

LP 4 Learning Objectives:

Identify potential locations for your farm or ranching operation based on your personal and business goals.

Identify information about regional business and agricultural factors that may affect where you want to look for land.

Identify real estate values/rental rates in the places you have identified.

Identify different types of landowners and how their motivations may affect your land access options.

Identify resources and strategies to locate available land.

Acknowledgments

Farmland for the Next Generation is supported by a four-year Educational Enhancement grant from the USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program.



Thanks also for support from the Farm Credit Contributions program, an Educational Enhancement Team of national experts in farmland access, and the members of American Farmland Trust.



The following language is required by USDA: *Farmland for the Next Generation* is supported by a four-year Educational Enhancement grant from the USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. Award# 2015-70017-23901. While it has to be included somewhere, it does not have to have its own slide.

Acknowledgments

This teaching resource was adapted for ELL farmers by Katie Painter, in partnership with the Institute for Social and Economic Development (ISED Solutions).

This material is funded by USDA, Risk Management Agency, under award number RM18RMEPP522C018:

“Producing and Using Risk Management Educational Resources and Methods for Refugee Farmers.”



The following language is required by USDA: *Farmland for the Next Generation is supported by a four-year Educational Enhancement grant from the USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. Award# 2015-70017-23901.* While it has to be included somewhere, it does not have to have its own slide.

Part 1: Identifying a Location



Connect to some of these sites and provide a demonstration

Ask students to create a list to include any local or regional possibilities

A written down search plan or strategy is helpful. Build a network and team to help you!

Finding Land Overview

- Select a target location
- Know what you're looking for
- Find out about real estate or rental values
- Identify resources that might provide access to suitable land
- Develop a plan!



Notes from AFT: Finding land can be challenging! But it is also an adventure. There is great value in networking: Work with friends, organizations and other farmers. Consider different kinds of landowners who might have land available for lease or purchase and what their motivations might be. Maximize search strategies and techniques. Develop a plan!

When you are selecting a target location, think about agricultural and business factors that will affect your operation. What are the main types of crops being grown? What are the natural resource conditions? What kind of transportation infrastructure is available? What are the market opportunities in and demographics of the places you are looking at?

Highlight stories and examples of ways that the BFRs you work with have located land.

How to Choose a Target Location?

- Find out about agricultural and business conditions
- Does the community support agriculture?



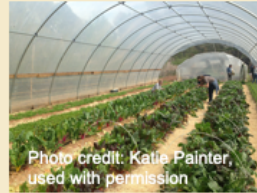
It is good to find out if the community is “farm friendly” Think about your quality of life as well as the needs of your business.

Know the local regulations!

Boise City



Ada County



12



>12

American Farmland Trust

Trainer notes: In our local area, for example, Ada County has much more relaxed regulations surrounding farming than unincorporated Ada County, with Ada being much easier for farming. Hoophouses are allowed without a permit in Ada County, while Boise City requires building permits for structures over 200 sqft and will not permit a hoophouse. Boise city has stricter and sometimes confusing regulations about the number of livestock permitted. In our area, neighborhoods in the city and county can look very similar but have very different policies in place, so it's important to identify these specific boundaries. Update with local examples if possible.

It is good to find out if the community is "farm friendly" Think about your quality of life as well as the needs of your business.

Photos: Katie Painter

How to Choose a Target Location?

- Personal and Business goals:
 - Do you want to be near family and friends?
 - City, town or rural area?
 - Near schools or other important places?



LP1 discussed business and personal goals, lifestyle goals, rural vs. urban locations, commuting to farmland, distance to markets, etc.

Things to know!

- Climate, growing season
- Water availability/rights
- Types of agriculture in the area
- Land values and rental rates



Trainer notes: Refugee growers are mostly likely to look for land close to where they already live and be familiar with the local farming scene. Here in Idaho, elevation, soil type, and growing season can change pretty quickly within a small geographic area, and even for urban ag within Boise, there are neighborhoods whose soil types are significantly better. So, it's good to know this info for your local area.

AFT notes: These factors may or may not have already been considered in developing their personal, financial, business goals. They should be prepared to view these at a variety of scales and continue to reevaluate as they narrow the search or are unsuccessful in a particular location.

