

BIANNUAL NEWSLETTER
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FARMLAND

PROTECTION,
ACCESS, AND
TRANSFER

1,722

acres of farmland
protected with agricultural
conservation easements
across 11 farms

801

acres of Maine's
best agricultural
soils protected



HART TO HART FARM
ALBION

245-acre dairy farm in the historic heart of Maine's commercial dairy industry

Farmers Doug and Linda Hartkopf run an organic dairy and a well-loved farm camp and education program. In December, we protected their 95-acre home farm and two additional parcels with an easement, a project that took several years. Doug and Linda faced a number of hurdles along the way, including the loss of their dairy barn roof during a bad winter storm. Dedicated to the future of their land, the Hartkopfs continued onward. As they recovered from the damage, they designed and built new multi-use infrastructure, allowing for more flexibility in agricultural production for themselves and future farmers. And the three large parcels of land protected by the easement could support up to three farm operations in the future.

We protected 50 acres in one of Maine's fastest-developing areas at Frost Meadow Farm in Gorham. When the high-traffic Gorham bypass was built in 2008, the historic farm was drastically reduced from ~90 acres to ~8 acres. In 2023, Jackie and Steven Matthews purchased the farm and began conversations with the owners of the adjacent fields right away, as the land was slated for a subdivision. The Matthews were able to purchase one section, increasing the farm to 20 acres, and the funds from the easement helped them purchase another 30 acres also slated for subdivision. They plan to continue growing their diversified farm operation, including hay production and an educational CSA program for families.



FROST MEADOW FARM
GORHAM

50-acre farm straddling the Gorham bypass and surrounded by new development



696

acres with extra protections to keep the land in **active production** via an Option to Purchase at Agricultural Value

530

acres of farmland continuing or brought into production by new farmers through 3 **FarmLinks**

27+

farmland protection projects in progress for 2026 and beyond



HOPE'S EDGE FARM
HOPE

In January, we partnered with Georges River Land Trust to contribute toward their purchase of an easement protecting 100 acres at Hope's Edge Farm, with support from the Land for Maine's Future program. Revitalized as a working farm in 2002, when landowner Holly Miller invited farmer Tom Griffin to lease the land, both hoped to see the thriving vegetable operation continue as Griffin neared retirement. In addition to securing the farm's long-term future with the easement, a multi-year project, the two found a pair of eager young farmers who shared their farming vision through MFT's FarmLink service. Philip Prevosto and Carmen Major have taken over the farm lease and completed their first full season in the fall.

*MFT and two land trust partners collaborated to protect a **100-acre farm and a 45-acre farm** in the town of Hope, helping two sets of farmers pass the torch to a new generation*

Just two miles down the road, Hope Orchards has been owned and operated by Brien and Emily Davis for 25 years, renowned for its u-pick apples, pears, berries, and more. With support from Coastal Mountains Land Trust, MFT closed on the easement protecting the farm in mid-November. In addition to ensuring that the 45-acre farm be well stewarded and remain in agriculture, the easement was a key part of the Davises' transition plan, helping make the farm more affordable to its next set of buyers. Having leased a portion of the land for several years as they established their vegetable farm, AK Produce, young farmers Anna and Kyle Rittenburg are under contract to purchase the farm at its appraised agricultural value. They plan to expand their offerings and envision a year-round operation, including apple picking in the autumn.



HOPE ORCHARDS
HOPE

FARMERS

GROWING DURABLE FARMS

MFT Farmland Stewards provided support to farmers and farm landowners across

45,985 acres of protected farmland, spanning **310 easements**



MISTY BROOK FARM
ALBION

After working with MFT over several years to develop a 10-year business plan and undergoing a competitive application process, three farms received Implementation Grants of \$55,000 each to support their goals to increase long-term profitability and durability.



