeguard our water, soil and air, and keep farmers on the land.

¹ Environmental Integrity Project. (2022.) The Clean Water Act at 50: Promises Kept at the Half-Century Mark. <https://environmentalintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CWA@50-report-EMBARGOED-3.17.22.pdf>

- Globally, agriculture is responsible for 24% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions,² which absorb and hold heat in the earth's atmosphere and trigger climate change. But sustainable agriculture releases fewer GHGs than industrial agriculture and actually has the potential to sequester GHGs.
- Farmers' voices must be included in solutions to our climate crisis. Farmers and ranchers who employ sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices are an essential part of the climate solution.

Equity

- Our farm and food system is rooted in, and remains deeply entwined with, racism and injustice. Farm Aid stands in solidarity with Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) communities working for justice in the face of systemic racism and violence. Our vision of a transformed America in which family farmers and eaters are partners in a thriving farm and food system that benefits all is not possible without actively being part of the struggle for racial equity and justice.
- Historically — and today — Black, Indigenous, Hispanic and farmers of color have struggled to keep their farms and ownership of land in rural communities due to discrimination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and other government agencies. Black farmers in America alone have lost more than [12 million acres](#) of farmland over the last century, mostly since the 1950s. Farm Aid advocates for legislation to address and correct historic discrimination within the USDA in federal farm assistance and lending that has caused Black farmers to lose millions of acres of farmland and robbed Black farmers and their families of the hundreds of billions of dollars of inter-generational wealth that land represented.
- Farm Aid celebrates the incredible gifts and rich heritages of this land's many Native farmers and is deepening our relationship with and commitments to leaders at the forefront of the revival of Native foodways. Regenerative agriculture — largely seen as the best agricultural solution to lessen the impacts of climate change — comes from methods cultivated by Indigenous farmers, as well as Black, Latinx and Asian American farmers, who are reviving and sharing their ancestral ways of producing food.

Corporate Power

- A handful of corporations control our food from farm to fork. Their unbridled power grants them increasing political influence over the rules that govern our food system and allows them to manipulate the marketplace, pushing down the prices paid to family farmers and driving them out of business.
- For eaters, extreme consolidation leaves fewer choices in the grocery aisle and higher prices, while corporate-written policies create growing food safety concerns, food worker exploitation and less transparency in the marketplace. The COVID-19 pandemic provided us a clear view of the failure of corporate consolidation as supply chains crumbled. Across the country, local farmers and local food systems demonstrated they are the best solution to a safe and steady food supply.
- Our corporate controlled food system damages rural communities, local economies, public health and the soil and water needed to sustain food production. The upcoming 2023 Farm Bill provides a crucial opportunity for people to call for regulation of corporate food giants and strong support of family farmers.

Indiana Agriculture Facts

- Indiana is home to 54,800 farms.³ According to data from 2022, farmland makes up about 14.8 million acres of the land within Indiana's borders, making it the eighth largest farming state in the nation.⁴ With an average farm size of 264 acres, more than 80% of land in Indiana is devoted to farms, forests and woodland.
- With just over 94,000 farmers in the state, 95% of farms in Indiana are family-owned or operated.⁵

² US EPA. (2023). Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data. <https://www.epa.gov/ghemissions/global-greenhouse-gas-emissions-data>

³ USDA NASS. (2022). 2022 State Agriculture Overview. https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/Ag_Overview/stateOverview.php?state=INDIANA

⁴ Indiana State Department of Agriculture. (2023). <https://www.in.gov/isda/about/about-indiana-agriculture/>

⁵ Ibid.

- Farm Aid has a long history of granting to and working with farm and food organizations in the Midwest. Since 1985, Farm Aid has granted more than \$2 million to farmers and farm and rural organizations in the region.
- Indiana is an agricultural leader in the U.S., ranking in the top five for many commodities. These include corn, soybeans, peppermint, spearmint, pumpkin, turkey and eggs. Of these, Indiana is second in the nation for pumpkin and egg production, providing around 10% of the U.S. supply for each.⁶

⁶ USDA NASS. (2022). Top 10 Leading States and Indiana's Rank.

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Indiana/Publications/Annual_Statistical_Bulletin/2122/pg2.pdf