Organic Opportunities and Markets

Thursday morning 9:00 am

Where: Gallery Overlook (upper level) Room C

Three experienced diversified vegetable farming couples will share their organic production and marketing experience, highlight key farm practices, and answer questions.

Moderator: John Biernbaum, Horticulture Dept., MSU

9:00 am       Large Scale CSA Farming in Northern Michigan
               • Ryan and Andrea Romyn, Providence Organic Farm, Central Lake, MI

10:00 am      Training and Retaining Great Farmworkers
               • Katie Brandt and Tom Cary, Groundswell Community Farm, Zeeland, MI

11:00 am      Growing Our Farm to Feed Our City
               • Tomm and Trilby Becker, Sunseed Farm, Dexter, MI

12:00 noon    Session Ends
Larger Scale CSA Farming in Northern Michigan

Ryan and Andrea Romeyn, co-owners of Providence Organic Farm

Ryan: 231-350-3366 - Head of Farming Operation
Andrea: 231-350-6420 - Head of CSA / Farm Marketing
email: providencecsa@gmail.com

website: providenceorganicfarm.com

Providence Organic Farm’s CSA is approximately 60% of our farm’s income (Vegetable shares 43%, CSA add-ons such as berries & pastured pork 17%). Farm markets and wholesale opportunities comprise the rest.

Gross Profit for entire farm around $400,000.00 in the last two years.

Always refining and learning and working towards efficiency to save costs in production and labor. So think of this farm tour as a “snap shot in time.”

Location is important:

Halfway between Traverse City and Petoskey, Elk Rapids & Charlevoix, 1 mile east of US 31 at Eastport. Great for distributing produce and for seasonal tourists and residents.

Amount of ground in vegetables: Approximately 20 acres at a time rotating with an additional 7 in cover crops. Another 60 in hay. The rest in pasture for our Belted Galloway beef and Katahdin lamb.

Soil: Ours is Emmet Onaway sandy loam
- know your soil
- look at existing climate and micro-climate

Soil Management:
- Annual testing of different fields
- Average 2-3 yards/acre medium carbon compost
- Fall Manure rotation
- fish/seaweed foliar, transplant booster
- Humates, Gypsum, Rock Phosphate
- Wood ash, Sul Po Mag
- trace minerals, ect…

- Find a good consultant, until you know better

Cover crops: After all cash crops up until sometime in mid-October
What are you trying to achieve?
- Sweet Clover
- Oats / Peas / Daikon
- Rye / Vetch
- buckwheat
- Sorghum Sudangrass
- MIX IT UP! Diversity is good (but know how they grow)
Crop Selection: Vegetable CSA is very diverse. Grow more of what does well on the farm and less of challenging crops. We give our CSA members an average of 8-12 items per box per week over 24 weeks. Always try to have one of each: Allium, herb, dark leafy green, tender greens, roots, cruciferous veggies and in-season items such as asparagus and “fruits” like peppers, or eggplant, etc… That means we grow around 200 different sub-varieties under an umbrella of 50 or so categories.

Growing Transplants
- Besides onions, we contract out all of our early greenhouse planting (which need a heated greenhouse) to a grower friend.
- We grow all of our brassica, lettuce, etc. successions in our unheated hoop house.
- We use Morgan Compost for our potting soil. Nutrients in the mix is good
- Vacuum seeder

Weeds: Prevent weeds going to seed as much as possible
- Quack: dry fallow/buckwheat/rye
- Early and often
- Basket weeder
- Tine weeder
- Inner row cultivators
- Throw soil when crop can handle it- field cultivators

Pests: Not too big a problem, but can be
- Remay keeps flea beetle out (radish, arugula, turnip etc)
- Wildflower planting & not mowing the borders attracts beneficial insects.
- Cabbage worm – Dipel- necessary
- Potato Beetle – Spinosad, pyganic. Change it up(heavy mulch helps)
- Tomatoes on plastic or in mulch. Try to grow them quick before disease in cool weather brings them down

Irrigation:
- germination/steady growth/yield/ fertility
- Drip under mulch or plastic
- Overhead 3” aluminum
- 60 gal/min will 5hp constant pressure pump
- new(used) traveler, working out kinks

Transplanting
- Have 2 Holland 1 row transplanters at 12 and 18 inch in row spacing.
- 2 row Holland transplanter
- Water wheel transplanter, 1-3 rows at various spacings
- Plant tomatoes by hand into plastic with mulch in between.

Harvest:
- Most vegetables are hand-harvested
- Potato Digger
- Carrot Harvester
- Under cutter
- Good sharp harvest knives: Johnny lettuce knives, Martin’s Produce Supply
- Harvest gloves for crew
- Alligator Totes that stack / nest: Reusable transport packaging (sales)
- Monte or Martins for 1 3/4 bushel lugs that stack / nest
- Walk-in cooler dolly / pallet

**Seasonal Extension:**
- Cold Storage
- Hoop House
- Remay

**Livestock Integration:**
- Eat brassicas when can
- Graze cover crops (in Dec.) or Sorghum in summer
- Spread manure
- Balance income (pigs)
- Growing equity in cattle / sheep
- Enjoy
- CSA available to our members / farm tours are more interesting / life!
- Sheep dog!

