



# Minority AgVocate<sup>TM</sup>

**DIGITAL MAGAZINE** 

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#### **Freedmen Heirs Foundation Highlights**

# In Case You



### 🙎 Glennville, GA

Sedrick Rowe, Freedmen Heirs Foundation's Farmer Liaison, attended the Berry Family Farm Field Day in Glennville, GA last month. During the event, Sedrick had the opportunity to connect with several agencies at the event — Farm Service Agency (FSA), the University of Georgia Extension Agency, Georgia Water & Soil District, and the McClendon Law Firm. Sedrick also learned about Berry Family Farm's operational practices, and had the opportunity to introduce Freedmen Heirs Foundation to event participants. (Sedrick is picture on the right, giving a brief overview of the Freedmen Heirs Foundation.)





**Photo description:** The Berry Brothers discussing the breeds of cattle they raise as well as rotation and vaccination cycles.



**Photo description:** Vegetable garden demonstration using plastic and an overview of the types of vegetables produced.



**Photo description:** An explanation of how hay is produced, how much is retained for their cattle operation, and how much is sold to others.

#### **Soil Health**

### American Farmland Trust Provides Soil Health Training To Farmers

Read below on how American Farmland Trust (AFT) has created soil health trainings tailored to provide farmers the tools needed to deepen soil health knowledge.

American Farmland Trust (AFT) is thrilled to announce that applications to their regional Advanced Soil Health Trainings (ASHT) are now open. The ASHT program is designed for corn, soybean, wheat, cotton, and dairy farmers, as well as farm advisors who share an interest in improving soil health while sharing their expertise among the community and the next generation of farmers.

This hands-on curriculum combines classroom time with all-day visits to innovative local demonstration farms to see soil health practices in action. ASHT courses will be offered in the Midwest, Southeast, New York state, Mid-Atlantic, and New England regions in 2024/2025. Applications are now open for the Midwest course starting July 23-24 in West Lafayatte, IN. The Southeast course will start July 30-31st in Raleigh, NC. Each ASHT cohort will meet in person 4 times over the course of about 12 months.



AFT's expert trainers, Barry Fisher, Brandon Smith, and Dennis Chessman, have worked in soil health education for decades and have



had long careers with NRCS, as regional team leaders in the Soil Health Division. The ASHT training will address practical management challenges such as cropping systems for soil health; how to do a soil health assessment; cover crop management to include selection, planting, termination, equipment, and more; new technologies, assessments, and products for soil health; and economic considerations. In addition to a certificate of completion, participants will graduate with a completed Soil Health Impact Plan, and resources for mentoring others in soil health practices. The training includes a strong focus on mentorship, with modules dedicated to building and sustaining a network of farmers and mentees.

This training is free of charge for all successful applicants and includes a travel stipend to cover costs for selected participants. Through this in-person training, participants will have direct access to high-level trainers who can answer your real-world management questions, as well as the opportunity to build relationships with a cohort of 30-35 participants,

#### **Soil Health**

facilitators, and speakers who have unique expertise and experiences with soil health and agriculture. Farmers and farm advisors who choose to continue working as Soil Health Advisors will also receive a stipend for their ongoing work with project partners.

For more information about what AFT is looking for in an applicant, please read the <u>Application Guidelines</u>. If you are interested in applying to this program, please click <u>here</u> to access the application.

This training is sponsored by the USDA Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities grant led by Truterra/Land O' Lake. American Farmland Trust is partnering to lead this component focusing on advanced training and scale-up of adoption by catalyzing farmer mentorship networks.

This grant is supported by USDA agreement #NR233A750004G016; USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.



