

January 30, 2020

Rockefeller Foundation  
Food System Vision Prize  
420 Fifth Avenue  
New York City, New York

RE: Agrarian Commons for Central Appalachia and Middle Tennessee

To Whom it May Concern,

On behalf of The Land Trust for Tennessee (<https://www.landtrusttn.org/>), I am writing to express our support for the Agrarian Trust's application to the Rockefeller Foundation for the 2020 Food System Vision Prize.

Tennessee's economy is driven by the agriculture and forestry sectors, which generate billions of dollars in economic impact annually according to the State of Tennessee. The Land Trust for Tennessee has been a leader in farmland conservation across Tennessee since our founding in 1999. Our strategic use of conservation easements across 69 counties has led to the protection of 130,000 acres of family farms, forests, open spaces, natural areas, and historic lands. We work with landowning families to ensure that some of Tennessee's most productive farmland remains available for agricultural use, helping to support local food systems for millions of current and future residents in rural areas and in population centers such as Nashville, one of the fastest growing metropolitan area in the United States, and also Chattanooga, and Knoxville.

Our Middle Tennessee office is located at The Land Trust for Tennessee's historic Glen Leven Farm, a 64-acre landscape suitable for growing local vegetables for area restaurants, hops for local breweries, and honey and beeswax for local consumption, all just four miles from downtown Nashville.

*Forever Tennessee*, our Strategic Conservation Plan completed in Fall of 2019, lists Farmland as a top Resource Protection Priority for our organization, and sets specific goals to conserve multigenerational family farms with fertile soils in Conservation Opportunity Regions across the state, including Middle and East Tennessee.

The Land Trust for Tennessee is currently working with the Farris Family, in collaboration with the Agrarian Trust, to permanently conserve the 487-acre Windy Acres Farm, a leading producer of organic grain and grass-fed meats. We believe that the conservation of this farm, located in a rapidly growing area just 45-minutes from downtown Nashville, and its transition into the Middle Tennessee Agrarian Commons, will serve as a long-term stewardship model for sustaining and enhancing food production on some of the region's best farmland.

We look forward to future collaboration with Agrarian Trust to establish and expand these long-term stewardship opportunities for legacy farms in Middle and East Tennessee. With that shared vision in mind, The Land Trust for Tennessee supports Agrarian Trust's application to the Rockefeller Foundation's Food System Vision Prize program.

Sincerely,



Emily Parish, Vice President of Conservation  
The Land Trust for Tennessee