

Dine Out for Farms™

Talking Points and Sound-bites for Bloggers

What is Dine Out for Farms™?

American Farmland Trust's inaugural *Dine Out for Farms™* is a national, week-long event that will bring together restaurants and consumers to support a sustainable future for America's farms. By dining out, you are supporting efforts to help local and regional farms.



American Farmland Trust
DINE OUT for FARMs

Who is American Farmland Trust?

American Farmland Trust is the nation's leading conservation organization dedicated to saving America's farm and ranch land, promoting environmentally sound farming practices and supporting a sustainable future for farms. Since its founding in 1980 by a group of farmers and citizens concerned about the rapid loss of farmland to development, the organization has helped save millions of acres of farmland and led the way for the adoption of conservation practices on millions more.

American Farmland Trust's vision is one of U.S. towns and cities surrounded by healthy farms with thriving networks in place to make fresh food from nearby farms a reality for everyone.

Here are some talking points about the importance of farms and farmland that you might use in writing a letter to the editor, a blog post or more:

Farmland is a key ingredient for restaurants---just as important as the kitchen, the food they prepare, and the diners. For without farm and ranchland, we have no food.

Each year, the United States has been losing nearly one million acres of farmland. That's more than an acre of land a minute, or an area the size of Massachusetts every five years. Once a productive farm is lost, it's usually lost forever, and the ripple effect can be tremendous.

By participating in the *Dine Out for Farms™* event, consumers can show their support for farms locally and farms in their region. Farmers and ranchers manage nearly half of all the land in the continental United States. Farmers need our help to stay in business.

Farms produce more than food, fiber and home-grown energy—they produce environmental and community benefits like clean water, wildlife habitat, clean air and open spaces. Keeping farms in our community will help provide these benefits now and in the future.

An astonishing 91% of our nation's fruit and 78% of vegetables and 67% of dairy products, by value, are grown on farms near urban areas. Those same farms are at the greatest risk for development.

In 2006, 87 percent of restaurants purchased some of their menu items locally—by supporting the *Dine Out for Farms™* restaurants, you're helping support a vibrant local and regional agriculture sector.

By Dining Out for Farms, you are helping provide an important market for your local and regional farms. When farms are economically healthy, they are less likely to lose their farmland to development.

