

WHY BLACK FARMERS ARE LOSING THEIR LAND:

An introduction to Heirs' Property

Tools and resources are needed to operate a successful farm.

- EQUIPMENT
- SEED
- TECHNOLOGY
- DEDICATION
- EDUCATION
- PEST CONTROL
- FERTILIZER
- BUSINESS PLANS
- WEED CONTROL
- KNOWLEDGE
- MARKETPLACE
- EXPERIENCE
- READY BUYERS
- HEART
- CREW
- PERMITS
- LIVESTOCK
- IRRIGATION



Heirs' Property is land jointly owned by descendants of someone who didn't leave a legal will, thereby leaving them without a clear title. The land that is passed down is delegated to surviving family members by way of fractional ownership — meaning any heir can divide or sell the land. This is the leading cause of involuntary land loss among Black landowners. Slavery, sharecropping discriminatory lending practices and a long history of racial discrimination have also deterred Black farmers from laying claim to land. These obstacles have led to lack of access to government assistance resources and incentive programs, lack of legal representation and a distrust of the court system. All of these factors have led to a significant drop in Black farmers and landownership over the last century.

You can be a successful farmer, but it's pointless without a clear title to the land.

Without a clear title to the land, proper ownership can't be identified. And the farmer's tools become meaningless.



1920



17% of farmers, over 925,000 in all, were Black. About 218,000 Black farmers owned their property, adding up to just under 14 million acres.

1930



By 1930, the USDA noted the loss of Black-operated and especially Black-owned farmland. At that time, Black farmers owned just over 11 million acres, a decrease of almost 20% in just 10 years. Only 20.5% of Black farmers owned their land in 1930, compared to over 60% of white farmers.

...and now?

According to the USDA's 2017 Census of Agriculture, Black farmers fully owned less than 2 million acres.

Without diversity, farms cannot survive. It's true of farmers too. This is where the LEAP coalition is trying to help.

Visit www.Deere.com/LEAPcoalition



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