

FROM ACADEMY AWARD® WINNER JAMES MOLL

FARMLAND



The Evolution of a Tradition

ALLENTOWN PRODUCTIONS presents "FARMLAND"

edited by TIM CALANDRELO director of photography HARRIS DONE music composed by NATHAN WANG
co-producer AMY MARTINEZ produced by CHRISTOPHER PAVLICK directed and produced by JAMES MOLL

Featuring an Original Recording Performed By EVERCLEAR with LIZ PHAIR

WWW.FARMLANDFILM.COM



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Film **DISCUSSION**
OVERVIEW & **Guide**




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FOREWORD

from Director, James Moll

As a documentary filmmaker, I enjoy delving into new cultures and places. Before I started *Farmland*, I didn't know any farmers personally. I didn't grow up around agriculture, so a lot of what I experienced in making the film was new to me.

My goal throughout the filmmaking process was to essentially get out of the way and capture on film what it's really like to run a farm today — straight from the farmers and ranchers themselves.

I got to know these six farmers on a personal level, and I'm excited to share their stories in *Farmland*. The farmers and ranchers in this film are the next generation of American agriculture — and I hope that watching this film will not only give viewers a connection to the people who grow our food, but that it will also prompt conversation about some of the thoughts, questions and concerns we all have about farming today.

James Moll
Director, *Farmland*

About **FARMLAND**

Most Americans have never set foot on a farm or ranch or even talked to the people who grow and raise the food we eat.

This film from award-winning director, James Moll, steps inside the world of farming and ranching for a glimpse into the lives of six young farmers and ranchers who have taken responsibility for the operation of their businesses. Director James Moll traveled across the country meeting young farmers and ranchers to learn more about the challenges and promises of growing and raising food. During this film you will learn about their high-risk/high reward jobs and passion for a way of life that for many farmers and ranchers has been passed down from generation to generation. This film was made with the generous support of the U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance®.



Meet the Director: **JAMES MOLL**

James Moll's work as a documentary filmmaker has earned him an Oscar®, two Emmys® and a Grammy®. Moll has directed and produced such films as "Foo Fighters: Back and Forth," about the 16-year career of the rock band Foo Fighters; the sports adventure, "Running the Sahara," executive produced by Matt Damon; "Inheritance," about the daughter of a Nazi concentration camp commander; and "The Last Days," executive produced by Steven Spielberg.



Moll's Universal Studios-based company, Allentown Productions, has also produced numerous programs for television as well as web-based content.

In addition to work as a filmmaker, James established the nonprofit Shoah Foundation with Steven Spielberg for recording and preserving more than 50,000 "visual histories" of Holocaust survivors.

About **ALLENTOWN** Productions

Established in 2001 by director/producer James Moll, Allentown Productions is a Los Angeles-based film and television production company specializing in non-fiction entertainment. Moll's work as a filmmaker has garnered him many accolades including an Academy Award® for his documentary directorial debut, "The Last Days."

Housed on the Universal Studios lot, some of Allentown's film credits included the Grammy Award®-winning "Foo Fighters: Back & Forth," the Emmy award® winning film, "Inheritance," and the epic sports adventure, "Running the Sahara."



PROFILES: Meet the Next Generation of American Farmers and Ranchers



Leighton Cooley

Roberta, Georgia

Leighton Cooley is a fourth generation poultry farmer who operates four farms in Georgia with his father. In addition to chickens, he also has a cow-calf operation and grows hay. Leighton and his wife have two sons.

“On our farm, we have an open-door policy and we love showing people what we do. It’s important to me to share the story of agriculture with consumers and share where their food comes from, that’s why I participated in this film.”



Brad Bellah

Thockmorton, Texas

Brad Bellah is a sixth generation cattle rancher who runs beef cattle operations in Texas and Colorado, including a natural beef herd. The 26-year-old husband and father of twins earned a bachelor’s degree in agricultural communications from Texas Tech University.

“I’m proud of what I do as a rancher. Participating in this documentary gave me the opportunity to share my story, which I hope shows my dedication to not only the animals on our ranch, but also to the people who eat the meat I raise.”



David Loberg

Carroll, Nebraska

David Loberg is a fifth generation corn and soybean farmer in Nebraska who operates a family farm with his mother. The farm also custom feeds 500 head of cows for a local dairy operation and runs an irrigation business. The 25-year-old and his wife have an infant son.

“I chose to be involved with this project to help consumers meet a face behind where their food comes from and share our story with them. In a day and age where people are becoming more disconnected from where their food is grown, I feel it’s important that they know that it’s being grown by people who care about the product just as much as they do. Farming, especially family farming through the generations is rich with history and heritage, and I feel honored to be able to tell a little bit of our story.”



