



## EXPANDING THE MISSION: FARM AID'S INNOVATIONS

- **HOMEGROWN Concessions®** and the **HOMEGROWN Village** debuted at Farm Aid 2007 in New York City.
- **Neil Young and Dave Matthews Band** have both partnered with Farm Aid's HOMEGROWN Concessions® to bring family farm, local and organic foods to participating venues during their individual tours.
- **Farm Aid 2024 was officially certified as a zero-waste event**, reaching a 90% diversion of all waste from the landfill.

## Farm Aid: 40 Years of Cultural and Musical Impact

Since 1985, Farm Aid has been the nation's most enduring music event dedicated to a mission, led by its original founding artists Willie Nelson, John Mellencamp and Neil Young. For four decades, Farm Aid has blended music, activism and food justice into one powerful movement and raised more than \$85 million to strengthen family farmers. Farm Aid has consistently featured a diverse lineup of artists across musical genres, reflecting the widespread support for and relevance of its mission. From country legends to rock icons, the festival has brought together musical artists dedicated to raising awareness and funds for family farmers.

### HISTORIC PERFORMANCES AND UNFORGETTABLE MOMENTS

- In 1985, Bob Dylan performed at the first Farm Aid in Champaign, Illinois, alongside Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers. In 2023, Dylan returned to Noblesville, Indiana, backed by the Heartbreakers once again.
- Eddie Van Halen and Sammy Hagar performed together publicly for the first time at Farm Aid in 1985. Shortly afterward, Hagar officially replaced David Lee Roth as lead vocalist for Van Halen.
- John Fogerty gave his first solo performance in 13 years at the inaugural Farm Aid.
- An unknown act named Bon Jovi was almost cut from the first Farm Aid but performed in an early morning slot. They returned to the Farm Aid stage in Austin, Texas (1986), as rising stars. Also relegated to an early morning performance, Garth Brooks played a 10 a.m. opening set in Indianapolis, Indiana (1990), during Farm Aid IV before his career exploded.
- Guns N' Roses performed its final show with the original lineup at Farm Aid IV.
- Dave Matthews Band made their Farm Aid debut at the 10th anniversary concert in Louisville, Kentucky (1995), performing for the largest audience of their career at that time. Dave Matthews would join the Farm Aid Board of Directors in 2001.







Elton John  
PHOTO Paul Natkin

- The late Toby Myers, bassist for John Mellencamp, and his wife, Roberta, married onstage at Farm Aid's 10th anniversary concert.
- Kacey Musgraves made her Farm Aid debut in 2013 in Saratoga Springs, New York, shortly before winning her first Grammy.

### SPECIAL GUESTS

- Elton John surprised audiences at Farm Aid IV with a tribute to Ryan White just hours before the young AIDS activist passed away.
- Ringo Starr became the only Beatle to perform at Farm Aid, joining Don Was at Farm Aid VI.
- Astronaut Buzz Aldrin commemorated the 25th anniversary of the moon landing at Farm Aid VII in New Orleans, Louisiana (1992).
- Farm Aid and Comic Relief teamed up at Farm Aid VII to bring comedians Paula Poundstone and Paul Rodriguez to the lineup.
- First Lady Tipper Gore played congas with Willie Nelson during "Whiskey River" at Farm Aid 2000 near Bristow, Virginia.
- President Barack Obama, then a U.S. senator, introduced hometown favorite Wilco at Farm Aid 2005 in Tinley Park, Illinois.
- Aerosmith's Steven Tyler joined Willie Nelson onstage at Farm Aid's 25th anniversary in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (2010), for a surprise performance of "Milk Cow Blues."
- Pete Seeger led a stirring singalong at Farm Aid 2013 at age 94 — his last public appearance.

### MOMENTS THAT MADE HEADLINES

- Farm Aid 2001 in Noblesville, Indiana, was the first large-scale public event following the 9/11 attacks — held just 18 days later. Arlo Guthrie appeared on stage at the start of the "Concert for America" for an acoustic version of "This Land Is Your Land," joined by Nelson, Mellencamp, Young, Matthews and Martina McBride.
- In 1997, Farm Aid relocated from Dallas to Tinley Park, Illinois, at the last minute — and still sold out.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Farm Aid hosted two festivals that were livestreamed: At Home with Farm Aid in April, with more than half a million dollars raised to support farmers impacted by market losses due to COVID-19, and Farm Aid 2020: On the Road.



Farm Aid's mission is to build a vibrant, family farm-centered system of agriculture in America. Farm Aid artists and board members Willie Nelson, Neil Young, John Mellencamp, Dave Matthews and Margo Price host an annual festival to raise funds to support Farm Aid's work with family farmers and to inspire people to choose family farm food. For 40 years, Farm Aid, with the support of the artists who contribute their performances each year, has raised more than \$85 million to support programs that help farmers thrive, expand the reach of the Good Food Movement, take action to change the dominant system of industrial agriculture and promote food from family farms.