### **Agripreneur Spotlight**

### **Esther Manor Farm: A Symbol of Hope and Resilience in the Heart of Virginia's Countryside**

Learn of Dr. Patience Fielding's journey to bringing authentic African produce and community fellowship to Beaverdam, VA

Nestled in Beaverdam, Virginia, Esther Manor Farm stands as a beacon of resilience, hope and healing forged amidst the trials of the global COVID-19 pandemic and the racial reckonings in 2020. Founded by Dr. Patience Fielding, a Cameroon-born, African-American woman, Esther Manor farm embodies a rich tapestry of tradition, sustainability, and community.

Amidst the chaos of shutdowns and food shortages, Dr. Fielding found solace in the rolling fields of rural Virginia, reminiscent of her childhood on her grandmother's farm in Bali, Cameroon. There, she grew up with the



art of herbalism and savored the flavors of nutrient-rich local cuisine. Her grandmother had remedies for several illnesses, which included boiling lemongrass to soothe fevers, creating mixtures of papaya and guava leaves to relieve constipation,

and preparing "mayanga" oil out of palm nuts to use as a body moisturizer. Dr. Fielding vividly remembers eating some of her grandmother's favorite African dishes, which were filled with fiber and antioxidants and provided the nutrients needed for one's growing body to flourish.

Esther Manor Farm's mission is to provide healthy and nutritious produce to the community and create an all-inclusive culture steeped in community fellowship and farming. Fueled by memories of her grandmother's remedies and dishes, Dr. Fielding embarked



on a mission to grow nutrient-rich foods, create a space for healing, and facilitate a hub of cross-cultural interaction where visitors can not only savor locally grown produce but also partake in the rich tapestry of traditions that define African agriculture.



Thus, Esther Manor Farm was born, as a testament to Dr. Fielding's vision of fostering not only healthy eating but also cultural

### **Agripreneur Spotlight**

exchange. Specializing in crops like Bitter Leaf, Njama Njama, and Waterleaf, the farm not only cultivates sustenance but also nurtures sustainable farming practices.

Esther Manor Farm upholds ancestral knowledge by preserving the lessons taught by both Dr Fielding's grandmother and mother. Each practice, from seed selection to harvest rituals, embodies the wisdom passed down through generations, fostering a deep connection to the land. By honoring this heritage, Esther Manor Farm not only sustains its agricultural productivity but also cultivates a profound respect for the wisdom of those who came before.

In addition to its agricultural endeavors, Esther Manor Farm serves as a cultural epicenter, hosting an annual farm-to-table event every fall that celebrates the fusion of



of African and American cuisine and cultures. This event showcases the rich traditions and customs of Africa, offering guests a sensory journey through the flavors and heritage that define Dr. Fielding's vision. The farm-to-table event culminates in a nostalgic storytelling session around the crackling bonfire, reminiscent of Dr. Fielding's cherished childhood evenings preparing food with her grandmother. As the stories unfold under the starlit sky, attendees find themselves

immersed in the rich tapestry of familial lore, fostering a deep appreciation for the farm's heritage and its enduring legacy.

Furthermore, Esther Manor Farm's commitment to health extends beyond the plate. A research study conducted by the National Institute of Health has highlighted the farm's Bitter Leaf for its demonstrated anti-cancer and anti-diabetes properties, adding another layer of significance to the farm's mission. Dr Fielding's grandmother thrived on a diet of fufu, njama njama, bitterleaf, okra, jute leaves enjoying robust health throughout her long life—a testament to the nutritional richness of these staple crops. Her daily consumption exemplifies the profound nourishment provided by these nutrient-dense foods, underscoring their significance in sustaining vitality and wellbeing.

In a world fraught with uncertainty, Esther Manor Farm stands tall as a beacon of resilience, unity, and unwavering hope. Dr. Patience Fielding's transformative journey from adversity to abundance not only inspires but also embodies the farm's ethos of using food and farming to build community resilience. Through her visionary leadership and the farm's commitment to fostering connections, Esther Manor Farm illuminates a path toward a brighter, more inclusive future for all.

To learn more about Esther Manor Farm, please visit <u>www.esthermanorfarm.com</u> or follow them on <u>Instagram</u> and <u>Facebook</u>.

