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WFAN's previous strategic plan (2016-2021) was a five-year outline drafted in 2015. It was created based on the realities of its present moment, hopes and visions for the future, and assumptions about the mitigating factors such as political administrations, climate change, economics, and social interests and movements. As was true for many, our 2015 crystal ball was cloudy – we did not anticipate the outcome of the 2016-2020 Federal executive branch elections and the subsequent impacts the administration would have on environmental regulations, including rollbacks of protections and stunted progress towards sustainable and regenerative agricultural policies and practices. We did not foresee the global shutdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and, perhaps most compellingly, we had not yet been catalyzed into radical reflection and anti-racist action by a nationwide racial reckoning.

This strategic plan seeks to incorporate evaluation of our evolution since WFAN's non-profit establishment in 1997, as well as our aspirations and intentions for the next three years. The goals are ambitious, but requisite to meet the moment in which we find ourselves. Incremental changes are not adequately responsive to the exponentially worsening climate crisis, deepening racial and gender inequities, public health uncertainties, and nationwide food insecurities compounded by rising costs and unprecedented income disparities.
Additionally, we know that it is critical to continue to identify, address and resist the extractive monoculture practices we see in the Midwest and throughout the country. We will continue to include and fight for rural women and non-binary folx in agriculture, building upon decades of activism and leadership development, while working to expand our membership and build solidarity with those in urban areas. We are confident that a commitment to our mission, vision and values well-equiops WFAN to be a responsive, reliable, and relevant network for our members, allies and co-conspirators.

This plan is a living document that will be revisited regularly by both board and staff. We welcome WFAN member input at any time, and will proactively and consistently seek feedback.
Over the next three years, hundreds of thousands of acres of land will be transferred to new ownership and/or stewardship. Half of farmland in the Midwest is owned or co-owned by women. Women landowners hold values of conservation, equity and legacy but are often disempowered in the farmland owner/tenant relationship or lack access to critical information to begin transformative work. WCL outreach engages women landowners through conservation education, networking, and resources to help them manage their land according to their values. Recently, WCL incorporated a new program component, the Stewardship Ambassadors cohorts, where women landowners and producers who are committed to implementing conservation and regenerative agriculture practices, speak to their community members and peers to expand knowledge and practice.

Women Caring for the Land (WCL)

Women are underrepresented at all levels of government, and the disparity is worse for women in agriculture and rural women. Through Plate to Politics, WFAN trains women to run for elected office and other leadership positions within their communities, as well as provide networking and advocacy tools for policy development and local engagement.

WFAN’s programs have been developed in response to the needs of women and non-binary folx in food and agriculture who are dedicated to creating just, equitable and ecological systems.
Harvesting Our Potential (HOP)

One of the most powerful knowledge sharing, networking, and support practices is mentoring. However, until recently, on-farm, women-led mentoring opportunities for aspiring women farmers were extremely limited or non-existent. WFAN’s Harvesting Our Potential program connects women who aspire to farm with a successful woman farmer for on-farm mentoring experience, networking events, and business training. We also provide learning circles for women considering becoming farmers to connect them with resources in a supportive environment.

Growing Community Resilience (GCR)

Launched as a pilot project in 2020, initially in response to the COVID-19 crisis, and then pivoting to respond to the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent racial reckoning, GCR creates space for our members to gather and address current events impacting them, their families, and their communities. Anticipated GCR activities and events in 2022-2025 include hosting and facilitating conversations and events that address relevant issues including equitable land access for beginning and young farmers; education on and exploration of alternative, collective and progressive land ownership and stewardship models; education and conversation centered on BIPOC stewardship of, and access to, land past and present; and uplifting LGBTQ+ voices in food and agriculture.
Programs

WFAN conferences – even virtually - always offer the approximate 300 farmers, food producers, advocates, educators, and students who attend a chance to share the good work that they do, to gain inspiration from one another, and to refresh and ignite their spirits, passions, and friendships. The annual conference is also our opportunity to learn from our peers, build a stronger network, and foster connections for long-lasting change.

Our conference will:

- Build and strengthen anti-oppression knowledge, initiatives, and action through training, reflection, and collaboration.
- Provide practical farm-based educational opportunities for beginning through seasoned agrarians, landowners, and food systems advocates.
- Increase our capacity as land caretakers to define, create, and implement practices rooted in ecological justice.
- Offer intentional spaces for critical dialogue, networking, coalition building, and story-sharing.

The full workshop agenda typically covers topics such as regenerative agriculture, permaculture, and sustainable agriculture, inclusivity and diversity in agriculture, coalition building, rural organizing and activism, on- and off-farm communications, marketing, and self-promotion, grant writing, value-added programs, conservation, pollinator protection, managed grazing, beekeeping, specialty crop production, home-based businesses, and more.
**WFAN Mission**
To engage women in building an ecological and just food and agricultural system through individual and community power.

