A Message from RAFI-USA Leadership

Dear Friends and Supporters,

The Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA (RAFI-USA) has stood beside and fought for farm families, their communities and the environment for nearly 30 years. As we continually assess and adapt our strategies to build power across stakeholder communities and better serve rural farm families, we remain focused on economic prosperity, social justice and environmental stewardship.

RAFI-USA has a unique and integrated purpose: to advocate for and advance rural communities. Farm families are stewards of natural resources, providers of food and fiber, employers and innovators working on behalf of the broader community. We achieve our mission by building power through coalitions, preparing for and responding to crises, promoting equity in the food system and identifying and sharing new opportunities for farm families.

We have the privilege of leading an incredibly talented, dedicated and collaborative staff at RAFI-USA. To highlight a few 2018 achievements we are most proud of:

- In March, we launched our pilot Contract Farmer Leadership Development Training program. The pilot proved an encouraging first step towards bridging divides between contract growers and environmental justice communities. Participants included poultry and hog farmers, current and former growers, as well as multiple organizations working in environmental justice and sustainability, social justice, worker’s rights and livestock legislative reform. The conversations were difficult but we watched as participants found common ground, committed to ongoing work together and demonstrated power through coalition.
- On September 14th, Hurricane Florence made landfall. We mobilized staff in advance of the storm to contact farming families throughout our network in the Southeast. After the storm, we began a multi-year recovery process that will involve direct casework to provide assistance in navigating complex disaster recovery funding programs, and to support families making very hard decisions about how to proceed. We’ve been helping folks prepare for and respond to crises for more than 20 years, so we were able to respond quickly to help protect people’s lives, homes, farms and legacies.
- Through our newest initiative, the Farmers of Color Network, we worked to promote equity in the food system. We provided technical assistance, educational and networking opportunities to 12 farmers of color, hosted a farm tour to facilitate connections between farmers of color, buyers, and community members and convened 35 black farmers to learn about hemp production, rules and regulations.
- We surveyed organic growers 10 years ago and learned they needed more control and ownership over their seed inputs, and they needed those seeds to perform well in this region of the country. Out of that research, RAFI-USA began a groundbreaking collaboration with organic farmers and NC State University plant breeders. We helped develop top-performing organic corn and soybean varieties through multi-year on-farm breeding trials. The participants included poultry and hog farmers, current and former growers, as well as multiple organizations of farm, community, university and government groups, we promote sustainability, equity and diversity in agriculture through policy change, practical assistance, market opportunities, and access to financial and technical resources.
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We are thankful for the collaboration and support of so many other organizations, academic institutions, businesses and individuals who have partnered with RAFI-USA over the years and again in 2018. Donor contributions, more than any other source or type of funding, keep our operations responsive and strategic. We are so grateful to all our supporters and welcome feedback or even just a hello from you anytime!

Sincerely,

Edna Rodriguez, Executive Director
Alex Hitt, Board President

Our Mission

To cultivate markets, policies and communities that support thriving, socially just and environmentally sound family farms.

Our Vision

- Family farmers have the power to earn a fair and dependable income.
- Everyone who labors in agriculture is respected, protected and valued by society.
- Air, water and soil are preserved for future generations.
- The land yields healthy and abundant food and fiber that is accessible to all members of society.
- The full diversity of seeds and breeds, the building blocks of agriculture, is reinvigorated and publicly protected.

Our Approach

Our programs address the trends and changes in agriculture that affect us from the local to the global levels.

- We combine on-the-ground services with national and international policy advocacy to ensure farmers have access to the tools they need to make the right choices for their farms and families. In turn, we want to ensure the best choice for farmers is also the best choice for their communities and the environment.
- We are collaborative, achieving results through coalitions, partnerships and affiliations. Working with a variety of farm, community, university and government groups, we promote sustainability, equity and diversity in agriculture through policy change, practical assistance, market opportunities, and access to financial and technical resources.
- We work on issues from the field, through one-on-one work with farm families. This unique approach allows us to bring lessons from the farm to national strategy discussions and, in turn, bring those resources and connections back to farm families.

RAFI-USA’s 2018 Board of Directors

Alex Hitt, Board President
Organic Farmer, Peregrine Farm
Graham, NC

Mary K. Hendrickson, Board Member
Assistant Professor of Rural Sociology, University of Missouri
Columbia, MO

Phillip Farland, Board Treasurer
Retired USDA Farm Service Agent
Raleigh, NC

Lisa Misch, Staff Representative
Project Coordinator at RAFI-USA
Pittsboro, NC

Jerry DeVitt, Board Member
Professor Emeritus, Iowa State University
Holly Springs, NC

Randy Ryse Roth, Board Member
Executive Director of Interfaith Action Greater St. Paul
St. Paul, MN

Archie L. Hart, Board Member
Special Assistant to NC Commissioner of Agriculture
Knightdale, NC

