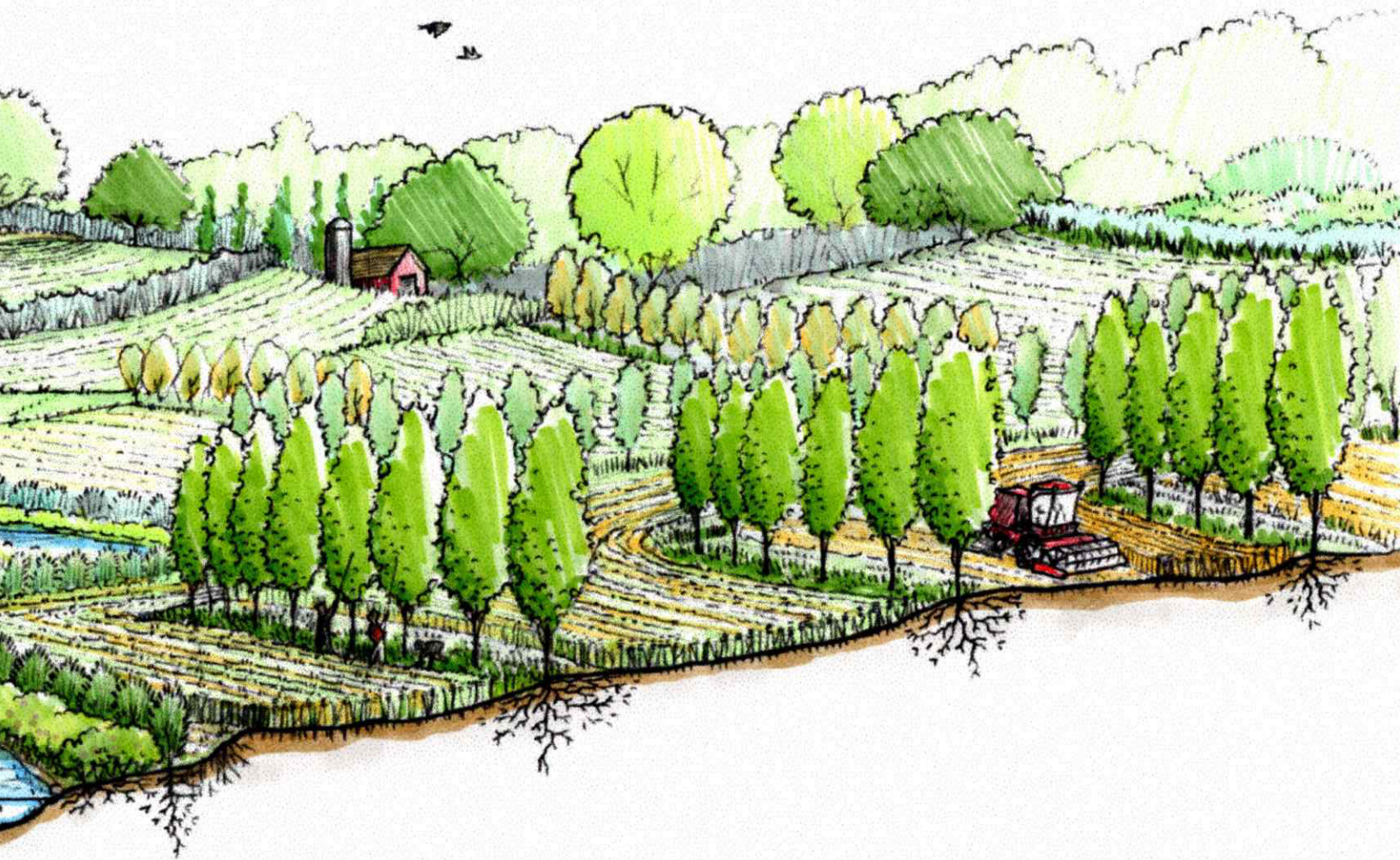




PERENNIAL REPORT



SAVANNA INSTITUTE

How to Give

Visit us at SavannaInstitute.org/donate or contact Alison Long, Director of Development, to learn more about supporting our work.

Alison Long, Director of Development
alison@savannainstitute.org | 608.448.6432 ext. 211

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SAVANNA INSTITUTE

EST. 2013

Based in Spring Green, WI and Champaign, IL
Administrative office and mailing address:
2453 Atwood Ave. Suite 209
Madison, WI 53704

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Fields Restored Demonstration Farm in Oregon, IL includes 20 acres of alley cropping established in 2015.

REPORT DESIGN: Roxanne Marina
COVER ILLUSTRATION: Paul Littleton

Letter from our EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Laying the groundwork for widespread agroforestry at the North Farm, part of Savanna Institute's Campus located in Spring Green, WI.

This past harvest season was a special one. The first orchard trees I planted had finally grown big enough to climb. And at four years old, my daughter was ready to be a big kid and climb up and away. Even better, it was the first real bumper apple crop for these trees. My heart grew an extra size.

Similar feelings arise as I reflect on ten years of the Savanna Institute growing up. What an incredible privilege it's been to help build an organization dedicated to unlocking the power of trees on farms to make the world better for our kids. My heart is full of thanks for all of you who have joined with us to bring this vision to life, in our shared belief that the world needs more of this.

Increasingly, even the establishment has to agree. I recently had the honor of representing the Savanna Institute at the USDA's 99th annual Agricultural Outlook Forum. To a room of the USDA's top brass and agribusiness big cheeses, I shared our work to catalyze widespread agroforestry. Ten years of research and outreach to Midwestern farms built my case for why agroforestry — diversified, perennial crop and livestock systems that feature trees — offers a viable climate solution, one that also generates ecological resilience, economic opportunity, and food security. Highlighting the need to move on from the “get big or get out” mantra, the Secretary of Agriculture said in his own address to the Forum, “It's not just get big, it's diversify. It's create multiple profit centers in your farming operation.”

At the Savanna Institute, planting trees is about something much bigger. Trees are only one way to bring us closer to a world that is more fair, just, and whole; we know that trees alone are not enough to create the systems-level change we need. But we also know that the promised land surely includes our children enjoying the fruits of our labor and climbing trees full of birdsong.

There's a lot needed to fully realize agriculture's powerful potential to become a just and lasting climate solution. Improved perennial crops, diverse cropping systems, integrated livestock, and appropriate technology. Fair labor standards, just land reform, and holistic social support systems. Equitable policies, reliable markets, sensible incentives, and resilient food

systems. Intact ecologies, cohesive human communities, and participatory governance systems. Without all these pieces coming together to support transformation, we can't just ask farmers to change their ways and become climate heroes. More than just the pieces, we need a revival of our vision of agriculture — as J. Russell Smith, Leah Penniman, and many others have noted — and a renewal of the social contract with farmers.

