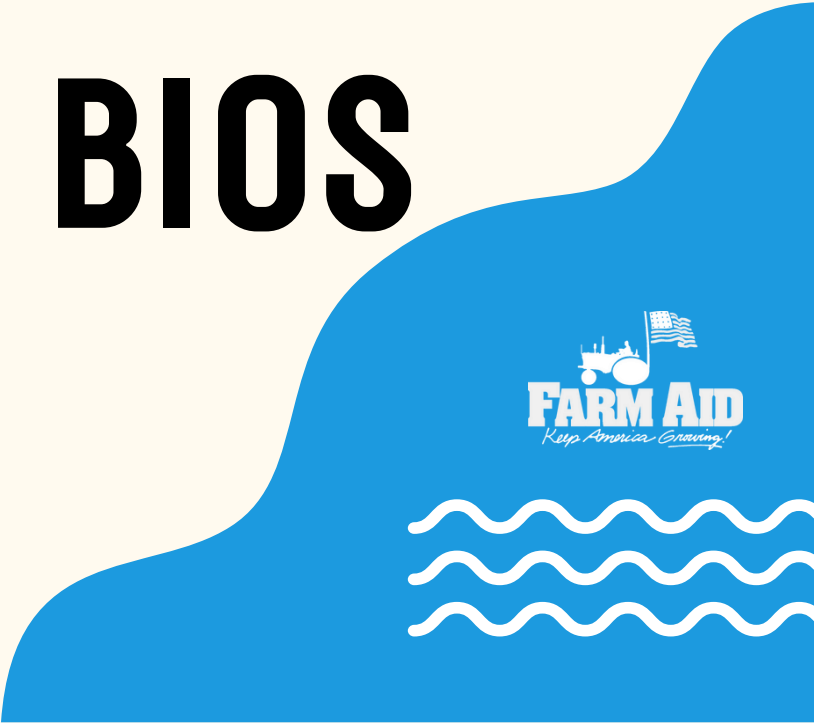




FARMER FORUM FULL SPEAKER BIOS AND CALLS TO ACTION!

A RURAL
CALL TO
ACTION FOR
ALL



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2024

2024 FARMER FORUM SPEAKER FULL BIOS AND CALLS TO ACTION



Tim Gibbons,
Missouri Rural
Crisis Center

Tim has been with the Missouri Rural Crisis Center (MRCC) since 2005. MRCC represents independent family farmers, rural families and their communities and citizens concerned with our food supply, our natural resources and democracy. Tim works to organize a large membership base of farm families, rural citizens and other Missourians to challenge the industrialization and corporate control of agriculture and our democratic process. Through MRCC, thousands of rural Missourians have been empowered by increased opportunities to participate in public policy formation and advocate for Missouri independent family farms and rural communities.

MRCC CALL TO ACTION:

No Farm Bill Without COOL! Stop by MRCC's booth in the HOMEGROWN Village at Farm Aid 2024 to record a message saying why **Country of Origin Labeling (COOL)** of meat is important to you!



2024 FARMER FORUM



Dania Davy
Land and
Liberation LLC

Dãnia Davy is the founder of Land & Liberation, LLC, a consultancy promoting liberatory relationships between humans, natural and financial resources, and land. This summer, she taught "Examining Food System Equity through Critical Race Theory" at Vermont Law School. She has served as Senior Policy Advisor for the US Southeast Region at Oxfam, Director of Land Retention and Advocacy at the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, and started her legal career as a Skadden Fellow at the Land Loss Prevention Project. Dãnia earned her J.D. at the University of Virginia School of Law and her A.B. in Africana Studies & Community Health at Brown University. Dãnia currently serves on the boards of the Farmers Legal Action Group, the Southern Rural Development Center, and A Place Matters, Inc.

til we are all free...





David Murkasin is the Managing Director for Litigation at FarmSTAND. He oversees our docket of consumer, worker, farmer, environmental, and constitutional claims taking on industrial animal agriculture's abusive practices. He has been a leading advocate against "Ag-Gag" laws, increasing safety for meatpacking and agricultural workers, and taking on false advertisements that cover up the reality of BigAg. He previously worked at Public Justice and Public Citizen and in private practice as a qui tam attorney. He currently teaches agriculture and environmental law at George Washington University Law School, and has previously taught at Georgetown and Vermont law schools. He is always behind in maintaining his dog's Instagram account, @FranktheFoxhound.

FarmSTAND CALL TO ACTION

Defend your rights to fair treatment in business and your communities, a clean environment that protects future generations over current profit, and government rules that are for the people, not corporations. Reach out to FarmSTAND, the first and only legal advocacy organization dedicated exclusively to taking on BigAg, to take action.





Kenya Crumel directs the Black Land & Power initiative at the National Black Food & Justice Alliance (NBFJA), a coalition of Black-led food justice organizations and farmers working collectively towards Black food sovereignty and land justice. Working in partnership to remove 15 million acres of land from the speculative market, Kenya along with a council of NBFJA members, piloted the Resource Commons in 2023 to provide non-extractive capital to Black farmers to secure land and equipment or build infrastructure.

