

Women Caring for the LandSM

Targeted Conservation Outreach to
Female Non-operator Farmland Owners



A program of Women, Food and Agriculture Network - wfan.org

3,000 members nationwide

Engaged in all aspects of sustainable ag

Programs for women landowners, women farmers, and food systems advocates

Programming in 8 upper Midwestern states



Women own or co-own nearly half of Iowa* land, and own 61% of the rented land.



All Iowa land



Rented land

*No current figures for US or other states.

Women farmland owners tend to be 65+ in age, inherited land they want to keep, have tenants, and want to learn.



Women are left out as active conservation partners by most publications.

Traditional



Meant for women



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WFAN has found that women landowners are active conservation partners when properly informed and supported. Our program: Women Caring for the LandSM



Older women landowners often don't feel comfortable in meetings with men present. They prefer to:

Create connections



Minimize differences



“Male” conversational style is presentation-based and confers status; can discourage interaction.

Lecture style confers status on the speaker



The “learning circle” approach builds relationships, trust, confidence.

Technical content is also presented



Meetings are held where tables can be arranged in a circle or U for group discussion and optimum hearing.



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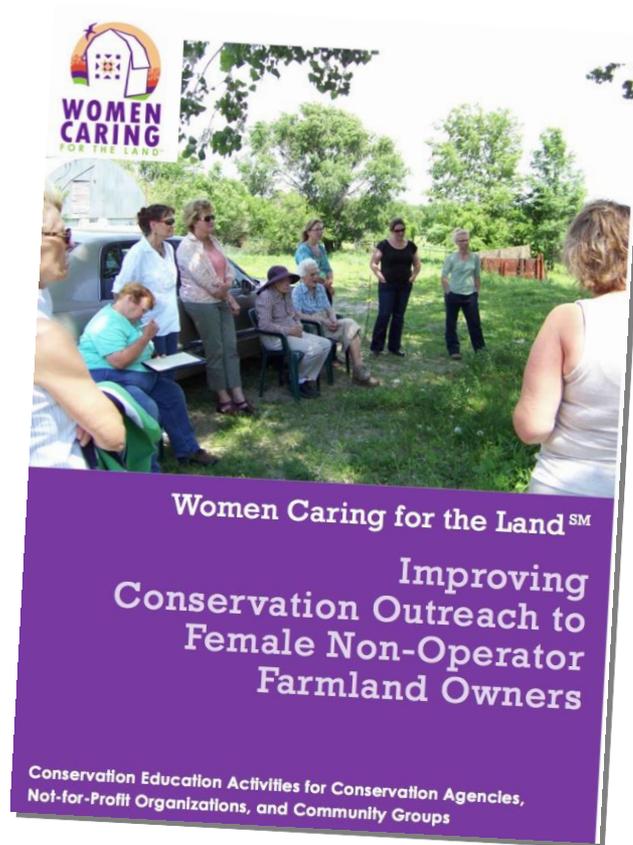
Conservation professionals should prepare to share something personal, plus summarize specialty areas.

(No PowerPoints!)

Sit down, mix in with participants



WFAN has created a manual to help agencies and other groups hold women landowner learning circles.



Available at our www.womencaringfortheland.org website.



The manual includes 10 hands-on activities with familiar materials to illustrate basic conservation concepts.



Envisioning her healthy farm using quilt squares



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Women need to see and hear that all women – just like themselves – can do conservation and protect their land for future generations.



We help each other try new things and succeed together.

We always have, and we always will.



What they are saying:

What a relief to be able to ask “dumb” questions!
I’m excited for the future of my father’s land.

Just cannot imagine how it could have been better – unless it was a Day Two.

I know that if I can get conservation information to women, they are likely to act. – Iowa watershed coordinator

I've attended several other meetings about this and I really liked how this one was set up ... There were opportunities to ask questions at the others but they were mostly just directed to the speaker. Here we could ask each other and had a discussion ... **I learned so much from the other women.**



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Thank you!

- Questions?



Women Caring for the LandSM Funders

2009	McKnight Foundation – WCL pilot project in eastern IA
2010 - 12	North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) – meetings in IA, NE and WI
2010 - 13	NRCS - Conservation Innovation Grant (with Center for Rural Affairs) – meetings in IA, NE, WI, KS, ND, SD and MN
2010	Iowa DNR Resource Enhancement and Protection Conservation Education Program (curriculum guide development)
2010 - 13	USDA BFRDP (land transition, with Practical Farmers of Iowa)
2011 - 12	Iowa Department of Ag and Land Stewardship (Division of Soil Conservation) – watershed mapping
2011 - 13	McKnight Foundation (IA, MN, WI, IL)
2011	Iowa DNR Resource Enhancement and Protection Conservation Education Program (wildlife & hunting ed)
2012 - 13	Audubon Foundation (habitat protection)
2012 - 15	US Environmental Protection Agency (wetlands)



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Related Research & Publications

- “The Overlooked Landowner.” Eells, Jean, and Jessica Soulis. White paper, WFAN, 2013.
- “Women Caring for the LandSM Non-Response Survey Results.” Dahlstrom, Michael and Jean Eells. (pending publication)
- “Maps help landowners think beyond human scale.” Eells, Jean, Michael Dahlstrom, and Ranae Ritland. Journal of Soil and Water Conservation, 2012.
- “One size does not fit all: Customizing conservation to a changing demographic.” Wells, Betty, and Jean Eells. Journal of Soil and Water Conservation, 2011.
- “Women Farmland Owners in Iowa: Cultivating Agency through Rhetorical Practice.” Wolford, Rachel. Dissertation, Iowa State University, 2011.
- “Loving the land is not enough: Empowering women farmland owners to prevent environmental degradation.” Eells, Jean. Ecopsychology, 2010.
- “The Land, It's Everything: Women Farmland Owners and the Institution of Agricultural Conservation in the U.S. Midwest.” Eells, Jean Crim. Dissertation, Iowa State University, 2008.
- “Women, Land and Legacy: Results from the Listening Sessions.” Bregendahl, Corry, et al. ISU, 2007.
- “Women Farmers: Pulling Up Their Own Educational Boot Straps with Extension.” Kiernan, Nancy Ellen, et al. Journal of Extension, October 2012, Vol. 50, No. 5.



Contact Us!

Visit our *Women Caring for the Land*SM website at www.womencaringfortheland.org

for more information, and these free downloadable resources for reaching out to women landowners:

- Curriculum guide
- Cover crops brochures and booklet
- *Patchwork* newsletter

We will work with you to hold meetings for women landowners! Contact:

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