Shirley Sherrod, Board Member
Co-founder, Southwest Georgia Project
Albany, GA

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Alex Hitt, Board President

Protecting the Future of Food

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### 2018 at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2,000+</strong></td>
<td>hours spent by our farm advocates fighting to keep farmers in their homes and on their land</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>150+</strong></td>
<td>farm families served by our farm advocacy team, including emergency financial counseling and assistance negotiating with lenders and agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>$29.3M</strong></td>
<td>in assets at risk in our 2018 farm advocacy cases</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>65</strong></td>
<td>additional farm families served during Hurricanes Florence and Michael</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td>cost-share grants awarded to farmers in partnership with the NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>$172K+</strong></td>
<td>earned by our Agricultural Reinvestment Fund grant recipients</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2,500+</strong></td>
<td>bushels of organic soybeans produced for seed by members of the seed cooperative</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td>seed varieties conserved and protected</td>
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<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td>farmer partners led our work in promoting seed biodiversity, including seed saving and breeding</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>430</strong></td>
<td>people participated in 10 Equity at the Table Speaker Series events</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td>dynamic, committed RAFI-USA staff members made this all happen</td>
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</table>
Farm Sustainability: Keeping Farmers in Their Homes and on the Land

During 2018, we saw farmers facing harsh conditions not seen since the 1980s farm crisis. Trade wars and historic weather events combined with the steady decrease of on farm revenues, resulted in some of the worst economic conditions farmers have experienced in more than a decade.

In the Southeast, Hurricanes Florence and Michael caused long term damage to the landscapes, nutrient density in soils, and waste & water management systems on which the agricultural sector relies. Through each of these crises, we helped farmers mitigate financial issues, access resources and navigate federal & state disaster relief programs. See page 10 for more details about our disaster preparedness and recovery work.

Our ‘boots-on-the-ground’ direct service approach rooted in one-on-one counseling enables policymakers to make accurate, real-time representation on coalitions at state and national levels.

Farm Allies

With the growing farm crisis making headlines across the country, we piloted the Farm Allies Program in 2018 to provide technical assistance to partner organizations for providing assistance to the farmers they serve. The Farm Allies program targets producers selling in local and sustainable markets. This pilot program trained farmers market managers, and other professionals working with farmers, to be allies with farmers in accessing USDA programs, risk management and other financial resources.

How can NC turn devastated lands into new agricultural opportunities?

According to a recent Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) study on climate change impacts, the nation’s flood prone area is likely to increase by 40-45 percent over the next 90 years (Floodplain Buysouts: An Action Guide for Local Governments on How to Maximize Community Benefits, Habitat Connectivity, and Resilience, 2017, Environmental Law Institute, Washington, D.C., and University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C.).

RAFI-USA consulted with community, county and state stakeholders to better understand opportunities, limitations and best practices for how this type of land may be used as a mechanism for economic development while also prioritizing community assets and long-range planning. This research is ongoing and will culminate in a white paper set to be released at the end of 2019.

“With increasing extreme weather events there is a need for risk management strategies that revitalize local communities instead of drawing assets away.”