**Useful Tools:**
- 50’s era (or newer if you can afford it) belly-mounted tractors
  - Kubota
  - 1975 John Deere
  - Seed EZ seeder
  - Waterwheel transplanter for everything but strawberries
  - Transplanters
  - Carrot Harvester
  - Front end loader
  - Box Truck
  - Flat Bed Trailer

**Transportation:**
- Field to wash/pack shed...old trucks and vans
- Pack shed to market(s)...refrigerated box trucks, sprinter van

**Staff:**
- Check References. Ask for 3.
- Interns - Some years. 26’ camper.
- Balance of getting people to work fast / enjoy job
- Fewer, higher skilled / paid, employees

**Organic & GAP Certification**
- Cog-pro
- Paper Trail

**Farm Markets: (As a means to sell and distribute to our CSA customers.)**
- Attractive Display with pictures of shares about CSA offerings to compliment the beautifully displayed veggies I’m bringing.
- Always have brochures / cards / information board, esp. in May and early June
- Know product and how to store and use it
- Be set up and ready to go on time, with scale, bags, etc
- Be engaging, knowledgeable, helpful at farmers markets
- Invite people to sign up for e-newsletter so they can receive more information at home

**Website:**
- Very Informative about CSA.
- Beautiful pictures
- Active link to sign up for newsletter for bi-weekly news, recipes, events, etc.
- Active link to sign up for CSA (Formerly we marketed our CSA mainly through one-on-one marketing at farm markets or through neighbors. Now we have many members who found us online, read our website, make a financial commitment and join. We use CSA marketing software called Farmigo for this.)

**CSA marketing software:**
- Lists all we offer.
- Organizes members, delivery schedule
- Easy mass email communication
- Take payments online. Especially helpful if you have over 50 members.
- We use Farmigo. 2% of all sales when we deliver, or $150 min. a month. Other CSA software companies out there: CSAaware, Small Farm Central, etc.

**Email marketing:**
- Entertain, share recipes, have eye-catching photos, advertise events, products as well as give links to our Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest pages.
- Again people self sign up for these newsletters through Facebook or by texting a name and number to their phone (a Constant contact tool) or by signing up on a paper form. I then go home and add them to contacts.
- Constant Contact and Mailchimp are the two I’m most familiar with and have great reviews.

**Other Marketing:**
- We’ve been listed with localharvest.org since the beginning of our CSA.
- We’ve also been listed in our regional farm & food directory (Taste the Local Difference) since it’s inception.
- Flyers and brochures at our two local food co-ops and at drop-off points.
- Farm to table dinners in the winter.
- Donations of food to worthy events / non-profit fundraisers
- Build Community: community potlucks / parties / classes & tours at the farm. Be open to give tours to area schools and college classes.
- Partner with area workplaces to increase their employee benefits by offering workplace CSA drop-offs
  - Swag (t-shirts, bags, stickers, etc.)
  - Name on CSA boxes, on root packaging, vehicles
  - Remind happy members to post reviews on Facebook and Google

**Nuts & Bolts to Weekly Management**
- Farm walk on Saturday or Sunday evening to survey fields and choose this week’s items
- Creating a pick list per day for CSA pick-ups and deliveries, after taking inventory into account
- Sending list to members for possible requests for switch outs and additions to share
- Posting list in wash pack
- Creating labels with name and contact information for each share box, including switch outs
- Creating delivery lists for truck packers and drivers so we can check off number of large and small shares that go into the vehicles and get dropped off.
Retaining CSA Members

- Weekly in-house emails go out to each CSA veggie member via Farmigo with a little news from the farm, what’s in the share box, educate on nutrition, recipes, storage tips, news)
  - Variety in items and share size! We aim to provide: An herb(s), alliums, a hearty green, tender greens, roots, cruciferous vegetables and several shorter season “fruits” per week. 8 -12 items per week is typical. We grow about 200 different varieties of vegetables under approximately 50 categories. Large family shares get 1/3 more food in their box.
    - Clean produce.
    - Give CSA customers top quality produce. If you do occasionally give seconds, educate.
    - Flexibility, (allow people to switch out items or delivery site, put shares on hold, add extra veggies)
    - Fixing problems when they arrive
    - Being generous,
    - Admitting mistakes
    - Providing positive farm experiences: (Parties, tours, classes)
    - Noticing new baby’s, sending thank you notes for special gifts, caring is someone is ill
    - Never get tired of telling your customers “Thank you. “You make a difference.”

“Your commitment to our farm makes our passion and dream possible. We couldn’t do this with out you.”

- Calling members personally to ask if they’d like to join the CSA in the next season and getting feedback as to why if not.