Ten years ago, when the Savanna Institute was started by a volunteer group of farmers, graduate students, and friends in central Illinois, it was hard to imagine how much we could change (page 6). But we hung out our shingle and issued a rallying call for people who shared our vision for a more perennial and diverse agriculture. There wasn't yet a team in the field assisting landholders in implementing thousands of acres of agroforestry each year (page 16), nor was there a farm management business making it easy for landholders to choose agroforestry (page 26). There wasn't a network of demonstration farms (page 18), nor an 800-acre farm campus dedicated to agroforestry R&D, advanced training, and public engagement (page 19). There wasn't a tree crop improvement program using cutting edge plant science to level the playing field for perennial crops (page 24). There wasn't a youtube channel and a podcast reaching new audiences with practical and inspiring media about perennial agriculture (page 12). The secretary of agriculture wasn't calling to diversify farms, nor were senators talking about agroforestry in the farm bill.

Ten years in, all that and more is happening, thanks to you and everyone who has been a part of Savanna Institute's growth. Thanks to the small group in central Illinois ten years ago who donated their time. Thanks to the original Native stewards of oak savannas, who continue to partner with the land here to co-create one of the most productive, resilient, and beautiful agroecosystems humans

have ever lived in. The hallmarks of oak savannas — deep roots, diversity, abundance, and human co-creators — give us a vision for what farming of the future needs to look like. If the last decade has taught me anything, it's that this why of Savanna Institute makes possible the amazing *what* of our work. Read on to learn about these *whats*: all our work to open doors for more trees on farms. And note the *how*: all supporters, foundations, and other funders who share this vision for the *why* (page 10). Thank you all for making it possible.

What will the next 10 years bring? The *why* will remain: we will always need deep-rooted, diversified agriculture, and long after we cease burning fossil fuels, we'll need trees to keep drawing carbon out of the atmosphere. The *what* will evolve to meet the needs of farmers and other stakeholders, from the building blocks of developing improved tree crop varieties, to the mortar of partnerships that hold together resilient food and farming systems. The *how* depends on you—the *who!*—and the community of supporters that believe in the Savanna Institute as a crucible for transforming our relationships with the land and each other.

Whether you're already a part of the who, or if reading this is your first introduction to the Savanna Institute, I invite you to join us for the next 10 years. Come to a farm field day or the Perennial Farm Gathering (page 21). Check out a video or podcast (page 12). Become a monthly sustaining donor (page 2). One way or another, please join us. We need you to find your part in developing an agriculture where we nourish each other, as we strive together to be good ancestors in a geography of hope.



Perennially grateful,
Keefe Keeley
Executive Director

info@savannainstitute.org

10 YEARS GROWING AGROFORESTRY

Inspired by the oak savanna native to the region, the Savanna Institute conducts research, education, and outreach to support the growth of diverse, perennial agroecosystems in the Great Lakes and Upper Mississippi watersheds.

Our Story

The Savanna Institute grew out of a gathering of Midwestern farmers, graduate students, and community members interested in ecological agriculture. Together around a kitchen table on a farm in central Illinois, the volunteer group started building a network and a nonprofit organization to support farmers in the region. Mark Shepard had just published his book *Restoration Agriculture*, which helped inspire Savanna Institute's mission — along with J. Russell Smith's vision of many "Institutes of Mountain Agriculture" in his book *Tree Crops: A Permanent Agriculture*.

Since its genesis in 2013, the Savanna Institute has grown to add demonstration farms, educational programs, and research initiatives to develop a more diverse, perennial agriculture—the way the native oak savanna ecosystem intended. Our growth is only possible through the hard work of staff, the vision of farmers and other partners, and the generous support from all who see the necessity of perennial agriculture as a natural climate and water quality solution. Thank you to all in our community who have helped us grow over the years.

ILLUSTRATION: Paul Littleton



2013

The Savanna Institute was founded by a small group of volunteer board members in Illinois.

Launched our first program, the “Bulk Plant Program,” which offered farmers custom orders of tree crop planting stock from select nurseries.

2014

Keefe Keeley joined the Savanna Institute as Executive Director.

Launched the Case Study Program with seven farms across three states, creating a participatory knowledge network for tree crop plantings.

2015

Received our first grant to study “Crop Performance, Pests, and Pollinators in Diverse Agroforestry Systems.”

Held our first official farmer gathering, which became known as the Perennial Farm Gathering, a one-of-a-kind community learning and networking event for perennial farming enthusiasts that we've hosted every year since.

2016

Published, with Farm Commons, *Inspirations for Creating a Long-Term Agricultural Lease for Agroforestry: A Workbook* by drawing on our case studies of farmers who secured long-term access to farmland for agroforestry enterprises.

Held our first workshops, on silvopasture and perennial crop management.

2017

Kevin Wolz transitioned from his role as founding President of the Board of the Directors to become Co-Executive Director, and Kristy Gruley was hired as our first program staff.

Published *Perennial Pathways: Planting Tree Crops*, a foundational handbook for farmers adopting agroforestry, with lead author Matt Wilson.

2018

Launched our first video series profiling six established Midwestern agroforestry farms.

Premiered *Persistence: Midwest Farmers and their Uncommon Crops*, a mini-documentary by filmmaker Anders Gurda produced by the Savanna Institute and partners.

2019

Launched our Apprenticeship Program, which provides on-farm learning and mentorship opportunities with experienced agroforestry farmers.

Established first alley cropping demonstration at Silverwood Agricultural Park, part of the Dane County, WI public park system.

Published the Hazelnut and Chestnut Impact Investment Plans to identify bottlenecks and opportunities for the marketplace.

2020

Became the steward of the first of our four farms that make up the Spring Green Campus in Wisconsin's Driftless Region.

Partnered with the University of Illinois and Lourash Farms to establish an alley cropping demonstration at 4-H Memorial Camp in Allerton Park near Monticello, IL.

Partnered with Scott and Sandy Williams and their farmers The Rodgers Family to establish Fields Restored Demonstration Farm, which features a multi-functional riparian buffer and silvopasture experiment.

2021

Added two more farms to the Spring Green Campus, each demonstrating agroforestry in a different context and scale, and offering settings for long-term research and intensive farmer training.

Launched our Technical Service Program to provide one-on-one farm planning support to landowners, and our Water Quality Program to focus outreach to landowners in key watersheds.

Launched our Breeding and Commercialization Programs to improve tree crops and their markets.

2022

Spun off Canopy, a perennial farm management business and tree crop nursery serving Wisconsin and Illinois. Kevin Wolz stepped away from his role as Savanna Institute Co-Executive Director to lead Canopy as its Chief Executive Officer.

Established Hudson Demonstration Farm with support from NRCS in a long-term partnership with Savanna Institute-supporter Cathe Capel, which features a 20-acre windbreak and 100 acres of annual and perennial alley cropping.

Received USDA Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities grant with partners The Nature Conservancy, Organic Valley, and more.

