nuveen
A TIAA Company

CIO Weekly Commentary
24 November 2025

CIO VIEWS: STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO CONSTRUCTION

What farmland investing brings to the table

Bottom line up top

Can investors carve out space for gratitude? Markets head into Thanksgiving week digesting two very different main courses: a softer-but-still-growing labor market (Figure 1) that could use some warming up, and a platter of piping hot earnings from tech giant and AI bellwether NVIDIA Corporation. Together, this duo of dishes suggests that even if the economy's trip to bountiful proves less productive than hoped, growth is still on the table.

Last week's release of September's long-delayed jobs report showed nonfarm payrolls rose by 119,000 for the month, more than double consensus forecasts of 50,000. This upside surprise didn't quite qualify as comfort food, seasoned as it was with some concerning details: Job totals for August and July were revised downward by a combined -35,000, and the unemployment rate ticked up to a nearly four-year high of 4.4% as more people returned to the workforce but were unable to find new jobs quickly.

Moreover, since September's tally doesn't reflect sizable layoff announcements from some of the biggest U.S. employers in recent weeks, the official numbers may understate labor-market weakening as it occurs in real time. Subsequent monthly job reports could prove disappointing if layoffs gather steam. For now, the data argues for the Federal Reserve to stay on a gradual path toward easing, but without the urgency a much weaker employment report would have stoked.

AI serves up another gravy boatload of earnings. The labor market may be lukewarm, but the AI economy is red-hot. NVIDIA's latest

Saira Malik, CFA
Head of Nuveen Equities and Fixed Income, Chief Investment Officer

On behalf of Nuveen's Global Investment Committee

As Head of Equities and Fixed Income, Nuveen's CIO and leader of our Global Investment Committee, Saira drives market and investment insights, delivers client asset allocation views and brings together the firm's most senior investment leaders to deliver our best thinking and actionable investment ideas. In addition, she is a portfolio manager for several key investment strategies.

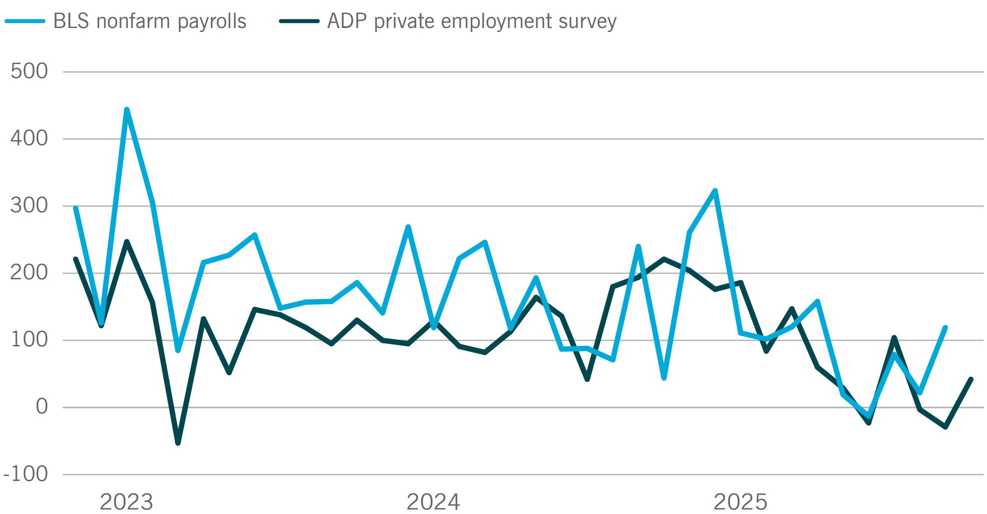
> ***Available economic data suggests the Fed will keep a relatively cautious and slow approach toward monetary policy easing.***

quarterly results, announced last week, included record revenue of $57.0 billion, with year-over-year growth north of 60%, driven largely by data center business. This powerful showing, along with management's upbeat outlook, helped assuage some AI bubble fears immediately upon release. But markets later struggled to hold on to gains amid awareness that AI revenues remain concentrated in a handful of names.

Whether the economic cornucopia is seen as half-empty or half-full, investors may want to consider using this season of reflection to adjust their expectations and diversify their portfolios with allocations to real assets that are less tied to short-term equity market drivers and more grounded in long-term stability and value.

FIGURE 1: MARKETS ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE RESUMPTION OF GOVERNMENT DATA

Monthly jobs growth (000s)



Data source: FactSet and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Nov 2022 to Oct 2025. Nonfarm payrolls are through Sep 2025.

Portfolio considerations

Despite a superficial similarity, there's zero connection between the idiom "buy the farm" and the financial suggestion "invest in farmland." The first is a metaphor for mortality, while the second may breathe fresh life into a portfolio.

Farmland historically has been an effective and consistent hedge against inflation. — a key consideration, with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) at 3.0% in September, the most recently available reading. Since 1970, per data from the TIAA Center for Farmland Research at the University of Illinois, the rolling three-year average correlation of U.S. farmland returns to CPI was +0.73. (Statistical correlations range from -1.0 to +1.0, or perfectly negative to perfectly positive, with 0 representing no

> ***Farmland offers low correlations to stocks and bonds, and has been a reliable inflation hedge.***

correlation.) This led the asset class to outperform CPI by an average of 6.5% per year over the past six decades (Figure 2).

