

SUSTAINABLE IOWA LAND TRUST

**SILT**

PROTECTING LAND TO GROW HEALTHY FOOD

# **SILT** **Working Buffers**

A voluntary, private sector solution to water quality -  
and a host of other issues.

**And it's permanent.**



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# The Problem

- Conservation contracts last 15 years tops.
- The water quality issue is polarizing.
- Our waters are still impaired.
- No political will for regulation.
- Staff are on short-term funding cycles.



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# Current Solutions

- Grass waterways
- Saturated buffers
- Riparian buffers
- Filter strips
- Prairie STRIPS

Enlist Farmer. Farmer Retires. Start over.



**Long-term problems require long-term solutions.**





**And these solutions  
take land out of  
production.**





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**What IF...**

we could  
stack the  
benefits of a buffer  
and keep land  
in production?



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**FIRST**

**Build it.**

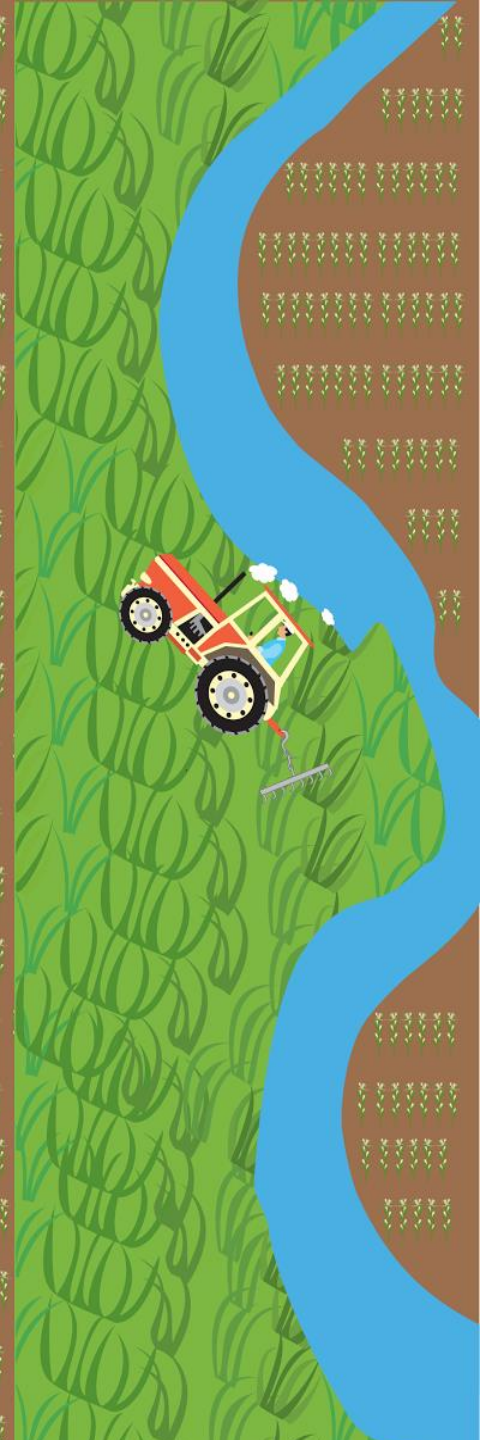
The following schematics are meant to illustrate a concept.  
Every farm is unique.



# Farmville... style!

Two conventional farms on either side of a river.

But this one has planted grasses along the riverbank.





