With 80% of U.S. farmland and ranchland made up of small and medium-size farms, the conservation behavior of farmers on these operations is crucial to the nation’s soil, water, and air quality, and critical to the preservation of future farmland. Regarding land tenure, considerable research shows that renting land is a disincentive to adopting conservation practices. However, recent research has complicated this conventional wisdom. Finding solutions to improve conservation efforts on rented land and highlighting the role of environmental stewardship in farm succession, are key components to improving the agricultural situation in the U.S.

Key Points
- For farmers renting land, lack of stability in lease, lack of resources and lack of support are constraints in implementing conservation practices.
- More education about profitability and conservation would improve efforts among farmers and landowners.
- Women landowners may be struggling more than their male counterparts with regard to having tenants following their conservation stipulations.
- Unique, Innovative and Successful Practices
  - Successful transition of incubator dairy farm to non-relative employee, and good stewardship achieved through due to lease-to-own arrangement
  - Deed attachment for carrying out environmental wishes for the land
  - Success in building partnership with landowning CSA member
  - Rehabilitation of older farms on public land, and the use of agricultural leases with conservation stipulations on public land

Relevant Links
- Angelic Organics Learning Center: www.learngrowconnect.org/
- Center for Absentee Landowners: www.absenteelandowners.org
- Land Stewardship Project: www.landstewardshipproject.org/
- U Can Farm: www.UCanFarm.org