

Erin Lowe

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I'm an agroecologist interested in building just and sustainable food systems.

For nearly a decade I've worked on farms, in food supply chains, and in food policy advocacy and research to understand ecological needs and community priorities and to amplify them in ways that can create change. As a generalist, I thrive when I'm able to work across issues to build collaborations and integrate different areas of work.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Project Coordinator | University of Wisconsin Jan 2023 – present
Coordinating \$10M USDA AFRI project in partnership with University of Wisconsin-Madison and four Tribal Nations

- Co-coordinating research, outreach, partnerships, budgeting, and logistics for a large project covering asset assessment; Indigenous crop and livestock research; economic and supply chains research; nutrition research and outreach; and mentoring, education, and technical support.

Consultant, Sustainable Food Systems | Freelance Dec 2022 – present
Supporting communications, research, and logistics for projects in partnership with Universities, non-profits and Native Nations

- Working as an organizer with the Great Lakes Intertribal Food Coalition to coordinate intertribal initiatives, write grants and conduct strategic planning to support Tribal food sovereignty across Wisconsin and the Great Lakes region
- Partnering with the Inter-institutional Network for Food, Agriculture and Sustainability (INFAS) to [facilitate networking](#) and share best practices for building the institutional resilience of sustainable agriculture centers at U.S. universities
- Developed [a curriculum module](#) on social and racial justice in U.S. agricultural systems for a rotational grazing course geared toward farmers and agricultural educators (in partnership with the Wallace Center)
- Synthesized and analyzed data from focus groups and interviews with small cider-makers and suppliers to share needs around cider production and supply chains (in partnership with Washington state University)
- Completed graphic design work on a [producer guide for Kernza growers](#) (in partnership with University of Minnesota)

Research & Communications Specialist in Food Systems Governance | University of Wisconsin May 2022 – Dec 2022
Communicated recommendations synthesized from 130 interviews and developed in collaboration with Midwest agricultural community members (see research below).

- [Developed a report and a series of briefs](#) for non-profits, government agencies, and policy advocates on policy and governance actions that support a transition away from corn/soy monocultures and industrial meat in the Midwest

Researcher in Agroecology & Sustainable Food Systems | University of Wisconsin Sept 2017 – May 2022
Conducted agroecological research and community engagement for an interdisciplinary doctorate in sustainable food systems

- Developed and managed diverse projects ranging from the ecology of regenerative agriculture practices to community-driven social science and policy research. Led multiple project teams and developed workplans, goals, and timelines
- Conducted 130 interviews with Midwest farmers, and employees of non-profits and Federal and Tribal government agencies on how transition from industrial meat production to perennial pasture in ways that further equity and justice
- Organized and facilitated 3 workshops with Midwest farmers and non-profits to build partnerships, coordinate work within the Midwest sustainable agriculture movement, and translate interview findings into policy action
- Developed a wide range of publications and presentations for farmers, policymakers, scientists, and the public

Pollination Biology Research Coordinator | Rutgers University Feb 2016 - Aug 2016; Mar 2017 - Aug 2018
Supported pollinator conservation research by managing and coordinating projects and research partnerships

- Managed student employees and developed workplans to facilitate timely completion of research projects
- Developed research partnerships with >25 private landowners, businesses, and governmental agencies
- Developed public communication materials including [Cooperative Extension fact sheets](#)

Grassroots Fellow | National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

Aug 2015 - Jan 2016

Built capacity to mobilize a coalition of over 100 organizations across the U.S. to advocate for Federal policies promoting sustainable agriculture, food systems, and rural communities

- Facilitated organizing and relationship-building amongst coalition partners through regular working group meetings
- Crafted blog posts, social media, and action alerts to facilitate outreach and inspire engagement in policy advocacy
- Gathered feedback from farmers to inform advocacy on Federal agriculture policy development and implementation

Local Food Supply Chain Specialist | Center for Environmental Farming Systems

Jun 2015 - Aug 2015

Worked with a rural food hub to develop outreach and communication materials to support farmer members and to tell farmers' stories to community members

- Developed fact sheets and toolkits to help farmers navigate Federal food and agriculture programs
- Interviewed food hub farmers and wrote stories to help share their experience with funders and local consumers

Writing Tutor | Swarthmore College

Sept 2011 - May 2014

Mentored 12-15 biology students per semester; provided feedback on a diverse range of student writing assignments

VOLUNTEERING & LEADERSHIP

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Member | University of Wisconsin

Sept 2020 – May 2022

Worked collaboratively with other committee members to identify, implement, and communicate about DEI initiatives

Symposium co-organizer | Entomological Society of America annual meeting

Feb 2021 - Nov 2021

Co-organized a symposium highlighting research on agricultural land use, insect conservation and agroecological transformation

Agroecology Advocacy Committee Chair | University of Wisconsin

Sept 2018 - Aug 2020

Founded and chaired a committee promoting greater teaching, research, and administrative focus on agroecology

Organizer and co-instructor, Agricultural Policy Course | University of Wisconsin

Sept 2018 - Dec 2018

Developed, organized, and co-instructed a graduate seminar on agricultural policy

PUBLICATIONS & AWARDS

Gwin, L.,* Miller, M.,* **Lowe, E.B.*** et al. (anticipated 2024). Resilience strategies for centers and institutes focused on food systems transformation. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*. (manuscript submitted).

Lowe, E.B., Groves, R., Gratton, C. (2023). Field edge flower plantings have variable effects on wild bee nesting and crop pollination independent of the surrounding landscape. *Agriculture, Ecosystems, and Environment*. 10.1016/j.agee.2023.108811

Lowe, E.B., Fochesatto, A., & Rissman, A.R. (2023). "Food systems transformation: political agroecology and managed grazing in the Midwestern United States." *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*. 10.3389/fsufs.2023.1096230

Rissman, A.R., Fochesatto, A., **Lowe, E.B.**, Lu, Y., Hirsch, R., Jackson, R. (2023). "Grassland and managed grazing policy review." *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*. 10.3389/fsufs.2023.1010441

Lowe, E.B. & Fochesatto, A. (2023). "Just Transitions to Managed Livestock Grazing: Needs and Opportunities for Change in the Midwestern U.S." (grasslandag.org/justtransitions)

Lowe, E.B., Iuliano B., Gratton C., Ives, A.R. (2022) "'Scalescape': an R package for estimating distance-weighted landscape effects on an environmental response" *Landscape Ecology*, 37: 1771–1785. 10.1007/s10980-022-01437-5

Lowe, E.B., Groves, R., Gratton, C. (2021). "Impacts of field-edge flower plantings on pollinator conservation and ecosystem service delivery – a meta-analysis" *Agriculture, Ecosystems, and Environment*, 310. 10.1016/j.agee.2020.107290

President's Prize for Best Student Research Talk, Entomological Society of America (2020)

*denotes co-first author

EDUCATION

PhD Environment & Resource Management, University of Wisconsin-Madison (2020-2022)

M.S. Agroecology & Entomology, University of Wisconsin-Madison (2017-2020)

B.A. Environmental Studies & Biology, Swarthmore College (2010-2014)