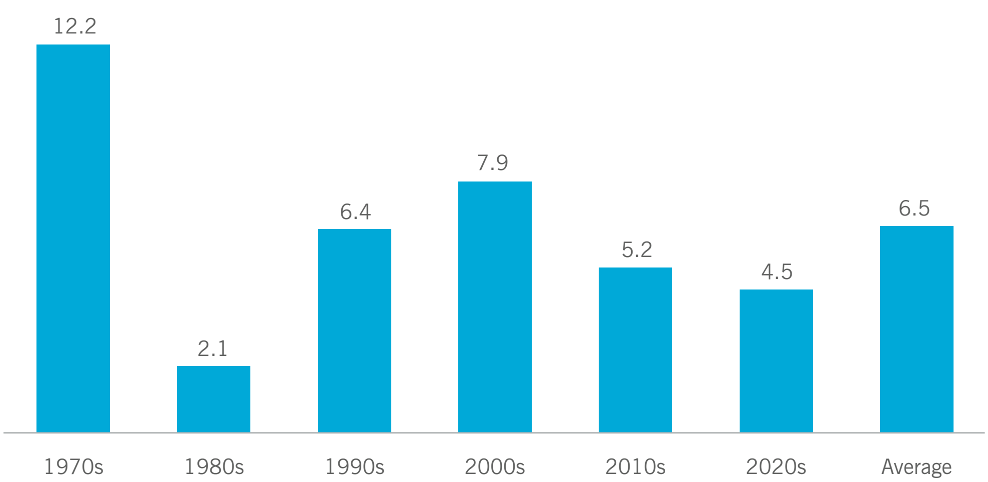
Meanwhile, the volatility of farmland returns (as measured by standard deviation) during the same multidecade period was 6.8%, significantly lower than the 16.6% for U.S. equities (S&P 500 Index). Additionally, the correlation of returns between farmland and U.S. equities was negative (-0.30), and between farmland and core U.S. fixed income only modestly positive (from +0.15 to +0.31, depending on the specific sector within the Barclay's U.S. Aggregate Bond Index). We believe these long-term correlation trends will continue, meaning an allocation to farmland should remain a good portfolio diversifier.

Lastly, farmland looks particularly compelling because it provides basic necessities, with demand for the goods it produces likely to remain resilient regardless of the economic environment. The asset class has weathered recent macro disruptions such as the Covid pandemic, global trade disputes, the Russia-Ukraine War and the Fed's aggressive inflation-fighting monetary policy from 2022-2023.

Longer holding periods strengthen farmland's advantages, as its correlation to inflation rises and its correlation to equities turns more negative — underscoring the value farmland offers as a strategic long-term investment.

FIGURE 2: FARMLAND HAS ACTED AS AN ATTRACTIVE INFLATION HEDGE

Farmland annual outperformance relative to inflation by decade (%)



Data source: TIAA Center for Farmland Research at the University of Illinois and U.S. Department of Agriculture, as of Aug 2025. Data depicts the average annual outperformance of farmland over the U.S. CPI Urban Consumers YoY Index for each decade, using on the TIAA Center For Farmland Research state-level data based on USDA survey data. **Performance data shown represents past performance and does not predict or guarantee future results.**

About Nuveen's Global Investment Committee

Nuveen's Global Investment Committee (GIC) brings together the most senior investors from across our platform of core and specialist capabilities, including all public and private markets.

Regular meetings of the GIC lead to published outlooks that offer:

- macro and asset class views that gain consensus among our investors
- insights from thematic "deep dive" discussions by the GIC and guest experts (markets, risk, geopolitics, demographics, etc.)
- guidance on how to turn our insights into action via regular commentary and communications

For more information, please visit nuveen.com.

Endnotes

Sources

All market and economic data from Bloomberg, FactSet and Morningstar.

This material is not intended to be a recommendation or investment advice, does not constitute a solicitation to buy, sell or hold a security or an investment strategy, and is not provided in a fiduciary capacity. The information provided does not take into account the specific objectives or circumstances of any particular investor, or suggest any specific course of action. Investment decisions should be made based on an investor's objectives and circumstances and in consultation with his or her financial professionals.

The views and opinions expressed are for informational and educational purposes only as of the date of production/writing and may change without notice at any time based on numerous factors, such as market or other conditions, legal and regulatory developments, additional risks and uncertainties and may not come to pass. This material may contain "forward-looking" information that is not purely historical in nature.

Such information may include, among other things, projections, forecasts, estimates of market returns, and proposed or expected portfolio composition. Any changes to assumptions that may have been made in preparing this material could have a material impact on the information presented herein by way of example. **Performance data shown represents past performance and does not predict or guarantee future results.** Investing involves risk; principal loss is possible.

All information has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, but its accuracy is not guaranteed. There is no representation or warranty as to the current accuracy, reliability or completeness of, nor liability for, decisions based on such information and it should not be relied on as such. For term definitions and index descriptions, please access the glossary on nuveen.com. **Please note, it is not possible to invest directly in an index.**

Important information on risk

All investments carry a certain degree of risk and there is no assurance that an investment will provide positive performance over any period of time. Equity investing involves risk. Investments are also subject to political, currency and regulatory risks. These risks may be magnified in emerging markets. Diversification is a technique to help reduce risk. There is no guarantee that diversification will protect against a loss of income. As an asset class, agricultural investments are less developed, more illiquid, and less transparent compared to traditional asset classes. Agricultural investments will be subject to risks generally associated with the ownership of real estate-related assets, including changes in economic conditions, environmental risks, the cost of and ability to obtain insurance, and risks related to leasing of properties.

Nuveen, LLC provides investment services through its investment specialists.

This information does not constitute investment research as defined under MiFID.