



2025 Farm Aid Activities





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, John Mellencamp, Neil Young, Dave Matthews and Margo Price host an annual festival to support Farm Aid's year-round work with family farmers and to inspire people to choose food from family farms. Since 1985, Farm Aid has raised more than \$90 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. The following Farm Aid programs accomplished our mission in 2025:

Promoting Food From Family Farms

The heart of Farm Aid's work to promote food from family farms is our annual **Farm Aid festival**. *Farm Aid 40* was held at Huntington Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on September 20. A crowd of 37,000 enjoyed performances by Farm Aid Board Artists as well as Bob Dylan, Kenny Chesney, Billy Strings, Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats, Lukas Nelson with special guest Sierra Ferrell, Trampled by Turtles, Wynonna Judd, Steve Earle, Waxahatchee, Eric Burton of Black Pumas, Jesse Welles, Madeline Edwards and Wisdom Indian Dancers. All the artists generously donated their time and travel expenses.

On September 20 at Farm Aid 40:

45 farm and food organizations engaged festivalgoers in hands-on, interactive activities about family farmers, soil, water and food production in Farm Aid's **HOMEGROWN Village**, including a local artist leading a seed art activity, creating album covers of each of the board artists out of seeds. In the **HOMEGROWN Skills Tent**, festivalgoers took part in hands-on demonstrations about beekeeping, fermentation, using flowers to dye fabric, seed saving and more.



On the **Farmyard Stage**, farmers, activists and artists came together in conversation about the benefits of composting, agriculture's promise as a remedy for climate change, the Farm Bill and the next generation of farmers. Engaging people in a hands-on way in the HOMEGROWN Village and on the Farmyard Stage fosters deep awareness of key food and farm issues.

Farm Aid partnered with Gopher Hospitality and Aramark Sports and Entertainment to serve **HOMEgrown Concessions®**: family farm-sourced food grown and raised with ecological standards and a fair price paid to farmers. HOMEgrown Concessions® builds a strong relationship with farmers, food companies, ethnically diverse food vendors and sponsors. Menu items featured family farm food, including local grassfed beef burgers, pastured pork sausages, an array of delicious salads and non-GMO snacks, cheese curds and street tacos. Many food companies and sponsors donated food for HOMEgrown Catering backstage and in the Hi-Fi Experience areas.



The **HOMEgrown Youthmarket**, a farm-fresh stand operated by young people from 4H, the Grange and Urban Roots, sold 1,300 pounds of fresh fruits, vegetables, cider and local snacks from local farms and orchards.

The festival was certified as a zero-waste event — a first for Huntington Bank Stadium—with 6.8 tons of food and serviceware waste collected to make compost and build soil for future crops. Farm Aid had a total of 472 volunteers, many of whom helped festivalgoers differentiate between landfill-bound trash, recyclables and compostables.

Farm Aid sold aluminum water bottles to reduce waste and worked with r.Cup for reusable cups on site. For the first time, all of Farm Aid 40's festival apparel was made with certified organic cotton from Texas farmers and manufactured in the United States.

Photos of Minnesota farmers and farms served as the backdrop for the music on stage all day. Photographer Scott Streble, who volunteers for Farm Aid each year, traveled across the state to document the farmers on their farms. In addition to adding to the messaging of the Farm Aid festival and literally putting farmers center-stage, the process of documenting farmers demonstrates to them how much their work is appreciated and valued.

Corporate sponsors included McKnight Foundation, Tractor Beverage Co., Explore Minnesota, Horizon Organic, 11th Hour Project, Huntington Bank, Seven Sundays, REI Co-op, Frontier Co-op, Simple Mills, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Rural Climate Partnership, Thousand Hills Lifetime Grazed, Compeer Financial, Patagonia Workwear, Native American Agriculture Fund, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and University of Minnesota.