- Lisa Misch, RAFI-USA Project Manager
### Issue Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key RAFI-USA Goals</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit</strong></td>
<td>We failed to see any major changes in the Farm Bill to close loopholes. However, the bill provided only incremental increases in loan limits for both direct and guaranteed loans and increased the program authorization to $10 billion, significantly reducing the likelihood of the program running out of money and leaving farmers stranded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After USDA Direct and Guaranteed Loans that reflect the current demand for loan programs, and ensure that USDA credit will be available to the full range of farmers who require it. Ensuring that USDA credit does not fuel concentration of farmland and loss of small and mid-scale farms. Improving oversight of borrower’s rights in USDA lending programs, including reform of the implementation of National Appeals Division findings, and the consistent application of borrower’s rights in guaranteed loans.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Crop Insurance Improvement/Reforms</strong></td>
<td>Although not all of the conservation programs were strengthened in the final bill, it did:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthen crop insurance by:</td>
<td>• Take steps towards ending disincentives against farmers who use cover crops</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Recognizing and incentivizing resilient practices and conservation-based risk management such as crop diversification, improved soil quality and use of cover crops</td>
<td>• Reauthorize &amp; improve Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)</td>
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<td>• Promoting crop insurance as a safety net for all farmers</td>
<td>• Direct the Risk Management Agency to engage with stakeholders on how WFP could better serve farmers</td>
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<td>• Expanding and improving crop insurance products that reward the risk-reduction benefits of crop and market diversification, including Whole Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP) crop insurance</td>
<td>• Increase the period of time that beginning farmers have to access WFP’s beginning farmer 10% premium discount (from 5 to 10 years)</td>
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<td><strong>Conservation</strong></td>
<td>Maintained overall conservation spending, and provided several improvements to critical conservation programs. However, this bill missed the opportunity to integrate conservation programs and crop insurance in ways that would increase the benefits to farmers, the environment, and potentially reduce costs to taxpayers. Bill also includes significant cuts ($5.2 billion) to future funding for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).</td>
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<td>Improve and increase incentives for NRCS CP-42 Pollinator Habitat Initiative to increase the establishment of beneficial insect habitat across agriculture.</td>
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<td><strong>Research and Seeds</strong></td>
<td>Reauthorized and funded critically important research programs for organic and sustainable agriculture including OREI, the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program, the Specialty Crop Research Initiative and the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative.</td>
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<td>Increase the amount of money allocated for organic research, public plant breeding, conservation and crop insurance to ensure they meet the unique needs and challenges of organic farming. Reinvigorate public cultivar development to expand the capacity of our universities to develop and distribute public varieties that respond to the needs of farmers and their communities. Re-authorize the National Genetic Resources Advisory Council to address critical issues of seed diversity, seed resources and seed policy ownership.</td>
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<td><strong>Organic</strong></td>
<td>Increased funding for OREI to permanent, baseline* funding levels. Reauthorized and funded Organic Certification Cost Share Programs, resources for organic import enforcement and data collection on organic production.</td>
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<td>Promote the growth of the organic marketplace and assure small-scale, beginning and limited-resource farmers have access to these important markets by:</td>
<td>Unfortunately, the bill also includes two provisions that weaken the integrity of the National Organic Standards Board.</td>
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<td>• Fully funding the Organic Certification Cost Share Programs, Organic Data Initiative, Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI), and National Organic Program (NOP)</td>
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<td>• Strengthening USDA/NOP authority and oversight of organic imports and enhance the integrity of the organic label</td>
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<td><strong>SNAP &amp; Nutrition</strong></td>
<td>There were no major changes to SNAP (a win) and FNS (now called GusNIP) was expanded with $250 million in funding over five years.</td>
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<td>Support local food access by:</td>
<td>Reduced food access barriers for markets by allowing farmers markets that operate in multiple locations to use a single processing machine to accept SNAP benefits across those locations.</td>
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<td>• Protecting allocations for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentives Program (formerly known as the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentives Program)</td>
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<td><strong>Rural Development</strong></td>
<td>Big win! We now have the LAMP program with $50 million/year in baseline* mandatory funding. Requires the USDA to have an Under Secretary for Rural Development.</td>
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<td>Promote rural development, the ability of local and regional food systems to provide viable markets for local farmers, and access to fresh fruits and vegetables for limited-resource consumers through the Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP) which combines the Value-Added Producers Grants Program (VAPG) and Farmers Market and Local Foods Promotion Program (FMLPP). Achieve baseline* funding for the program. Require the USDA to have an Under Secretary for Rural Development.</td>
<td>Another new program consolidation, the Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach (FOTO) program, provides permanent baseline funding to grant programs that support beginning, veteran and socially disadvantaged farmers.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Commodities</strong></td>
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<td>Tighten loopholes around payment limits to assure that farmers have a safety net against low commodity prices, but that they do not receive unlimited government funds to get bigger and bigger. Make sure payments are aligned with individuals rather than business entities and limit the number of family members eligible for payments.</td>
<td>This farm bill essentially gutted payment limits, extending payment limits to aunts, uncles and cousins. This change opens the door for large farms to get larger and drive further erosion of mid-scale farms.</td>
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<td><strong>Livestock &amp; Competition</strong></td>
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<td>Provide common-sense protections for farmers in livestock production contracts by reinstatement of Farmer Fair Practices Rules, including protection from retaliation for speaking to a public official, and protection from arbitrary termination of contracts without warning.</td>
<td>RAFI-USA has long championed basic protections for producers in livestock production contracts, such as hog and chicken contracts where the farmer does not own the animals. The bill did nothing to address these issues.</td>
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*Baseline funding means that a program’s funding will be automatically included in calculations for future year’s budgets. It is a big win for a program because it increases that program’s stability and longevity.
Hurricanes Florence and Michael

In fall 2018, Hurricanes Florence and Michael left farmers across the Southeast with damage to their land, shelters, essential farm equipment and homes. Many of those affected were still recovering from Hurricane Matthew in 2016.

Our 25+ years of experience in responding to more than 20 hurricanes allowed us to quickly mobilize our staff to address the needs of farmers. Before the storms, we contacted hundreds of farmers within our network to share targeted preparedness information. We encouraged farmers to photograph their assets, back-up and secure documents and take steps to protect their farms and homes.

In the aftermath of the storms, we partnered with Farm Aid to distribute $25,000 in emergency household grants to farmers. We also helped farmers apply for disaster and unemployment assistance, sourced seeds & transplants to replace crops lost during the storms, circulated disaster recovery information, and provided technical assistance and training to local organizations supporting farmers.