Meet our Team

OUR STAFF

Kaitie Adams
Demonstration Farm Director

Scott Brainard
Tree Crop Breeder

Fany Bortolin
Director of Finance

Devon Brock-Montgomery
Water Quality Program Manager and Tribal Liaison

David Bruce
Director of Agroforestry Adoption

PJ Connolly
Business Analyst

Erin Crooks Lynch
Spring Green Campus Engagement Manager

Bill Davison
Value Chain Development Manager

Barbara Decré
Agroforestry Programs Manager

Heather Driscoll
Event Coordinator

Kathleen Fitzgibbon
Operations Manager

Renee Gasch
Assistant Director of Communications

Jacob Grace
Communications Project Manager

Eliza Greenman
Germplasm Specialist

Kristy Gruley
Education Program Manager

Lucas Gully
Campus Field Crew

Erik Hagan
Spring Green Campus Farm Director

Dave Hopey
Field Operations Manager

Fred Iutzi
Director of Research and Commercialization

Keefe Keeley
Executive Director

Omar de Kok-Mercado
Technical Service Provider

Nate Lawrence
Ecosystem Scientist

Alison Long
Director of Development

Sven Pihl
Technical Service Provider, Illinois

Sam Purnell
Administrative Assistant

Jenn Ripp
Education and Apprenticeships Coordinator

Monika Shea
Landscape Ecologist

Xinyuan Shi
Research Fellow

Meg Weidenhof
Campus Field Crew Lead

Kate Wersan
Senior Director, Impact and Engagement

Matt Wilson
Technical Service Provider Manager

Kevin Wolz
Lead Scientist

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Richard Omar Warner
Sarah Wentzel-Fischer
Sandra Williams
Wendy Yang
Gary Zimmer

Our Community is Growing

The Savanna Institute uses art and media to tell farmer stories and help audiences visualize a different way of farming in the Midwest. Our goal is to move agroforestry from the margins of Midwest farming to mainstream acceptance. To achieve that, we create multimedia educational materials that are accessible to a wide set of audiences, experience levels, and learning styles.

IN 2022, THE ORGANIZATION GENERATED:

135K video views
33K website visitors
10K newsletter subscribers
8K podcast listens
5K PDF downloads
1K event registrations

TARGETED COMMUNITY OUTREACH IN ILLINOIS AND WISCONSIN RESULTED IN:

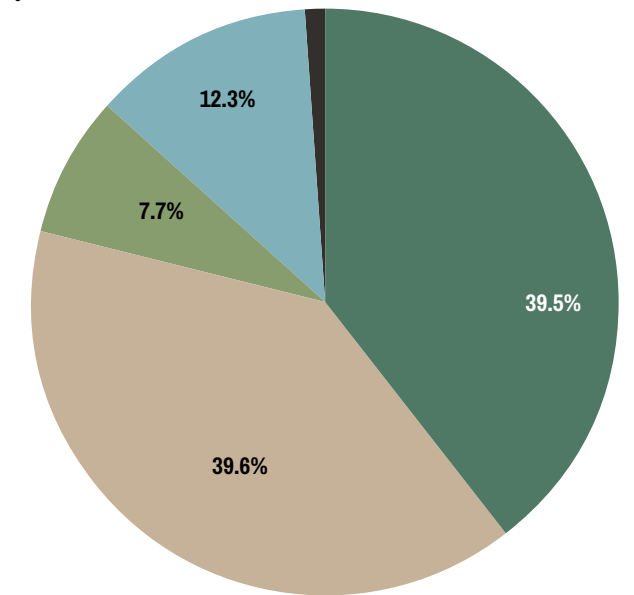
15K landowners reached
43 farmers enrolled in Technical Service
2K (2,288) more acres in transition to agroforestry

IN TEN YEARS, WE'VE DIRECTLY IMPACTED:

8K (8,281) acres of Midwest farmland

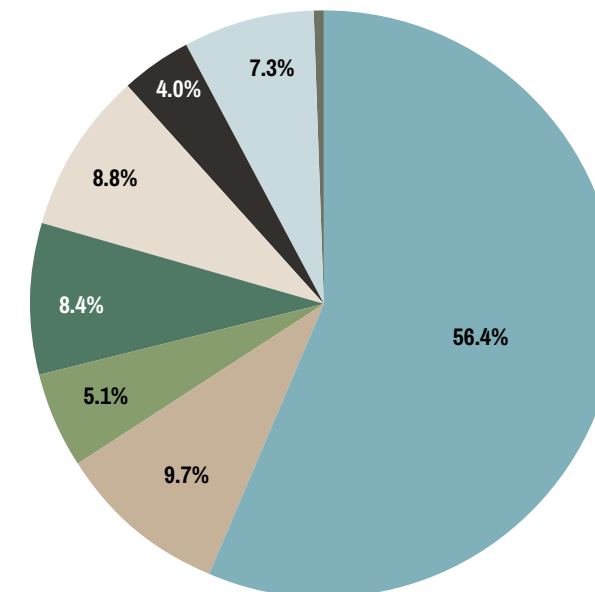
2022 Income

- Government Grants
- Other Grants
- Programs
- Donations and Gifts
- Other Income



2022 Expenses

- Staff
- Operations
- Education/Outreach
- Agroforestry Adoption
- Spring Green Campus
- Demonstration Farms
- Research & Development
- Fundraising



10 Years of Gratitude to our Funders, Supporters and Partners

4-H Memorial Camp at Allerton Park
7 Sisters Farm
Nathan Aaberg
Agrarian Trust
Michelle Ajamian
Allerton Park & Retreat Center
Koji Amakawa
American Farmland Trust
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continued on page 13

PHOTO: Canopy



Perennial AF

An agroforestry podcast and blog by the Savanna Institute

Hosted by Jacob Grace, Perennial AF is a fun storytelling platform we use to engage mainstream audiences in topics related to perennial agriculture. AF stands for agroforestry of course, and each episode introduces listeners to tips, tricks, and lessons learned from Midwest farmers and Savanna Institute staff. Here are some episodes you'll find at SavannaInstitute.org/PerennialAF or wherever you get your podcasts:

- Grazing on Solar Farms, Raising Farm Dogs, and Goat Wrangling with Aaron Steele
- New Forest Farm Tour with Mark Shepard
- Shower Goats and Arctic Kiwis with Xinyuan Shi
- "Perennial Dreams and Realities" Keynote by Dr. Ricardo Salvador, 2022 Perennial Farm Gathering
- How NOT to Start a Farm with Marie Raboin
- The Climate Conversation Podcast: Agroforestry and the Farm Bill
- Partnering for Agroforestry, Part II: Nettle Valley Farm, Southern Ohio Chestnut Company, and Delight Flower Farm
- "Is This Really A Dairy Farm?" Ask-a-Farmer with Greg Galbraith
- Cooking with Perennial Ingredients Beth Dooley, Linda Hezel, Rick Mullins, & Taylor Neff
- "We Have Mongoose Pressure" Silvopasture Farmer-to-Farmer Interviews
- "Why Do Farmers Wear Overalls?" Farmers answer commonly Googled questions about farming
- Agriculture as a Climate Solution: Just Add Trees
- "A Growth Mindset for Agroforestry" featuring Bill Davison
- Partnering for Agroforestry, Part I
- "The Indiana Jones of Agroforestry" with Eliza Greenman
- Why are we still using old AF technology? Ask-an-Agroforester with Eric Wolske

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Wii Crombie of Man Alone Media
and staff Jacob Grace
interview Kaitie Adams.