Other Keys to Success:

- Grow slowly
  (One important example in regards to CSA: Don’t start a CSA until a farmer has a few growing seasons under the belt and knows s/he can provide a variety of vegetables every week for the length of the growing season.)
  - Learn as you go: Youtube videos, classes, conferences, books, podcasts, etc.
  - Study your demographics… who’s buying the food? Are you reaching them?
  - Use member surveys at the end of the year
  - Find a good mentor(s) or shadow a farm that’s ahead of you
  - Know what you need, not what you want
  - Source price you can afford
  - Buy right / Be careful
    (ex. cattle, sheep, dog, house, barns, work as my own contractor, shop auctions, craigslist. Build in “sandbags” / “safety nets” to increase resiliency. Still working on it.
  - Build relationships: Local Farm Co-op, People in our Community, Farm peers (support each other, compliment good work and farming systems that aren’t your own), Local Food & Farm Organizations.
  - Give back: donations to food pantries, school back-pack programs, veggies for fund-raiser meals, fundraiser gift certificates, etc…
    - Build a great team: We have an excellent secretary, book keeper, accountant, FSA agent and key people in the field, wash / pack and at markets.
    - Take breaks. Play. Have some fun in the summer too. Don’t work one whole day a week, except for chores.
    - Be Grateful. Not everyone who wants to farm for a living gets to! Helps us get through the stress of high season.
Helpful Resources

(Can Be Found on our website: csaferms.org/providencefarm.asp)

Trade Magazine: Growing For Market
Seed Sources: E&R, Johnny’s, Fedco

Suppliers: Trickle-eze Irrigation

Martin’s Produce Supplies, Glacier Valley, Monte Packaging, Ellsworth Farmer’s Co-op

Equipment Sources: Auctions, Craigslist, Roeter’s Farm Equipment, Market Farm Implement

Online resources: ATTRA
OEFFA (Our organic certifier)

Books:
The New Seed Starters Handbook, Bubel
The Organic Gardener’s Handbook of Natural Insect and Disease Control, Ellis & Bradley, Organic
Principles and Practices, Handbook Series, Caldwell
Wholesale Success, Diffley & Slama

Loans/grants:
Farm Service Agency, NRCS
Larger Scale CSA Farming in Northern Michigan

Location is important: Providence Farm & CSA is located on the north end of Torch Lake, 1 mile east of US 31, at Eastport halfway between Traverse City and Petoskey, Elk Rapids & Charlevoix. Great for distributing produce and for seasonal tourists and residents.

Currently, Providence Farm is a certified organic in vegetables, strawberries & hay. We also have 32 pork, 30 Belted Galloway beef and 35 Katahdin meat lamb. Approximately 20 acres in produce, 60 acres certified organic hay, 45 in pasture.

40% of our business is sold through wholesale (Grain Train, Dryana, Cherry Capital Foods) up to six farm markets, our roadside stand.

60% of our business is through our 350 CSA families. (43% vegetables, 17% CSA add-ons such as berries, chicken, fish, pork, lamb, etc.)

Soil Care & Cover Crops
- Choose your soil carefully / know your soil
- Annual soil testing
- Amending soil w/compost, manure and minerals.
- Be aware of the damage tillage can do.
- Keep it green (as much as possible).
- Cover crops and rotations

Sorghum Sudan Grass
Larger Scale CSA Farming in Northern Michigan

Crop selection
- Vegetable CSA is very diverse.
- We grow over 200 varieties of vegetables
- Last share of the this season:
  - We give our CSA members an average of 8-12 items per box per week for 24 weeks. Always try to have at least one of each:
    - Herbs
    - Allium
    - Crucifers
    - Tender greens
    - Dark greens
    - Fruits
    - In season "fruits" of the vine
    - Occasionally have flowers or fruit

Growing Transplants
- Besides onions, we contract out all of our early greenhouse planting (which need a heated greenhouse) to a grower friend.
- We grow all of our brassica, lettuce, etc. successions in our unheated hoop house.
- We use Morgan Compost for our potting soil.

Weeds: Prevent weeds going to seed as much as possible
- Early and often
- Basket weeder
- Tine weeder
- Inner row cultivators
- Field cultivators, throw soil
- Allis Chalmers G, Farmall Super A (Have one for sale)
- Walk behind flame weeder
- 2 row potato hiller
- Weeding with hoes
- Interseed cover crop

• Buddingh 2 row finger weeder
• Buddingh 5 row basket weeder (with shovels to blank out unseeded rows)
Larger Scale CSA Farming in Northern Michigan

12/10/2016

Farm pests: ICW, SCB, CPB, Aphids, asparagus beetle

Irrigation
• Farm Well/Pump, 60 gpm, 5 hp, vs pump
• Drip Tape
• 3 inch aluminum pipe
• Overhead Sprinkling
• Traveler

Overhead sprinkling saves the strawberries!

Pest Control
• Beneficial insect habitat
• Remay (also helps with frost)
• 12 foot, 55 gallon boom sprayer
• Backpack sprayer for spot spraying.

