

2025

Impact Report



Dear Friends and Partners of NCAT,

Fifty years ago and in the midst of an energy crisis that shook the nation, a small but visionary group of thinkers and doers came together in Butte, Montana, with a simple, powerful belief: that the right solutions for people and the planet are often the ones already within reach. From that conviction, the National Center for Appropriate Technology was born.

As I reflect on this milestone, I am struck not just by how much the world has changed since 1976, but by how steadfastly NCAT's founding principles have endured. The idea that communities — especially those who have been underserved and overlooked — deserve practical, affordable, locally grounded solutions is as urgent today as it was half a century ago. In fact, it may be more urgent than ever.

What began as a response to an energy crisis has grown into a national organization with staff in 14 states and programs reaching tens of thousands of farmers, ranchers, veterans, rural households, and families every year. Through ATTRA Sustainable Agriculture, Armed to Farm, AgriSolar Clearinghouse, Soil for Water, Energy Corps, and so many other initiatives, NCAT has consistently translated cutting-edge ideas into tools that real people can use on real land to build real livelihoods.

This 2025 Impact Report is both a celebration and a testament. It tells the story of the past year — the farmers we helped transition to regenerative practices, the veterans who found purpose and community through sustainable agriculture, the rural households who gained access to clean and affordable energy, the young people who discovered that caring for the land is a calling worth answering. But it is also the story of 50 years of accumulated learning, trust, and transformation.

None of this happens without the extraordinary dedication of NCAT's staff, whose expertise and passion continue to inspire me. It does not happen without our federal, state, and philanthropic partners, who share our belief in the power of appropriate technology. And it does not happen without you — our donors, volunteers, advocates, and community members — who have believed in this work year after year.

As we mark this golden anniversary, we do so with gratitude and resolve. The challenges ahead — climate disruption, food insecurity, rural poverty, and the urgent need for a just energy transition — demand exactly the kind of flexible, community-centered, science-backed approach that NCAT has always championed. We are not slowing down. We are building on five decades of momentum.

Here's to 50 years of helping people and the land flourish — and to the next 50.

With deep gratitude and optimism,



Jacqueline Hutchinson, Board Chair



40 YEARS OF TRUSTED INFORMATION:

ATTRA Sustainable Agriculture

For nearly 40 years, NCAT's ATTRA program has been a trusted source of information for farmers and ranchers, providing individualized technical assistance and in-depth resources to support sustainable agriculture.

NCAT is regarded as an honest broker of credible information—farmers and ranchers know they can rely on NCAT's ATTRA program to provide the resources and connections they need.

But you don't have to take our word for it! One of ATTRA's clients, a commercial producer from New York, shared that, "Following ATTRA guides has been like a cheat code to production success. I just need to follow what an ATTRA specialist wrote, and if I do the work, I reap the rewards."

ATTRA specialists don't take that kind of trust lightly. The team of more than 30 agriculture specialists around the country work hard behind the scenes to make sure all the publications, videos, blogs, podcasts, workshops,

and webinars we share with our audience are grounded in the latest scientific research, as well as practical experience from farmers and ranchers.

Specialists also understand the impact of peer-to-peer learning. ATTRA shares farmer case studies and stories to give producers real-world ideas to work from. Whether it's a video showing how one farmer in Puerto Rico creates an agroforestry system, a story of how an organic produce farm in Oklahoma grows their own fertility, or a podcast with a farmer that sells their products to schools – stories from farmers and ranchers demonstrate to ATTRA clients that linking success and sustainability is possible, and provide examples of how they can achieve it themselves.

ATTRA Impact Highlights 2025

22,926 producers received technical assistance to strengthen their operations

8,243 producers trained through **136** hands-on workshops and events

1M⁺ resources accessed – a testament to ATTRA's national reach

46K⁺ subscribers across Weekly Harvest, Armed to Farm, and Cosecha Seminal e-newsletters



[NCAT.ORG/SUSTAINABLE-AGRICULTURE/ATTRA](https://ncat.org/sustainable-agriculture/attra)

Conservation in the Southern High Plains: Abundant Ogallala



Just like every orchestra needs a conductor, an effective multi-state conservation project needs someone to bring a vast network of partners together.