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USDA NCR Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)
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USDA Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
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Wisconsin SARE
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Scott and Sandy Williams, Fields Restored Farm
John Williams, Sola Gratia Farm
Willy Street Co-op
Bill Wilson
Chuck Wilson
Gayle Wilson
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Cristel Zoebisch, Carbon180
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SAVANNA INSTITUTE
OFFICES
Spring Green, WI
Madison, WI
Champaign, IL



SAVANNA INSTITUTE
DEMONSTRATION FARMS
Spring Green Campus, Spring
Green, WI
Silverwood, Edgerton, WI
Fields Restored, Oregon, IL
Hudson Farm, Urbana, IL
4-H Memorial Camp,
Monticello, IL



APPRENTICESHIP FARMS
Nettle Valley Farm, Spring
Grove, MN
Salvatierra Farms, Northfield,
MN
Joia Food Farms, Charles City,
IA
Red Fern Farm, Wapello, IA
Spring Green Campus, Spring
Green, WI
Prairie Birthday Farm,
Kearney, MO
Lily Springs Farm, Osceola, WI
Mary Dirty Face Farm,
Menomonie, WI
Branches and Berries,
Wauzeka, WI
Green Horizon Farm, Elk
Mound, WI
Canopy Farm Management,
Champaign, IL
Brambleberry Farm, Paoli, IN
Merry Lea Sustainable Farm,
Wolf Lake, IN
Nightfall Farm, Crothersville,
IN
Route 9 Cooperative,
Carrollton, OH



OTHER PARTNER FARMS
Organic Compound, Faribault,
MN
All Seasons Farm, Cashton, WI
Riveredge Nature Center,
Saukville, WI
Ozaukee Washington Land
Trust, West Bend, WI
Vulcan Farm, Forrest, IL
Saturn Farm, Elwood, IL
Prairie Fruits Farm and
Creamery, Champaign, IL
Autumn Mill Farm, Argenta, IL
Delight Flower Farm,
Champaign, IL
Chiwara Permaculture
Research & Education,
Shelby, MI

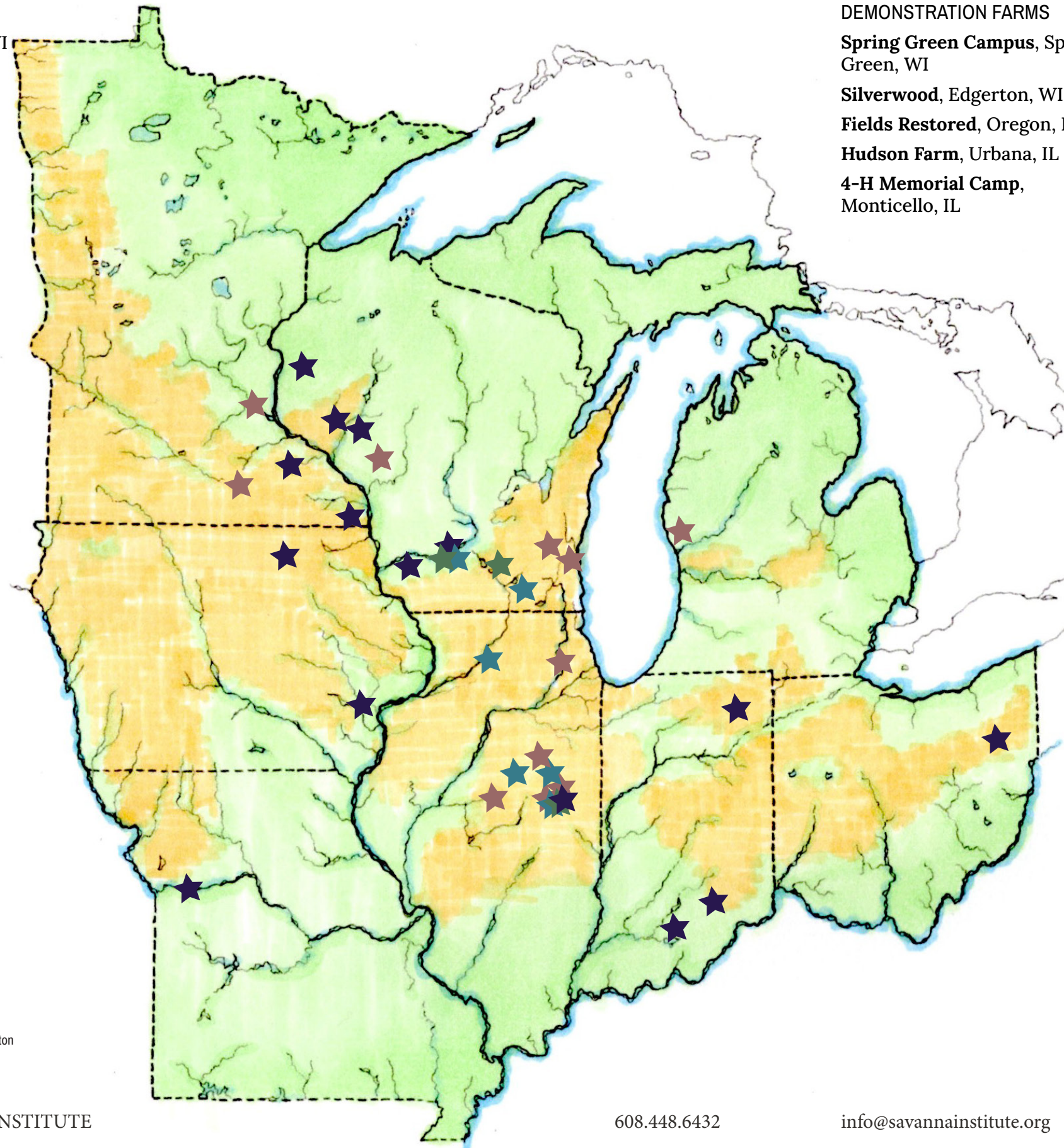


ILLUSTRATION: Paul Littleton

“I trust Savanna Institute to be careful stewards of land that’s important to me and my family, and to develop and spread farming practices that will increase biodiversity and fight climate change.”

Jack Lenehan, Donor

Publications

Our collection of resources has grown to include 15 publications, all available to download at SavannaInstitute.org/resources.



BOOKS

Perennial Pathways: Planting Tree Crops

Guidebook for Financing Perennial Farms

FACTSHEETS

Understanding Agroforestry

Key Perennial Crops

Partnering for Agroforestry: Case Studies

GROWER GUIDES

American Elderberry: A Native Perennial Crop for the Midwest

Black Currant: A Superfruit for the Midwest

REPORTS

Overcoming Bottlenecks in the Eastern US Chestnut Industry

Overcoming Bottlenecks in the Midwest Hazelnut Industry

Generating Value Through a Long-Term Agroforestry Lease: Tips for Landowners

Inspirations for Creating a Long-Term Agricultural Lease for Agroforestry

Livestock impacts on Silvopasture Tree Establishment

Managing Food Safety Liability Risks when Integrating Livestock with Specialty Crops

Urban Agroforestry Training Programs: A Joint Report

Illinois Agroforester's Report: Planting Trees to Build Community in East-Central Illinois



Agroforestry Technical Service

In September 2020, the Savanna Institute launched its Technical Service Program to help answer the call from farmers for more one-on-one agroforestry technical assistance.