Audience at Farm Aid 40.
Photo © Brian Bruner /
Bruner Photo



Farm Aid 40 received significant local and regional media coverage, as well as national attention, including from Associated Press, The New York Times, CNN, The Minnesota Star Tribune, Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal, New Nation, MPR, Rolling Stone, Billboard and hundreds more. **Coverage resulted in 6,775 print, online and broadcast media hits, contributing to more than 14 million media impressions from announcement day through festival-month.** Feature stories touted the entertainment value of the festival, the long history of Farm Aid in the family farm movement, as well as the impact of farmers on their local communities, the importance of family farm agriculture for all of us and the need for farm policy that supports and grows local and regional agriculture. Local TV crews came out to the pre-events that were held before the festival, including farm tours and an all-day farmer forum, with on-air features about all the events that were part of Farm Aid 40 programming.

Farm Aid partnered with CNN for the first time to broadcast *Farm Aid 40* during prime time, with multiple segments leading up to the live event, including advance interviews with Willie and Annie Nelson (by Kaitlan Collins on September 17); Dave Matthews (by Jake Tapper on September 18); Margo Price (by Dana Bash on September 18). On-site interviews were conducted by Bill Weir and anchors John Berman and Laura Coates of Margo Price, John Mellencamp, Dave Matthews, Lukas Nelson, Nathaniel Rateliff, Governor Walz, Senator Amy Klobuchar and many farmers. The CNN broadcast had more than 4 million viewers worldwide, coming in #6 in all of cable programming during its time period. Significantly, the CNN broadcast helped Farm Aid more than double our fundraising through online and text donations.

Additionally, Farm Aid 40 was broadcast in its entirety on SiriusXM satellite radio, along with interviews with artists, family farmers and advocates. The festival was webcast live on www.farmaid.org and Farm Aid's YouTube channel, with 359,000 views by 172,500 unique viewers for a total watch time of 189,000 hours. Farm Aid also partnered with nugs to livestream to their music-centric audience.

The Farm Aid 40 app for iPhone and Android provided festival details including the music lineup, stories about featured farmers, information about exhibits in the HOMEGROWN Village and the organizations presenting them, and the menu for HOMEGROWN Concessions®. The *Farm Aid 40* app was used by 21,413 people who logged 186,168 sessions with an average session time of more than 6 minutes and more than 2.5M screen views.

Over the summer, Farm Aid staff visited farms across the state to film videos that brought farmer voices to the Farm Aid stage (at our press event), TV and web broadcasts, and to our website and social media audiences. *Farm Aid 40* shined a spotlight on farmers who are creating community-based food systems that improve food access and quality, boost farmer income and local economies, and promote healthy soil and water. A diverse group of farmers and food producers shared the ways they work in their communities to develop a more democratic farm and food system that is healthy, safe, equitable and accessible. Farmers declared that they need more support from our country's eaters, as well as from our elected representatives in local, state and federal government.

Farm Aid 40 Pre-Events

Leading up to festival day, Farm Aid partnered with the University of Minnesota and other organizations to produce a plethora of public events throughout the week. Farm Aid 40's "Week of Farm Aid" programming and pre-festival events were all about people, power and place, bringing together farmers and communities to build our shared connection to food, land, culture, climate and story. Events included:

- **Lessons in Mobilizing: From the Farmer Labor Movement to the Tractorcades to Today**, a screening of the film *The Farmer-Labor Movement: A Minnesota Story* and the world premiere of *Tractorcade USA*, with music by folk singer Larry Long, moderated by historian Cory Haala.
- **Black Food Politics, History and Transformation: Reimagining Food Systems from Below**, a roundtable conversation with Angela Dawson, founder of 40 Acre Coop; Dominique Hazzard, a UMN faculty member; and Zoe Hollomon, farmer and leader of Rootsprings, a Black & LGBT-owned Co-operative farm in Annandale, MN and the Midwest Farmers of Color Collective; moderated by Tracey Deutsch, a UMN faculty member. The roundtable session centered the energy, deep history, and significance of Black activism around food and farming.
- **Collective Power in the Countryside: A Conversation**, a roundtable conversation with authors Sarah Smarsh and Sarah Vogel, moderated by Minnesota farmer, factory farm activist and author Sonja Trom Eayrs.
- **Farm Aid Presents Rissi Palmer's Color Me Country Takeover**, which celebrated the legacy of BIPOC artists and farmers and lifted up the lasting influence on roots music, culture and community that inspires us all.
- **Amplifying Inclusion: A Conversation with Rissi Palmer of Color Me Country Radio**, a roundtable conversation with Rissi Palmer, the Black woman country artist and host of Color Me Country Radio; Sumanth Gopinath, musician and UMN faculty member; and Yolanda Williams, an opera singer, performer and UMN faculty member. The roundtable was moderated by Patrick Warfield, UMN Professor and Director of the School of Music at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities.

