Unlocking new place-based financing to expand regenerative agricultural systems and improve rural resilience across the United States.

Overview

Croatan Institute is developing the concept of Rural Regenerative Organic Agricultural Districts, also known as ROADs, to help agricultural producers and landowners finance soil wealth using land-secured financing mechanisms and other place-based investing approaches. As part of the Institute’s Organic Agriculture Revitalization Strategy (OARS), ROADs will unlock new sources of capital for implementing conservation practices for regenerative agriculture.

With support from USDA NRCS, Patagonia, and 20 private sector and non-profit partners, ROADs seeks to accelerate the development of regenerative agricultural systems at a pace and scale needed to stem the tides of soil degradation and rural economic decline. This $1.5 million project spans two years, with activities concluding in May 2022.

Soil wealth is the constellation of benefits associated with building both soil health and community wealth through regenerative agriculture.

* This material is based on work supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, under agreement number NR203A750013G012
The ROADS Concept:
Establish special-purpose soil wealth improvement districts that would become magnets for regenerative agriculture investment.

“We know that dense regional clusters of regenerative, organic operators create tangible socio-economic benefits for farmers and their broader rural communities. However, financing the implementation of this regenerative organic transition remains a challenge that this project aims to tackle head-on in new, place-based ways.”

— Dr. Joshua Humphreys, Croatan Institute

Focusing on four distinct U.S. regions (upper Midwest, Southeast, Heartland, & West Coast), we will research, assess, and pilot the potential configuration of ROADS.

To learn more or support this project, please contact:

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Farm Partners
Bender Farms
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Project Partners

Photo: Pipeline Foods