

Lancaster Farmland Trust Announces President/CEO – Jeff Swinehart

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Lancaster Farmland Trust (LFT) Board of Trustees has announced Jeff Swinehart to become the chief executive of the organization, effective January 1, 2022. Swinehart's new title will be President & CEO. He will succeed Karen Martynick, who is retiring from her position as Executive Director. Since 2004, Martynick has dedicated herself to building LFT into one of the most successful, and one of the 50 largest, land trusts in the nation. LFT has preserved 540 farms and 33,202 acres. LFT's success, when combined with the Lancaster County Agricultural Preserve Board, results in Lancaster County having more protected farmland than any other county in the nation.

"I was a staff member nearly two decades ago when a group of community leaders interviewed Karen for the Executive Director position," said Swinehart. "Since that time, I've witnessed an incredible evolution of the organization – made possible by Karen's diligence, careful consideration and the utmost of respect for the community she serves. Now, as she heads into retirement, I look forward to continuing that tradition of integrity and dedication as President and Chief Executive Officer."

This shift in organizational structure is part of an established succession plan to strategically transition operational responsibilities and leadership to Swinehart, which has been in process since 2019. In accordance with the strategy, the Board of Trustees also announced two promotions - the appointment of Amanda Hickle to Vice President of Development & Communications, and Jeb Musser as Vice President of Land Protection.

"Jeff is a positive and energetic leader. His knowledge of the organization and passion for farmland conservation have earned him the esteem of our staff, Board, and donors," said LFT Chair of the Board of Trustees, G. Donald Hess. "The Board is excited to work with Jeff as our new President & CEO. We are confident that Lancaster Farmland Trust will be well positioned under his guidance to thrive in the years to come."

Swinehart has been with LFT since 2000, most recently in the role of Chief Operating Officer. With a core understanding of the organization's mission and vision, Swinehart has a successful record in advancing the organization's strategic objectives and facilitating the expansion of LFT's programmatic priorities. During his tenure, Swinehart and his team have built Lancaster Farmland Trust's easement portfolio into the largest of the more than 70 land trusts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Swinehart's conservation leadership includes serving as a member of the WeConservePA Board of Directors and Policy Committee, Chairman of the Manheim Township Planning Commission, and soon to be Chair of the Lancaster Clean Water Partners beginning in 2022. In 2019, he began serving a three-year term as the Mid-Atlantic representative for Terrafirma RRG, LLC, and recently was re-elected to serve a second, three-year term.

Prior to beginning his career in environmental conservation as a Land Preservation Assistant with LFT, Swinehart graduated from Mansfield University in 1999 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography, plus minors in Geology and Regional Planning. In 2009, he earned a Master's degree in Public Administration from the Pennsylvania State University.

As a lifelong resident of Lancaster County, Swinehart's passion for farmland preservation comes from spending his childhood in the southern end of the county and working on a family-owned dairy farm. He currently resides in Manheim Township with his wife and two children.

Swinehart's Education:

Pennsylvania State University, (M.A., Public Administration)

Mansfield University of Pennsylvania (B.S., Geography with Environmental Science emphasis; Minor in Geology and Regional Planning)

Swinehart's Professional Affiliations:

Lancaster Clean Water Partners – Executive & Steering Committees

Manheim Township Planning Commission – Chairman

WeConservePA – Board of Directors & Policy Committee member

Partners for Place – Lancaster County's Places 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Growing Greener Coalition – Executive Committee

Terrafirma RRG LLC – Mid-Atlantic Member Representative

Leadership Lancaster – Core class 2006

About Lancaster Farmland Trust

Lancaster Farmland Trust was established in 1988 by local citizens concerned about the growing threat of development in Lancaster County. LFT works to preserve and steward the beautiful, productive farmland of Lancaster County that reflects our heritage, supports our economy, nurtures our health and enhances our quality of life.

Details at www.lancasterfarmlandtrust.org