Those with land in the family may already feel committed to a parcel but should consider other land if family land doesn't meet their needs.

Remind them we will get more specific in LP5- Site Assessment.

Things to know!

- Where are your markets?
- What's your transportation plan? Will you spend a lot of time driving?



American Farmland Trust

Trainer notes: Refugee growers are mostly likely to look for land close to where they already live and be familiar with the local farming scene. Here in Idaho, elevation, soil type, and growing season can change pretty quickly within a small geographic area, and even for urban ag within Boise, there are neighborhoods whose soil types are significantly better. So, it's good to know this info for your local area.

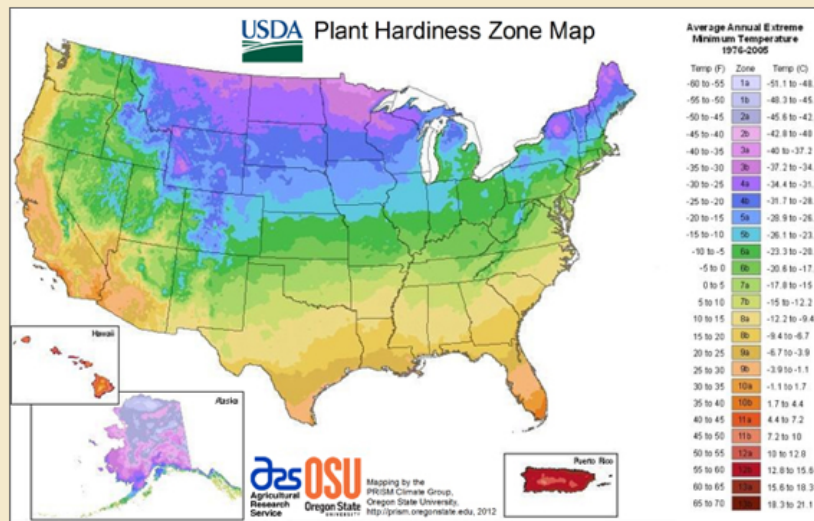
Photo: Katie Painter

AFT notes: These factors may or not have already been considered in developing their personal, financial, business goals. They should be prepared to view these at a variety of scales and continue to reevaluate as they narrow the search or are unsuccessful in a particular location.

Those with land in the family may already feel committed to a parcel but should consider other land if family land doesn't meet their needs.

Remind them we will get more specific in LP5- Site Assessment.

Climate/Growing Conditions



Trainer notes: Pretty graphic provided by AFT. Only really relevant if growers are exploring moving to a different area altogether.

USDA Agricultural Research Service Plant Hardiness Zone Map

<http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb/>

This web page provides information about plant hardiness zones nationwide. The interactive maps enables users to find their own plant hardiness zone.

What is a census?

- The Census counts the number of people living in a place, usually every 10 years.
- The Census of Agriculture counts the number of farms, farmers, income and kinds of crops produced.



The Census of Agriculture provides a wealth of information about farms and farmers. The Census of agriculture is available online at: <https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/>

2012 Census of Agriculture Highlights:

https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/Highlights/

State Information:

https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Census_by_State/

County Information:

https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/

Idaho Census of Agriculture - 2017

- 1304 farms in Ada County
- 672 farms are between 1 and 9 acres.
- 692 farms sold \$2500 or less in farm products
- Average Ada County farm earns \$20,801

- Lots of other information can be found.



Trainer Notes: AFT provided some census of ag info. I chose a few data points that I thought would be interesting to the farmers, listed here. Update with local info. Trainers could further explore this website with individual farmers working on their land search.