### **Upcoming Events**

### **Webinars and Live Events**

The Rodale Institute is hosting a webinar titled "Prepare for Battle! How To Establish A Full Spectrum Organic Integrated Pest Management Program". Presenters will explore ways to control pests using organic practices, how to effectively manage pest concerns, and will provide long-term pest control solutions that will last into future seasons.

This webinar will be held on **May 29, 2024**, at **2:00 pm EST**. Register now to take part in this informative event.

REGISTER HERE



Join Freedmen Heirs Foundation for our next webinar session — Enhancing Your Farm's Business Management Practices: The Agribusiness Way™ — on June 18, 2024, via Zoom at 1:30 pm CST/2:30 pm EST. During this webinar, Darrell Tennie, Chief Executive Officer of The Tennie Group, LLC, will provide tax and accounting training to improve the financial skills and business practices of farmers and ranchers.

Register below to discover effective agribusiness management practices that can position you and your farm for success in the agriculture industry.

**REGISTER HERE** 



### **Upcoming Events**

### **In-person Events**





Briarwood Cattle Farm is hosting its 3rd Annual Day of Healing, an event that aims to end the stigma around mental health. This event will be held on May 18, 2024 in Red Springs, NC from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm and promises a day filled with insightful keynote speakers. Topics range from the art of yoga and crafting an effective business plan, to navigating agricultural resources tailored just for you. Scan the QR code above to register.

Freedmen Heirs Foundation is delighted to be joining Innovation Forum's Future of Food USA conference this year. The Future of Food conference returns in-person this year in Minneapolis, May 29-30, 2024, with 300+ attendees, 30+ practical sessions and 60+ speakers.

This two-day business conference will bring together leading brands and key stakeholders to identify the main areas of opportunity and innovation within the food and beverage industry. We'll assess what supply chain transformation means on the ground to ensure more resilient and regenerative food systems. Click here to view the full agenda. Speakers



Key speakers from



Driscoll's

















include senior representatives from Freedmen Heirs Foundation, ALDI, Campbell Soup Company, Mondelēz International, McCain Foods, **Danone, Cargill,** and many more.

Use the link below to view registration details.

**MORE DETAILS** 

#### **In-person Events**

#### **Bloom Ranch Juneteenth Local Food Symposium**

<u>Bloom Ranch</u> in Acton, CA is hosting a Local Food Symposium, a day of Sustainable Growth and Community on **June 14, 2024**, beginning at **9:00 am PT.** This special event is dedicated to fostering collaboration among California's agricultural community and is packed full of activities tailored to encourage networking and education building.

You'll have a chance to connect with like-minded individuals and industry experts to expand your professional network. You'll also get the chance to join discussions and presentations tailored to enhance your agricultural knowledge and skills.

Click below to learn more and to register to attend this one-of-a-kind event.



#### **In-person Events**

#### **Food Entrepreneur Training Available**

Food Entrepreneur Training is available in Georgia! Are you starting a new food business or preparing to launch one? Join the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership's one-day training program tailored for food entrepreneurs in Georgia.

The training sessions focus on improving food safety practices and fostering business development for farmers and food entrepreneurs. The program also encourages networking among industry experts and fellow entrepreneurs. The next in-person session is on **June 14**, **2024**.

For more details and to sign up for this training, click on the link below.