NBFJA CALL TO ACTION:

The National Black Food and Justice Alliance (NBFJA) is at the forefront of working to protect and reclaim Black land while building sustainable food systems rooted in self-determination. Join us in the fight for food and land justice by:

- Donating to NBFJA to support our [Resource Commons](#) Initiative, which focuses on liberating land from the speculative market to secure it for sound ecological, social, and financial stewardship while also defending land currently at risk via heirs property rules, discrimination in lending, and other threats. [Donate Here](#)
- If you're interested in contributing personal land through easement or deed transfer/sale, please email Black Land & Power Director, [Kenya Crumel](#), for more information on how you can make a meaningful impact.
- We are also seeking pro-bono services from attorneys, tax experts, and technical assistance professionals—your support is crucial to advancing this work.





Eric Sheffer: Eric Sheffer is a 6th generation owner/operator of Sheffers Grassland Dairy LLC, a 225 cow organic dairy in Hoosick Falls, New York. After returning home from college, Eric invested in his family's farm by turning the existing dairy replacement rearing operation back into a dairy. In 2008, the Sheffers began milking 100 cows on grass conventionally, and over the course of six years grew the farm up to 250 cows. At this point, because of market signals and growth limitations, Eric began converting the farm over to an organic dairy. In 2017, Sheffer's Grassland Dairy was officially an organic dairy and it has shipped to Stonyfield Organic since. Eric, his wife Jillian, and son Jackson, are proud sixth and seventh generation owners of the dairy and stay very active in agriculture. Eric currently serves as the vice president of the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance, as well as the board president for the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship.



Robert Chang: Robert Chang is Director of Policy, Co-Director with NEFOC Land Trust. He is an immigrant of Jamaican and Chinese descent. He grows certified organic vegetables and cut flowers at Echo Farm in occupied Wabaquasset Nipmuc territory now known as Woodstock CT. He is a founding member of the New CT Farmer Alliance and the Southern New England Farmers of Color Collaborative. After a career outside of agriculture, he looks forward to continuing work to build community, power and prosperity among farmers in the region.





Tracy Lerman is [GrowNYC's](#) Assistant Director for Regional Agriculture. In this role, she heads up GrowNYC's Farmer Assistance team, which provides training and technical assistance to growers who aspire to or currently sell at GrowNYC's Greenmarkets, their network of more than 55 farmers markets around New York City. Prior to her work with GrowNYC, she was the Executive Director of the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (NESAWG), a 12-state, multi-sector network of farm and food practitioners working to strengthen the movement for a just and sustainable food system. She has a master's degree in Community Development from the University of California Davis where her research examined the efficacy of various marketing strategies purported to help small and mid-sized sustainable growers be more profitable. She lives in Kingston, NY, with her husband, an organic farmer and beekeeper, young daughter, and dog.

You can reach Tracy at tlerman@grownyc.org





Ghanja O'Flaherty: Raised by trade unionists, Ghanja O'Flaherty was taught to fight for better systems that genuinely serve and benefit people of every social class. She uses her background in environmental engineering and public health to interrogate societal distribution and use of resources. As the managing director of Animal Agriculture Reform Collaborative, Ghanja values context and collective action in the co-design and implementation of solutions towards a better food system for all.



Dorothy Barker, Executive Director, Operation Spring Plant is a leader and advocate for small family farmers with 33 years of experience in farming and market development. Mrs. Barker is a co-founder of Operation Spring Plant, Inc. She currently serves as the Executive Director, where she has been actively involved in all OSP programs and has been a major contributor in each of the organizational accomplishments.



Irene Ruiz is the daughter of Mexican Immigrants, she grew up in Hazelton, ID where she also worked in the fields with her family. She received her Master of Arts in Hispanic Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago and her Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from Boise State University. Irene currently lives in Boise, ID. Irene has been an activist for over 20 years. She currently works for the Idaho Organization of Resource Councils. She is a board member for the ACLU of Idaho the Stay at School Quinceñera program, and Indigenous Idaho Alliance. Irene also co-founded and organized a coalition of 10 non-profit organizations to support the Latinx, immigrant, and farm-working community called the Idaho Immigrant Resource Alliance (IIRA) that started in 2020 to support those communities around climate change. IIRA won the 2022 Humanitarian of the Year Award from the Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs for their work.

Irene was selected as one of 28 women to be a part of the U.S. Grassroots Accelerator Program from the Women's Earth Alliance in 2022 which will support her work on environmental justice while building alliances with other powerful leaders working to protect the environment. Irene is a Resilience in Climate Equity Award (RICE) winner, an award given to Women and Femmes of Color doing expectational work in climate justice. Irene has won the 2024 Robert Bullard Environmental Justice Award from the Sierra Club.

