

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Plant It Forward Seeks Farmland to Establish Permanent, Cooperative Farm in Houston Area

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HOUSTON, TX – Plant It Forward (PIF) is actively looking to purchase 50-100 acres of farmland in the Houston area to create a permanent, cooperative farm that will support at least 30 farming families. A community-based organization dedicated to empowering new American farmers, Plant It Forward is thrilled to announce this groundbreaking initiative, which they are launching in partnership with Agrarian Trust, a national nonprofit. This project marks a historic step toward establishing a community-owned, regenerative agriculture hub in Texas. Through this new farm, the organizations seek to provide Houstonians long-term community control over land stewardship, while offering land security and affordability to small-scale farmers.

Backed by a grant from the USDA Farm Service Agency’s Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Program, PIF and Agrarian Trust are actively searching for this new farm site. They seek at least 50 acres within a 40-mile radius of central Houston, with suitable agricultural soils and located outside the 500-year floodplain. To realize their ambitious vision, PIF seeks values-aligned landowners, such as farmers, religious organizations, or public institutions, who share their commitment to preserving space for regenerative, small-scale farming in Houston for generations to come.

Since its founding in 2011, PIF has collaborated with over 80 new American growers, working alongside them to restore family farming to Houston – a practice that has all but disappeared from our region. Through these partnerships, PIF is helping reintegrate family farms as a vital element of our landscape. For the refugee farmers served by PIF, agriculture provides a meaningful opportunity to utilize their skills while making a positive contribution to their new community. This project is not only an opportunity to revive local, sustainable agriculture but also to foster mutual benefits for both the farmers and the broader community.

Bobilya Apendeki, a refugee who arrived in Houston in 2016, began farming with PIF in 2018. She describes farming as the “natural gift” she offers to her new home. In turn, community support for her farm affords her economic independence and a strong sense of belonging. Her farm enterprise has been supporting her children through college and enriching Houston’s food culture. Thousands of Houstonians have experienced the benefits of PIF’s work, from fresh, local produce to connecting with the farmers who grow their food. “Supporting an organization like PIF helps showcase the culinary offerings of local Houston agriculture,” says Rafael Nasr, co-owner and chef of Craft Pita, a Lebanese fast-casual restaurant.

Despite widespread community support for their work, securing affordable and stable farmland has remained a persistent challenge for PIF. They are not alone. According to the National Young Farmers Coalition, land access is the number one barrier to entry reported by new farmers. Addressing this challenge requires innovative solutions.

Agrarian Trust is leading the way in creating sustainable land access solutions. Through its national Agrarian Commons model, the organization helps secure farmland for community-based agriculture, ensuring land remains accessible and affordable for future generations of farmers. This partnership represents a scalable, long-term approach to protecting farmland and strengthening local food systems. To learn more about the Agrarian Commons model, visit their website.

For more information about this project or to discuss farmland opportunities, please contact Rachel Lockhart Folkerts, Commons Director at Plant It Forward, at [commons@plantitforward.farm](mailto:commons@plantitforward.farm).