Irrigation
• Farm Well/Pump, 60 gpm, 5 hp, vs pump
• Drip Tape
• 3 inch aluminum pipe
• Overhead Sprinkling
• Traveler

Direct Seeding
• Use (and still do occasionally) an Earthway Push Seeder
• 3 row Planet Jr. Seeders Mounted under Allis Chalmers G
• 3 point cone spreader for broadcasting cover crops

Transplanting
• Have 2 Holland 1 row transplanters at 12 and 18 inch in row spacing.
• 2 row Holland transplanter
• Water wheel transplanter, 1-3 rows at various spacings
• Plant tomatoes by hand into plastic with mulch in between

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Harvest:
• Most vegetables are hand-harvested
• Potato Digger
• Carrot / Beet Harvester
• Under cutter
• Good sharp harvest knives:
  Johnny lettuce knives, Martin's Produce Supply
• Harvest gloves for crew
• Alligator Totes that stack / nest
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• Plant tomatoes by hand into plastic with mulch in between
Wash & Pack
Set up until this summer:
• Barrel Washer
• Basement of an old dairy barn (30 X 40) equipped with many sinks & tables

In 2016 we built a new wash pack barn to meet our need for more room and cold storage.

The back half of our new wash-pack barn.

Seasonal Extension
- Cold Storage
- Hoop House
- Remay

Thanksgiving Week Deliveries
Larger Scale CSA Farming in Northern Michigan

Livestock Integration:
- Eat brassicas when can
- Graze cover crops (in Dec.) or Sorghum in summer
- Spread manure
- Balance income (pigs)
- Growing equity in cattle / sheep
- Enjoy
- CSA available to our members / farm tours are more interesting / life!
- Sheep dog!

Pork
- Piglets...like colored pigs, especially black as their skin is less vulnerable to sunburn.
- Start them in a hard-fenced area and train them to the electric fence.
- Pasturing & Shade
- Livestock Trailer
- Organic vegetables
- Nipple drinkers
- Non-GMO corn/soy
- Prepare for butcher in the fall

Beef
- Belted Galloway
- Some Mob Grazing
- Some temp fence failures
- Pasturing & Sun Protection
- Water, Movable into pasture
- Vegetables...love!
- Minerals, Kelp w/D.E.

Katahdin Hair Sheep
Usually have twins, excellent mothers, great meat
no shearing, parasite resistant, hearty.
Larger Scale CSA Farming in Northern Michigan

Useful Tools:
- 50’s era tractors
- Kubota
- 1975 John Deere
- Seed EZ seeder
- Waterwheel transplanter for everything but strawberries
- Transplanters
- Carrot Harvester
- Front end loader
- Box Truck
- Flat Bed Trailer

Transportation
- Field to wash/pack shed…old trucks and vans
- Pack shed to market(s)…refrigerated box trucks, sprinter van.

Staff:
- Check References. Ask for 3.
- Interns - Some years. 26’ camper.
- Balance of getting people to work fast / enjoy job
- Fewer, higher skilled / paid, employees
- Migrant workers, June - September

We use Farm Markets: (As a means to sell and distribute to our CSA customers.)

Display helps to attract CSA members.

Marketing is key: Attractive Display with pictures of shares about CSA offerings to compliment the beautifully displayed veggies I’m bringing. Always have brochures / cards / information board, esp. in May and early June. Also:
- Know product and how to store and use it
- Be set up and ready to go on time, with scale, bags, etc
- Be engaging, knowledgeable, helpful at farmers markets
- Invite people to sign up for e-newsletter so they can receive more information at home.

(Have Brochures Ready to Pass out)
Happy People Eat Well!
Show pictures that inspire people to join the CSA at markets, in brochures on website. Include your customer's real testimonies.

“We LOVE Providence Farm’s CSA. It’s the best choice we could’ve made for our family. We love trying new things and everything is so delicious! We can’t thank you enough for this heavenly fare.” Liz B.

We use Farmigo for online sign-ups and CSA organization. They charge 2% of sales only during months we deliver. We take payments using check gateway which charges 1% of all sales and $.30 per transaction. There are other CSA software companies out there such as Small Farm Central. This is what the customer sees:

Email marketing
- All of your CSA members are automatically on your list. They stay on from year to year unless they unsubscribe.
- Entertain, share recipes, have eye-catching photos, advertise events, products as well as give links to our Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest pages.
- People self sign-up for these newsletters through Facebook or by texting a name and number to their phone (a Constant contact tool) or by signing up on a paper form. I then go home and add them to contacts. (Constant Contact & Mail Chimp both good.)

Have a Great Website
- Vary informative about CSA.
- Include beautiful pictures
- Actively link to sign-up for newsletter for bi-weekly news, recipes, events, etc.
- Action link to sign-up for CSA (formerly we marketed our CSA mainly through one-on-one marketing at farm markets or through neighbors. Now we have many members who found us online, read our website, make a financial commitment and join. We use CSA marketing software called Farmigo for this.)

CSA-marketing software, this is what we see:
- Lists all we offer.
- Organizes members, delivery schedule
- Easy mass email communication
- Take payments online. Especially helpful if you have over 50 members.
- We use Farmigo.
- 2% of all sales when we deliver, or $150 min. a month.
Other CSA software companies out there: CSAware, Small Farm Central, etc.