- **Slow Roll Bike Ride – Farm Aid 40 Edition**, in partnership with Slow Roll MSP, REI Co-op, and the Rails to Trails Conservancy, a celebratory community bike ride through South Minneapolis that linked together urban farms utilizing the Minneapolis trail system.

Farmer Programming at Farm Aid 40

Farm Aid held pre-festival events targeted to farmers and farm advocates on Thursday and Friday before *Farm Aid 40*. On Thursday, **Farm Aid hosted a farm tour**, which highlighted the University of Minnesota Research Farm, Kimber Contours Farm and the Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA) Farm.

On Friday, Farm Aid and advocates and farmers gathered for **Farm Aid 40's Farmer Forum**. Even before the event began, the mood within the Farm Aid community was one of celebration and excitement. Just a week before, the future of *Farm Aid 40* was up in the air due to a labor strike and picket line at the University by Teamsters service workers. In solidarity with the work, Farm Aid's artists, production team and partners announced they would not cross the picket line. Farm Aid publicly called for the University to come back to the bargaining table and as the deadline for festival load-in approached, Farm Aid went public in the Minnesota Tribune to say that the lack of resolution of the dispute might result in the cancellation of Farm Aid 40. Finally, both the University and the Union came to the table and came to an agreement that met the workers' demands and Farm Aid missed only one of our preparation days. **Farm Aid's solidarity echoed the decades-long partnership of farmers and workers to support each other.**

Zoe Hollomon speaks at 2025 Farmer Forum on a panel of Minnesotan activists.



The forum took place in the shadow of growing challenges for farmers who are struggling with the downturn in the farm economy in addition to uncertainty about the Trump administration's tariff policies, cuts in federal funding impacting local and regional markets, and the reduction in USDA staffing, limiting access to important federal programs and resources.

The day's programming included: "Power and Presence of Native Foodways," featuring a group of Native leaders and advocates; "This is What Democracy Looks Like," a panel of Minnesota-based farmers and advocates speaking about activism and solutions in Minnesota's food and farming system; Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar, Ranking Member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, speaking to the challenges farmers face in this moment and the need for a new, bipartisan farm bill that will address the many needs of small and mid-sized farmers; and various breakout sessions that led to several calls to, including asking attendees to make connections and develop relationships with local and state lawmakers.

The day was capped with a keynote address by Keith Ellison, Attorney General of Minnesota and Co-Chair of the Democratic Attorneys General Association and a fierce antitrust advocate, as well as a rally and performance by the Pride of Minnesota, the University's marching band. This got attendees on their feet and moving in the spirit of the day's calls for hands-on advocacy and organizing.

Our annual Farm Aid Eve event, taking place the night before the annual festival, brings together not just farmers, but our entire community, from artists and donors to farmers and advocates. Farm Aid Eve was held at a unique venue with immersive video, which allowed us to showcase the video footage we have been in the process of digitizing. We were able to immerse attendees in footage from the Farm Aid festivals over the years, as well as from farmer rallies, protests and gatherings. Our programming recognized Carolyn Mugar, Executive Director, and Glenda Yoder, Associate Director, who stepped back from their roles at the end of 2025. Additionally, current Co-Directors Jennifer Fahy and Shorlette Ammons recognized key leaders in the farm movement over the last 40 years.

Our Year-Round Community

Farm Aid's website, email and social media informs and inspires the public through storytelling about America's innovative family farmers, the challenges they face and the solutions they hold. Farm Aid's website offers resources directly to farmers and informs and offers eaters opportunities to support family farmers every day in their own lives and engage in food and farm issues.