OLD CROW RANCH
DURHAM

Misty Brook Farm's Brendan and Katia Holmes needed to reduce their energy and operating costs for the farm's longevity. With their grant, they will invest in improvements to their pig barn to increase efficiency and production of their pig operation and reduce labor. They'll also purchase a wood boiler to save on electricity and fossil fuel costs.

At Old Crow Ranch, Steve and Seren Sinisi will relieve financial strain and increase capacity for long-term planning and expansion with the installation of a solar array, generator, and fuel bunker. Using funds for loan payoff, energy independence, and operational resilience aligns with their commitment to sustainable farming, community connection, and long-term stability while stewarding conserved land responsibly.



SECOND FROST FARM
MONROE

"Now more than ever we really appreciate this opportunity to access regional agricultural funding. We feel hopeful that this implementation grant investment will build key efficiencies and resiliencies into our farm business."

– Naomi Brautigam & James Gagne, Second Frost Farm

Noami Brautigam and James Gagne of Second Frost Farm are using their grant to invest in infrastructure to become more efficient, resilient, diversified, and ultimately more profitable. Upgrades include building out and equipping a covered wash and pack facility and CSA pick-up area with two additional walk-in coolers, plus new equipment to expand their on-site commercial kitchen capacity for value-added foods production.

Header photo: Naomi Brautigam and James Gagne at Second Frost Farm in Monroe



64

farms engaged in MFT programs, with 50% engaged in 2+ offerings

112

total engagements in MFT's farmer programs, workshops, and grants

623

hours of technical assistance delivered to 33 farms, including 114 hours supporting PFAS-impacted farms

*Cross-functional collaboration to **deepen farmer relationships and supports***

Relationships with farmers and landowners are core to our work, and when farmers face multi-faceted challenges, we strive to bring multiple layers of support to those relationships. Farmland Access & Transfer Program Manager Hanne Tierney joined Stewards Lee Heuss and Garrett Linck on farm visits this summer to get to know farmers involved in or planning for a farm transition. At The Yellow Place Farm in Solon, the landowner recently inherited her father's farm and is thinking about the costs and resources to return the farm to production. At Reitze

Farm in Canaan/Clinton, the highbush blueberry growers are interested in leasing out a portion of their land. The cooperative farmers at Shooting Star Farms in Canaan are in different stages of planning a shift in ownership as they age. And the landowner at Brick Farm in Skowhegan (MFT's first protected farm!) plans to sell. Since then, Hanne has helped the Brick Farm landowner get ready to list the farm on FarmLink and has referred farm seekers, and Lee is offering guidance on preparing the next farmer to understand and work with the easement.



DOSTIE FARM
FAIRFIELD & SKOWHEGAN

*A years-long journey to help Dostie Farm find a **profitable path forward after PFAS***

Dostie Farm was a thriving organic dairy operating on nearly 1,000 acres (650+ protected by MFT) until their milk tested high for PFAS in 2020. Since then, the Dosties have been determined to stay in farming, exploring countless possibilities to mitigate or find alternative uses for their contaminated land

and maximize their "clean" fields, supported by the state PFAS Fund. But even with mitigation measures, the distance between their milking barn and the majority of their clean fields meant they couldn't sustain a profitable dairy herd, and options like switching to beef and growing corn snaplage also hit a dead end. In 2023, former MFT staff Tricia Rouleau began working with Egide Dostie II through our PFAS support program, and soon brought in Farm Business Planning Program Manager Alex Fouliard to join her, Egide, and other technical assistance providers to work toward a viable business model. Over the past two years, their work has involved intensive research on input costs, market prices, land and infrastructure capacity, and other data points to build financial projections for a dozen operational scenarios at different scales. In late 2025, Alex and Egide landed on a model they project to be profitable, combining haying, maple sugaring, and seasonally raising feeder calves for other beef operations. We are optimistic as the Dosties seek funding from the state PFAS Fund and begin implementing the plan in 2026!