AFT notes:

The Census of Agriculture provides a wealth of information about farms and farmers. The Census of agriculture is available online at: <https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/>

2012 Census of Agriculture Highlights:

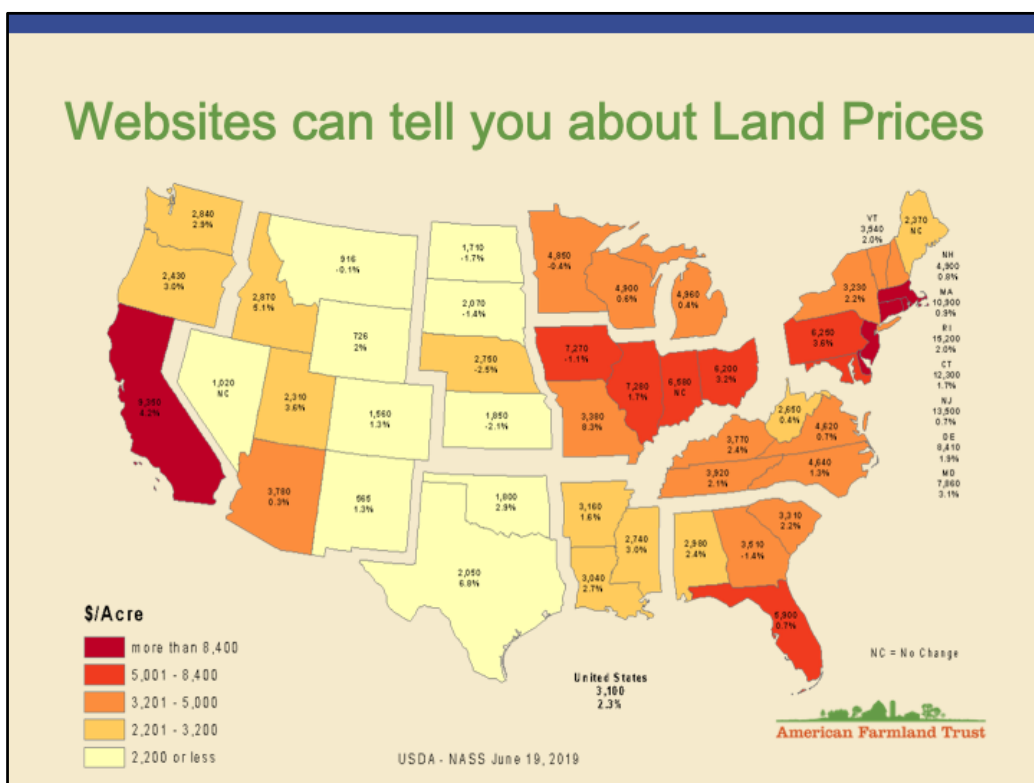
https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/Highlights/

State Information:

https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Census_by_State/

County Information:

https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/



Trainer notes: AFT gives a lot of information on how to find out about land prices in different geographic areas. Most refugees won't be considering moving to a different state or area to farm. This graphic from https://www.nass.usda.gov/Charts_and_Maps/Land_Values/ briefly shows that land prices are different in different places, and that web resources can help people find out about this. If an individual is more interested, trainers can access the resources in the AFT notes below. This map shows prices of land for sale (not lease prices).

AFT notes:

For state and county averages:

Land Values 2017 Summary, USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2017

<https://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1446>

This report summarizes information from the annual June Area Survey, which collects data on crop acreage, land use, grain stocks, farms, rents, and the value of land and sales. NASS estimates national

and state agricultural land values and rental rates paid by producers (cash rents) from that survey.

Information about land values in chart and map format is posted at:

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Charts_and_Maps/Land_Values/.

For more drilled down information:

Real Estate Listing Services There are many online real estate listing services under the umbrella of the National Multiple Listing Service (MLS). These services provide a listing of homes, farms and land available for sale or rent plus information on demographics, average sale prices, trends, tax rates, and community services. <http://www.mls.com/>

Check in with the local assessors and real estate agents and others in the community.

Part 2: Finding Land Strategies

Connect to some of these sites and provide a demonstration

Ask students to create a list to include any local or regional possibilities

A written down search plan or strategy is helpful. Build a network and team to help you!

How Can I Find Land to Rent or Buy?

- Word of mouth – Talk to people you know.
- Real estate agents
- Online resources like Craigslist or FarmLink programs
- Community networks
- For Rent signs
- Find land, identify the owner, and ask them.



Trainer notes: Point out that lease values may or may not be related to how much the land would cost if it were sold, since landlord motivations vary a lot and lease prices vary a lot from location to location. Many growers in our area pay relatively low rent on farmland even though that same land would be really expensive to purchase. Many Global Gardens farmers borrow land for free from churches and other landowners, or pay only the cost of water and other amenities.

AFT notes:

There are lots of ways to find land, but it's not always easy. Think of it as a journey and consider both usual and unusual Lots of possibilities – maybe some that you have not considered. For example, many states have land trusts and farmland protection programs that have permanently protected land for agriculture and may be looking for new owners or tenants to keep that land in production.

NYFC guide on working with land trusts: <http://www.youngfarmers.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/NYFC-Finding-Affordable-Farmland.pdf>

Public sector landowners may make land available – from federal grazing land to state and local governments, park departments, military bases

Who owns land?

- Farmers and homeowners
- Cities, states and the federal government
- Institutions like churches and schools



Trainer notes: These are the kinds of landowners we usually end up leasing from. The AFT gives a much more detailed description of who landowners are.

AFT notes:

The USDA Farmland Ownership, Tenure and Transfer (TOTAL) report describes three types of landowners: “owner-operator” refers to agricultural landowners who operate some or all of the land they own. Second, the phrase “operator landlord” describes farm operators who rent a portion of the land they own to other farm operators. A given farm operator who rents out land is both an owner-operator and an operator landlord. “Non-operator landlord” describes landlords that own and rent out agricultural land but are not actively involved in farming. In addition, the term “operator landowner” is used to collectively describe both owner-operators and operator landlords, or the land owned by them.

https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/74672/60298_eib161.pdf?v=42607

Whether you are looking to rent or buy land, you can find it from many different kinds of landowners. So it is good to think broadly about who might have land available and to understand the different types of people or entities you may be negotiating with. They will have different motivations for making land available to you. These usually are financial, but money may not be the driving force. Some may have a public purpose to fulfill and others may just want to see their land put to good use.

When we think about these, we often think about people who have a direct relationship to agriculture – including retired farmers or families who may be nonoperators as well as operators – vs. those who don’t. Those who don’t have a harder time understanding what’s involved with farming or ranching.

Still, it helps to think about Government agencies (federal, state or local), utility companies, religious institutions, civic groups, conservation organizations like land trusts and Native American Tribes as they all may have suitable land. But it can be a challenge to know what’s available.

Many farmers and ranchers lease or buy land from each other. But there are many non-operator landowners as well – ranging from individuals to business entities to conservation organizations like land trusts. Governments and government agencies also own a lot of land. So keep your options open and don’t limit your search just to farmer

and ranchers.

Why do landowners lease their land?

- To earn money
- Help maintaining the property
- Tax savings
- To help farmers and support food production
- To care for the environment



AFT notes: Let's explore in a little more detail what some of their motivations might be. This affects how you might approach them to rent or purchase their land, or even to barter for a lease. For example, a retired landowner who wants to see their land stay in agriculture, but does not have an identified heir to take over their operation, may be willing to help you with more than a lease to get started.

ALSO The type of owner and their interests/motivation will also influence lease or sales terms, length of and complexity of the process, methods to advertise properties for sale/leased.

How can I find land near me?

- Google maps can help you find plots of land near where you live. www.maps.google.com

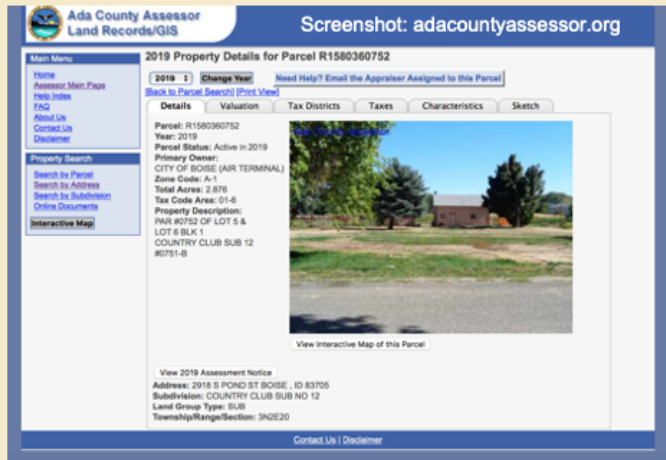


American Farmland Trust

Trainer notes: This is a strategy I often suggest for refugee growers, and a strategy we've used to identify incubator farm sites. Determine the geographic area you prefer, usually close to home to minimize driving. Notice a piece of farmland that seems unused and suitable for farming, or use Google Maps to find parcels of undeveloped land. Use the tax assessor website to determine who owns the land, and contact them about whether they'd be interested in a lease agreement. Photo: screenshot from maps.google.com

I see some land I like. Who owns it?

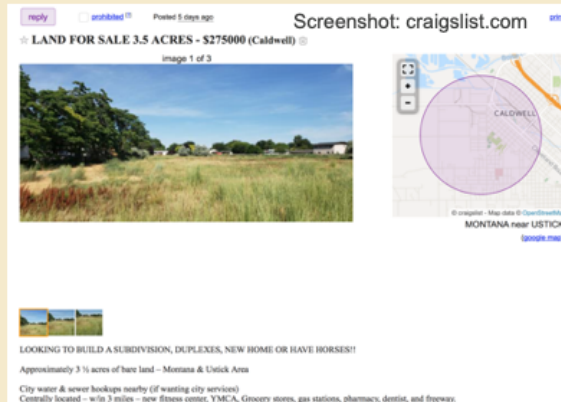
- Go to the Ada County Assessor Website to find out: www.adacountyassessor.org



Trainer notes: This is a strategy I often suggest for refugee growers, and a strategy we've used to identify incubator farm sites. Determine the geographic area you prefer, usually close to home to minimize driving. Notice a piece of farmland that seems unused and suitable for farming, or use Google Maps to find parcels of undeveloped land. Use the tax assessor website to determine who owns the land, and contact them about whether they'd be interested in a lease agreement. Photo: screenshot from adacountyassessor.org of a farm property we use at 2918 Pond Street.

Find land lease or sale ads online:

- www.boise.craigslist.com
- www.zillow.com
- www.realtor.com



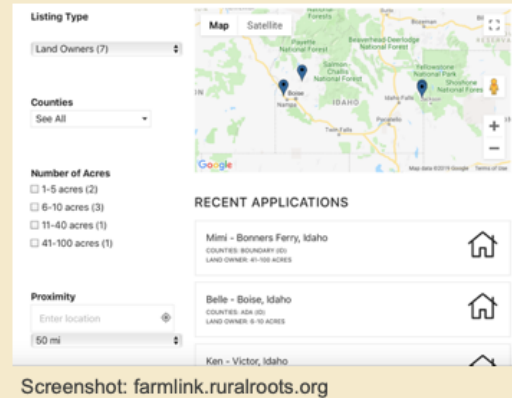
American Farmland Trust

AFT notes: Outside of farm country most real estate agents lack knowledge about agriculture, so be specific on your needs. Use the online MLS site features to customize your search, then cross reference with other information such as soils, climate.

Photo: screenshot from craigslist.com

What is Farm Link?

- FarmLink or LandLink are websites where farmers and landowners can place ads and find each other.
- Find Idaho FarmLink at www.farmlink.ruralroots.org



 American Farmland Trust

Trainer notes: If available, find the FarmLink website in your state. Idaho's FarmLink lets land seekers advertise what they are looking for and landowners advertise the land they have available. Full contact info isn't given nor is specific location, so some information is missing but interested parties can contact each other through this website. Land seekers can consider posting a land seeker ad with their land criteria. Trainers will want to make sure that someone is checking the site or the associated email address regularly, as many refugee farmers don't email on a regular basis so it would be easy to miss messages.

AFT notes:

FarmLink (LandLink) programs connect land seekers with landowners. Most include a listing service; some include a matching service as well.

<http://landforgood.org/resources/faqs/farm-link-programs/>

For a list of FarmLink programs:

<http://www.farmlandinfo.org/special-collections/4439>

Let's make a plan and find some land!



Connect to some of these sites and provide a demonstration

Ask students to create a list to include any local or regional possibilities

A written down search plan or strategy is helpful. Build a network and team to help you!

Photo: American Farmland Trust



Saving the Land that Sustains Us



American Farmland Trust

www.farmland.org