In 2025, there were 1.45 million sessions to www.farmaid.org by 936,000 users, nearly a doubling of last year's traffic. Farm Aid communicated with our audience of more than 100,000 email subscribers and reached millions of people on Facebook, Instagram, Threads, Bluesky, X and YouTube; additionally, we started a TikTok account. Farm Aid's YouTube channel features more than 2,700 videos, with 560 million lifetime views and more than 750,000 subscribers.

Farm Aid's Cultural Impact

Farm Aid's podcast [Against the Grain](#) continued features farmers, artists, advocates, food experts, activists and policymakers who fight industrial agriculture giants, hold government accountable, and shift culture towards a food and farm model that is better for farmers, soil, water and climate. In 2025, *Against the Grain* launched a seven-part series on Artists and Activism, which was very well received and led to Farm Aid being invited to join the Heritage Radio Network.

Farm Aid continued to work to ensure the security of its archive, working with industry leaders George Blood and Soncraft to digitize all of Farm Aid's audio archival holdings. Farm Aid provided support and artifacts to the University of Illinois's Spurlock Museum for the exhibition, "Songs of Solidarity: the 1985 Farm Aid Concert." In addition to marking Farm Aid's 40th anniversary, we marked the 30th anniversary of the first factory farm protest in Lincoln Township, Missouri, with a blog post remembering the landmark event attended by Farm Aid President Willie Nelson.

Farm Aid launched an analysis of the landscape of the family farm movement and Farm Aid's place in it. A team of Farm Aid staff crafted and analyzed both a staff survey and a series of movement partner interviews. The results of the partner interviews show a clear desire for Farm Aid to continue to amplify the work of our partner organizations; convene gatherings where the work of the movement and the people behind it who do it are; and work to bring in the next generation of farmers, organizers, and artists.

Farm Aid worked with Margo Price and Alcorn Custom Case to build out a traveling road case exhibit that tells Margo's family farm and Farm Aid story. The road case introduces fans who attended Margo's fall/winter headlining tour to the work of Farm Aid and, in partnership with Propeller, gave them the chance to donate to Farm Aid and win two tickets to Farm Aid 2026 and a signed Gibson guitar.

To mark Farm Aid's 40th anniversary, **Farm Aid collaborated with Shepard Fairey** on a limited edition print titled "Farms, Not Factories," which captures the noble, solitary work of so many family farmers while also highlighting forty years of action and activism fighting the same corporate greed Fairey first targeted with his OBEY campaign.

"Farms Not Factories"
by Shepard Fairey



Growing the Good Food Movement

In 2025, Farm Aid and our partners continued to implement strategies that bolster the Good Food Movement— the growing number of eaters demanding family farm-identified, local, organic or humanely raised food. **Farm Aid awarded grants in the amount of \$194,000** to organizations that strengthen infrastructure for local and regional food systems and raise awareness of their value. These grants supported work to create new markets for farmers and enhance access to good food for everyone, regardless of race, color, national origin or zip code.

Helping Farmers Thrive

U.S. farmers have recently faced consecutive years of high input costs and low commodity prices, decreasing the already small margins that many operations get by on. And while these conditions alone are difficult enough to navigate, additional challenges introduced in 2025 have only increased uncertainty for U.S. farmers. Farmers have been hit from every direction: seesawing tariffs, damaging trade policies, inflation and drastic cuts to federal farm programs. These impacts combined with decades of agriculture policy that favors large-scale, industrial operations and corporations, are bringing many farmers, and the rural communities they support, to a breaking point. As Farm Aid marked its 40th anniversary, farmers, advocates and policymakers began to warn that we are entering the next farm crisis, as farmers across the spectrum struggled to make a living. In response, Farm Aid continued to expand our direct farmer response and increased our advocacy of solutions to farm policy that needs a massive shift in direction—one that is equitable to all farmers and delivers fair prices and competitive markets that allow farmers to make a living.

Through the **1-800-FARM-AID Hotline** and the Online Request for Assistance, **Farm Aid’s Hotline Operators listen to farmers and refer them** to an extensive network of farm and rural support organizations across the country. Referrals provide immediate support to farm families in crisis and farmers seeking to transition to more sustainable farming practices, as well as to people interested in establishing farm businesses. In 2025, Farm Aid’s 1-800-Farm-Aid Hotline Team responded to 636 farmer cases nationally. There were 189 cases from the Midwest, 102 cases from the Northeast, 227 cases from the South and 113 cases from the West. Farm Aid distributed 129 Emergency Grants to farmers through the Hotline, totaling more than \$64,000.