FUTURE

CULTIVATING SUPPORT FOR AGRICULTURE

70+

**policy advocacy
actions** taken
this year by...

32

farmers in MFT's
Farm Network

17

other farmers and
community members



FARMER-CENTERED POLICY & ADVOCACY

Farmers with diverse perspectives working together with MFT to advance policy & research priorities locally & nationally

MFT's Farmer Advocacy Committee continued for its second year in 2025, with a new cohort of six farmers representing potato, fruit, vegetable, dairy, and meat livestock operations signing on to help grow power for Maine farms: Bill Spiller (Spiller Farm), Lindsey Neville (Newdawns Farm), Molly DellaRoman (5 Star Nursery and Orchard), Brad Santy (Santy Dairy), Angela Baglione (Seek-No-Further Farmstead), and Lane Moir (Moir Farms). Along with several 2024 members continuing their support, the 2025 FAC worked together to help shape MFT's policy priorities, engage farmers and policymakers in their communities to discuss key issues, and take civic action at all levels.

FAC '25 member Brad Santy and daughter Allie of Santy Dairy in Skowhegan

Growing state support for farmland protection and investments in farm businesses

MFT helped to draft several bills and amendments, provided testimony on 26 bills, and grew support for an Ag Bond, gathering 100+ legislators for a lunch and learn with farmers. Advocacy from FAC members, farmers and MFT supporters were critical to many wins, including:

- broadening access to business grant funding via the Maine Farms for the Future program
- improvements to the Voluntary Municipal Farm Support Program (VMFSP) that allows towns to create their own non-permanent ag easement program while lowering property taxes on farms
- guaranteed minimum wage for farm workers without undue economic hardship for farms
- implementation of the new law creating a permitting process and mitigation fee program for solar installations on high-value farmland

Efforts to advance a \$40 million bond to fund investments in Maine farms, legislation to increase state funding for farmland protection, and other important bills will continue in 2026.

"If Maine Farmland Trust needs information from farmers, we're already plugged in to that system and can give them the information they need to make the really good policies they've been working on...it's just such a good give and take between what the farmers can do for MFT and what MFT is doing for them."

– Molly DellaRoman, Farmer Advocacy Committee Member
5 Star Nursery and Orchard in Brooklin

Header photo: FAC '25 member Bill Spiller of Spiller Farm in Wells

26

public testimonies delivered by MFT on State Legislature bills

27

municipalities directly engaged in **farm-friendly policy & planning** outreach and assistance

1,300+

people reached through **policy outreach and community engagement** activities & events

Advocating for federal action on PFAS, climate resilience, and farmland protection

Returning 2024 FAC member Brendon Wormell joined us with policymakers in D.C. to talk about why farmland protection and access are critical for Maine farmers, and we shared more input from farmers back home on the need for federal climate resilience and infrastructure investment programs. MFT contributed to a working group with 14 partners led by American Farmland Trust to release the first comprehensive set of federal recommendations to address PFAS contamination of farmland. And with our strong support, Rep. Pingree and Sen. Collins re-introduced the Relief for Farmers Hit with PFAS Act, bringing a safety net back into consideration for the next Farm Bill.

Supporting farms in local policy & planning

We provided targeted technical support to 14 municipalities and reached 13 more communities through workshops, presentations, and other outreach with FAC members and other farmers, municipal officials, and local and regional councils. We offered guidance and assistance on Skowhegan's comprehensive plan, a solar development ordinance in Weld, and subdivision and rural residential development standards in Brooklin. We also provided ongoing, in-depth support to the newly formed Durham Agriculture Committee as they explored land use amendments to better support existing agricultural uses. Additionally, we engaged seven towns in the greater Farmington region in community conversations and workshops about farm-friendly policy and planning in collaboration with regional partners.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT IN BLUE HILL AND FALMOUTH

