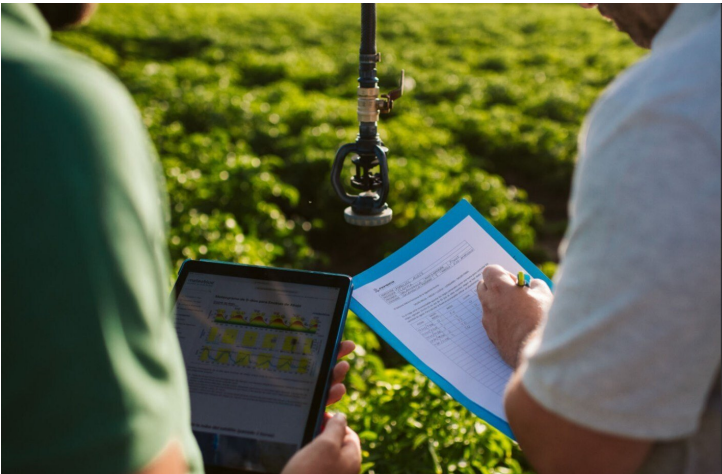


## PepsiCo, Unilever lead groundbreaking collaboration to advance regenerative agriculture

19 September 2025 | News

**STEP up for Ag strengthens farmer-facing organizations by providing tools, training, and funding to accelerate adoption of sustainable practices and build resilient supply chains**



**STEP up for Ag strengthens farmer-facing organizations by providing tools, training, and funding to accelerate adoption of sustainable practices and build resilient supply chains**

PepsiCo and Unilever have launched **Supporting Trusted Engagement and Partnership (STEP) up for Agriculture (STEP up for Ag)**, a pre-competitive initiative designed to strengthen the capacity and sustainability of farmer-facing support organizations across North America.

"PepsiCo is rooted in agriculture, and farmers are at the heart of our food systems. STEP up for Ag is about investing in the organizations that support farmers every day, aiming to ensure they can grow, innovate and lead the transition to more sustainable agriculture," Chief Sustainability Officer, Jim Andrews said. "When farmers thrive, we all thrive."

### Empowering Farmer Support Organizations

Regenerative agriculture can be a powerful tool to promote healthier soil, as well as to reduce agricultural emissions, enhance biodiversity and watershed health, and help raise the standard of living for farmers and farming communities. It's why PepsiCo, which sources approximately 50 key agricultural crops and ingredients from more than 60 countries around the world, has a goal to drive the adoption of regenerative agriculture, restorative, or protective practices across 10 million acres by 2030.

Scaling regenerative agriculture requires more than just technical solutions—it depends on trusted relationships and local expertise. Farmers are more likely to adopt new practices when they see clear benefits and receive guidance from organizations they know and trust. That's why farmer-led, farmer-facing support groups are critical to the success of corporate regenerative agriculture programs.

"The PepsiCo program has given me the flexibility to try a lot of the regenerative practices I have wanted to implement, and across more acres. When we decided to do this regenerative agriculture thing, we wanted to be playing the long game. Something that will benefit our soil, that will benefit me if I am farming in my fifties and sixties. Or my kids if they are farming after me," Chris Beaudry, 4th Generation farmer in St. Front, Saskatchewan and South East Research Farm member, said. "When you, as a farmer, start looking at your soil having an interdependent relationship with you, then you can start making decisions that benefit you, benefit the crop and benefit us as humans as well."

STEP Up for Agriculture seeks to strengthen these local organizations by equipping them with tools, training, and resources needed to support farmers on the ground. This approach is designed to unlock scale by meeting farmers where they are, with the aim of accelerating adoption across diverse geographies and creating a ripple effect of trust and innovation throughout the supply chain.

"Regenerative agriculture is a big part of how we're building a stronger, more resilient supply chain and food system—and Unilever is committed to rolling out regenerative agriculture principles across 1 million hectares globally by 2030," said Kristina Friedman, Head of Sustainability for Unilever North America. "STEP up for Ag can help us move faster and smarter, empowering farmer-led groups with the tools they need and opening doors to more great suppliers to grow our business. Our longstanding work with Practical Farmers of Iowa has been game-changing, and this next chapter is a huge step forward."

Through STEP up for Ag, corporate and philanthropic partners will provide funding and strategic support to help farmer support organizations:

- Develop robust business and strategic plans to boost profitability and local economies
- Expand staffing and training to better equip farmers with the tools of the future
- Establish measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) systems to track sustainable progress against goals
- Enhance implementation capabilities to support scalability
- Access new revenue streams and partnerships to grow support for farmers over time

"Farmers learning about new conservation practices requires an ecosystem of learning. First, each of us must understand 'why' it's important. Second is learning --- available information is now so easy to obtain. But the essential third and most valuable part of our ecosystem is the ability to have a real farmer, an experienced mentor, stand side by side and help,"— Jim Moseley, U.S. Department of Agriculture Deputy Secretary (2001-2005), farmer and board member of FarmAdvisor said.

"Investing in and supporting these relationships is important because those who have already adopted new conservation practices understand the consequences for the future of our productive US soils, our water quality, and a diverse biological community—if we don't."

Transitioning more farms to regenerative agriculture requires deep collaboration—no single company or organization can do it alone. By working together across sectors, STEP up for Ag is building a shared ecosystem of support that empowers farmers and drives lasting change at scale.

**Farmer Facing Support Partners:** Phase I will include South East Research Farm (SERF), supporting farmers throughout the Canadian Prairies, and Practical Farmers of Iowa, supporting farmers across western Canada and the US, and Farm Advisor, a farmer-led, Indiana-based initiative that pairs experienced conservation farmers with peers to accelerate the adoption of soil health practices through mentorship, education, and on-farm support.

"From the beginning, Practical Farmers of Iowa has aimed to cut through the noise with clear, science-based information and a farmer-to-farmer network grounded in trust. Over a decade ago, we saw that farmers were ready to adopt practices like cover cropping—and we needed to scale up to support them. Having all these major names invest in our capacity came at a pivotal moment,"— Sarah Carlson, Senior Programs and Member Engagement Director, Practical Farmers of Iowa, said. —

Over the next two years, STEP up for Ag will aim to facilitate peer learning, host annual in-person workshops and develop shared tools and resources to scale impact.

Through this partnership—and with the potential future involvement of additional major organizations—this growing network aims to help drive meaningful, long-term progress toward a more sustainable agricultural future.