By 2022, our team of technical service providers grew to three. Together with our outreach specialists on the Adoption Team, we offer free support to landowners and farmers in the Midwest to help them plan, design and finance successful perennial

systems. In its first full year, the Technical Service Program worked directly with **43 farmers** to adopt agroforestry on **2,288 acres** in the upper Midwest – more than doubling the total acres impacted for the Savanna Institute over the last ten years. Savanna Institute's Adoption Team led targeted outreach to **15,000 landholders** in critical watersheds where agroforestry is well-suited, and secured funding for the next scale up of the Program.

In 2023, the Savanna Institute is honored to serve as the Midwest lead on a flagship USDA Partnership for Climate-Smart Commodities, a historic federal grant program to fund the transition to more sustainable food production. As part of the grant, the Savanna Institute is hiring new technical service providers to meet the growing demand and expand support across the Midwest.

SUSTAINABLE START

\$100



SUSTAINABLE START GIFT PACKAGE

Instead of buying plants from nurseries which increases our carbon footprint through transportation and delivery, this package helps us work in smaller packages of seeds and scion to get our Home Farm Nursery and plantings off to the most sustainable start. One pound of seed plants one acre and ensures further revenue to support education, research, and demonstration. Visit savannainstitute.org/giving to purchase.

“All of us here are focused on regenerative practices, resilience-based practices working towards happiness and health of ourselves and our livestock and the land.”

Dayna Burtress
Nettle Valley Farm
2022 Young Shoots Award



To apply for technical service or learn more:
Visit SavannaInstitute.org/technical-service
Call 608.448.6432
Email info@savannainstitute.org



Growing our Demonstration Farm Network

To adopt agroforestry, Midwest farmers need to see perennial systems demonstrated at the scale of a commercial farm. That is why Savanna Institute's Demonstration Farm network is a critical part of our work. We run Demonstration Farms in Illinois and Wisconsin and collaborate with partners in Minnesota and Michigan to create accessible hubs where farmers and the public can experience an agroforestry system in action. Demonstration Farms also host tree crop germplasm repositories, variety trials and ecosystem monitoring for Savanna Institute's Research Team.

Hudson Farm is a 120-acre farm near Urbana, IL owned by Cathe Capel that demonstrates a variety of windbreak designs for wildlife, wind protection and profit. Hudson Farm also features hardwood timber and grain alley cropping, elderberry and hazelnut variety trials, and pollinator habitat. Hudson was the first major agroforestry installation launched in partnership with Canopy Farm Management, a tree planting business started by the Savanna Institute in 2021.



PHOTO: Canopy

4-H Memorial Demonstration Farm is located at Allerton Park, a 1500-acre park in Monticello, IL owned by the University of Illinois. The Savanna Institute manages a 35-acre alley cropping demonstration farm that features rows of hardwood timber with alleys of annual row-crop rotation.



PHOTO: Canopy

Fields Restored in Oregon, WI is a privately owned, 166-acre farm featuring row crop, pasture, and agroforestry plantings. The Williams family first worked with the Savanna Institute to transition 20 acres to alley cropping in 2015, and current work includes a silvopasture experiment and riparian buffer to stabilize an eroded waterway.



Staff Nate Lawrence at a field day.

Silverwood Park in Edgerton, WI is home to our first demonstration farm, established in 2019. The 18-acre, publicly accessible alley cropping demonstration field is now entering its fourth year of growth. Chestnuts, elderberry, black currant, black walnut, and hybrid poplar are interplanted between rows of organic annual crops.



Establishing the Spring Green Campus

Thanks to the generosity of neighbors and friends in Spring Green, WI, the Savanna Institute purchased land in 2020 to set up a campus. Made up of four farms along the Wisconsin River in the heart of the Driftless Region, the Spring Green Campus is Savanna Institute's first opportunity to establish agroforestry systems on land held by the Institute, which secures long-term access to crops we're planting for research trials.

In 2022, we started putting our plans into motion, hiring new field and engagement staff, planting trees, and launching five research trials to assess methods for pruning, spacing, breeding and selecting crop varieties. We worked with six private partners to lease out 300 acres of crop and pastureland — including to Canopy Farm Management, which leased land to start their bare-root tree crop nursery. And we established meaningful partnerships with

Taliesin Preservation, Savor the River Valley artisan producers, Uplands and Lowery Creek Watershed groups, among others, to strengthen our community connections.

Each of the four farms that make up the campus help us showcase agroforestry in different contexts and landscapes. In September 2022, we hosted our first open house at the North Farm, and plan to make it a perennial event each September.

North Farm is located directly north of the Wisconsin River, comprising well-drained river valley bottomland and undulated upland hillslopes. In addition to native savanna restoration and riparian management along the shorelines, we planted a seven-acre pilot farm for clonally propagated hybrid hazelnuts and established a 10.5-acre chestnut orchard for a cold-hardiness trial. As the hazels took root, we grew 20,000 lbs of organic vegetables in the alley cropping system to demonstrate ways to diversify farm income streams. We also partnered with Sauk County Land Resources and Environment to develop over 50 acres of pasture for researching and demonstrating silvopasture systems.



Staff Jenn Ripp planting chestnuts.
PHOTO 1, 2, 3: Randall Hyman, GLPF

Valley Farm consists of flat, highly productive farmland along the Wisconsin River, and is ideal for intensive research plots, our tree crop improvement program, and large scale windbreak and alley cropping demonstrations. In 2022 we planted 12 more acres of hybrid hazels as part of the tree crop improvement program, planted a five cultivar clonal hybrid hazelnut pruning trial and established a 12 cultivar elderberry variety trial. Canopy also established a 15-acre mother tree and bare-root nursery.

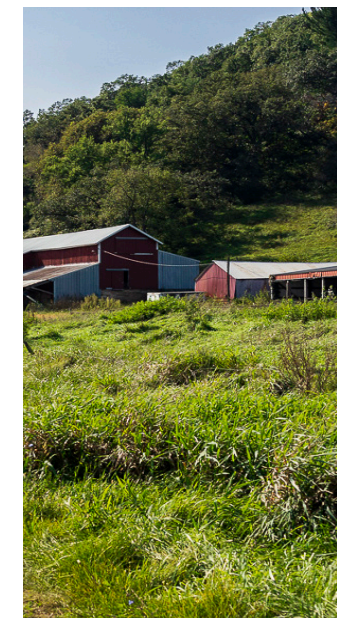


Staff Kathleen Fitzgibbon planting hazels.

Hillside Farm, located within sight of Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin, contains a mature silvopasture, extensive cattle handling and management facilities, and several modern buildings for hosting workshops and educational events. The farm is home to Savanna Institute's Retreat Center, where partners gathered to host events and meetings throughout the year. In our tenth year, the Retreat Center opens as a public facility, demonstrating the potential for agritourism with agroforestry.



South Farm contains both riparian and upland ground, and offers opportunities for multispecies silvopasture, wetland and riparian management, savanna restoration, alley cropping systems, forest farming, and facilities ideally suited for tree crop processing.