#### **LEARN MORE**

#### 2024 National Black Grower's Council (NGBC) Model Farm Series



Date	Location	Host	Focus Crops
May 23-24, 2024	Tanner, AL	Darden Bridgeforth and Sons	Corn, Cotton, Soybeans & Wheat
June 6-7, 2024	Pine Bluff, AR	Conyer Farms LLC	Corn, Rice & Soybeans
June 27-28, 2024	Greenville, MS	Smith Farms	Corn & Soybeans
July 25-26, 2024	Bastrop, LA	Armstrong Farms	Corn, Rice & Soybeans
August 29-30, 2024	Montezuma, GA	James Farms	Cotton, Peanuts & Soybeans

For more information go to:

https://nationalblackgrowerscouncil.com/ or call (202) 641-4197

NBGC Annual Meeting - December 2024- Information coming soon







































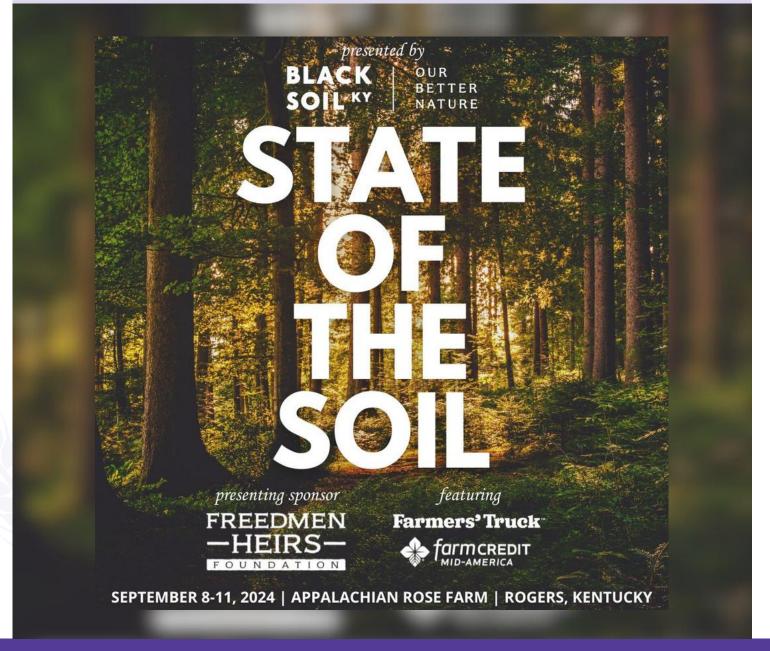


#### **In-person Events**

Join Black Soil KY, Freedmen Heirs Foundation, and The Farmer's Truck in Rogers, Kentucky for The State of the Soil summit from **September 8-11, 2024**. This convening promises days filled with farm-to-table dining experiences with dishes prepared by Chef Isaiah Screetch, networking with global and national brands, and presentations by agriculture industry experts that will take a dive into The State of the Soil.

Click the link below to learn more and to register to attend this unforgettable experience.

#### **MORE DETAILS**



#### **Farmer Resources**

### **Programs and Reports**

Welcome to our Farmer Resources section, a dedicated space to provide you with valuable tools and information. Explore comprehensive reports and programs as well as funding opportunities designed to provide support for a variety of farming projects and initiatives. Additionally, for those seeking to grow their team or find new career paths within the agriculture industry, we've included a section on employment opportunities that span a range of roles and expertise.



### USDA Program Deadlines

Learn more about important dates and deadlines for USDA programs and events.

**LEARN MORE** 

#### Farmers.gov| Local Dashboard

Click Explore to find your state and view local data and USDA resources.

**EXPLORE** 

### May 2024 Lending Rates

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides loans to agricultural producers to help start or expand their farming operations, purchase equipment and storage structures, or meet cash flow needs. Click Explore to view this month's interest rates for loans offered through FSA.

**EXPLORE** 

# The Economics of Soil Health on Small Grain Farms

The Soil Health Institute recently released the results of a study that examined the economic and on-farm benefits of implementing soil health management systems (SHMS) on small grain farm operations. Click below to read more.

**READ MORE** 

#### **Programs and Reports**

### **USDA NASS Crop Production Report**

This monthly report contains crop production data for the U.S., including acreage, area harvested, and yield. The report also contains a monthly weather summary, a monthly agricultural summary, and an analysis of precipitation and the degree of departure from the normal precipitation map for the month. Click below to view current and archived reports.