Engaging communities to grow robust support for local farms and food systems

Dozens of MFT supporters and community members showed up this summer for farm tours and community conversations about how MFT works with farmers to protect farmland, strengthen and adapt their farm businesses to emerging challenges, and engage in policy advocacy. In Blue Hill, farmers Molly DellaRoman and Tim Skillin of 5 Star Nursery and Orchard and Reid Calhoun and Nikki Burtis of Moon Beam Farm shared their perspectives on how we can grow a thriving local agricultural economy together, along with our partners at Blue Hill Heritage Trust who are helping to protect Moon Beam Farm with an easement. And in Falmouth, the Boudreau family shared how they're working with MFT to secure the future of their farm, one of the last remaining in Falmouth.

FAC '25 member Molly DellaRoman with community members in Blue Hill

ABOUT MFT

STRATEGY AND OPERATIONS



Watch our 2025 film featuring Jordan's Farm!



mainefarmlandtrust.org/jordans-farm

MEDIA & PUBLICATIONS



'Suffering the consequences': Why Maine banned sewage sludge spreading and how farmers are adjusting JANUARY 27, 2025



Maine's Land Trusts MAY 20, 2025
Artist Joseph Fiore JUNE 17, 2025



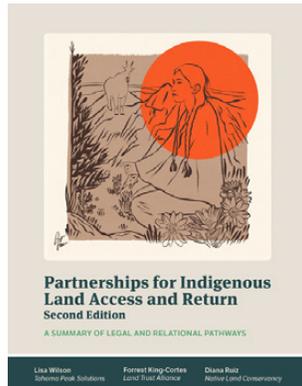
The upward trajectory of Maine agriculture looks to have stalled. Can the state's farmers and their supporters plant the seeds for a bright future? JULY 2025

Engaging farmers and members to help shape MFT's next 5-year strategic plan

In 2025, we embarked on a year-long process to develop a new strategic plan to chart the course for the next 5 years of our work. Central to our process was gathering feedback from the many farmers, supporters, and partners we work with to help shape our priorities and focus areas. In April, staff and Board gathered at Dandelion Spring Farm in Bowdoinham to reflect on our history, our existing programs, and our vision for the future. Over the summer, we held an online survey and in-person discussions with farmers and community stakeholders at Jordan's Farm in Cape Elizabeth, New Leaf Farm in Durham, Brodis Blueberries in Hope, and the home of MFT supporters in Woolwich to hear their input on the areas of MFT's work that are most impactful for farmers and the food and farming system in the area. And through fall and winter, we've been working to incorporate this feedback as we draft and finalize our goals. Our new strategic plan will launch in early 2026!



Federal recommendations to address PFAS contamination of farmland, created by MFT and 14 partners led by AFT



Case study with reflections from Niweskok & MFT on our partnership to purchase their 245-acre farm in 2024



STRATEGIC PLANNING

Above & header: Staff & Board strategic plan retreat at Dandelion Spring Farm



FINANCIAL REPORT

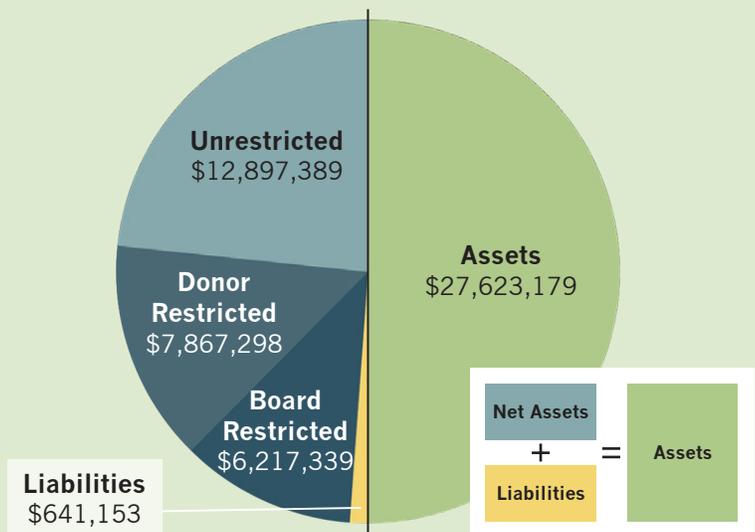
FISCAL YEAR 2025

UNAUDITED DRAFT STATEMENTS
October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025