Other Marketing
- We’ve been listed with local farm lists once the CSA.
- We’ve also been listed in our regional farm & food directory (Taste the Local Difference) once it’s inception.
- Nourish and brochures at our two events, co-op and at drop-off points.
- Farm to table dinners in the winter.
- Donations of food to worthy events / non-profit fundraisers.
- Build Community: community potlucks, dinners / classes & tours at the farm. Be sure to reach out to area schools and college classes.
- Partner with area workplaces to increase their employee benefits by offering workplace CSA drop-offs.
- Name on CSA boxes, packaging.
- Swag, Ask happy customers to post reviews.
**Nuts & Bolts to Weekly Management**

- Farm walk on Saturday or Sunday evening to survey fields and choose this week’s items.
- Creating a pick list per day depending on pick-up and deliveries for field workers.
- Sending list to members for possible requests for switch outs and additions to share.
- Posting list in wash pack.
- Creating labels with name and contact information for each share box, including switch outs.
- Creating delivery lists for packing trucks and delivery person.

**Key to Success Continued...**

- Build relationships: Local Farm Co-op, People in our Community, Farm peers (support each other, compliment good work and farming systems that aren’t your own, advertise for the entire farm market, not just your own booth).
- Plug into local food & farm organizations.
- Give back: donations to food pantries, school back-pack programs, veggies for fund-raiser meals, fundraiser gift certificates, etc.
- Build a great team: We have an excellent secretary, bookkeeper, accountant, FSA agent and key people in the field, wash & pack and at markets.
- Take breaks: Play. Have some fun in the summer too. Don’t work one whole day, a week, except for chores (look at whole health: balance).
- Be grateful. Not everyone who wants to farm for a living gets to! Helps us get through the stress of high season.

**Retaining CSA Members**

- Weekly in-house emails go out to each CSA veggie member via farmgo with a little news from the farm, what’s in the share box, educate on nutrition, recipes, storage tips, news.
- Variety in items and share size. We aim to provide: An herb(s), allium(s), a hearty green, tender greens, roots, cruciferous vegetables and several shorter season “fruits” per week. 8-12 items per week is typical. We grow about 200 different varieties of vegetables under approximately 50 categories. Large family shares get 1/3 more food in their box.

**Retaining Customers cont...**

- Clean produce.
- Give CSA customers top quality produce. If you do occasionally give seconds, educate.
- Flexibility (allow people to switch our items or delivery site, put shares on hold, add extra veggies)
- Fixing problems when they arrive.
- Being generous.
- Admitting mistakes.
- Providing positive farm experiences (Parties, tours, classes).
- Noticing new baby’s, sending thank you notes for special gifts, caring is someone is ill.
- Never get tired of telling your customers “Thank you. You make a difference.”
- “Your commitment to our farm makes our passion and dream possible. We couldn’t do this without you.”

**Other Keys to Success**

- Grow slowly (We started farming 28 years ago. Started own business 10 years ago. It takes time.)
- One important example in regards to CSA: Don’t start a CSA until a farmer has a few growing seasons under the belt and knows s/he can provide a variety of vegetables every week for the length of the growing season.
- Learn as you go.
- Study your demographics – who’s buying the food? Are you reaching them? (And use member surveys at the end of the year)
- Find a good mentor(s) or shadow a farm that’s ahead of you.
- Know what you need, not what you want.
- Source price you can afford.
- Buy right / be careful.
- (ex. cattle, sheep, dog, house, barns, work as my own contractor) shop auctions, craigslist. Build in “sandbags” / “safety nets” to increase resiliency. Still working on it.
Helpful Resources

(Can be found on our website at http://www.csfas.com/resources.aspx)

Trade Magazines: Growing for Market
Seed Sources: EBay, Johnny’s, Jekka’s
Suppliers: Trickle-Weir Irrigation
Martin’s Produce Supplies: Glacier Valley, Monte Packaging, Glensworth
Farmer’s Co-op
Equipment Sources: Auctions, Craigslist, Renter’s Farm Equipment, Market Farm Implement
Online Resources: ATTRA
CERTF (Due organic certification)
Books:
The New Seed Starter’s Handbook, Bybel
The Organic Gardener’s Handbook of Natural Insect and Disease Control, Ellis & Bridgford
Edgar
Principles and Practice, Handbook Series, Caudwell
Wholesome Success, Donald & Storm
Loans/grants:
Farm Service Agency, NRCS
Training & Retaining Great Farmworkers

