



**OWEN AND ELLEN LOVE FAMILY
FARMLAND PROTECTION FUND**

GRANT PROGRAM

Background: In 1995 through the generosity of Owen and Ellen Love, American Farmland Trust (AFT) acquired a 660-acre farm in Climax, Michigan. In February, 2010, the farm was sold, subject to a conservation easement held by AFT, to two brothers who will continue to operate the farm for grain production. In accordance with the Loves' wishes, the proceeds from the sale of the farm have been set aside in the Owen and Ellen Love Family Farmland Protection Fund at AFT to be used to assist in the permanent protection of other farmland in the state of Michigan.

The Grants: American Farmland Trust will make grants from the Owen and Ellen Love Family Farmland Protection Fund (the "Fund") to eligible Michigan local units of government and land trusts to assist in purchasing permanent agricultural conservation easements on eligible farmland. An eligible local unit of government must meet the requirements set forth in Section 324.36203(2) of Act 451 of 1994, the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. An eligible land trust must be a qualified 501(c)(3) corporation incorporated in Michigan that at a minimum has adopted the Land Trust Alliance's Standards and Practices, and can demonstrate through its mission and past projects that the protection of agricultural land for future active, agricultural use is a primary objective of the organization. Grants from the Fund are intended to close a funding gap to match or supplement other public or private funding to purchase a permanent agricultural conservation easement on eligible farmland.

The Process: AFT will accept proposals throughout the year using the attached application form. To apply, mail or e-mail a completed application and all required attachments to American Farmland Trust c/o Robert Wagner, 1 Short Street, Northampton, MA 01060, bwagner@farmland.org.

Eligible Projects: The sole objective of grants from the Fund is to support the completion of land projects that permanently protect the viability and productive use of agricultural land. Thus, grants from the Fund are limited to projects that will permanently protect farmland that is currently in and intended to remain in active, agricultural use. Proposals involving agricultural conservation easements that include an affirmative farming covenant will be given preference.

Other natural resource and public values of the project will be considered on a case-by-case basis. For example, projects that link the protection of the agricultural resources on the land with

an ecosystem service objective and/or a local food production/system opportunity are of particular interest.

All projects must be consistent with any applicable, local comprehensive land use plan.

Since it is intended that grants from the Fund are to close a funding gap to match or supplement other public or private funding, the applicant must document the commitment of available funding to the project, such as allocations from the Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund and/or the USDA Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, or secured private donations and grants.

Stipulations on Use of the Grants: The final decision on the awarding of grants from the Fund for any project rests with American Farmland Trust's Board of Directors. The grants may only be used to contribute to the purchase of a permanent agricultural conservation easement on eligible farmland. The grants may not be used for staff or transaction expenses or stewardship responsibilities related to a project. AFT reserves the right to review the easement language for any project utilizing a grant from the Fund. AFT will look for the easement to describe the agricultural resource being protected; recognize the changing nature of agriculture; and not unduly restrict agricultural practices, products and buildings. Additional appropriate conditions and restrictions may be required by AFT to ensure proper use of the Fund in a project. The entity must agree to list the American Farmland Trust and the Owen and Ellen Love Family Farmland Protection Fund in any publicity on the project.

Inquiries: Direct all inquiries or questions on the use of the Fund to Robert Wagner, Herrick Mill, 1 Short Street, Northampton, MA 01060, 413-586-9330, Ext. 12, bwagner@farmland.org.