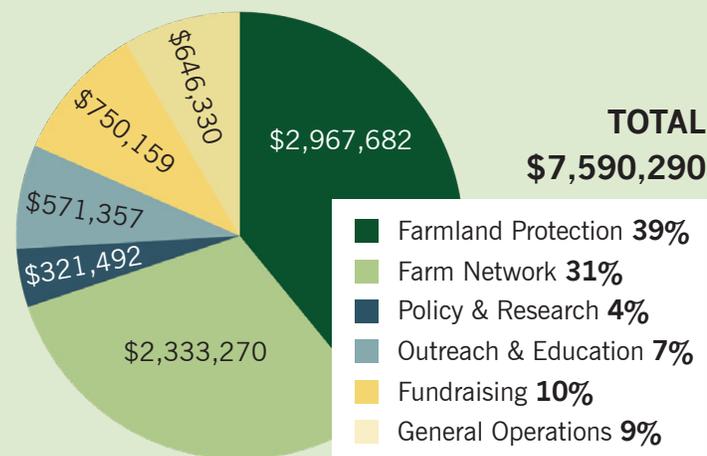
FY25 was a demanding year for many organizations, including Maine Farmland Trust.

Reduced federal funding and headwinds in philanthropic giving required us to make hard but responsible decisions to bring our FY26 budget into closer alignment. Under new leadership, we approached these choices thoughtfully – prioritizing mission impact, organizational resilience, and long-term sustainability. Our financial foundation remains strong, and we are energized by the growing depth and breadth of relationships that will carry this work forward.

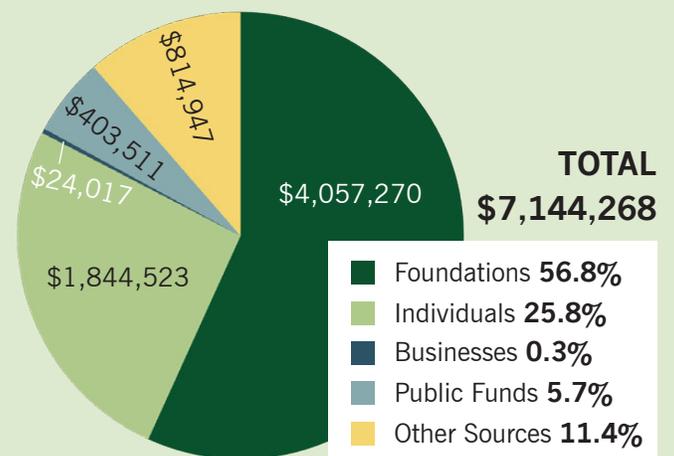
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION



FY25 OPERATING EXPENSES



FY25 OPERATING REVENUE



THANK YOU

THE POWER OF OUR COMMUNITY



Dear Friend of Maine Farmland Trust,

Each day, I enjoy an early morning walk with my English Shepherd, Franny. We trek (or trot, if you're Franny) the edges of Broadturn Farm in Scarborough, where co-founder John Bliss and I, our crew, and leasing farmers have grown flowers, food, and community for over 20 years.



Recently, these walks help me reflect on my first full year as MFT's president. My priority has been to listen deeply to and elevate the voices of farmers. Farmers are the backbone of our communities and key drivers of our economy, and farm viability is essential to Maine's future. At MFT, we're committed to building durable solutions for farms, businesses, and community sustainability.

