

**United States Department of Agriculture  
Project Initiation**

**Project Data for Accession Number 1025408**

**Project Title**

Incentivizing Land Access for Small, Beginning and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers: Research, Extension and Community of Practice

**Project Details**

<b>Sponsoring Institution</b> National Institute of Food and Agriculture	<b>Project Status</b> COMPLETE
<b>Funding Source</b> NIFA Non Formula	<b>Grant Year</b> 2021
<b>Grant No.</b> 2021-68006-33892	<b>Cumulative Award Amt.</b> \$499,997.00
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<b>Program Code</b> [A1601] Agriculture Economics and Rural Communities: Small and Medium-Sized Farms	

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**Performing Department**

(N/A)

**Non Technical Summary**

Success for small, beginning, young, and/or socially disadvantaged (New Generation) producers depends on their ability to secure suitable land to start and expand their operations. Yet this is a major challenge, which governments have addressed with several types of financial incentives. Little research has been done to measure the impacts and reach of these programs. This integrated Research and Extension project fills that gap and establishes a Community of Practice to increase adoption of these promising new tools. It combines two Program Area Priorities: outreach to create opportunities for entry and farm viability, and identifying opportunities and obstacles to land access and transfer. Our goal is to increase knowledge of the impacts and reach of Land Access Policy Incentives (LAPI) and to build capacity to advance their use, to facilitate access to land for a New Generation of farmers and ranchers. Through social science methods of policy analysis, survey, interview, and translation of findings to extension, the project will

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pursue these objectives:1. Chronicle the patterns of LAPI policy development to inform the design of future LAPI approaches 2. Increase knowledge of the reach of LAPI programs and their impacts on land transfer, land access, New Gen success, and rural prosperity 3. Provide guidance on effective methods of outreach to increase their utilization by landowners and New Gen farmers 4. Sustain a Community of Practice to promote effective financial incentives and support service providers to facilitate farm transfer and improve access to land for New Gen producers 5. Increase promotion and utilization of LAPI programs through service provider networks, conferences and e-Extension.

### Animal Health Component

Animal Health Component: 0%

### Research Effort Categories

Basic	0%
Applied	50%
Developmental	50%

### Classification

Knowledge Area (KA)	Subject of Investigation (SOI)	Field of Science (FOS)	Percent
901	0120	3080	40%
901	0120	3040	20%
902	0120	3080	40%

### Knowledge Area

[901] Program and Project Design, and Statistics

[902] Administration of Projects and Programs

### Subject Of Investigation

[0120] Land

### Field Of Science

[3080] Sociology

[3040] History

### Keywords

Beginning Farmers, Social, Land Transfer, Entering Farmers, Farm Viability, Land Owners, Land access

### Goals / Objectives

Overarching Goal: To increase knowledge of the impacts and reach of the three main LAPI approaches, and to build capacity among agricultural service providers to advance their use to facilitate access to land for small and mid-sized

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New Gen producers. Research Objective 1: Chronicle the patterns of LAPI policy development to inform the design of future LAPI approaches. Research Objective 2: Increase knowledge of the reach of LAPI programs and their impacts on land transfer, land access, New Gen success, and rural prosperity. Research Objective 3: Provide guidance on effective methods of outreach to increase their utilization by landowners and Next Gen farmers. Extension Objective 1: Sustain a Community of Practice to promote effective financial incentives and support service providers to facilitate farm transfer and improve access to land for New Gen producers. Increase promotion and utilization of LAPI programs through service provider networks, conferences and e-Extension.

### Project Methods

**Overview of Research:** The research will aim to add a great deal of value to the LAPI assessments that state and federal governments have been able to conduct to date. Our social science approach will combine qualitative and quantitative methods to collect primary data and analyze secondary data. Year 1 will lead with an analysis of public documents and interviews with stakeholders to orient the project and fulfill RO1. To achieve RO2, we will collect data directly from LAPI participants (landowners and New Gen producers) and analyze existing datasets to describe the LAPIs' impacts and reach. RO3 will case study patterns of participation and non-participation in LAPI programs. These methods will build from one to the next in sequence to triangulate sets of findings on LAPI reach and impacts, barriers to participation, and strategies to expand their capacity to facilitate land access and land transfer.