This is the work NCAT has been doing in the High Plains region to achieve some lofty goals: conserve and recharge the Ogallala Aquifer, protect the lesser prairie chicken, improve grasslands, and improve the sustainability and profitability of farmers and ranchers in the region.

Like a good piece of music, these goals exist in harmony with each other. Thoughtful land stewardship can slow depletion of the Ogallala Aquifer and even support recharge. The same conservation practices that help replenish groundwater can also improve soil health, strengthen drought resilience, boost profitability, and create habitat for pollinators, songbirds, and the lesser prairie chicken.

NCAT recognized the need for a reliable way to access and share timely, real-world information about the best conservation practices to

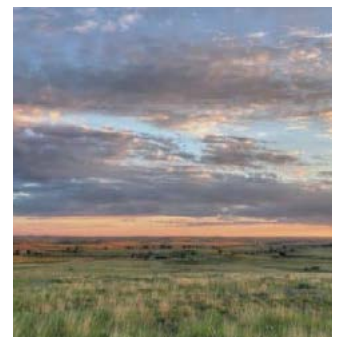
improve groundwater resilience and lesser prairie chicken habitat to help producers and partners in the High Plains region. In 2024, we launched our Abundant Ogallala project and have expanded it throughout 2025 to do just that.

NCAT sustainable agriculture specialists, alongside our project partners, have built peer learning networks, simplified conservation pathways, and created shared messaging among partners to bring clear, research-based practices to the producers on the ground who have the power to put them to work. We now have nearly 200 partners—agencies, landowners, nonprofits, and researchers—across New Mexico, Colorado, and Kansas playing the same song in unison: the song of conservation.

What can this many people and agencies do when they coordinate



Photo: Ryan Hagerty, USFWS



[NCAT.ORG/SUSTAINABLE-AGRICULTURE/ABUNDANT-OGALLALA](https://ncat.org/sustainable-agriculture/abundant-ogallala)

and move in the same direction? So far, we have worked together to “ground truth” conservation practices, ensuring that what we promote truly performs well in the High Plains context and meets our intended goals. By simplifying access to resources and creating shared learning spaces, the project is helping producers understand what works and how to move forward.

Conservation champions like landowners Brett Riley and Willard Heck have shared their experiences and insights, reinforcing the importance of collaboration and practical information for long-term outcomes. Their leadership highlights the critical role of education in shaping the future of conservation in the region.

The results of Abundant Ogallala so far are:

- ❑ A regional conservation education network that did not previously exist
- ❑ A clearer understanding for producers and landowners of what works, where it works, and how to access resources to get started
- ❑ A new foundation for future conservation plan adoption and implementation
- ❑ Over **30,000 acres** in conservation easements are already confirmed
- ❑ 21 producers have enrolled, and conservation planning is underway on nearly **100,000 acres**

What’s still on the horizon:

- ❑ Another 4-part webinar series will happen in 2026, along with a 2-day field workshop
- ❑ Up to **59** more **producers** will be enrolled over the remaining project timeline
- ❑ Producers will conserve an estimated **80,000 acre-feet** of water annually. This represents about **0.4% of the total volume** pumped annually from the Ogallala Aquifer—a meaningful contribution, particularly when targeted at priority landscapes and sustained over time.
- ❑ Practices like conservation tillage, cover crops, managed grazing, and field buffers will help restore hydrology and habitat within the 55-million-acre project footprint



Prior to this effort, producers faced fragmented information and unclear pathways to adopt conservation practices—barriers the project is actively reducing. This work comes at a critical moment, as declining aquifer levels and increasing climate variability threaten the long-term viability of agriculture in the High Plains. The Abundant Ogallala model provides a replicable framework for multi-state conservation coordination that could be adapted in other regions facing similar water and habitat challenges.

SIGN UP

for a free conservation plan and gain access to expert support : [NCAT.ORG/
SUSTAINABLE-AGRICULTURE/ABUNDANT-OGALLALA/INTAKE-SURVEY](https://ncat.org/sustainable-agriculture/abundant-ogallala/intake-survey)

Finding Energy Solutions for Rural Healthcare Center



In rural Montana, 50 miles away from the nearest major hospital, Roundup Memorial Healthcare serves as the primary medical center for the town of Roundup and surrounding Musselshell County.