Katie Brandt & Tom Cary
Groundswell Farm
## 10 Years in the Muck!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Inf.$</th>
<th>FTE</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>2 Farmers/payroll</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Lease 7 acres of muck in December!</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Nerves, decisions</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>16x48 Greenhouse, Well, Truck</td>
<td>$17K</td>
<td>$12K</td>
<td>2/0</td>
<td>Zero infrastructure, few building skills</td>
<td>-$20K/$1K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Tractor, 8x8 Cooler, Disc, Rotavator</td>
<td>$38K</td>
<td>$9K</td>
<td>2/1</td>
<td>Doubling business</td>
<td>$4K/$3K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Truck, Brush Hog, Hiller, Spin-Spray</td>
<td>$46K</td>
<td>$5K</td>
<td>2/1.5</td>
<td>2Floods, interpersonal</td>
<td>$12K/$9K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>GH expansion, $10K Farmer buyout, buy farm $24,500</td>
<td>$63K</td>
<td>$2K</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>1 Flood</td>
<td>$26K/$14K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>G Tractor, Potato Planter</td>
<td>$87K</td>
<td>$8K</td>
<td>2/2.5</td>
<td>New farmer</td>
<td>$28K/$17K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Potato Digger, Paper pot planter*</td>
<td><strong>$131K</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4K</strong></td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Special orders</td>
<td>$32K/$32K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>NRCS Hoophouse, 10 acre ($63K),well*</td>
<td>$132K</td>
<td>$11K</td>
<td>2.5/5</td>
<td>Drought, Baby</td>
<td>$32K/$48K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Delivery Truck, Manure spreader, Lifter</td>
<td><strong>$166K</strong></td>
<td><strong>$9K</strong></td>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>Cooler space</td>
<td>$32K/$50K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>30x48 Wash Station, Tractor, Rotavator, Plow, Delivery Truck, Semi-trailer cooler</td>
<td><strong>$190K</strong></td>
<td><strong>$55K</strong></td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>Building delays</td>
<td>$32K/$73K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Driveway, Wash Station, Barrel Washer</td>
<td>$199K</td>
<td>~$10K</td>
<td>4.5/6</td>
<td>Staff turnover, Tom arm, high yields, $</td>
<td>$24K/$77K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Increase cash on hand, 22x32 greenhouse, Well</td>
<td>$215?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>4.7/6</td>
<td>Selling CSA shares</td>
<td>$21K/?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Farm Labor

**Finding Good Workers**
- Attracting Farmworkers
- Interviewing & Selecting workers
- Pay & Benefits
- Interns? Apprentices? Employees?

**Training Good Workers**
- Delegating Management
- Organizing Tasks & Systems
- Training
- Efficiency & Harvest Rates
- Mid-season evaluations & raises
- Being a good boss

**Retaining Good Workers**
- Worker Retention
- Year-round opportunities

+ Farmer Sanity
+ Succession
Finding Good Workers

- Attracting Farmworkers

- Word of Mouth
- Website
- Social Media
- CSA newsletters
- Colleges
- WWOOF
- ATTRA
- Other?

Work at Groundswell
Farmworkers make everything at Groundswell possible...

Groundswell has given me the opportunity to take on new challenges and to be part of the decision making process more so than any other farm I've worked on in the past. My wife and I are starting Full Hollow Farm and Katie & Tom have shared their planning spreadsheets, financial history, tools and advice to help us get started.

- Brad Smith

Groundswell is a great place to work!

Fair wages
- Hourly pay starting at $8.50/hour
- Free CSA share OR access to veggies as needed (your choice)
- Raises for talent and experience
- Time-and-a-half overtime pay

Experience
Attracting Farmworkers

• Interview
  • Describe farm, pay & benefits, work hours, season and management opportunities
  • Standard questions
• Call References!
• Decide without delay
• Notify worker
  • Send tax forms
  • Send link to training materials
  • Ask for bio and photo for website

Finding Good Workers

• Interviewing & Selecting workers

**Interview Questions:**

Interviewer: Katie Kat

---

**Farm**

**Benefits**

**Day/Week/Season**

Specialties: Quincy Farm Manager (Kat), Field Manager, Poll Manager (Alyssa), Greenhouse, Irrigation, Pest/Disease, Volunteer/Events, Food Safety/Wash Station, Social Media, Maintenance, Special Orders, Farmers’ Market, CSA,

1. Are you available from May 1 to October 30? Yes

2. Are you looking for full time or part-time work? Part time, 2 days per week, Saturday, Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday

Will groundswell be your only job? No, manager at Kirkland's

3. Can you commit to working multiple seasons at Groundswell? Yeah, I would like to transition into farming
Finding Good Workers

- Pay & Benefits

- Clear & Consistent
- Spell out pay & benefits in writing
- Round robin:
  - What is everyone paying?
  - Does it attract & retain workers?

$8.90/hour
$10/hour
Free Veggies!
Housing + Stipend

**Fairwages**
- Hourly pay starting at $8.50/hour
- Free CSA share OR access to veggies as needed (your choice)
- Raises for talent and experience
- Time-and-a-half overtime pay

**Experience**
- Learn all aspects of organic farming from greenhouse techniques to transplanting, irrigation, pest/disease control, weeding, harvesting, washing and marketing
- Experience selling produce at a farm with 150+ CSA members, 2 successful farmer's markets and sales to 4 health food stores
- A choice of work specialties (coordinate the greenhouse, direct seeding in field, food safety, volunteers & events, irrigation, special orders, CSA pickups, farmers' markets, etc)
- Work with over 300 vegetable varieties on 2 soil types (muck & sandy loam)
- Potential to become farm manager at either of our two farm sites or be field manager at our main farm site
- Opportunity to tour other sustainable farms one per month

**Good working conditions**
- Eight hour workdays
- Five-day work-weeks
- Paid half-hour break and unpaid hour-long lunch
- Focus on safety
- Workers' compensation in case of accidents
Finding Good Workers

**Hours**

Farmworkers
- 5-day weeks
- 40-hour weeks
  - Time-and-a-half overtime
- 7am – 3:30pm (6am – 2:30 if over 90°)

Farmer
- 40-hr/wk fieldwork
- 10 hr/wk computer work
Finding Good Workers

- Interns? Apprentices? Employees? Subcontractors?