# More than pollinator habitat

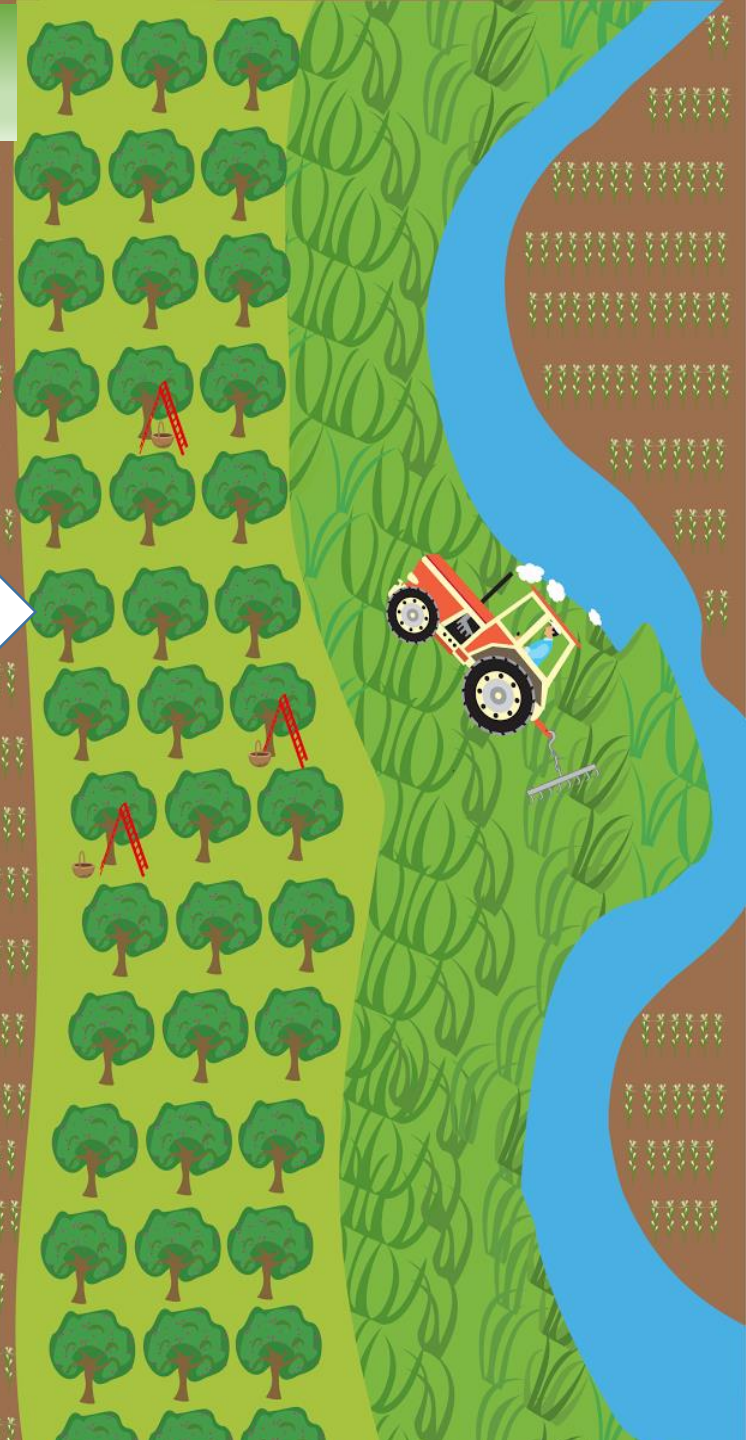


Once established, he can harvest it for bio-fuel, seed or flowers. Wet years he may get nothing.





# More than a riparian buffer



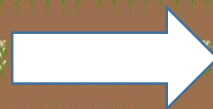
Then he plants fruit  
and nut trees and  
berry bushes. (upland)  
Chestnuts = \$6,000 /acre)