Sutton Morgan

Brawley, California

Sutton Morgan is a fourth generation farmer from California who grows, packs and sells onions, potatoes, melons, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, lettuce, chard, kale and alfalfa. Sutton holds a degree in business economics from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

“Farmland” will hopefully help consumers understand where their food comes from and the hard work and risk associated with farming. I hope it helps dissolve some of the negative sentiments toward ‘commercial’ farming by showing how farmers, like me, are truly stewards of the land.



Margaret Schlass

Gibsonia, Pennsylvania

Margaret Schlass is a first-generation Certified Naturally Grown vegetable farmer who grows and markets her farms’ produce through a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) membership program, as well as the Pittsburgh farmers market and to restaurant owners. Margaret earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in art history and anthropology from the University of Delaware before embarking on her farming career.

“Lots of people talk about how hard they work, but until you know a farmer, you don’t know what hard work is.”



Ryan Veldhuizen

Edgerton, Minnesota

Ryan Veldhuizen is a fourth generation farmer taking over the operation of his family’s hog farm in Minnesota with his brother and sister. On the farm, Ryan and his siblings raise hogs, and grow corn and soybeans, which they use for feed.

“The real story of modern agriculture is not being told because a lot of farmers aren’t eager to speak out publicly. My family and I decided to be part of this film because it allowed us to share our story, in our own words, and provide consumers with a firsthand look at what we do on our farm.”

DISCUSSION Guide

About the Discussion Guide

This guide is an invitation to start a conversation about American agriculture — from the people who grow and raise our food — to the choices that are made available to today’s food-purchasing consumer. The following questions and topics are intended to guide and enhance discussions about the documentary, *Farmland*, as well as farming and ranching.

Topics to Open the Conversation

- Have you ever been to a farm?
- What is your image of an American farmer or rancher?
- Where do you purchase your food?
- Do you feel like you have enough information about where the food you purchase comes from (grocery store, farmer’s market or restaurant)? What about the methods that the farmers or ranchers use to grow/raise the food you eat?

About the Film

- If a friend asked you what this film was about, what would you say?
- Was there a farmer or rancher who had a story that you could relate to?
- Did anything surprise you about the stories shared in the film?
- What was the most interesting or newest piece of information you learned about the methods farmers or ranchers use when growing/raising food from watching this film?



Photo by DonHolz.com

Perspectives on Agriculture

- Is your image of an American farmer different than it was prior to watching this film?
 - If it's now different, what did you see or hear in the film that changed your perception?
 - Did anything resonate for you about the people in the film? If so, please describe.
- Was there one film subject who really changed your perspective?
- Describe a moment or scene in the film that had a particular impact on how you view modern agriculture?
 - What scene was especially compelling to you?
- Was there a scene or part of the film that you had a negative reaction to? What was it and what were your feelings as you watched this part of the film?
- Has your level of trust in farmers increased, stayed the same or decreased after watching *Farmland*?
- How do you think this film is different from other documentaries and stories in the media about agriculture?
- For people who will see this film who don't know much about how our food is grown and raised, how do you feel their opinions will shift or change?
- How did you react to the film subjects' descriptions on farming practices – from their conversations on the weather to GMOs to animal welfare and marketing?
- What more could the film subjects have shared with you on these topics?
- After watching the film and hearing the film subjects' descriptions on farming practices, are you more inclined to go out and do your own research?
- Where can people go to learn more about farming and ranching?

Making a Difference

- The food we grow and eat in our country has been a hot topic as of late. How did this film shape or reshape what you know or believe?
- Were you surprised at the amount of technology that today's farmers are using?
- What do you think was missing in the story that was told?
 - How would you address the elements you feel were missing?
- If you could ask one of the film subjects a single question, what would it be?



Suggested Guidelines for a Productive Discussion:

- Make sure your comments are appropriate and respectful
- Speak up so that everyone can hear you.
- Listen carefully to others' comments.
- Encourage others to join in the discussion.
- Refer to the film when possible, citing examples from it or drawing connections to it.

Resources

For more information about the documentary, visit **FarmlandFilm.com** or join the discussion online about the film on **Facebook** or **Twitter (@farmlandfilm.com)**.

To learn more about how food is grown and raised, visit the online resource, **USFRA FoodSource**. This tool, available at **www.FoodDialogues.com**, is a one-stop, online destination for information on topics including farm size, antibiotic use in farm animals, animal welfare and biotechnology.

Farmland was made with the generous support of the U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance®.



About USFRA

U.S. Farmers & Ranchers Alliance® (USFRA®) is a group of more than 80 farmer- and rancher-led organizations and agricultural partners representing virtually all aspects of agriculture. The creation of this organization in 2011, marked the first time agricultural groups at the national, regional and state levels collaborated to lead the dialogue and answer Americans' questions about how food is grown and raised. For more information about USFRA®, visit **www.FoodDialogues.com** or join the conversation online via **Facebook** or by following on **Twitter @USFRA #FoodD**.





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