**WFAN Vision**
A vibrant, community-centered food and agricultural system in which women are strong leaders.

**WFAN Values**

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<tr>
<th>Ecological Relationship with the Land</th>
<th>Ecofeminism</th>
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<td>WFAN values human and non-human species diversity, habitat restoration, and ecosystem-centric approaches to land use.</td>
<td>WFAN values an ecofeminist approach to inclusive community (plant, animal, human, soil, water, air) regeneration which grows from a space beyond gender-normed definitions.</td>
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<td>WFAN believes in the core restorative and agricultural principles of soil building, natural habitat revival, and holistic land stewardship approaches grounded in respect for natural systems and cycles.</td>
<td>WFAN values a relationship with ecological systems that is rooted in reciprocity and compassion.</td>
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**Interconnectedness**

Wfan values the interconnection of ecological justice and gender equity and believes that we cannot address one without addressing the other.

Wfan values relationship building over transactional partnerships.

**Storytelling**

WFAN values the power of story as a means of connection, communication and knowledge sharing.

WFAN values diverse ways of learning and information exchange which are critical to shifting the dominant narratives in food and agriculture systems.

**Justice**

WFAN values an anti-racist approach to food and agriculture systems from the ground up, including food and land reparations.

WFAN supports policies that are drafted and implemented by, for and with Black, Indigenous, and People Of Color (BIPOC) communities.

WFAN believes that a relationship with healthy food and clean water is a right, not a privilege.

WFAN believes equity is requisite to creating a respectful, responsive, and inclusive approach to food systems.

WFAN values ensuring animal welfare as an intrinsic part of a just and healthy food system.
The racial reckoning of 2020, following the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, had a profound effect on WFAN’s staff, Board and membership. In the spring of 2020, WFAN reflected and created our solidarity statement with the Movement for Black Lives, a codification of the justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) principles WFAN aspires and strives to adhere to in our work. Key tenets of that statement provide the framework of WFAN’s JEDI commitment, including:

**Responsibility.** This work is on us. As an agricultural and majority-white organization, we recognize that the US food system is based on Indigenous genocide, the enslaved labor of African Americans, and the continuous exploitation of BIPOC. The control of land -- and the food growing upon it -- have long been weapons of white supremacy. Black farmers have been and continue to be pushed off their land by discriminatory governmental practices and a food system that was created at their expense through systemic exploitation and exclusion.

We call on our members to do more, today, to show up for racial justice and to actively confront white supremacy in all its manifestations. We invite our members to learn and act with us. Demand that our local, state, and national leaders begin a process of reconciliation and reparations. Educate yourself on abolition. Provide material aid to BIPOC-led farms, organizations, and activists. White members, get ready to be uncomfortable as we challenge you to learn new tools and engage in new ways in the shared work of dismantling white supremacy across our WFAN programming.
**Action.** We know that solidarity and commitment statements are not enough; we need continued action. We must engage as active partners in this work alongside those already in the streets, in the fields, and in the packing plants. We must end white supremacy and support the leadership of Black women, Indigenous women, and women of color.

We have work to do, within our organization and within our communities, to be accountable to this commitment. This work includes both urgent actions in support of BIPOC communities today and the long-term work of dismantling white supremacy and building anti-racist systems. As an organization, we will outline bold and specific goals, as well as accountability processes, to do better. We are prioritizing anti-racist and anti-oppression work through our strategic planning, programming, and staff/board training. We will engage in hard conversations throughout not only about patriarchal control of resources and land in agriculture, but white settler control of resources and land.

We send our love to all engaged in the now centuries-old struggle for racial justice in this country. We pledge to work together in confronting the systemic racism that we know is to be found in the communities in which we all live.

The transcendent commitment to this 2022-2025 Strategic Plan is to do the JEDI work, including centering BIPOC voices, building relationships with BIPOC partners, and continuing to self-reflect, identify and address our own internal biases and privilege, re-learning, and decolonizing our minds and practices. There is so much more to be done, and WFAN will not be complacent nor complicit through inaction.
Recognizing that building an ecological and just food system requires leadership and representation from diverse communities, WFAN aspires to create an environment that welcomes women and gender non-conforming people who are passionate about creating a better food system. WFAN is committed to using gender-inclusive and non-sexist language that affirms and respects how people describe, express, and experience their gender. As an organization whose work is rooted in dismantling patriarchal structures that exclude women in the food system, we deeply understand the importance of spaces that are inclusive to the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Identities including trans, intersex, and genderqueer reflect personal descriptions, expressions, and experiences. We encourage network members to share their pronouns and names, and these gender identities and expressions will be honored by WFAN staff and in our network spaces.
WFAN’s 2022-2025 Strategic Initiatives

Membership

*Current considerations:* WFAN’s network of members, allies and co-conspirators includes over 9,000 farmers, advocates, workers, activists, students, researchers, and educators and has national and international reach. Twenty-five years ago, WFAN was chartered in Iowa, in the heart of the US Corn Belt. Our founding mothers understood well the extractive nature of mainstream agriculture, and built solidarities with those working towards just and sustainable food and agricultural systems in the US and abroad. WFAN members understand that neither rural or urban communities are monolith, and are committed to engaging in the important networking across rural/urban divides, geographic place and generations in a shared commitment to systems change. Over the next three years, WFAN aims to deepen our relationships by providing relevant, requested programming and resources, reciprocated by intentional membership commitment and investment of time, talent and treasure.