**VIEW REPORT** 

### USDA World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) Report

The World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report is prepared and released by the World Agricultural Outlook Board (WAOB). This report is released monthly and provides annual forecasts for supply and use of U.S. and world wheat, rice, coarse grains, oilseeds, and cotton. The report also covers U.S. supply and use of sugar, livestock & meat, poultry, eggs, milk, and dairy products; as well as Mexico's supply and use of sugar. Read May's report by clicking the link below.

**VIEW REPORT** 

### Secretary of Agriculture Briefings on WASDE and Crop Production Reports

The WASDE and Crop Production briefings can be watched every month beginning at 12:05 pm ET on NASS' Youtube Channel. The briefings will be streamed live just moments after the reports are made public. Click below to watch the most recent briefing.

**EXPLORE** 

#### **Farmer Resources**

### **Additional Information**

#### Our Latest Webinar Is Now Available on YouTube

Last month's webinar — From Local Farms to National Markets: Diversifying Supply Chains Through Wholesale Partnerships — is now available on our YouTube Channel. During this webinar, Lauren Horning, Director of Local Sourcing and Sustainability at FreshPoint, shared insights on how producers can expand their sales markets and grow their businesses.

Click the link below to view the discussion.

WATCH NOW





### Slakes App Available For Download

Would you like to measure your soil aggregate stability levels from home? Now you can with the help of the Slakes, a free smartphone app created by the Soil Health Institute. Click below to learn more.

**LEARN MORE** 

#### **Farmer Resources**

### **Funding Opportunities**

### **Amazon Business Small Business Grants**

Amazon Business is receiving applications for its small business grants which are designed to support small business development.

The deadline to submit your application is **May 24, 2024.** Click the link below for more information.

**LEARN MORE** 

### Comcast RISE Grant Package

Comcast RISE is accepting applications to assist small businesses in their recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with a focus on expansion and development.

Applications can be submitted now through **May 31, 2024**. Click the link below for eligibility criteria and to apply.

**LEARN MORE** 

### WomensNet Grant Opportunities

WomensNet offers funding to many women-owned businesses all year round. Applicants are elilgibe for several opportunities which Include the Monthly Amber Grant, Monthly Startup Grant, Business Category Grants, and the \$25,000 Annual Amber Grant.

The application deadline to apply for the Monthly Amber Grant is **May 31**, **2024.** To learn more, click the link below.

**LEARN MORE** 



### **Beginning Farmers Stipend**

Rural Advancement Foundation International-USA (RAFI-USA) is currently accepting applications 2024 Beginning Farmers Stipend, which aims to assist historically underserved farmers by providing financial assistance. The stipends, ranging between \$3,000 to \$5,000, can be used for initial farming expenses and production costs.

The application deadline is **May 31**, **2024** at **5:00 p.m**. To learn more about this opportunity, click the link below.

**LEARN MORE** 

### Root and Bloom Fellowship

The National Young Young Famers
Coalition is accepting applications for its
Root and Bloom Fellowship. The
fellowship aims to explore how federal
agriculture policy affects the challenges
faced by young and BIPOC farmers, and
how to make changes at the local and
regional levels. Fellows will meet
virtually for bimonthly sessions, receive
stipends, and pursue leadership
positions.

The application deadline is **June 3, 2024** at **11:59 EST**. Click the link below to learn more.

**EXPLORE** 



### The National Black Business Pitch

Applications for Phase I of the National Black Business Pitch are still being accepted. Submissions who proceed to Phase II will have the chance to receive cash prizes of up to \$10,000.

For more information and eligibility criteria, click the link below. The deadline for submitting applications and videos is **June 3**, **2024**.

**EXPLORE** 

### Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Sustainable Agricultural Systems

Applications for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Sustainable Agricultural Systems (SAS) are still being accepted. NIFA is seeking projects that aim to enhance to availability of affordable, safe and nutritious foods. The application deadline is **June 6, 2024**. To learn more about this opportunity, click the link below.