Apprenticeship Program

To transform agriculture, we need more people practicing agroforestry. The Savanna Institute launched its Apprenticeship Program in 2019 to support beginning farmers on their perennial career paths. Every summer, our Apprenticeship Program pairs apprentices with mentor farms for 10 weeks of on-farm experiential learning alongside online coursework from the Savanna Institute. The Program builds the workforce for perennial agriculture and supports our partner farms in filling seasonal vacancies. In 2022, 17 apprentices and 10 mentor farms across six states participated in Savanna Institute's Apprenticeship Program. In 2023, the Program has grown to **28 apprentices** paired with **32 mentors** on **15 farms** across **7 states**:

Nettle Valley Farm,
Spring Grove, MN

Joia Food Farms, Charles
City, IA

Spring Green Campus,
Spring Green, WI

**Canopy Farm
Management,**
Champaign, IL

Salvatierra Farms,
Northfield, MN

Red Fern Farm, Wapello, IA
Prairie Birthday Farm,
Kearney, MO

Lily Springs Farm,
Osceola, WI

Route 9 Cooperative,
Carrollton, OH

Mary Dirty Face Farm,
Menomonie, WI

Brambleberry Farm,
Paoli, IN

Branches and Berries,
Wauzeka, WI

**Merry Lea Sustainable
Farm,** Wolf Lake, IN

Green Horizon Farm,
Elk Mound, WI

Nightfall Farm,
Crothersville, IN



APPRENTICESHIP

\$2500



APPRENTICESHIPS GIFT PACKAGE

Sponsor an apprentice! On-farm, hands-on experience is hard to find. Your gift could provide experience and technical education for aspiring farmers through on-farm training with a mentor farmer and community-building opportunities for farmers, apprentices, and those interested in incorporating trees on farmland. Visit www.savannainstitute.org/giving to purchase an Apprenticeships Gift Package.

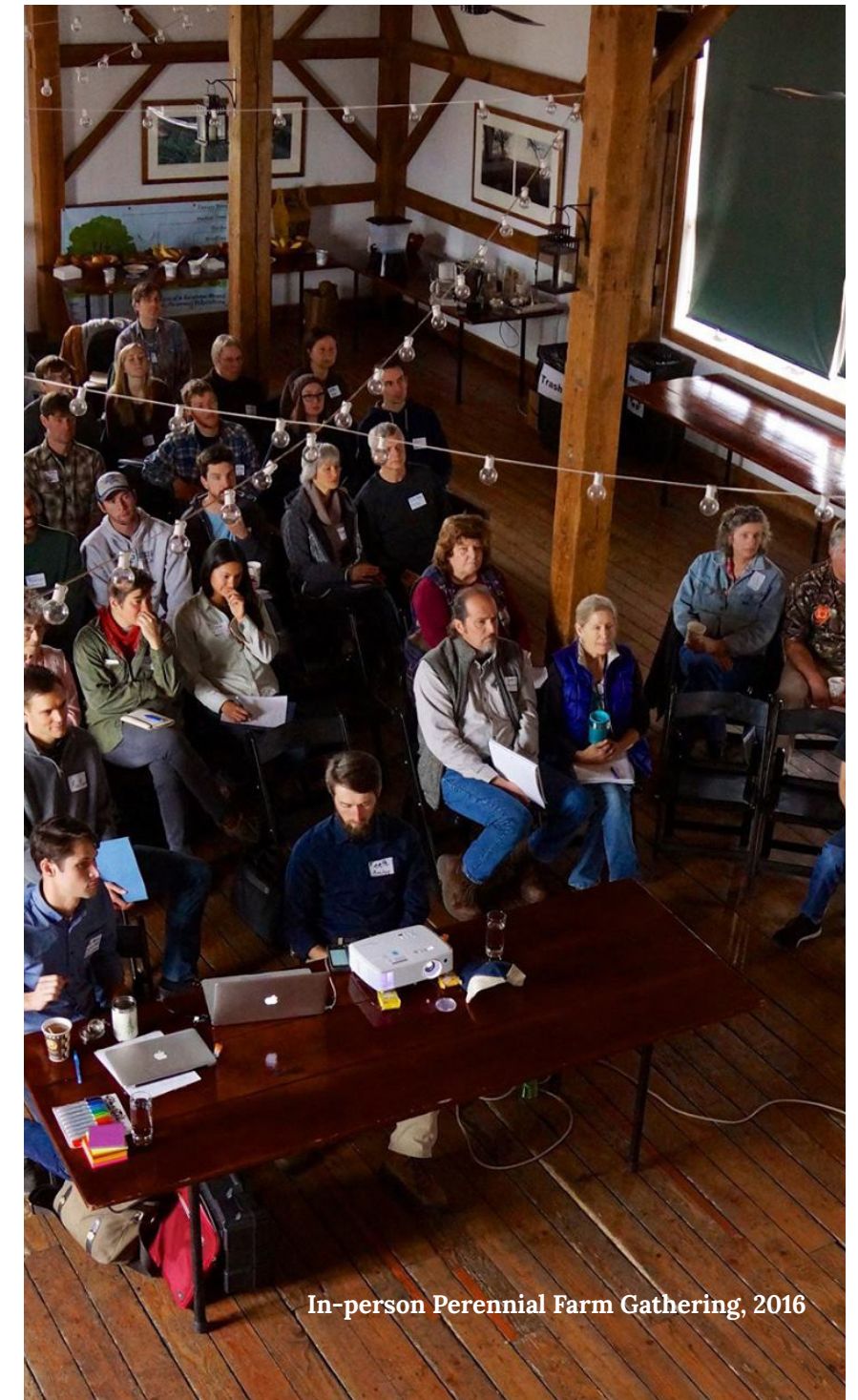
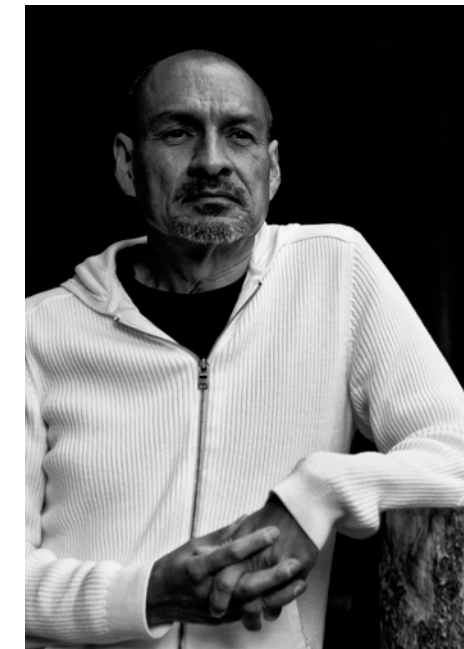
Perennial Farm Gathering

Soon after the Savanna Institute began, we started hosting our flagship event of the year: the Perennial Farm Gathering. The PFG is a rare opportunity for perennial farmers and agroforestry enthusiasts to come together and share knowledge from their last year's worth of work in the field. The PFG moved to a virtual event in 2020, creating a more affordable option for all to attend and growing our geographic connections even wider include global guests. In 2022, the three-day virtual event brought together **450 registrants** and **90 presenters** for **22 sessions**. We plan to keep the online format for now — look for an invitation to join our next virtual gathering coming this winter.