To meet the need following the hurricanes, we also extended our Farm Crisis Hotline hours. Our average annual caseload is approximately 50-100 cases, but through our hotline, ads in local newspapers and direct outreach, we reached an additional 65 farmers. Staff fielded approximately 80 calls, working directly with 65 farmers on disaster assistance programs. Work with farmers on Disaster Unemployment Assistance alone resulted in $20,923 in direct payments to farmers.

"I didn't want help at first but when I talked to Tyler I felt comfortable. I don't want to lose the farm. Tyler is helping us improve the farm so I can pass it down to my grandson."

- Melvin Slade, Beaufort County, NC

This kind of work has lasting impact and without it the agricultural landscape of the Southeast might look very different today. While disaster exposes vulnerabilities in rural communities, our intensive and relational case management approach to farm recovery often also reveals underlying strategic opportunities. For example, Melvin Slade, a 65-year-old second generation farmer, is one example of a farmer who reached us during the hurricanes yet plans to continue working with RAFI-USA in the future.

For Mr. Slade, turning the farm over to his grandson Memphis is top priority after addressing the impacts of Hurricane Florence. After supporting him during the storms, RAFI-USA staff are now working with Mr. Slade to develop a succession plan for his farm and business.

Long after the media and politicians leave a disaster, RAFI-USA remains. We make long-term commitments to the farm families we serve, providing in-depth financial counseling, evaluating the family's overall financial situation and options, and assisting the family in accessing programs and funds to keep them in their homes and on the land, no matter how long it takes. We also provide a listening ear to families when they are at the end of their rope, facing hopeless situations and help them make difficult decisions. Typically, recovery following storms like these last 2-3 years after the disaster.

Disaster recovery often exacerbates existing structures of poverty and access. To address these issues, RAFI-USA is a founding member of the NC Inclusive Disaster Recovery Network (NCDR). During Hurricanes Florence and Michael, the NCDR provided coordination between state and federal agencies and grassroots organizations, and advocated for disaster program design and implementation that includes those most often left behind as partners in recovery.

On behalf of farmers and communities devastated by Hurricanes Florence and Michael, RAFI-USA extends a heartfelt thank you to the banks and mortgagee (The Arnett Brothers, Future Inlands, Galactic, Miss Ms, Mathew, Nathaniel Ratcliff & The Night Sweats, Soo Noh, Tallah, Tallah Thors Faux), chefs Michelle Aronson (owner of Parachute) and Virjan Howard (owner of Chef and the Farmer), ParA, North Carolina Pollinator Toolkit with the goal of reversing the decline of pollinator species. This toolkit is a comprehensive, "one stop shop" to guide residents of North Carolina in selecting appropriate species and seed mixes, site preparation, planting, maintenance and identifying funding for pollinator habitat projects. The Toolkit was completed in collaboration with Audubon North Carolina, Fresh Energy, the NC Botanical Garden, NC Wildlife Federation, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Pollinator Working Group. Funding for the Toolkit was provided by the Ruth Beas-Greater Good Foundation.

In 2018, Just Foods helped to develop a North Carolina Pollinator Toolkit with the goal of reversing the decline of pollinator species. This toolkit is a comprehensive, "one stop shop" to guide residents of North Carolina in selecting appropriate species and seed mixes, site preparation, planting, maintenance and identifying funding for pollinator habitat projects. The Toolkit was completed in collaboration with Audubon North Carolina, Fresh Energy, the NC Botanical Garden, NC Wildlife Federation, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Pollinator Working Group. Funding for the Toolkit was provided by the Ruth Beas-Greater Good Foundation.

In 2018, Just Foods advocated for organic integrity and greater investment in public plant and animal breeding at the federal level and through grassroots action in collaboration with many other organizations.

Efforts focused on educating decision-makers and stakeholders about the importance of protecting organic integrity, advocating for strengthened federal support and research programs that encourage farmers to transition and expand organic production and developing strategies to help close the domestic organic supply-demand gap to ensure more farmers can benefit from this fast growing market. Specifically, advocacy efforts and key wins in the 2018 Farm Bill are described on pages 9-10.

"In order for organic farmers in the Southeast to remain competitive we need varieties that are adapted to our region. This year the co-op was able to produce six varieties of organic soybeans that are well suited for our region, that are normally in short supply, and to begin selling this seed to other growers that normally have a difficult time sourcing appropriate seed for their operations."

- Peyton McDaniel

Just Foods: Ensuring Integrity in Our Food System

The Just Foods Program has continued to make significant gains in preserving the infrastructure for sustainable and organic agriculture, developing pollinator habitats in NC and forming a farmer-owned co-op for regionally-adapted organic seeds. Highlights from 2018 include:

Participatory On-Farm Plant Breeding Initiative:

Corporate consolidation of the seed and chemical industries increasingly limits farmers’ access to seed varieties, control of prices and ability to adapt seed for organic production or changing climate conditions. Just Foods has responded by developing an on-farm plant breeding initiative that has conducted 10 corn, cotton and soybean on-farm research projects and evaluated important criteria for improved germination, weed suppression and yield.