The multi-building campus includes a hospital, clinic, and residential care spaces, with a 25-bed capacity at the 39,000 square foot facility.

Staff at the facility recognized that aging mechanical systems were creating both high energy consumption and operational risks. They learned about the Montana Resources Efficiency Program (MREP), developed by NCAT and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality to provide energy audits for Montana businesses.

The Importance of Audits

NCAT conducted an energy audit evaluating the HVAC systems, heating plant, lighting, and domestic hot water infrastructure that support a facility operating 24 hours a day, year-round. We paid particular attention to

Access to Emergency Services

Boiler Conversion & Generator Replacement

Engineer:	Cushing Terrell 13 N. 23rd Street, Billings, MT 59101	  ROUNDUP MEMORIAL HEALTHCARE
Financed by:	Montana Department of Commerce Delivering Local Assistance Program Musselshell County Hospital District	
Special Thanks to:	Musselshell County for supporting RMH's grant application Musselshell County taxpayers for their support of the hospital	

system reliability and energy performance.

The evaluation revealed that the facility relied heavily on coal-fired steam boilers for both space heating and domestic hot water, resulting in energy use significantly above national averages for comparable healthcare buildings. The situation created several challenges: elevated fuel use, increased

maintenance costs, and ongoing fire and safety risks within the mechanical space.

The assessment of the heating distribution system found that the heating infrastructure was aging, leaking, and in need of replacement. The HVAC digital control system serving several air handlers was non-functional, so maintenance staff had to adjust heating valves manually to control temperatures.

The audit also identified a critical mechanical issue: the improper design of the coal storage bin created a fire risk and forced the facility to abandon the use of a newer boiler system and instead operate an older backup boiler year-round, which was found to be performing poorly.

Taking Action

The medical center used audit recommendations and information to implement upgrades, and they received several grants to help with the costs. They replaced the coal-fired boilers, eliminating the problematic coal storage and feed system. They upgraded from an aging steam system to high-efficiency, propane-fired hot water boilers that provide improved combustion control, higher thermal efficiency, and simplified operation compared with the previous coal system. In parallel with boiler replacement, the facility upgraded key components of the HVAC control infrastructure to restore automated system operation. This improved the system's ability to match heating output with real-time building demand, reducing unnecessary heat generation and improving distribution efficiency across the facility.

The facility also implemented lighting upgrades throughout as lighting accounted for a significant portion of the facility's electrical consumption. To improve efficiency, a lighting retrofit replaced fluorescent lamps with high-efficiency direct-wire LED tubes, significantly reducing lighting energy consumption while also lowering maintenance requirements.

Seeing Results

As a result of these heating system and HVAC control upgrades, the hospital achieved a **32% reduction** in thermal energy consumption, demonstrating the effectiveness of replacing the inefficient coal-based heating system with a modern propane hot-water boiler plant integrated with improved HVAC controls.

The lighting conversion resulted in an estimated annual reduction of approximately **79,065 kWh** of electricity, corresponding to roughly **\$8,800 in annual energy cost savings**. Operational benefits

Overall, the project reduced the facility's Energy Usage Intensity (EUI) by 23.5%

included improved lighting quality, reduced heat generation from fixtures, and longer maintenance intervals.

Overall, the project reduced the facility's Energy Usage Intensity (EUI) by **23.5%**, improved system reliability, eliminated hazards, reduced maintenance requirements, and reduced both thermal and electrical energy demand.

This project shows that energy audits can impact far more than just energy usage and operational costs; the improvements to safety, durability, and indoor air quality can also be significant. Programs like MREP cover the costs of these audits and strengthen the infrastructure on which rural communities depend. This type of multi-year project is where NCAT's 50-year track record shines—we are here to support communities for the long term.

NCAT is excited to continue serving Montana businesses to minimize energy consumption, reduce operating expenses, and address health and safety concerns. Each audit and each upgrade makes for a more sustainable planet.