Want to learn more about sponsoring the Perennial Farm Gathering?
Email Heather Driscoll, Event Coordinator
heather@savannainstitute.org

“The world that we’re living in right now doesn’t just happen to be the world we were born into—it’s the world our ancestors imagined.”

Ricardo Salvador
Union of Concerned Scientists
2022 PFG Keynote



In-person Perennial Farm Gathering, 2016

Online Coursework

In our tenth year, the Savanna Institute launched a series of professional development courses to add to our collection of beginning farmer online courses. These self-guided educational resources available on LearnAgroforestry.com help people jump start their farms, and increase the number of professionals with agroforestry skills in our schools, government, and businesses. We're building the workforce for sustainable agriculture, equipped with the tools needed to plant more trees on farms.

NEW PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

Coming soon to LearnAgroforestry.com

Climate-Smart Agriculture: STEM Teacher Training

This STEM Teacher Training is designed for high school educators to incorporate agroforestry into their STEM classrooms. The three modules included cover the problems related to climate change and agriculture as well as solutions for addressing them with natural climate solutions. Great for educators who want project-based and place-based lesson ideas. Created with funding from SARE.

Agroforestry Practices:

Introduction to Technical Service Includes three modules on providing technical assistance, including study of three common practices: silvopasture, alley cropping, forest farming, as well as key topics in providing technical service. The course is available on-demand, or with an option for small groups to engage in cohorts, and will be tied to in-person events located across the Midwest, Northeast, and Southeast. Developed in cooperation with Interlace Commons and Appalachian Sustainable Development with funding support from the Edwards Mother Earth Foundation.

Conservation Courses

Created with funding from SARE, this collection includes four new modules studying the ecosystem benefits of perennial systems: Climate Conservation: Farming with trees; Building Soil Health Through Agroforestry; Improving Water Quality with Trees; and Providing Agroforestry Technical Assistance: The Basics.

BEGINNING FARMER COURSES

Currently available on SavannaInstitute.org/online-courses

Agroforestry Foundations

Designed to introduce you to a diversity of agroforestry practices, financial arrangements, farm designs and business models while helping you reflect on your own personal values and goals.

Social Justice and Agroforestry

For many people, at least part of their interest lies in being an active participant in an agricultural system that is more environmentally regenerative, economically viable, and socially responsible than the current dominant US agricultural system. We explore the histories and topics relevant to creating systemic social change in agriculture.

Perennial Crops & Practices in Agroforestry

Planning prior to starting an agroforestry practice or system is essential for long-term sustainability. In this course, we take a much deeper dive into planning for agroforestry, land access options and resources, and finance options and resources.

Managing Agroforestry Systems in a Changing Climate

All ecosystems are complex, including agroforestry systems. Through observing and understanding how ecosystems function in changing climate, people can work with natural processes to design and manipulate ecosystems for desired benefits in ways that are sustainable, resilient, and even regenerative.

Land Access and Finances in Agroforestry

Planning prior to starting an agroforestry practice or system is essential for long-term sustainability. In this course, we take a much deeper dive into planning for agroforestry, land access options and resources, and finance options and resources.

Marketing in Agroforestry

If selling at least one product or generating income is a goal of your agroforestry practice, then, it's important to consider how you will market the product(s) you want to sell. In this course, we review the basic elements of marketing and how to create a marketing plan for an agroforestry enterprise.

Expanding our Water Quality Program

Green, algae-filled lakes and streams are now common during the summer months in the Midwest. Downstream, dead-zones grow in the Great Lakes and Gulf of Mexico, a direct result of runoff from Midwest farms. In 2022, the Savanna Institute expanded its Water Quality Program to demonstrate the impact agroforestry systems can have on entire watersheds. We know that the deep perennial roots of tree crops hold in soil better than annual crops, and we know that tree canopies slow runoff during extreme rain events. If farmers and landowners planted more trees, we could protect water across the region for generations.

Our Water Quality Program is partnering in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Illinois to establish demonstration farms and do targeted outreach to landowners with agricultural land near waterways. Demonstration Farms in our network serve as education

and outreach hubs to grow local agroforestry adoption so we can plant more trees for water quality. At public events planned throughout the year, partners will connect community leaders with education on land-use practices that include trees. Already underway at demonstration farms in Wisconsin and Illinois, Savanna Institute's Research Team is testing soil carbon and monitoring stream health to help quantify the benefits that each agroforestry system provides the local ecosystem.

In 2022, Research Fellow Xinyuan Shi, a graduate of our Apprenticeship Program, joined the team to update the USDA's Conservation Buffers Guide for landowners looking to adopt practices that improve water quality. Our partners at the Croatan Institute and Farm Commons are collaborating with us to write a Guidebook for Financing Perennial Farms. Together, we're building a toolkit to improve

water quality in the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Basins.

Our Water Quality Program is made possible with the support of the Great Lakes Protection Fund and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Follow updates about the Water Quality Program at SavannaInstitute.org/water-quality.

"We invite you to join us as we work to preserve the Great Lakes and to respect the resources that we have via agroforestry."

Devon Brock-Montgomery
Water Quality Program Manager
and Tribal Liaison

Savanna Institute's Devon Brock-Montgomery and Barbara Decré walk the land with Water Quality Program partners from Riveredge Nature Center in Saukville, WI. PHOTO: Randall Hyman, GLPF



Investing in Agroforestry Research

Compared to annual grain and bean crops, US research into tree crops has seen systematic underinvestment for more than a century. Savanna Institute's Research Team is working to change that by scaling up its research and development into agroforestry systems and their crops.

In 2022, the Savanna Institute established a hazelnut orchard on the Spring Green Campus where Tree Crop Breeder Scott Brainard conducts research. Together with Eliza Greenman at the Savanna Institute and Malachi Persche at UW-Madison, the team is developing phenotyping and genotyping methods to accelerate the development of new varieties. Hazelnuts have the market pull to be a major perennial crop in the Midwest, and Savanna Institute's research trials

on hybrid hazels aim to improve crop suitability for the upper Midwest climate. This crop will also be a model for several other agroforestry species on which the Tree Crop Improvement Team is beginning breeding work.

To make tree crop selection easier for farmers and technical service providers, Landscape Ecologist Monika Shea is mapping suitability for over two dozen agroforestry species across the Midwest. To create the detailed maps, she compiles information on the environmental requirements necessary for each species to grow and be productive. Our team of Technical Service Providers has already started using this information to guide farm planning with clients. Next, with the support of the Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research (FFAR), Shea is creating suitability maps

under future climate scenarios to help farmers adapt to the changing climate.

In 2022, Germplasm Specialist Eliza Greenman officially joined our Research Team, and received support from the Illinois Specialty Crop Block Grant and private donations to invest approximately \$100K in persimmon genome sequencing. Our team is also laying the groundwork for persimmon suitability targets for enhanced cold tolerance breeding goals.

Also in 2022, Ecosystem Scientist Nate Lawrence joined the team to help quantify the water and climate benefits that agroforestry provides. He has already initiated several water quality and carbon sequestration studies at Demonstration Farms in Spring Green, Wisconsin and Urbana, Illinois as well as regional partner farms.