Farmer Seed Cooperative:

RAFI-USA’s seed co-op represents a powerful model for participatory on-farm plant breeding. This independent, farmer-owned seed co-op aims to ensure access to more seed choices and reduce dependence on corporate seed for both organic and conventional farmers in the Southeast.

During the 2018 growing season, the co-op grew out all four of the inbred corn lines needed to maintain production of their double-cross hybrid corn line. This will allow them to produce seed independently and increase the amount of corn they are able to sell to other farmers. Participating farmers also produced 6 varieties of soybeans that were certified as organic by NC Crop Improvement and they now have a seed cleaning facility inspected by both NC Crop Improvement and an organic certifier. The co-op produced 2,500+ bushels of organic soybeans – enough to be able to start selling to other farmers in the Southeast. This was quite an accomplishment especially considering the two hurricanes that hit NC in 2018.

Next, Just Foods intends to see the co-op through a full cycle which includes: breeding, growing, harvesting, saving back, marketing and selling.

Pollinators

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Agricultural Reinvestment Fund

Grantmaking to family farmers: A Proven Model of Increasing Farm Income

Rural communities are often sustained by thriving farm businesses, and we believe that offering a leg-up to innovative or beginning farmers is critical to revitalizing rural communities. Generously funded by the NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission, the Agricultural Reinvestment Fund (ARF) is in its 21st year in providing North Carolina farmers and collaborative farmer groups with funds to overcome barriers in scaling up or economically diversifying their farms to become more sustainable. ARF is a proven model to assist all types of farms in combating farmland loss, increasing farm income by mitigating the risk of entrepreneurship, replacing lost tobacco income with higher-value agricultural products, and providing NC farmers with models for innovation and entrepreneurship.

Grant recipients are also able to demonstrate new ideas and innovative models for farm profitability to other farmers in their communities. The program has funded more than 600 projects, dispersing more than $6 million in support of innovative farm enterprises in North Carolina.

Targeted outreach to young, beginning and socially-disadvantaged farmers in 2017 and 2018 helped us achieve a more inclusive group of grantees. We processed more than 96 applications for the 2018 grant program. We awarded 26 cost-share grants of 50k-511k (23 to individual farmers and 3 to collaborative farmer groups). The total of $225,000 awarded spurred growth and innovation that earned grant recipients $172,896 in income, collectively.

Farmers participating in the 2018 grant cycle represented 16 North Carolina counties. Projects included dairy, education, fiber, fruits, grains, horticulture, hydroponics, livestock, marketing, medicinal herbs, poultry and value-added products. Traditional row crop, specialty crop and livestock operations were represented.

As a result of our outreach efforts, the number of grantees self-identifying as farmers of color increased significantly compared to previous years, and represented 50% of our total grantees in 2018. More than half (69%) of grantees were beginning farmers (less than 10 years in operation), 27% young farmers (age 35 and under), and women farmers represented 19% of grantees. Five recipients were former tobacco quota holders and 10 were former or current tobacco farmers.

"This was an incredibly meaningful project that brought so many producers and customers together. It is very encouraging that a project like this can have the first year successes it has."

"I really needed the boost this grant gave the farm. I was able to get many of the things I needed to expand the farm."

"The project has added financial stability to our operation, which means we can stay in business, grow and add employees. We have hired two more full-time staff since the project has been completed."

Between June and December 2018, RAFI-USA staff conducted site visits with grantees and supported grantees in organizing and promoting demonstration events to feature their projects and farm operations, such as a pastured poultry operation and the opening of a grantee’s ice cream stand. RAFI-USA also hosted a “Friendsgiving” event in November featuring products from five current and former grantees to highlight their projects and participating farmers’ achievements through their projects.

Agricultural Reinvestment Fund’s Impact Highlights in 2018:

- 61 jobs created
- 471 jobs sustained
- 1,611 acres of farmland protected as agricultural land
- 26 new acres of farmland added that were directly related to farm projects
- 23,646 farmers and consumers received information about the grant projects
- $111,690 of additional leverage from other sources and invested by farmers in 2018 grant projects
- $172,896 earned by recipients in 2018 as a result of grant projects

Grantees Funded in 2018:

