

# HARVEST THE VOTE

HOW DEMOCRATS CAN WIN AGAIN IN  
RURAL AMERICA

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## **GROUPS YOU CAN SUPPORT**

The best way you can be part of rebuilding the Democratic Party with rural voters at the table is to come out and connect with the land and support groups who do this work every day. It's going to take a lot of work and we are all going to have to collect a lot of road dust to get this done. Good news is, you get to see beautiful, vast, quirky, and diverse rural communities while you stand with us (and eat really good, locally grown food!). A portion of all book sales will go to support these groups who love and work in rural America. I deeply believe in the power of organizing, lifting up rural voices, and electing more rural Democrats. These groups are part of the solution.

### **Association of State Democratic Committees, [asdc.democrats.org](http://asdc.democrats.org)**

The best place to invest in red and rural states in order to build up the infrastructure to win elections for Democrats is to give money to state and county parties. You can find your state party and donate directly to them. When you are on the state party website, look up your local/county party also. They need your help, too. The single best thing you can do to help elect Democrats up and down the ballot is to invest in your state and county party.

### **Bold Alliance, [boldalliance.org](http://boldalliance.org)**

Bold started in Nebraska to help stop the Keystone XL Pipeline with the unlikely alliance of farmers, ranchers, environmentalists, and tribal nations. Bold now helps rural groups across the country push back on Big Oil and Big Ag threatening the land and water. Bold also works to elect more candidates representing rural communities and rural issues.

### **Family Farm Action, [farmaction.us](http://farmaction.us)**

A coalition of family farmers and advocates building the political muscle to fight for farmers and rural communities. Family Farm Action protects America's family farms and rural communities from multinational agribusiness monopolies that are destroying rural economies and our way of life.

### **Farm Aid, [farmaid.org](http://farmaid.org)**

Started by Willie Nelson, Neil Young, John Mellencamp, and later Dave Matthews, the yearly concert does not stop at an awesome rock show. Farm Aid helps family farmers and ranchers year-round with a suicide hotline, grants to continue their operations, and advocacy to have their voices heard in state legislatures and on Capitol Hill. While Farm Aid is not a partisan group, they are the one group who every year celebrates rural voices with a platform bigger than any other.

### **RuralOrganizing.org**

A group of over 50,000 rural activists staying connected to rebuild rural America. They conduct polling and research, and they advocate to include rural issues in national politics. Their mission is rooted in the simple belief that local people know how to solve local problems.

## MORE READING

I find many books about rural America are filled with sadness, addiction, and hopelessness. I hope these books and podcasts give a different view of the people, the land, and the way of life in rural towns.

Cather, Willa. *My Ántonia*

Immigrants from all over the world came to the Great Plains. This beautifully written story follows a Bohemian family. The way Willa describes the land resonates still to this day.

Clyburn, James E. *Blessed Experiences: Genuinely Southern, Proudly Black*

Representative Clyburn's stories of the small towns and growing up black in the South are rooted in history as he describes his path to Majority Whip. (University of South Carolina Press, 2015)

Foxfire Fund, *The Foxfire Book of Simple Living: Celebrating Fifty Years of Listenin', Laughin', and Learnin'*

No one thought a book series about how to hunt, make moonshine, build a log cabin, and engage in faith healing would be bestsellers, but they

were! The books shaped generations on how they viewed rural. (Anchor, 2016)

Horton, Myles, and Paulo Freire. *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change*

A book about social change through a lens of literacy and poverty programs happening in rural communities. (Temple University Press, 1990)

Genoways, Ted. *This Blessed Earth: A Year in the Life of an American Family Farm*

The story of the Hammond family: how they confront the changing landscape and threats to family farmers. (W. W. Norton, 2018)

Hewitt, Ben. *The Town That Food Saved: How One Community Found Vitality in Local Food*

A town of 300 people transformed jobs, the economy, and its self-image with food. (Rodale, 2011)

Hightower, Jim. *Thieves in High Places: They've Stolen Our Country—And It's Time to Take It Back*

Anything Jim writes will make you laugh and think. This is one of his many books about how the grass roots can take back our politics. (Viking, 2003)

Nagle, Rebecca. *This Land* (podcast)

The podcast follows how a murder in Oklahoma set up a case in front of the Supreme Court that will determine the fate of tribal nations and half the land in the state. The podcast is published

by Crooked Media, who also puts out Pod Save America. All of their podcasts are must-listens to stay grounded in hope and to stay connected to strategic political thinking. (2019)

Pipher, Mary. *The Middle of Everywhere: Helping Refugees Enter the American Community*

Mary tells the stories of refugees building the American Dream. Rural towns and cities are embracing refugees and immigrants, and Mary reminds us why they make our country better. (Mariner, 2003)

Vaughan, Carson. *Zoo Nebraska: The Dismantling of an American Dream*

A story about a quirky rural town, with residents' backstories and the big personalities we find in just about every small town. (Little A, 2019)