**Overview of Extension:** The extension methods will interact with, inform, and be integrated into the research throughout the project. We will start by creating a Community of Practice which we will expand over the life of the project and beyond. The purpose of the CoP is twofold: 1. To build capacity to use existing programs and resources to facilitate farm transfer between landowners and New Gen producers, and 2. To improve the performance of these programs to serve more - and more diverse - New Gen producers. We have built in a staff person to coordinate the CoP, including two in person meetings, quarterly online meetings and an on-line workspace to share materials and facilitate communication between meetings. As research findings become available, we will incorporate them into AFT's land access curriculum and engage AFT's cohort of LATs to educate service providers through trainings, mentoring and extension activities. In Year 3, we will harness AFT's professional National Agricultural Land Network (NALN) to help disseminate findings and build relationships with a larger universe of professionals working to support New Gen producers and advance farmland protection, retention and access. Finally, we participate in developing proposals and presenting on findings at conferences, add policies to AFT's state policy scorecard, translate findings into fact sheets, policy briefs and other Extension products, and create dedicated LAPI web pages on AFT's Farmland Information Center (FIC) website.

**Research Objective 1:** Chronicle the patterns of LAPI policy development to inform the design of future LAPI approaches. Information about how states and the federal government have developed the various LAPIs has so far only been collected in pieces (Meehan; Williamson & Girardi, 2016). Our comprehensive review will gather and interpret this material to prepare two deliverables, an open-access, peer-reviewed analysis and a summary version for Extension.

**Activities:** Review key documents with a focus on legislative proceedings, service provider reports, and states' evaluations and audits of their policies. Conduct interviews with key stakeholders. Based on interview and document data, analyze the process of policy adoption, implementation and evaluation.

**Research Objective 2:** Increase knowledge of the reach of LAPI programs and their impacts on land transfer, land access, New Gen success, and rural prosperity. Here we will resolve gaps in the understanding of how LAPIs may be influencing New Gens' access to land, their contributions to agriculture, and landowners' patterns of farm transfer. This objective will describe how incentives affect their participants' perspectives, decisions, and behaviors. The methods will also identify any contrasts between participants and non-participants, according to their contributions to agriculture (product mix, farm scale, marketing mix), geographies, demographics, and representation of subgroups.

**Activities:** Conduct robust surveys of New Gen and landowner participants in state easement incentives and BFTCs and report findings directly to these participants. Extract and analyze IRS Schedule F data to test for effects of LAPIs on new small and mid-sized farm viability.

**Research Objective 3:** Provide guidance on effective methods of outreach to increase the utilization of LAPIs by landowners and Next Gen producers. The activities we will undertake to fulfill RO1 and RO2 will prepare us to focus RO3 on barriers to participation and their corresponding opportunities for LAPI programs to enhance their delivery and promotion.

**Activities:** Online survey of CRP-TIP leads in 50 states. Case studies of patterns of participation and non-

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participation  
Extension Objective 1: Sustain a Community of Practice to examine and extend financial incentives to improve opportunities for land access and farm viability for New Gen producers  
Activities: Facilitate quarterly Zoom meetings for CoP members  
Organize two in-person convenings  
Establish and maintain an online workspace and collaboration platform for CoP members to communicate and share resources  
Share research findings and resources to advance CoP members' work  
Extension Objective 2: Increase promotion and utilization of LAPI programs through a variety of service provider networks, conferences and e-Extension.  
Activities: Develop four policy briefs to explain LAPI programs and each of the approaches  
Profile success stories from research and highlight them in online profiles or story map  
Widely disseminate outputs from Activities 1 and 2 as well as research findings (see Table 5) through the CoP, FIC, LAT cohort, NALN, BFRDP, e-Extension and other lists suggested by the CoP and NAT  
Incorporate LAPI materials into AFT's land access and transfer curricula for LATs to use in New Gen producer trainings  
Deliver at least three presentations at beginning farmer and other stakeholder conferences  
Create a LAPI collection of project deliverables and support materials on AFT's FIC