*Working alongside farmers, policymakers, and **supporters like you** strengthens every aspect of our mission.*

In seasons of change and challenges, I am buoyed by this organizational commitment. As I hope you have noted in this impact report, uplifting farmers and understanding the barriers they face is the heart of our work. And I remain excited for farming's future; inspired by the community of folks, **including you**, who make the work possible; and grateful for the opportunity to press onward.



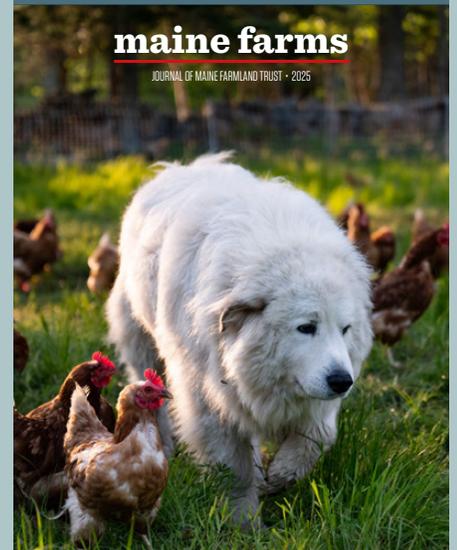
Stacy Brenner
President

Stacy, Reid Calhoun and Nikki Burtis (Moon Beam Farm), and Tim Skillin and Molly DellaRoman (5 Star Nursery and Orchard) celebrating agriculture in the Blue Hill region.

MAINE FARMS JOURNAL SNEAK PEEK

maine farms

JOURNAL OF MAINE FARMLAND TRUST - 2025



Franny isn't the only farm dog featured in the 2025 edition of our annual journal! Each year, MFT produces a new volume of stories, photography, and art to explore different facets of Maine's food and farming community – and as a way to say thank you to supporters like you, who are helping us to grow a vibrant future for Maine's farms and farmland every day.

COMING THIS SPRING!



GROUNDED IN COMMUNITY
KATY KELLEHER & MOLLY HALEY

Meet Heather Flor Cron, Autumn-Jade Fitch, and Erica Emery – three land stewards striving to enrich local communities through connections with food and land.



PASSING ON THE MILKING PAIL
KIRSTEN LIE-NIELSEN & CHIP DILLON

Overcoming the obstacles to grow the future of Maine's dairy sector demands creativity and commitment – but Maine farmers are up for the challenge.



FINDING THE WAY TO FARMLAND
ALEX REDFIELD & SEAN ALONZO HARRIS

Quality farmland is increasingly difficult to find and afford. Five stories showing creative pathways to farmland access offer lessons to guide our work toward a vibrant future.



WHAT'S IN THE RECIPE?
MARGARET HATHAWAY & KARL SCHATZ

Get the recipe for a Maine-made meal – and the story of the often unseen ingredients, from seed to irrigation systems to shelving, in the journey from farm to table.



BARN CATS & FARM DOGS
HOLLI CEDERHOLM & KELSEY KOBIC

Barn cats and farm dogs are more than pets – they are part of the farm crew with important jobs to do! Say hello to a few fuzzy companions, workers, and agricultural icons.



VOICES FROM THE MFT COMMUNITY
JOSSELYN MILLER, ROB TOD, & ALIX HOPKINS

We asked three MFT supporters why they feel connected to Maine farms. Find out what they have in common with one another and the wider MFT community.



MAINE FARMLAND TRUST

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Our impact is
your
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in action!

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*What's inside the
Impact Report:*

Hart to Hart Farm
and 10 more newly
protected farms



Stories from other
farms you helped to
strengthen in 2025



Farmer voices
advancing policy
and research



Hart to Hart Farm in Albion,
protected December 2025

*...and so much more, thanks to
the generous supporters who
make this work possible!*

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Ram Island Conservation Fund at
the Maine Community Foundation

AND TO OUR 2025 FRUIT
LEVEL BUSINESS MEMBERS