Farm Aid continued to operate the **Spanish Hotline** in partnership with Migrant Clinician's Network and expanded our Spanish resources for farmers and farmworkers. Our partnership continued with both **Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network-Northeast (FRSAN-NE) and FRSAN-West**, federal programs authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill. To provide farmers and advocates with more personalized communications,

The Hotline Team attended multiple farmer conferences around the country, including PASA, Marbleseed, Regenerate Conference, National AgrAbility, Intertribal Agriculture Council, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Convention and the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition Winter Meeting. The Team participated in several trainings throughout the year, including Disaster Preparedness for Agricultural Communities, Finding, Accessing and Securing Farmland, Farm Succession Basics and Farm Law 101.

Farm Aid's [**Farmer Resource Network \(FRN\)**](#), available in English and Spanish, offer an interactive website and database of more than 2,000 resources that provide guidance for new farmers, direct assistance to farmers in crisis, and support for farmers who wish to transition to more sustainable production methods and markets. Through the FRN, **Farm Aid makes connections between individuals, farm service organizations, and businesses to address challenges and create opportunities for farmers.** Farm Aid points farmers and advocates to our most trusted resources, new offerings and timely opportunities via our curated Resource Guides. Farm Aid continued its new **Farmer Resource newsletter**, growing the list to more than 800 subscribers.

In May, for Mental Health Awareness month, the Hotline Team hosted Farm Aid's Breaking Bread webinar, showing the documentary "Out of the Shadows," followed by a panel discussion on farmer mental health.

2025 marked the second year of Farm Aid's three-year partnership with USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI), University of Arkansas, and the Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Center at Alcorn State University, to create the **Distressed Borrowers Assistance Network (DBAN)**, an initiative designed to provide personalized support to financially distressed farmers and ranchers across the country via a national network that connects distressed borrowers with individualized assistance to help them stabilize and regain financial footing.



Both DBAN and FRSAN were impacted by the Trump Administration's federal funding freeze; challenges arose from frozen funding, lack of communication from FSA staff, and rapid changes in USDA programs. Farm Aid mitigated these by collaborating with Network Leads and by piloting programming. Thanks to the organization's strong financial position, Farm Aid did not need to suspend work or conduct layoffs as a result of the delayed funding and funding eventually resumed and Farm Aid's outstanding expenses for work conducted under both cooperative agreements were fully reimbursed.

Key activities of the DBAN team during 2025 included research to support farmer outreach, conducting a needs assessment of farm support organizations and direct service providers, piloting Network engagement infrastructure, developing online platforms to share trainings and resources, and hosting an in-person Network Gathering and four virtual trainings. **Farm Aid supported 265 financially distressed farmers through the Farm Aid Farmer Hotline and reached more than 650 individuals via the Farmer Resource Newsletter.** We conducted a landscape scan and piloted engagement infrastructure with 29 farmer support organizations. Farm Aid grew the Network to 133 direct service providers representing 41 organizations. Over 40% of members attended the in-person Network Gathering with strong participant satisfaction.

The **Northeast Climate Disaster Relief Network** (organized by Farm Aid and many partners in 2023) conducted research into disaster programs available to farmers and interviewed farmers about the impacts of climate change on their operations and the policies that would support them better. A white paper will be published in 2026.

Farm Aid partnered with the University of Texas LBJ School's Extreme Weather Adaptation Lab in 2025 to work with professors and graduate students to conduct research and analysis that will produce impactful resources to support farmers and partners in disaster response and recovery. The students' project, Landscape Analysis of State-Level Disaster Resources and Programs for Farmers, was a comprehensive look at the existing options farmers have for accessing these much-needed programs. A new class will continue this work in 2026, considering the strengths and opportunities in disaster response for farmers, and how different entities have worked effectively together.