- Phillipp Barker, Olusanya LLC, Granville County
- Kamal Bell, Sankofa Farms LLC, Orange County
- Chas Edens, Edens Meats LLC, Orange County
- William Fricks, Fricks Apiaries, Orange County
- Josh Galloway, Vance County
- Austin Genke, Boxcarr Farms, Orange County
- Michael Goodson, Kidd Farms LLC, Wake County
- Michael Graves, Porte’Lu Farms, Caswell County
- Jesse Hamilton, Broken Spoke Farm, Orange County
- Brandon Hamrick, Carolina Farmhouse Dairy, Durham County
- Emanuel Hayden, Homestead Asili, Rowan County
- Victor Hunt, Hunt Family Farm, Warren County
- Frederick Inglis, Somerset Farm, Chowan County
- B. Ray Jeffers, B. Ray Jeffers Farm, Person County
- Matthew Ballard & Emma Mankin, Benevolence Farm, Alamance County
- Alesia Moore, Shepherd’s Gate Fiber Mill & Discovery Farm, Franklin County
- Eva Moss, Heartstrong Farm, Randolph County
- Nicole Owens, Durham Greens, Durham County
- Randall Page, Page Farm, Caswell County
- Jim Pellegrini, Western Wake Farmers Market, Inc., Wake County
- Monica Rivera, Cultivating Resistance Herbol, Durham County
- Thomas Justin Robinson, Stonemint, Durham County
- Anna Sonnewald, Anna’s Homestead, Durham County
- Demetrius and Janel Thompson, Thompson Farm, Durham County
- Matthew Vaughn, The Carolina Homeplace Farm, LLC, Randolph County
- Patrice Veille, Bear Fiber LLC, Forsyth County “Collaborative Project”

Learn more about the grantees and their projects: rafiusa.org/grants/2018-grant-awards
Farmers Of Color Network

Farmers of color in the U.S. South have been held back by systemic and institutional racism, including discrimination in access to credit, loans, resources and markets. In 2017, we launched a new project, the Farmers of Color Network (FOCN) to address threats to both economic and cultural survival for farmers of color. Recognizing that the impact of oppression is not just economic, but also cultural, the FOCN works to create a holistic economic and cultural ecosystem that values farmers of color in the local, regional and national food system.

The FOCN project builds upon previous efforts to support farmers of color in pursuing civic engagement by seeking elected, local positions such as in the Farm Service Agency and Soil and Water Commission County Committees.

When the FOCN began to take shape, we organized internally to integrate FOCN with RAFI-USA’s Agricultural Reinvestment Fund (ARF), a program that has funded more than 600 farming projects and distributed more than $16 million to agricultural communities over the past 21 years. More intentional outreach to farmers of color in multiple funding cycles has reinforced trust within the network and grown its reach. In 2018, 30% of the applicant pool (81 applicants) self-identified as people of color and 50% of grants for a total investment of $100,161 were awarded to farmers of color. Their projects impact production on more than 814 acres of farmland across 9 NC counties.

RAFI USA organized two Farmers of Color Farm Tours bringing together about 80 farmers and 15 buyers. In partnership with SAAFON and Operation Spring Plant, the FOCN hosted about 35 attendees for an Industrial Hemp Gathering for black farmers interested in hemp farming.

Several times a year, the FOCN hosts Farmer Peer-to-Peer Cultural Gatherings to provide explicit structure and process that supports leadership, story and value-intelligence from women farmers, young farmers and multi-generational work. The convenings also provide a space to highlight agroecological and sustainable practices as well as ancestral traditions and knowledge.

Next steps for the Network include exploring market solutions, providing technical assistance for production and innovative agricultural practices, hosting work exchanges and farmer-led educational activities and leveraging resources for farm infrastructure projects.

More information about this project can be found here: rafiusa.org/farmersofcolornetwork as well as on the Farmers of Color Instagram page FarmersofColorNetwork.

“As a result of the grant, technical support, and educational opportunities through the Farmers of Color Network, we’ve been able to start a pastured pork business. Our farm has been in my family since 1919, and this project has created an opportunity for a new generation to be employed on the farm. We’ve increased production so much that we’ll be expanding to new land to meet growing demand for our products.”

- Ray Jeffers, B.R. Jeffers Farms, Roxboro, NC

Contract Agriculture Reform (CAR)

For the past 28 years, RAFI-USA has organized contract poultry farmers to reform the system of American meat production. In the face of ever-expanding corporate power and control of livestock processors, we aim to bring farmes to contract farming, reduce industry subsidies, redistribute costs which have been externalized to taxpayers, consumers and farmers, hold the industry accountable for their environmental impact and return economic vitality to rural communities. To do so, we cultivate leaders and collaboration among producers through our farmer advisory network, advocate for policy reforms and counsel farmers in crisis.

Contract Farmer Leadership Development Training

One goal of the CAR program is to disrupt industry narratives about contract farming by uplifting farmer stories that illustrate the reality of contract livestock production. To further this goal, we held a Contract Farmer Leadership Development Training in early 2018. In attendance were contract poultry and hog farmers from North Carolina and West Virginia. Dr. Sacoby Wilson, of the University of Maryland’s School of Public Health, presented about the health effects of CAFO-related environmental exposures. Hunter Ogle, of the Western NC Workers’ Rights Center; discussed the deplorable working conditions in poultry processing plants, and Naeema Muhammed, of the NC Environmental Justice Network, discussed environmental justice for communities affected by the NC hog industry.