Photo: rmhmt.org

CONTACT US

Ready to get started? Contact the Energy Services team:
[NCAT.ORG/CLEAN-ENERGY-AND-CONSERVATION/CONTACT](https://ncat.org/clean-energy-and-conservation/contact)

Connecting Farmers to Schools to Feed the Next Generation



NCAT's Bringing the Farm to School Through New Connections links local farmers with school food buyers to help nourish students, strengthen regional food systems, and cultivate the next generation of informed eaters and land managers. It's a story of collaboration, where fresh, local food meets education, community resilience, and economic opportunity.

Why Focus on Farm to School?

Schools serve millions of meals every day, making them powerful levers of change in local food systems, and they can provide a steady and reliable market for

farm products. Yet barriers persist that limit meaningful connections between producers and schools:

- **Limited Market Access for Farmers:** Many small and mid scale farmers struggle to access institutional markets due to scale, infrastructure, or procurement challenges.
- **Lack of Capacity and Coordination:** Schools, farmers, and food service staff often lack the resources and shared understanding to work together effectively.

Bringing the Farm to School Advances Solutions

Bringing the Farm to School through New Connections has been

active since 2024 through a cooperative agreement with the USDA Food and Nutrition Administration. The program directly builds on the highly adaptable Bringing the Farm to School curriculum developed in 2020. The project addresses the barriers between local farms and schools by creating opportunities for farmers and school food buyers to network and connect in facilitated events.

Supporting Farmers. In addition to connecting producers with buyers, we provide technical assistance, training, and resources to help producers successfully sell to schools and diversify their markets. Through our connector events and site visits to area school kitchens, producers we work with learn what school food buyers look for when purchasing local products.



- At a site visit and connector event at the Manheim Township school district cafeteria in Pennsylvania, School Nutrition Director Kelly Price led a tour of the kitchens, highlighting what works and what her challenges are when she buys from local producers. Producers then spent time connecting with school nutrition directors from the region.

Strengthening Schools. We help school food buyers increase their options for procuring local food by linking them with local farmers. The connector events give school food service directors a chance to learn about the challenges and opportunities that producers have when trying to sell to schools.

- In Washington state, in collaboration with Viva Farms and the Washington State Department of Agriculture, we tested a virtual model called Bringing the Farm to School Connections Week. The program had **50 producers** and **35 school food buyers** participating. The asynchronous virtual networking gave school and childcare food buyers the opportunity to contact Washington farmers and producers to set up meetings on their own time through a comprehensive directory.
- Bringing the Farm to School connector events held in Texas, like one in Lake Travis in September 2025, have been integral in helping create the Farm to School Collaborative. Through attending

It's important to have fresh, local produce in our cafeterias because it sparks curiosity in our students and it really makes them grow up to be conscious consumers. They also get to experience the seasonality and taste of Texas. –MARISSA B., DIETITIAN & MARKETING COORDINATOR AT LAKE TRAVIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



multiple connector events, a group of school nutrition directors, nonprofits, and a food hub are working together to get more local food onto students' plates.

Lasting Impact

We have worked with producer-serving organizations throughout the country to set up educational and networking opportunities for producers who want to sell their product to schools. We are collaborating with organizations throughout the country such as Pasa Sustainable Agriculture, Washington State Department of Agriculture, Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (TOFGA), Marbleseed, Georgia Organics, and more. Over the course of this project, we have held **19 educational events** that also connect producers and food buyers. More than **800 producers, school food buyers, aggregators, and others** have participated in our events.

Bringing the Farm to School Through New Connections is building relationships between farmers, ranchers, and schools, empowering educators, and ensuring that all children, especially those in underserved communities, have access to healthy, culturally appropriate food.

By creating and strengthening these connections, NCAT is increasing farm viability, rural economic development, and food system resilience.

Planting the Seeds of FoodCorps



“We wouldn’t have had FoodCorps without NCAT,” says Curt Ellis, a co-founder of FoodCorps and the organization’s current Executive Director.