In 2025, **emergency grants totaling more than \$40,000 were made to farm families** to cover essential household expenses. These \$500 grants are recommended on a case-by-case basis by hotline operators who also connect farmers with helpful services, resources and opportunities specific to their individual needs. Additionally, Farm Aid gave \$26,500 in disaster grants to organizations providing direct support to farmers in response to climate disasters, such as those that provided vital relief to farmers in the Southeast devastated by Hurricane Helene in late 2024.

Farm Aid awarded \$591,000 in End of Year grants to organizations that help farmers secure the resources they need to begin farming, access new markets, grow sustainably and build resilience in the face of crisis and stress.

Taking Action To Change The System

Farm Aid works with local, regional and national organizations to promote fair farm policies and grassroots organizing efforts. **Farm Aid granted \$361,000 to family farm organizations working to ensure competitive markets for family farmers, address antitrust and contract violations, fight factory farms, strengthen the grassroots around a unified vision for our farm and food system, and amplify farmer voices to reform the food system.**

Throughout the year, Farm Aid:

- Responded to emergent policy issues and program changes and terminations enacted by the Trump administration;
- Informed our audience about the impact that policy – including immigration enforcement, federal funding freezes, a historic government shutdown and tariffs – has on family farmers;
- Focused our advocacy on issues and policies related to farmer stress and mental health, climate change, racial equity and justice, and corporate power;

- Published 13 blog posts and factsheets on Farm Aid’s website to educate our audience about current policy events and issues impacting family farmers;
- Actively engaged as a partner and member in three national coalitions working on policy change: National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Campaign for Contract Agriculture Reform, and Animal Agriculture Reform Collaborative;
- Convened and led the Northeast Climate Disaster Relief Network to find solutions and disaster relief for farmers facing climate disasters;
- Continued to cultivate key partnerships with state policymakers through collaboration with State Innovation Exchange;
- Signed on to and endorsed 28 letters of support and marker bills;
- Continued to advocate for a new farm bill that addresses the mounting challenges family farmers face.

Farm Aid’s credit working group, made up of people directly serving farmers through one-on-one advocacy in addition to experts in farm credit and agricultural law, meets bi-weekly. During the Biden Administration this group met regularly with top USDA officials to push for changes that make USDA programs and credit more accessible to farmers, especially underserved farmers, with better outcomes for family farmers. Unfortunately, that has not been possible during the Trump Administration.

Farm Aid continues to serve as a leader and contributing member of various **collaborative efforts to change our farm and food system** and advance the power and participation of farmers. These include efforts to address economic and social injustices across animal agriculture; to elevate on- the-ground solutions to climate change; to build the supply of non-GMO food ingredients and animal feed in the U.S.; and to promote regenerative agriculture.

Other Grants and Total Grantmaking

Farm Aid made **strategic grants totaling \$40,000 to enable long-term Farm Aid partners to address pressing needs or take advantage of unique opportunities to advance family farm agriculture.**

Strategic grantees included: NOFA VT for grassroots efforts to secure emergency relief for farmers impacted by extreme weather events; Liberation Farm to support their advocacy, education and community building to address Black farmland equity, food sovereignty and liberation; Washington Young Farmers Coalition to expand its AgCare Fund, which provides direct aid to farmers and farmworkers to support mental health care; and CCOF to support expansion of the Hardship Assistance Fund beyond California, providing

financial assistance to farmers experiencing financial loss due to extreme hardship. Farm Aid gave **\$40,000 in farmer leadership grants** for the development of leadership skills among farmers and farmer advocates and the elevation of their voices in decision-making circles. This includes a \$6,000 grant to American Agriculture Movement to create change for farmers, fisherman and ranchers by providing a voice, advising, advocating and demanding action.

Farm Aid's Agricultural Scholarship Fund, established by Youngkers Department Store in 1985, **granted ~\$20,000 in agricultural-related scholarships to students** at three land grant universities during 2025.

In total, **Farm Aid made grants in the amount of \$1,336,000 during 2025.**

Farm Aid prioritized grant proposals from organizations that focused on four issue areas: racial equity; farmer-led solutions to climate change; stopping the growth of industrial agriculture and corporate power; and providing support for farmers experiencing crisis and farm stress.