The group sought to identify commonalities among farmers, farmworkers and other community members impacted by pollution from contract hog farms. We discussed effective media engagement, cross-issue campaigning, recognizing manipulative narratives and holding productive meetings with political representatives. Farmers formed a working group that includes members of social rights groups, impacted communities and environmental activists.

2018 Farmer Fly-In to DC

In the Summer of 2018, RAFI-USA staff traveled with 8 farm families to DC to discuss contract agriculture issues in the 2018 Farm Bill with their elected representatives. We met with the offices of 8 legislators from 4 states: Arkansas, Alabama, South Carolina and North Carolina.

IAMO Presentation

In June 2018, RAFI-USA staff presented “Betting the Farm: A Case Study on the Effects of Tournament Payment Incentives on Contract Poultry Farmer Pay Outcomes in the US” during the IAMO Forum 2018 in Halle (Saale), Germany. The conference focused on increasing economic prosperity to agriculture in Eastern Europe. We shed light on the exploitative impacts of contract poultry to deter other nations from adopting such a predatory system.

2018 Advocacy Efforts

• Pushed for federal-level checks on corporate power and a moratorium on mergers in the agriculture & food sectors,
• Urged the USDA to address the remaining Farmer Fair Practice Act rules on tournament pay, anti-retaliation & pay transparency via the Farm Bill, and
• Advocated changes in Farm Service Agency and Small Business Administration lending practices to prevent Federal tax dollars from subsidiizing industrial scale, exploitative livestock production.
Gathering? If so, what?”

Participants were asked, “Do you plan to take any action based on your experience at the gathering? If so, what?”

- I plan to be a better listener and create more space for that to happen.
- I plan to at least address racism with the ministry team I’m part of in deliberation of how that team can be effective in its ministry.

**Equity at the Table Speaker Series**

From March to October 2018, Come to the Table hosted an Equity at the Table Speaker Series including ten events throughout the Triangle, Wilmington, Winston-Salem and Charlotte. The series was designed for people working at the intersection of equity and food security and for those with the desire to think more critically about equity in their work and volunteerism. A list of events can be found here: [rafiusa.org/events-calendar](http://rafiusa.org/events-calendar)

Participant responses to the Speaker Series:

- “It was made clear that economic injustice and food justice and housing justice are all interconnected.”
- “I am motivated to continue working for justice and equity in the food system.”
- “I now have a name to describe behavior that I have seen in myself and my loved ones and some mechanisms to help us cope.”

The Speaker Series provided critical discussion on the roots of hunger and inequality and also helped to grow the Come to the Table network. Learn more about the Speaker Series: [rafiusa.org/cttt/speaker-series](http://rafiusa.org/cttt/speaker-series)

**Chatham Gathering**

In April 2018, Come to the Table hosted a Food, Faith and Justice Gathering in Chatham County, NC. This Gathering brought together 25 people including farmers, faith and community leaders from Chatham County and surrounding areas to learn about and discuss the intersections of food, faith and justice as they relate to Chatham County.

Participants were asked, “Do you plan to take any action based on your experience at the gathering? If so, what?”

- I plan to be a better listener and create more space for that to happen.
- I plan to at least address racism with the ministry team I’m part of in deliberation of how that team can be effective in its ministry.

**Equity at the Table Fellowship Program**

In 2018, Come to the Table launched a Fellowship Program designed to equip faith and community leaders who are engaged in food access work to use their passion and influence to positively impact the landscape of work at the intersection of food, faith and justice in North Carolina. The 2018-2019 Fellows were Rev. LaShauna Austria, Rev. Dele, Kim Pevia and Rev. Dr. Fatimah Salleh.

Learn more about the 2018 Fellowship Program: [rafiusa.org/cttt/fellowship/2018fellowship](http://rafiusa.org/cttt/fellowship/2018fellowship)

**Fiscal Sponsorships and Technical Assistance**

In 2018, Come to the Table had two fiscal sponsorships and three technical assistance projects with organizations focused on food and faith in North Carolina. With RAFI-USA support, the Durham Farmers Market Double Bucks program had another successful year, redeeming over $13,000 in “Double Bucks” nutrition incentives between May and September, which included a record $6,504 in Double Bucks that matched WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (PFNP) vouchers at the market. RAFI-USA staff supported North Carolina Community Garden Partners (NCCGP) with funding for the 2019 North Carolina Community Garden Partnership Conference. RAFI-USA staff worked with the Common Life Church and Farm in Wilmington and Common Life Church and Farm in Winston-Salem to build relationships and spread the word about the conference to local leaders, organizations and community members. RAFI-USA staff worked with Men and Women United in Charlotte to support their efforts.

In July 2018, Come to the Table hosted a training on Popular Education facilitated by staff from the Highlander Center. Partner organizations were invited to join RAFI-USA staff for the first day of the training to learn about the popular education methodology. During the second day, RAFI-USA staff worked with a group of organizations to design their own training sessions.

