

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Systems that integrate trees and shrubs into agricultural operations, known as agroforestry, hold immense potential to transform US agriculture. Cultivated and honed by Indigenous peoples for millennia, agroforestry is common globally but not widely practiced in the United States. Widescale adoption of agroforestry practices by farmers and ranchers could provide transformative benefits to people and communities — boosting farm economies, biodiversity, and resilience to extreme weather while sinking and storing more carbon from the atmosphere.

## BENEFITS OF AGROFORESTRY

ECONOMIC	ENVIRONMENTAL	CLIMATE CHANGE	SOCIAL
Increase yield and profit per acre	Protect and restore soil health	Mitigate climate change by sequestering and storing carbon above and below ground	Improve air and environmental quality for communities
Create new market and economic opportunities for farmers	Increase water quality and availability	Increase resilience to extreme weather	Deliver social and psychological benefits for people
Produce high-value tree crops	Increase biodiversity and improve wildlife habitat	Increase food security while using less land	Create pathways for land access and local food systems

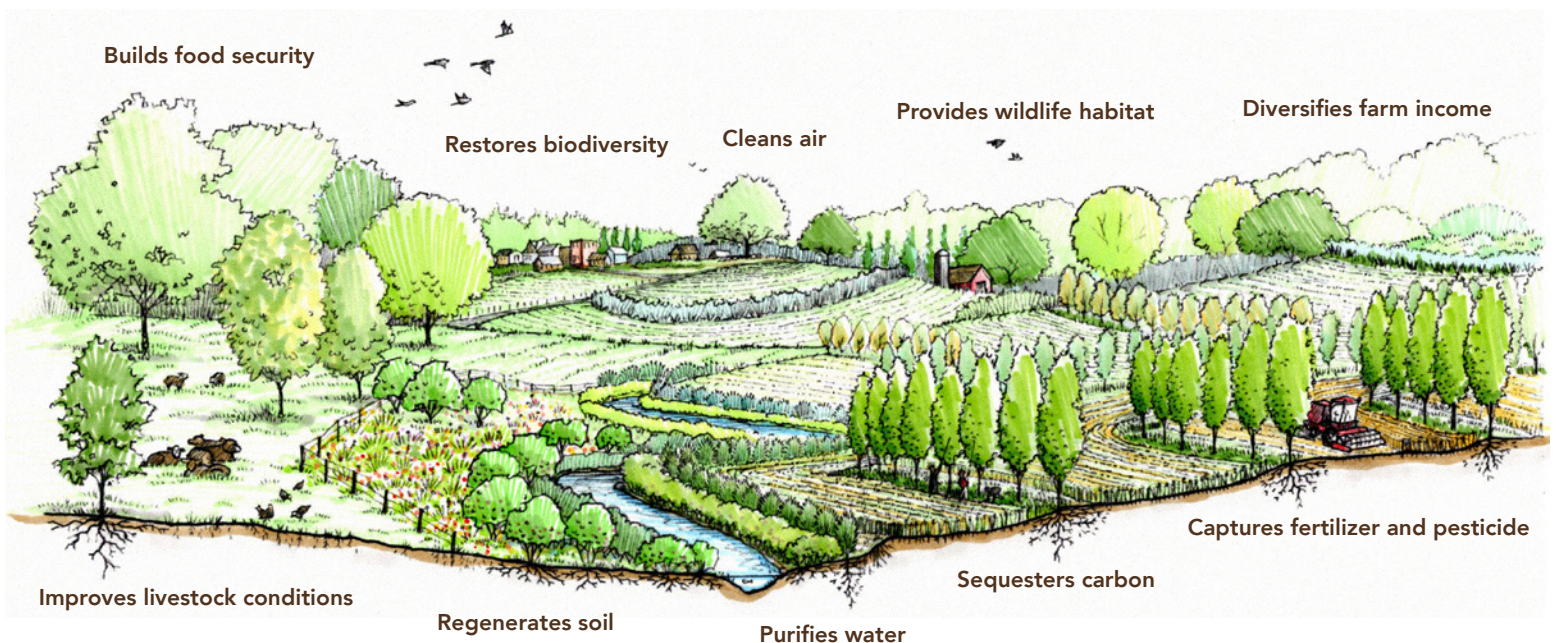


ILLUSTRATION: Savanna Institute. Agroforestry systems represented from left to right: silvopasture, a riparian stream buffer, a mature alley-cropping system, and windbreaks along field edges.

In recent years, critical steps to produce the research, technical assistance, and financial support for producers to implement these practices have elevated agroforestry as a key solution for climate adaptation, resilience, and mitigation. However, waiting periods before young trees and shrubs become harvestable create unique upfront costs and risks for producers, while

also requiring specialized expertise and technical assistance. Further policy support is needed to harness the full potential of agroforestry across diverse US landscapes.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) is already translating this need into action and has invested over \$150 million to support agroforestry projects across the US through

the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities. This year, the US has the opportunity to leverage the largest policy mechanism that drives US agriculture to build on this momentum: the farm bill. Now is the time to embed targeted support for agroforestry, from long-term research to local market development to cost-share for producers.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION	EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	PRODUCER INCENTIVES	SUPPLY CHAINS AND PRODUCT MARKETS	RESEARCH
Create a standard definition of "agroforestry" across federal programs.		✓	✓	✓
Direct USDA to develop a technical assistance program specific to agroforestry systems.		✓		
Authorize at least three new regional agroforestry centers to complement the National Agroforestry Center (NAC).	✓			✓
Adjust the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to establish a new agroforestry initiative and expand support for all agroforestry practices across subprograms.	✓	✓		
Prioritize silvopasture within the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).	✓	✓		
Add agroforestry systems to the list of new or innovative approaches that EQIP Conservation Innovation Grants (CIGs) may support.	✓	✓		✓
Adjust the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to make perennial agroforestry systems eligible for supplemental payments and establish region-specific agroforestry practice bundles.	✓	✓		
Support regional tree seed and seedling supply chains to meet increasing interest in adopting agroforestry practices.			✓	✓
Support local marketing of agroforestry products within the Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP).	✓		✓	
Authorize a cooperative National Agroforestry Survey (NAS) every five years to collect data on agroforestry practices implemented across the US.	✓		✓	✓



PHOTO: Canopy. An alley cropping system in Illinois integrates rows of native timber trees in between wide alleys of corn.