**Goal: Attract, Grow, Engage and Retain WFAN Members**

**Outcome:** WFAN provides valuable connections, programming, and support for members

**Outputs/Metrics:**
- Enroll and retain 5,000 active members committed to the mission, vision and values of WFAN
- Hire dedicated Member Engagement and Communications Coordinator

**Measurement/Accountability:**
- Collect and analyze member surveys, focus groups, and affinity groups to provide feedback on programs, member needs and areas of interest
- Quarterly membership enrollment and time, talent, and treasure donation reports
- Bi-monthly board data dashboard report of online engagement levels, in-person program activity participation, and collected member stories/highlights
WFAN’s 2022-2025 Strategic Initiatives

Fiscal Stewardship

Current Considerations: WFAN currently receives 51% of its funding through private foundation support, 36% from government sources (federal and state) and 13% from individual memberships, registrations and donations. While there is no magic ratio of funding, the more balanced and unrestricted the funding, the easier it is to be flexible as program needs emerge and shift. What remains of critical importance is sincere values alignment with our funding partners. We want donor investment in WFAN to represent a trust in our mission, vision, and values as well as confidence that funds will be ethically stewarded and appropriately spent.

Goal: Diverse and Increased Funding to Expand and Enhance Programs and Partnerships

Outcome: WFAN is consistently and reliably funded, enabling continuous improvement and supportive partnership engagement

Outputs/Metrics:
- Intentional program co-creation and resourcing with values aligned program partner agencies
- WFAN to assist new movements/nonprofits with fiscal sponsorship by FY25
- Grow annual operating budget to $800K+ by FY25
- Increased staff capacity to meet member program needs, staff capacity expansion through retention, growth, training, and support

Measurement/Accountability:
- Co-written funding applications, tracking of funds co-developed with partner agencies
- Identification and support of new, values-aligned nonprofits who may need fiscal sponsorship
- Tracking of fundraising and budget growth to be on target by FY25
- Tracking of staff trainings/professional development, increased program staff and/or volunteers, interns
WFAN’s 2022-2025 Strategic Initiatives

Movement Building

Current Considerations: WFAN is a connector. We bring together and hold a network of aligned and organizational partners so that our members, allies and co-conspirators can confidently navigate the food and agriculture systems, mindful that they are part of an organized progressive movement grounded in justice, equity, and environmental stewardship. We will look to our BIPOC allies and partners for leadership and direction for how to best serve in intersectional space. WFAN will also leverage our platforms, communication channels, and membership to lift up and engage with partner agency initiatives and policy development.

Goal: Power Building Through Collective Actions

Output/Metrics:
• Engage in advocacy at local, regional and national levels for member aligned initiatives including, but not limited to, women’s rights, LGBTQIA+ rights, anti-racism movement, BIPOC land repatriation and access, water rights, land conservation and protection, rural justice, and worker’s rights
• Build local, regional, national women’s leadership and political candidacy, activism and advocacy training.

Measurement/Accountability:
• Development of partner organization map
• Provide monthly updates to staff, Board and membership on current advocacy initiatives with partner organizations
• Promote and track agency and member engagement/calls to action
WFAN’s 2022-2025 Strategic Initiatives

Women and Nonbinary Leadership in Regenerative Agriculture

Current Considerations: Over the past 25 years, WFAN has become regarded as a progressive organization for women and nonbinary folx in the food and agricultural systems. To maintain that trusted position requires continuous education, organizational partnership involvement, and excellent member communications.

Goal: Thought and Action Leadership as Women and Nonbinary Folx in Regenerative Ag

Output/Metrics:
- Co-development of Land Transition Education and Advocacy (BIPOC access, Commons/collective ownership and stewardship) curricula and programming with key organizational partners and contributors
- Professional development and continuing education on best practices for Conservation Education and Advocacy, including staying current on agroecology, ecofeminism movements
- Annual Conference programming that highlights women leadership in food and agriculture
- Mentorship programming that connects new and aspiring farmers to established women in agriculture
- Enhance and expand Stewardship Ambassador training that draws from proven community education models, such as the promotora program

Measurement/Accountability:
- Development of tailored curricula that is updated bi-annually to include most up-to-date information, resources, considerations
- Identification of professional development and continuing education opportunities, and attendance support (paid travel, childcare, job coverage)
- Conference feedback forms and data analysis that inform future annual conference design and execution
- 20% increase in mentorship program participation annually
- Extension of mentoring programming beyond Midwest and to include urban farming mentorships and LGBTQIA mentorships
- Increased stipend amounts for mentors/mentees
- Tracking of number of Stewardship Ambassadors trained
- Tracking of number of Stewardship Ambassador presentations/learning circles, and number of attendees
Acknowledgements and Gratitude

WFAN is deeply grateful to the WFAN Staff, Board, Members and Consultants who informed, shaped, edited, and co-developed this Strategic Plan.

Thank you for your continued commitment to our mission, vision and values, and for helping guide WFAN forward with trust, support and accountability.