FoodCorps is a national nonprofit that works to reduce childhood obesity by bringing fresh, healthy, local food into schools. “NCAT was ahead of the field with the Montana FoodCorps that it had developed through AmeriCorps Vista,” he continues. Led by former NCAT specialist Crissie McMullan, Montana FoodCorps served as a model for what became the national FoodCorps organization. Throughout the four-year planning process (2006-2010), NCAT was one of four organizations that incubated FoodCorps and then served as the state partner in Mississippi, Montana, and Arkansas.



Montana FoodCorps launched in 2006 as a project of Grow Montana, NCAT’s food policy coalition. Montana’s VISTA Farm to School program, which would become Montana FoodCorps, recruited and trained a team of AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers who

were charged with establishing and growing farm-to-cafeteria programs at three public universities and one public school system in Montana. Building on the program’s success, Crissie McMullan and NCAT pursued

additional funding to develop the concept and plan to scale up the project, with the goal of making significant changes in America’s food production systems and how meals are provided to public school students. NCAT’s program

became the foundation for national FoodCorps, and in 2012 the Montana program merged with the national organization.

Today, FoodCorps works in nearly **200 school districts** across **18 states** and the District of Columbia, providing fresh, healthy food to more than half a million public school students and providing children with opportunities to grow their own food in school gardens. Growing their own fruits and vegetables makes children more likely to try and enjoy eating them in the cafeteria.

Crissie McMullan recalls NCAT's pivotal role in making FoodCorps possible: "NCAT's Executive Director gave me the space to figure out where we want to take FoodCorps. NCAT funded my time so I could focus on thinking through how to take FoodCorps national. NCAT took a leap of faith—they believed in the work and that made it possible for me to build national FoodCorps."



Although FoodCorps no longer works directly with farmers, focusing instead on partnering with school districts, NCAT continues to work with producers to support them in developing relationships with school systems in their communities and building the infrastructure for bringing locally grown food into schools.



NCAT took a leap of faith—they believed in the work and that made it possible for me to build national FoodCorps.

—CRISSIE MCMULLAN, FORMER NCAT SPECIALIST

Veterans in Agriculture

American agriculture stands at a moment of profound transition. As farmers age out of the profession and the pressures of climate change, consolidation, and economic instability intensify, the need for a new generation of stewards has never been greater.

At the same time, millions of military veterans are seeking purpose, belonging, and meaningful work as they transition from service. For many, farming and ranching offer a way forward—one rooted in care for land, community, and country.

Veterans bring discipline, resilience, and a deep commitment to service—qualities essential to building a food system that can endure. With the right support, they are uniquely positioned to help meet the nation's urgent need for skilled, values-driven farmers and ranchers. NCAT's agriculture work exists to support that possibility, providing education, technical assistance, and connection

focused on soil health, regenerative practices, conservation, market opportunities, and long-term farm viability. Through stewardship of ATTRA, NCAT extends this support nationwide by sharing practical, trusted information that keeps farmers informed and empowered.

Guided by the principles of Appropriate Technology, NCAT asks not only what works, but who it works for. Our approach prioritizes agency, local control, and meaningful participation—holding efficiency alongside dignity and stewardship. These values come to life in Armed to Farm, which connects veterans to agriculture as a pathway to renewed purpose, economic opportunity, and community.

The program recognizes that the transition from military service is not just about employment, but about identity, place, and contribution.

Looking to the future, NCAT is deepening its commitment to veteran farmers by cultivating lasting communities of practice. Ongoing coaching, peer learning, and opportunities to return as mentors and leaders are paired with an expanded focus on farmer well-being, resilience, and sustainability. By linking veterans to ATTRA's broader network, NCAT is helping them grow not only viable farm enterprises, but hopeful futures—rooted in service and stewardship, and essential to a resilient food system.



Energy Conservation

Energy conservation remains one of the most cost-effective energy resources available. The cleanest and least expensive unit of energy is the one that never has to be produced.

NCAT's energy work focuses on helping communities conserve energy. We provide technical assistance, increase access to incentives, and offer compliance support with codes.

By reducing demand, communities lower operating costs for households and businesses while easing pressure on energy infrastructure.