**But our corn/bean farmer  
doesn't want to farm this.**

**He lets some  
young farmers  
work this parcel  
and cash flow it  
with diverse  
annual food crops.**

**(2016 rent avg \$300-\$350/ac)  
(We can help him  
find the farmers.)**



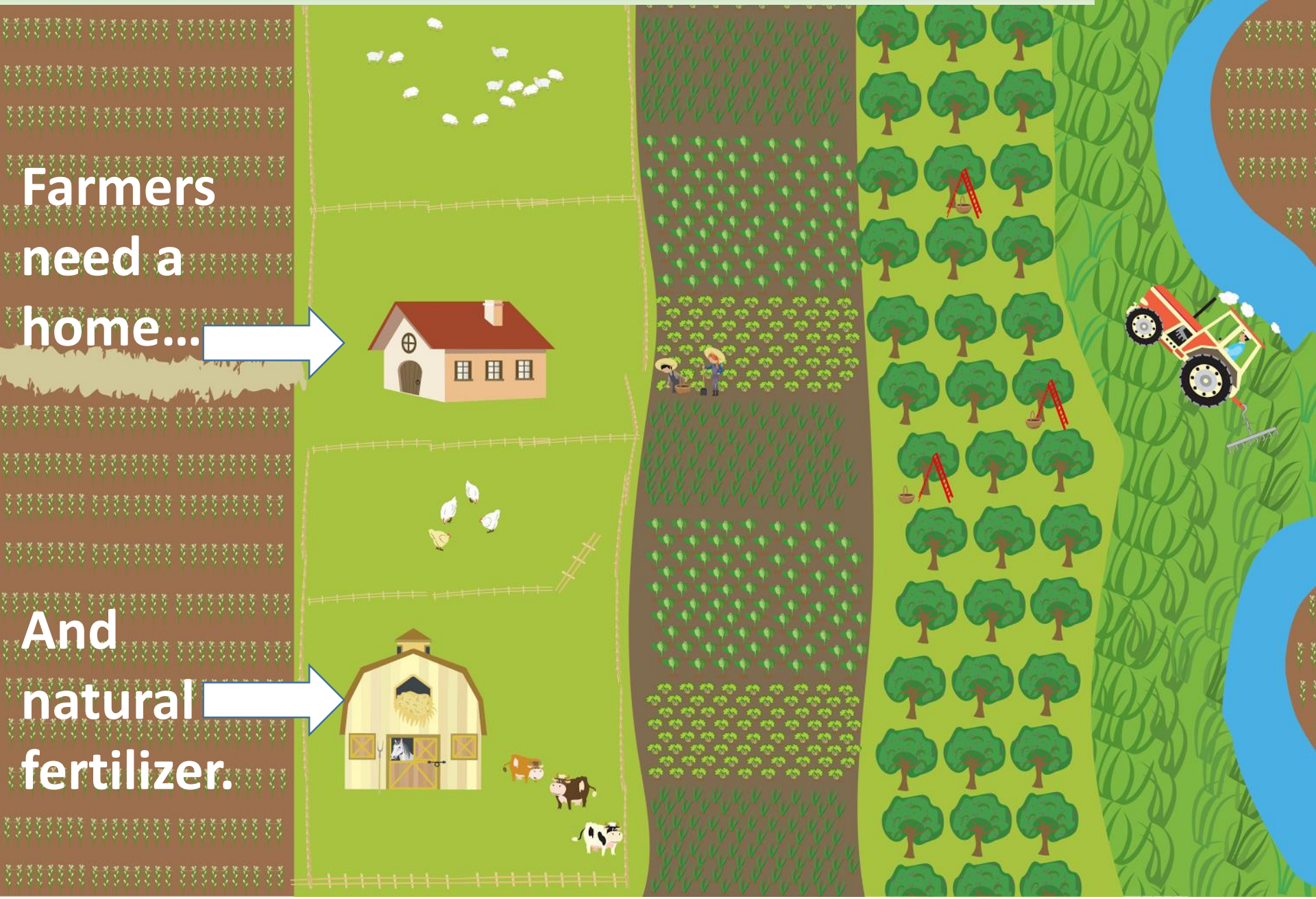


# This kind of farming requires attention.

Farmers  
need a  
home...



And  
natural  
fertilizer.





# A multi-generational solution.

Value of land surrounding this farm rises when developers come calling.



(Developers experience 30% to 40% premium on houses sold in "agri-communities")





# Stacked benefits.

**This whole-system farm  
makes this land a  
job-creating,  
food-producing buffer  
that brings young  
people back to the  
community.**





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Then

Protect It.



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# An ag conservation easement

1. Reduces farm value for estate planning.
2. Reduces land costs for future farmers.
3. Secures farmland for the future.
4. Retain ownership and control of property.
5. Tax incentives available.



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# A Comprehensive Solution

Retiring farmer land transfer w/diversified income

Affordable farmland

Diversified agricultural economy/fresh food

Third-party monitoring of land in perpetuity

Increases surrounding land values

Cleaner water, reduced soil erosion



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# The Challenge

**This is labor-intensive work!**

- a. Identify interested farmers/landowners
- b. Assist in the easement transaction
- c. Manage the relationship



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# With your support

- Landowner referrals
- Program assistance
- Partnerships
- Donations

**SILT can get this done.**



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**Thank you!**  
**Questions?**

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