Farm Aid also continues its **leadership in the philanthropic community** to bring funders' attention to the varied challenges faced by family farmers and to encourage collaboration and collective problem solving. Additionally, Farm Aid established a framework to better align our grantmaking approach with justice-based principles, including trust-based philanthropy and "a just transition."

Management and Development

*Left to right: Jennifer Fahy
(Co-Executive Director and
Communications Director)
with Shorlette Ammons
(Co-Executive Director
and Program Director).
Photo © Suzanne Cordeiro*



2025 marked a **new era of leadership** at Farm Aid, with new Co-Executive Directors Shorlette Ammons and Jennifer Fahy leading the Farm Aid staff. Farm Aid welcomed Patricha Paul as our first-ever in-house Finance Director. With one new hire and one departure, Farm Aid started and ended the year with 22 staff members, including 19 full-time and three part-time employees.

Farm Aid remained in a stable financial position, thanks to several years of strong support from our Board and festival artists, donors and Farm Aid fans. The annual festival continues to be the organization's primary source of revenue. Additionally, Farm Aid benefits from generous foundation and corporate support, particularly for our farmer services work. Though funds for our federal FRSAN and DBAN programs were frozen for more than half of 2025, our strong financial position allowed us to avoid layoffs or work stoppage so that we could continue our outreach, advocacy and direct services for farmers and farm service providers.

Farm Aid continues to benefit from the generous and largely grassroots financial support of people across the country. Our fundraising approach prioritizes engagement with our diverse donor groups through authentic experiences, powerful storytelling and compelling messaging.

Strategically, we strive to expand upon the success of previous initiatives while also seeking and evaluating new opportunities. **We partnered once again with the Luck Presents team** at Willie and Annie Nelson's Luck Ranch outside Austin, Texas, for the annual PotLuck dinner and Luck Reunion festival in mid-March where we were grateful to be one of three non-profit beneficiaries to share proceeds from the dinner through the Luck Family Foundation. Additional revenue was raised through the silent memorabilia auctions we held at both events and Farm Aid again organized and moderated two panel discussions featuring farmers and artists during the Reunion event.

We continue to generate contributed revenue through partnerships with Soundwaves Art Foundation, Plus1 and Fandiem, an online sweepstake platform where fans entered to win a VIP experience to the annual Farm Aid festival. In the fall of 2025, we launched a pilot program with Margo Price through our platform partner Propeller in the form of a road case exhibit (paid for through a donation from workwear brand Carhartt) with an enter-to-win donation sweepstakes for tickets to Farm Aid 2026 and a signed Gibson guitar as promoted at each stop of her tour. Our goal is to continue to learn how to best optimize these informative, awareness-building and revenue-generating campaigns through the tours of other Farm Aid artists.

This year's 40th anniversary provided additional fundraising opportunities, not only through our "Hi-Fi Experience" (formerly "VIP Experience") premium seat program, but specifically – and dramatically – through the text or scan-to-donate feature promoted through the CNN broadcast of Farm Aid 40. **This helped us crush our festival season fundraising total by a magnitude of around eight times the previous year's raise to an amazing \$1.4 million in donations alone!** The broadcast also brought in many new donors to Farm Aid.

Additionally, we raised 35% more in experience and memorabilia auctions associated with the festival than the previous year, exceeding \$100,000 in revenue for those efforts. The success of these programs would not be possible without the partnerships of organizations like AmFund and the Gibson Gives Foundation.



Lastly, the **"Forty & Forward" campaign** was launched at the festival to celebrate the organization's four-decade milestone and will continue to build through the 2026 festival. To date, it has helped us secure significant additional revenue, including a \$40k pledge from a major donor, a \$40k anonymous donation from an artist in the Farm Aid 40 lineup, and a \$40k match donation from Willie's Remedy for GivingTuesday. In fact, this last gift helped us not only break our previous GivingTuesday raise total again, but it also set the pace for another record-breaking end-of-year period with a stunning 55% increase over the previous record-setting year for a total of approximately \$320,000 raised!

We are so inspired and grateful to all those who continue to support our work for family farmers through a donation to Farm Aid, as well as those who directly support the family farmers in their own communities in many ways.