**Farmers Markets & SNAP**

Our work also includes assessing opportunities to connect local, sustainable family farmers with food access programs such as SNAP by increasing the number of farmers markets that offer SNAP and matching nutrition incentives and working with those markets to address issues that arise.

In March 2018, the Come to the Table team published the second edition of the “Guide to SNAP/EBT for N.C. Farmers Markets: Steps, Best Practices, and Resources.” Learn more about the Guide and download a copy: [rafiusa.org/blog/a-guide-to-snap-ebt-for-nc-farmers-market](http://rafiusa.org/blog/a-guide-to-snap-ebt-for-nc-farmers-market)

In response to the unexpected closure announcement from Novo Dia Group (a major EBT equipment provider at farmers markets) in July 2018, Come to the Table provided emergency technical assistance to affected markets, participated in state and national conversations about solutions, distributed information about acquiring replacement equipment and shared grassroots advocacy tools.

**Preparing for the 2019 Come to the Table Conference**

In 2018, RAFI-USA staff and NC Council of Churches staff made significant progress in preparing for the 2019 Come to the Table Conference (held in March 2019 in Charlotte, NC). The group convened a Workshop Review Committee, reviewed workshop proposals and confirmed the keynote speakers: Eric Holt Giménez, Executive Director of Food First and Monica White, author of *Freedom Farmers*. Staff traveled to Charlotte frequently to build relationships and spread the word about the conference to local leaders, organizations and community members. Staff worked with local leaders to form a steering committee to determine the content of the conference.
### Statement of Activities

#### For the Year Ended December 31, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support and Revenue:</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Foundations</td>
<td>$ 357,148</td>
<td>$ 416,588</td>
<td>$ 773,736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Grants and Contract</td>
<td>295,527</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member Dues</td>
<td>170,600</td>
<td>7,850</td>
<td>178,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Contributions</td>
<td>140,395</td>
<td>16,211</td>
<td>156,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Contracts and Honoraria</td>
<td>66,131</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corporate Contributions</td>
<td>4,463</td>
<td>14,271</td>
<td>18,734</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16,991</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Fees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Income</td>
<td>7,328</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>3,394</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Change in Value of Charitable Gift Annuity</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets Released from Restrictions</td>
<td>1,146,866</td>
<td>(1,146,866)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Support and Revenue</td>
<td>2,208,843</td>
<td>(691,946)</td>
<td>1,516,897</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Expenses:

| Program Services                            | 1,762,438    |                        |          |
| Support Services:                           |              |                        |          |
| General and Administrative                  | 353,308      |                        |          |
| Fundraising                                 | 70,453       |                        |          |
| Total Support Services                      | 423,761      |                        |          |
| Total Expenses                              | 2,186,199    |                        |          |
| CHANGES IN NET ASSETS                       | 22,644       | (691,946)              | (669,302)|
| NET ASSETS – Beginning of Year              | 639,029      | 2,929,555              | 3,568,584|
| NET ASSETS – End of Year                    | $ 661,673    | $ 2,237,609            | $ 2,899,282|

#### Expense Ratios:

- Total Expenses: $2,186,199
  - Programs: 81% ($1,762,438)
  - General & Administrative: 16% ($333,308)
  - Fundraising: 3% ($70,453)

### Statement of Financial Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Assets:</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>$ 1,105</td>
<td>$ 765,153</td>
<td>$ 766,258</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charitable Gift Annuity</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Receivables:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>90,756</td>
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<td>880,756</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contracts</td>
<td>42,411</td>
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<td>42,411</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dues</td>
<td>34,050</td>
<td></td>
<td>34,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>624</td>
<td></td>
<td>624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid and Other Assets</td>
<td>44,876</td>
<td></td>
<td>44,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Current Assets</td>
<td>213,822</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,768,975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Noncurrent Assets:

| Noncurrent Assets:                             |              |                        |          |
| Grants Receivable:                             |              |                        |          |
| Total Assets                                   | 896,054      |                        | 3,133,663|

#### Current Liabilities:

| Current Liabilities:                           |              |                        |          |
| Accounts Payable                              | 46,841       |                        | 46,841   |
| Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt           | 8,095        |                        | 8,095    |
| Accrued Compensation                          | 61,352       |                        | 61,352   |
| Total Current Liabilities                     | 116,288      |                        | 116,288  |

#### Long-Term Liabilities:

| Long-Term Liabilities:                         |              |                        |          |
| Note Payable                                  | 118,093      |                        | 118,093  |
| Total Liabilities                             | 234,381      |                        | 234,381  |

#### Net Assets:

| Net Assets:                                    |              |                        |          |
| Total Liabilities and Net Assets               | 896,054      |                        | 3,133,663|

#### Net Assets:

| Net Assets:                                    |              |                        |          |
| Total Liabilities and Net Assets               | 896,054      |                        | 3,133,663|
The Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA (RAFI-USA) cultivates markets, policies, and communities that support thriving, socially just and environmentally sound family farms.

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