- Groundswell
  - Employees for pay & taxes
  - Train as if apprentices

- Interns

- Apprentices
  - Registered apprenticeship program
  - Farm School

- Employees

- Subcontractors

- Landlord/Mentor
Training Good Workers

Delegating Management

- Farmers
- Farm Manager
- Field Manager
- Polk St. Manager
- Farmworkers
  - Greenhouse Manager
  - Wash Station Manager
  - Etc.
- USDA loans – 3 years of farm management experience

Farm Manager – Suzanne

- Harvest
  - Oversees daily and weekly harvesting
  - Maintains harvest lists
  - Monitors yields
  - Conducts counts (perform or delegate)
  - Trains and leads a harvest crew on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
  
- Make day-to-day decisions about worker tasks and priorities, including decisions about timing of planting, trellising, harvesting, and tilling crops under

- HR
  - Trains and manages 10 to 20 farm employees
  - Co-manages or oversees Head Farmer
  - Oversees and/or trains wash station managers, head farmer
  - Delegates to specific order people
  - Oversees farmworkers
  - Routes farmworkers to best specialties
  - Delegates truck crew and loading
  - Conducts interviews and hiring (with Head Farmer)

- Farmworker training

- Newsletters?
- Special order email?
- Marketing?
- Co-lead farm walks with farm manager
- Tractor work – Comfortable with most farm implements, especially mowing
- Ability to cultivate with 2 if field manager is unable to do so (optional?)
- Work with farm manager to prioritize harvest vs. non-harvest tasks
- Have experience as needed
- Ask Katie questions as needed and notify her of issues, problems, etc.
- Mid-March to early November or late December
- Pay begins at $15/hr
- 2-year commitment preferred
Training Good Workers

- Organizing Tasks & Systems

- Plan in winter, delegate in summer
Training Good Workers

Weekly Lunchtime PowerPoints
• 11 weeks on how to farm at Groundswell
• 8 weeks on how to start or manage a farm
• 3 Collaborative Meetings
  • Mid-season Meeting, Variety Evaluation, End-of-season Meeting
• www.groundswellfarm.org
  • click on ‘Grower Resources’
Training Good Workers

- Training

Potting On

- Start in 20 – row "liney" trays
- Pot on when cotyledons or start of 2nd True Leaf
- Prep 132-tray soil blocks
- Fill trays in planting order
  - 1, 2 & 3 in a tray, 4 & 5 in another, etc.
- Use popsicle stick to remove part of a row
- Put into square hole in block
- FULLY COVER root soil with new soil from block
- PRESS to ensure root-soil contact

Greenhouse to Weeds to Marketing

LETTUCE

- **Directly on Table Cloth**
- **A Row for Each Variety**
- **Green-Red-Green-Red-Green Alternating Colors**
- **Try to Group Each Type**
  - Romaine
  - Oakleaf
  - Summer Crisp
  - Butterhead
  - Leaf
  - **Mini in Bag with 2 – 3 Colors**
- **Describe by Texture**
  - Crunchy
  - Tender
- **Greens Tend to be Milder**
- **Reds Can be Bitter**
Training Good Workers

- Training

Decide on crops & marketing for the first season and beyond...

Try to start with a manageable focus—there will be time to diversify

- Veggies
- Dairy & Livestock
- Fruit
- Bees & Honey
- What you enjoy that could “work”

Dairy cattle at Lubbers Farm in Stndale

Business Planning to Finding Land to Finances

Business of Farming

2016 Income
- Garlic up to 5%
- Grand Haven Market (~5%)
- No New Loans

2016 Expenses
- Increase Cash Reserve (7%)
- Pay Loans (~5%)
- New Well (2%)
- New Cooler & Greenhouse (1%)

Soil Survey

- Soil layers to 5 ft. deep
- [http://websollsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm](http://websollsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm) or search for the Web Soil Survey

- Quincy St.
  - Carlisle Muck
  - 0-60” Muck
  - Kawkawlin Loam at NW corner?