**EXPLORE** 

#### Southern SARE Research and Education Grant

Pre-proposals for the Southern SARE Research and Education grant are still being accepted now through **June 7, 2024**. This competitive grant is designed to encourage projects that explore a <u>systems approach</u> to sustainable agriculture. Learn more by clicking below.

**LEARN MORE** 

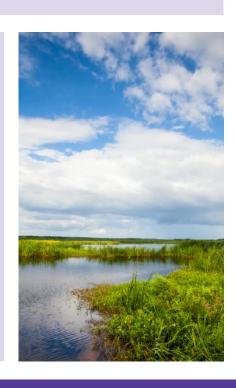
### Historically Underserved Farmerto-Farmer Outreach Grants

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) is accepting applications for its Historically Underserved Farmer-to-Farmer Outreach Grant Program. This program aims to enhance water quality and coastal resilience by promoting soil and water conservation practices.

The deadline for submitting applications is **June 14, 2024**. Click the links below to learn more.

**LEARN MORE** 

**VIEW RFP** 



### Ag Innovation Challenge

Applications for Farm Bureau's Ag Innovation Challenge are being accepted. This national business competition highlights startups that are addressing issues among the U.S. agricultural community through innovation.

Competition prizes include a \$100,000 grand prize, a \$25,000 runner-up prize, and two \$10,000 prizes for business owners who reach the final four.

The deadline for submitting applications is **June 15, 2024**. Click the link below to learn more.

**LEARN MORE** 



Corporate Counsel Women of Color Entrepreneurs is accepting applications for its Women of Color Grants Program. This program aims to help minority business owners with business development and economic growth.

Applications are open now. Click the link below to learn more.

**LEARN MORE** 



### Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure (RFSI)

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) is still accepting applications for its Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (RSFI). The program is designed to support North Carolina producers by strengthening and enhancing opportunitues for growth in local and regional food systems.

The deadline to apply for this funding opportunity is **June 15, 2024**. Click the link below for more information.

**LEARN MORE** 

### Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has made \$1.5 billion available to assist farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners in implementing and expanding conservation practices to improve natural resources and combat climate change.

NRCS is still accepting applications for the program. The deadline to submit applications is **July 2, 2024**. Click the links below for more information.

**ABOUT RCPP** 

**HOW TO APPLY** 

### Rural Energy for America Program

Applications are still being accepted for the Rural Energy for America Program-Renewable Energy Systems & Energy Efficiency Improvement Guaranteed Loans & Grants. The program offers guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to support renewable energy systems or enhance energy efficiency.

Additionally, producers can seek loans for new energy-efficient equipment and systems for agricultural production and processing. Explore further and access state-specific details by clicking below.

**EXPLORE** 

### **Underserved and Veteran Farmers, Ranchers, and Foresters - 2501 Program**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is accepting applications for the Underserved and Veteran Farmers, Ranchers, and Foresters - 2501 Program. This program is administered through the Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE) and was created to support community-based and nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education and eligible tribal entities in assisting underserved and veteran farmers and ranchers by increasing awareness and access to USDA programs and services.

The deadline for submitting applications is **July 5**, **2024**. Click the link below to learn more about eligbilty criteria and to view the fact sheet.