Perennial Market Development

In the summer of 2022 on an Organic Valley dairy farm in western Wisconsin, US Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced a historic investment in climate-smart commodity markets. The Savanna Institute is honored to play a key role in two of the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities grants awarded.

The flagship project, led by the Nature Conservancy, is a \$60 million grant to scale up agroforestry in 38 states across the eastern US and Hawai'i. The Savanna Institute serves as the technical service provider for the upper Midwest region. Additional partners include Canopy Farm Management, Propagate Ventures, University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry, Tuskegee University, and Virginia Tech University. The project estimates it will directly transition at least 30,000 acres of land to agroforestry as a result of the grant.


The Partnership for Climate-Smart Commodities grant, led by Organic Valley, received a total of \$25 million in funding from the USDA to reduce supply chain emissions for Organic Valley dairy and egg producers through a carbon insetting program, which rewards farmers for carbon sequestration opportunities using agroforestry practices and other best practices. The grant allows the Savanna Institute to grow its Technical Service Program, and allows Organic Valley to provide direct payments and resources to farmers to accelerate the adoption of 1,200

new carbon reduction and removal projects on 500 member-farms over the next five years.

Our Commercialization Team continued nurturing the development of small fruit shrub markets to create accessible pathways for beginning farmers to enter perennial markets. Small fruit shrubs such as American elderberry, black currants, and aronia mature faster than other perennial crops, allowing beginning farmers a quicker return on investment. When added to windbreaks or buffers, small fruit shrubs provide great pollinator and wildlife habitat in addition to another food and income source for people. That's why we've invested in growing their markets and expanding demand for agroforestry products. In our tenth year, we've achieved these milestones:

- We released multimedia guides for growing and marketing elderberry and black currants developed by Tree Crop Commercialization Lead Bill Davison and made possible by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Specialty Crop Grant.

- With support from the Matthew Zell Family Foundation, we hired Business Analyst PJ Connolly to focus on supporting market development for small fruits and other agroforestry crops, and laid the groundwork for a Small Fruit Food System Innovation plan to increase processing facilities to serve farmers in the region.
- We advanced development on a hazelnut harvester with support from a private financier and established hazelnut product collaborations with two major confectionery companies.
- Savanna Institute purchased the rights to McGinnis black currants for use in our tree crop improvement program and licensing Canopy's nursery to sell the most productive and disease-resistant cultivars available in North America.

<p>HAZELNUT</p> <p>\$250</p> 	<p>ELDERBERRY</p> <p>\$550</p> 	<p>BLACK CURRANT</p> <p>\$750</p> 	<p>CHESTNUT</p> <p>\$950</p> 
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Hazelnut Gift Package

Your gift plants 40 hazelnut seedlings that can sequester carbon while preventing erosion, improving water quality, and protecting biodiversity.



Elderberry Gift Package

Your gift plants one half acre of elderberries—that's over 450 seedlings taking root to help the planet.



Black Currant Gift Package

Your gift plants over 730 black currant seedlings that grow for local markets.



Chestnut Gift Package

Your gift plants one acre of chestnut trees, each with a potential lifespan of 250 years.



Give a gift that truly keeps on giving for generations. Explore our giving guide at SavannaInstitute.org/giving.

Canopy's First Year

Well, there it is: Canopy's inaugural year is in the books! And what a memorable year it was. We launched right into the worst of the supply chain crisis of early 2022, which delayed orders of carefully chosen equipment, followed by one of the wettest springs in Illinois recorded history, which cut our planting season in half. But thanks to the incredible effort and dedication of our team, we managed to plant over 57,000 trees - a success in our book.

There's something special when you establish an agroforestry system in the heart of the corn belt. Somewhere out there, in a corner of a landscape wiped clean every year by annual conventional agriculture, you'll know that something new, something durable and persistent, is afoot. These young trees may be hidden by the corn for now, but as we speak they are bursting forth in slow motion, transforming the soil, the water, and the ecology itself, creating a place out of an otherwise anonymous rectangle. It's hard to imagine when you look back at a freshly planted field, filled as it is with "just sticks", but a future has been set in motion that will unfold over a lifetime. It's inspiring work, and it's what drew us all to Canopy in the first place.

Let's talk numbers: those 57,000 trees were planted on nine sites totaling 789 acres across Illinois and Wisconsin. Lined up end to end, the tree rows would march 56 miles across the landscape. And speaking of numbers, each of those trees had GPS coordinates logged during planting, enabling drone and satellite imagery to be used not just for agronomic insights but also reliable quantification of carbon sequestration.



Savanna Institute's Kaitie Adams and Canopy's Kevin Wolz planting trees. PHOTOS: Canopy

At Canopy, we don't just plant trees and walk away, we also provide ongoing management services for everything from mowing to seeding, spading to spraying, pruning to harvesting. We can do it all, and we do in fact do it all on over 250 acres of new and established agroforestry operations near our main hub in Champaign, IL. Among those farms are several mature black currant plantings, from which we harvested over 12,000 pounds of berries using our mechanical harvester. Watch this space - we'll be setting harvest records for years to come!

Our first year in the nursery business was also a success, and prepared the way for significant growth in the future. We produced 11,000 trees and shrubs out of the greenhouse, along with 12,000 softwood cuttings of black currants as we populate our mother plant nursery with the best cultivars for the Midwest. In the bare-root nursery we grew over 30,000 trees and shrubs, including favorites such as chestnut, heartnut, elderberry, and persimmon. Trees are available while supplies last - and supplies will be replenished year after year!

What's next for Canopy in Year Two? Well, first of all, some of that equipment we ordered in 2021 has finally arrived, so we are excited to try that out. We're looking forward to expanding the nursery and harvesting more crops. We're looking forward to improving our efficiencies and becoming the well-oiled machine that we know we can be. But most of all, we're looking forward to seeing the trees we planted last year grow, and to send thousands more on their life journey in spring.

Happy planting!

CANOPY FARM MANAGEMENT



phone: 217.919.TREE (8733)
email: info@CanopyFM.com
website: CanopyFM.com

ABOUT CANOPY FARM MANAGEMENT

Canopy is a perennial farm management and tree planting business established by the Savanna Institute and the Grantham Foundation in 2022. To scale up agroforestry in the Midwest and unlock the potential of natural climate and water solutions, we need more tree planting services for landowners. Canopy fills that need in the marketplace, plus Canopy's nursery sells black currant, chestnut, heartnut, persimmon, pawpaw, and shrub willow increasing supply and affordability of plant material in the area. Plants purchased at CanopyFM.com/nursery support Savanna Institute's nonprofit mission.





SAVANNA INSTITUTE

Est. 2013

2453 Atwood Ave.

Suite 209

Madison, WI 53704



*We're transforming agriculture into a climate solution.
Join us for the next ten years!*

HOW TO GIVE:

Visit us at SavannaInstitute.org/donate or contact Alison Long, Director of Development, to learn more about supporting our work.

Alison Long
Director of Development
alison@savannainstitute.org
608.448.6432 ext. 211