- Polk St.
  - Gifford Sandy Loam
    - 0 – 32” Sandy Loam
    - 32 – 38” Loamy Sand
    - 38 – 80” Sand
    - Granby Loamy Sand at NE corner?
Training Good Workers

• Efficiency & Harvest Rates

• I do, We do, You do (UC Santa Cruz)
• Training example from Jamie at Full Hollow Farm
  • Show & Explain 4 or 5 techniques
  • Attempt with Guidance
  • Practice
  • Compliment & Suggest Improvements
• Record Rates online
• Incorporate Rates into Harvest List?
Training Good Workers

• Focus on Learning

NOFA-NY
On-Farm Skills Development Guide

1. Prioritize Learning/Work Objectives
   • Business, Dairy, Maintenance, Field Crops, Fruit, Greenhouse, Livestock, Produce

2. Finalize Learning Plan

3. Mid-Season Review

4. End-of-Season Meeting Evaluation
Training Good Workers

- Mid-season evaluations & raises

- Tell them a day or two in advance
  - Two-way evaluation
  - “Think of what you need from us to do a better job”
- Farmer, Farm Manager & Worker
  - Compliment
  - Suggest Improvements
  - Ask for suggestions on better management
  - Ask for suggestion on improving systems and tools
- ~6 weeks after start date
- Pay raise
  - 50¢/hr for full time workers
  - $1/hr for excellent managers

“I don’t have time to write performance reviews, so I’ll just criticize you in public from time to time.”
Training Good Workers

• Problems?!

• Refer back to interview
• Give concrete suggestions
• Ask how things are going
• Get input from worker on how they could do a better job
• Talk to other workers for suggestions
• Find tasks that are a better fit for their skills
• Fire as a last resort, after consulting other workers

9. Can you be on time, day after day, for an early morning start at 7am?
   Yes

10. What is your transportation and housing situation?
    Live in a house in Wyoming and I have a car

11. How do you like to learn how to do a new task?
    I am a very visual person and I am a hands-on learner, just verbal instruction is not the best, I like to understand and practice

12. Often we have volunteers and working share members working on the farm and we could have them work with you. Do you like to manage people or would you rather not?
    Yes, that was the thing I enjoyed most at my old job. I liked to be a guide rather than a boss, I liked giving people opportunities to grow and learn new things
Training Good Workers

- Being a good Boss

- Live up to your promises
  - Pay
  - Opportunities

- Admit your weaknesses as a manager

- Seek input!

"You refuse to admit someone stole your horse, don't you?"
Training Good Workers

- Farmworker Survey

- September
- Discuss at end-of-season meeting

2. What are your favorite and least favorite tasks at Groundswell?

   My favorite job is
   My least favorite job is
   I would like ____, but our methods/tools are not great

3. Please share your thoughts & recommendations on the worker trainings.

   Was the info useful?
   Favorite or Most Useful Topics for this year?
   Least Favorite/Least Useful topics from this year?

4. How is the harvesting process? Give us recommendations to improve where you can think of them. Multiple answers are OK. (We’ll ask about specific crops in the next question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Great</th>
<th>OK</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harvest List</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden Carts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to harvest a new item</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with volunteers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weedsiness level in items I harvest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of crops I harvest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity on harvest sheet matches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What do you recommend to make CSA pickup, farmers markets or special orders work better?

6. Rate the management at Groundswell.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Tom</th>
<th>Kat</th>
<th>Alyssa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great to work with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes difficult to work with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pain in the @$$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives clear directions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Training: Good Workers

### Survey

#### 7. How were your co-workers? (Multiple answers are ok)
- [ ] Excellent!
- [ ] Hard-working
- [ ] I felt I worked harder than others
- [ ] Quick & efficient
- [ ] I felt I worked faster than others
- [ ] Smart and willing to take initiative
- [ ] Not always thinking how best to do a task
- [ ] I have a suggestion to help folks work better
- [ ] Morale was high
- [ ] Morale was average
- [ ] Morale was low
- [ ] Any suggestions?

#### 8. How is our management of the following crops? Multiple answers are OK.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Harvest method too slow</th>
<th>Difficult to wash</th>
<th>Pests/Disease/Low quality crops</th>
<th>We grow too much/don't have time to pick</th>
<th>We grow too little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bok Choy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels Sprouts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Cabbage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 9. What other suggestions do you have for improving the farm, farm work or any other aspect of the farm not previously discussed?

#### 10. What do you like & dislike about working at Groundswell?
- **I like**: 
  - 
- **I dislike**: 
  - 

---
Training Good Workers

• Farmworker Meeting & Survey Results

Meeting

1. Update on Katie & Tom possibilities
   a. “Head Farmer” position
2. Investment/improvement ideas
   a. Loading dock
   b. Farmall cub with basket weeder
   c. Irrigation
      i. Traveler
      ii. Solid Set
   d. Other
3. Look @ survey
4. Training Ideas
   a. Same as this year, but add readings
   b. One day per week power point, 1 day per week tasting
5. Marketing ideas
6. Varieties
   a. Less trials in 2017? Try to reduce to 250 total varieties?
   b. Specific issues
7. Crops
   a. Reduce tomatoes by 40%
   b. Other
8. Other??

What are your favorite and least favorite tasks at Groundswell?

My favorite job is

- Anything with the crops, even if not as enjoyable. I wanted to soak up as much info as I could. Hands in the dirt is a great way to learn. I also enjoyed the tractor work.
- harvesting leeks
- harvesting anything
- