

Lancaster Farmland Trust Capital Campaign Meets and Exceeds Goals

“Honoring the Promise” Campaign Raises over \$8.4 million

for Farmland Preservation and Stewardship in Lancaster County

For immediate release: May 25, 2022

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LANCASTER, Pa. – Three years ago, Lancaster Farmland Trust knew it had to do something drastic to pick up the pace of farmland preservation in Lancaster County. Every year, 1,200 acres of rich, productive farmland are developed to make way for the county's growing population. According to projections, Lancaster County's population will surge by 100,000 people over the next 20 years.

With growth inevitable and 50 farms on its waiting list, LFT leadership knew it must act quickly to preserve these farms before they were lost forever. That's why LFT launched its "Honoring the Promise" campaign in 2019 – a \$7.5 million initiative to preserve 50 farms on 4,000 acres of rich, productive Lancaster County farmland and to make an investment in the long-term stewardship of its easements.

This effort was pioneered by Co-Chairs and community pillars Beverly Steinman of The Steinman Foundation and Steinman Communications, F. Barry Shaw of The Wenger Group, and former LFT Executive Director Karen Martynick. Together they led a committed steering committee, staff, and group of volunteers in raising funds to achieve the campaign goals. "Lancaster County is a special place. We are blessed with beautiful views, access to fresh foods, a strong economy, and an extraordinary quality of life. These blessings are made possible by the hard work of our farming community and the land they work day in and day out. Our agricultural heritage has shaped us in ways we can't count – and it's our responsibility to protect it and pass it on to future generations. This campaign achieved just that," Steinman and Shaw collectively noted.

Despite a global pandemic and a host of other challenges, our community rallied to support our farmland. More than 510 donors contributed to the campaign totaling more than \$8.4 million – exceeding the campaign goal by nearly \$1 million. The campaign leveraged more than **\$22 million** from contributions of easement value from landowners and other funding sources. The campaign also saw a resurgence in giving to farmland protection with a significant increase in donors and a cache of new donors who were introduced to the mission through the campaign. The success of the campaign – the first in the organization's history – will enable LFT to honor the promise it has made to farm families who want to protect their land and its commitment to the community to preserve what is unique and special about Lancaster County.

The Steinman Foundation played a critical role in the campaign's success, by contributing a \$2 million matching grant to the effort – the largest gift ever awarded by the Foundation and the largest single gift ever received by Lancaster Farmland Trust. "Through our multi-decade relationship with Lancaster Farmland Trust, we've learned a couple of things about farmland in Lancaster County. We've learned that it's a national treasure, and it's something that needs to be preserved. It's under a

lot of pressure. This is the time to really address the need to preserve farmland. We are so pleased and proud to be part of this story," said Shane Zimmerman, President of The Steinman Foundation.

Jeff Swinehart, President and CEO of Lancaster Farmland Trust, added, "Our Honoring the Promise Campaign has propelled our mission forward, ensuring that the rich, productive farmland of Lancaster County is protected forever. The campaign enabled the preservation of 62 farms and 4,040 acres of land, which includes 93,668 feet of stream frontage and 394 acres of forested land. We are leaving a remarkable legacy to future generations – our farmland and natural resources protected in perpetuity. I'm grateful that our community has joined us in making the campaign a reality. Because of you, we have fulfilled our promise through this campaign. And now, we'll use this momentum to push this movement forward."

In the 34 years since Lancaster Farmland Trust was founded, it has permanently preserved more than 34,000 acres of farmland on 550 farms. It has played a vital role in making Lancaster County a national leader in preserving farmland. Lancaster County ranks #1 in the nation in acres of protected farmland.

"Lancaster County is blessed with the most productive, non-irrigated farmland in the country. We have an obligation to protect this important natural resource – both to honor our past and to leave a lasting legacy for the future," said LFT Board Chairman Don Hess. "One of the primary reasons we embarked on this campaign – and why I supported this campaign personally - was to save our beautiful farmland for what it produces and for current and future generations to enjoy. Once farmland is developed, nothing can bring it back."

Lancaster Farmland Trust is a private, nonprofit organization with the mission of preserving farmland and sustaining agriculture in Lancaster County. It was founded in 1988 and has evolved into a successful, dynamic organization that is serving the needs of our community and protecting our extraordinary quality of life for future generations.