BENEFITS:

- Decrease demand on the utility means they can either produce less or don't have to buy additional power from other utilities
- Decreased production has environmental benefits
- Energy conservation measures (more efficient HVAC, insulation, etc.) offer health benefits for occupants (more optimal

temperatures, better indoor air quality) and make operations and occupancy more comfortable and affordable.

Working with commercial entities has impact at a scale where energy conservation efforts can offset the energy consumption of hundreds of households (cumulatively).

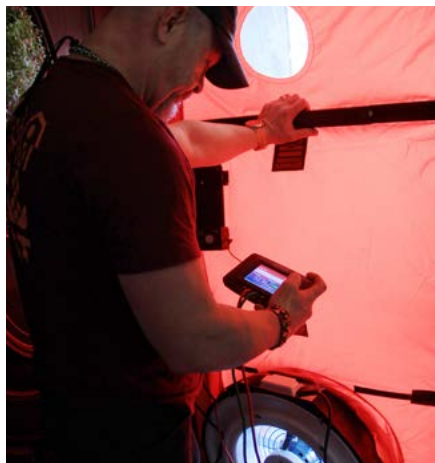
NCAT will continue to expand opportunities to partner with utilities and regional economic development entities, building on our successful partnerships in Montana.

NCAT'S UNIQUE OFFERING:

- Credibility from our long history of focusing on appropriate technology and clean energy
- Reliable and highly expert staff

- Role as an intermediary between government (e.g., related to energy codes), utilities, and industry where we can demonstrate the benefits of compliance, provide analysis on cost savings, understand and correctly apply for incentives.

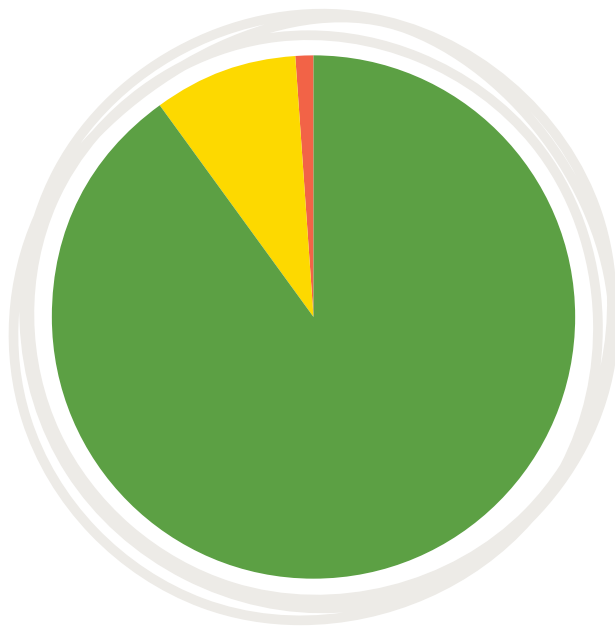
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Financials

Total revenue from all sources:	\$10,157,308
Total expenses for all activities:	\$9,501,372
End-of-year net assets:	\$3,536,886
Program Expenses:	\$8,562,249
• Sustainable Agriculture Programs:	\$7,340,457
• Sustainable Energy Programs:	\$1,221,792
Administrative Expenses:	\$855,670
Fundraising Expenses:	\$83,453

Breakout by Program Expenses, Administrative Expenses, and Fundraising Expenses



■	PROGRAM EXPENSES	90.12%
■	GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	9%
■	FUNDRAISING EXPENSES	.88%

NCAT Board of Directors

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OUR MISSION

NCAT advances practices in sustainable agriculture and clean energy, reducing poverty, so that both people and the environment can flourish.

OUR VISION

We envision vibrant, economically strong communities that provide all people with healthy food and clean energy, soil, and water.

HOW WE WORK

We share knowledge, build skills, craft practical solutions, and cultivate networks through workshops and convenings, an online resource hub, and multimedia communications.



WHO WE SERVE

We serve farmers, ranchers, agriculture and energy professionals, people who cultivate local food systems, and those with energy access needs.



WHERE WE WORK

We are a national organization that operates locally, with deep ties to the communities and regions we serve. Headquartered in Butte, MT, NCAT has staff around the U.S. who implement programs that reach thousands of individuals and organizations across all 50 states.



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