TAKE ACTION:

DEMAND HEAT JUSTICE FROM OSHA – [Sign on TODAY!](#)





Toni Stanger-
McLaughlin

Toni Stanger-McLaughlin J.D., a citizen of the Colville Confederated Tribes, serves as the Chief Executive Office (CEO) of the Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF). Mrs. Stanger-McLaughlin has compassionately worked in agriculture law and policy for many years. Before being named the CEO of NAAF, she served as the first NAAF Director of Programs where she assisted the development and delivery of millions of dollars of NAAF philanthropic investment in Tribal food systems.

started her agricultural career working in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) headquarters in Washington D.C., within the Office of Civil Rights. She was engaged in the settlement of civil rights and access to credit claims on behalf of American Indian farmers and ranchers in the Keepseagle national class action litigation; the settlement of those claims ultimately led to the creation of NAAF. Mrs. Stanger-McLaughlin thereafter moved from the Office of Civil Rights to the USDA Office of Tribal Relations in the Office of the Secretary.

While in the Office of Tribal Relations, Toni working across multiple USDA agencies and offices as well as other federal departments to advance Tribal needs in agriculture, natural resources, land use and infrastructure development. A key highlight in her time at USDA included leadership in a comprehensive analysis of the policies related to sacred sites for the U.S. Forest Service. Upon leaving USDA, Toni established a successful consulting business working directly with Tribes for five years.

Prior to joining NAAF, Toni served as the Director of Tribal Relations for the University of Arkansas School of Law Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (IFAI). At IFAI, Toni worked with individual producers and Tribal governments advancing their needs in agriculture and in self-governance in the area of food law and policy. Her work also included providing training directly to Tribal producers and food businesses.

She attended the University of North Dakota School of Law and received her JD, focusing on federal Indian law. In addition, Mrs. Stanger-McLaughlin holds certificates in mediation, Tribal law and business, as well as executive leadership. In her spare time, Toni enjoys being outdoors with her husband and three children, as well as beading and sewing powwow regalia for her immediate and extended family.

WORKING FAMILIES PARTY

WFP NATIONAL DIRECTOR MAURICE MITCHELL

Maurice Mitchell is a nationally recognized political strategist and visionary leader in the Movement for Black Lives. Raised by Caribbean working-class parents, he began organizing as a teenager and never stopped. After working for several grassroots advocacy organizations in his home state, Maurice directed the NY State Civic Engagement Table. In the wake of the police murder of Mike Brown, he relocated to Ferguson and helped build the Movement for Black Lives. He went on to co-found and lead Blackbird, a movement anchor organization, and was a key organizer of the Movement for Black Lives convention in Cleveland in 2015. In 2018, Maurice took the helm of the Working Families Party where he is applying his passion and experience to make WFP the political home for a multi-racial working-class movement.

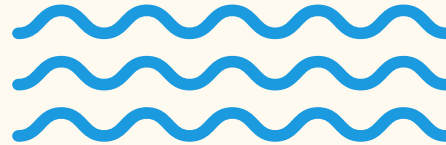
KEYNOTE



AFTERNOON ORGANIZING AND RURAL RALLY EMCEES!



Jim Hightower, Jim Hightower is a longtime agitator, organizer, and mobilizer, working with grassroots democracy activists across the country to challenge corporate power and put a little more progress in "progressive." Twice elected Texas Agriculture Commissioner, he writes "The Hightower Lowdown" commentaries for Substack and on more than 100 radio stations.



Deanna Zandt, is an award-winning media technologist, and the author of [Share This! How You Will Change the World with Social Networking](#) (Berrett-Koehler 2010). She is a consultant to key media and advocacy organizations, and her clients have included The Ford Foundation, Deutsche Telekom, Planned Parenthood, and Jim Hightower's [Hightower Lowdown](#). Zandt has advised the Obama White House on digital strategy and public engagement; she has been a regular contributor to [Forbes.com](#), as well as NPR's flagship news program, [All Things Considered](#). Zandt specializes in emerging media, is a leading expert in women and technology, and is a frequent guest on MSNBC, CNN International, BBC Radio, Fox News and more.



SPECIAL PERFORMANCE



Larry Long

Larry Long, Larry Long is a singer-songwriter, educator, community organizer, spoken word poet, activist and storyteller. Well traveled across the world, wherever he goes he celebrates people and places in song and gives voice to family farmers, embattled workers and veterans. Larry has sung at major concerts and festivals throughout the United States and world, released over a dozen albums including two on the prestigious Smithsonian Folkways label and is a recipient of the prestigious In The Spirit of Crazy Horse Award, Bush Artists Fellowship, Pope John XXIII Award, Leadership In Neighborhood Fellowship (St. Paul Companies), and Sustainability Award for his work in forgotten communities. Author Studs Terkel called Larry Long “a true American Troubadour.” When Pete Seeger was told that Larry is often referred to as the Pete Seeger of Minnesota, Pete replied, “I would be honored to be called the Larry Long of New York.”