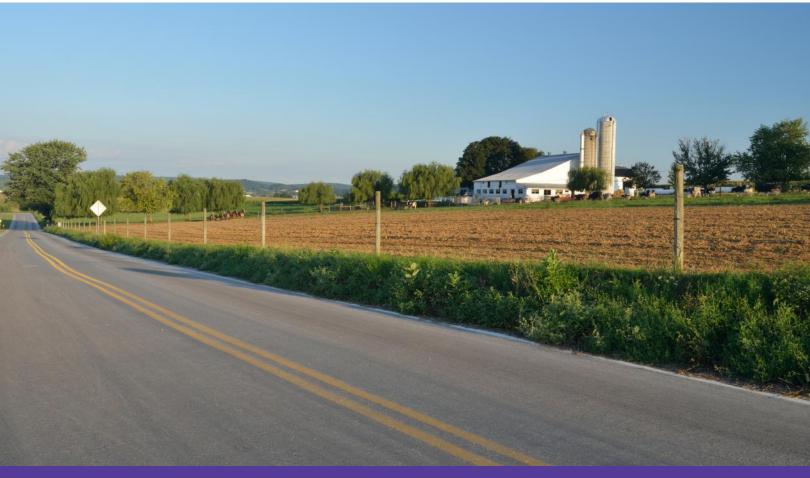
**LEARN MORE** 

### **USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) plays a crucial role in enhancing both domestic and international opportunities for U.S. growers and producers. By collaborating with a diverse range of organizations, AMS extends its support to rural America and the broader agricultural sector, through the creation of programs designed to meet specific needs within the agricultural sector.

Please note that grant opportunities are available throughout the year with varying deadlines. Click Explore to see the full list of opportunities and which program(s) align with your needs. Select the program you wish to learn more about to view details that include the grant opportunity deadline.

**EXPLORE** 



#### **Farmer Resources**

### **Employment Opportunities**

### The Soil Health Institute

The Soil Health Institute is seeking a Soil Health Educator to join their team. The role involves creating and implementing educational initiatives to promote the use of soil health management systems in the U.S. Cotton Belt region. For more details about this position and to apply, click the link below.

**LEARN MORE** 

### **American Soybean Association**

The American Soybean Association (ASA) is seeking a State and Industry Relations Manager to join their team. In this role, the State and Industry relations manager will help ASA grow their relationships with corporate stakeholders, manage programs, and strengthen state relationships.

Click below to see the full job announcement and to apply.

**APPLY** 

**ANNOUNCEMENT** 

### American Farmland Trust

American Farmland Trust is hiring a Deputy Director of Climate & Soil Health. The Deputy Director will oversee internal operations, program planning, communications, financial spend down, and staff development. They will also play a role in defining the division's programmatic growth strategy and annual work plans to ensure project outcomes and budgeted targets are met. Click the link below to learn more about this opportunity.

**LEARN MORE** 

#### The Croatan Institute

The Croatan Institute is currently recruiting for multiple positions within their team. Click the link to view available positions and submit your application.

**EXPLORE** 

### **Employment Opportunities**

### University of Vermont

The University of Vermont is searching for a Technical Assistance Program Coordinator to join their team. Position responsibilities include establishing a network of technical assistance providers to aid potential applicants in their submissions for Northeast SARE Grant Programs and working to develop and enhance policies that support Northeast SARE grant program goals.

Click below to learn more about this position and to apply.

LEARN MORE

### **Bread For The World**

Bread For The World is looking for a Senior Domestic Policy Advisor to provide expertise on U.S. food security, nutrition, and the root causes of domestic hunger. This position also includes offering guidance on policy advocacy strategies related to the U.S. federal government and administrative agencies.

For more details about this position and to apply, click the link below.

**LEARN MORE** 



### Do You Have Resources or Information You Would Like to Share?

If you wish to contribute an event, program, funding or employment opportunity, please email us with your resources at <a href="mailto:info@freedmenheirs.org">info@freedmenheirs.org</a>.

### Thank You For Your Support!

## **Support Freedmen Heirs Foundation!**



Scan the QR code above or click here to make a financial contribution to our organization. Your generous donation will help support our mission and make a positive impact on the agricultural community.

Thank you for your continued support!

### Follow Us on Social Media









# Nominate an Agripreneur

Help us recognize Agripreneurs who are making a difference!

If you know someone deserving of recognition, nominate them to be featured in our magazine by completing this form or sending us an email at info@freedmenheirs.org. Self nominations are also welcome.







To learn more about Freedmen Heirs Foundation, visit our website.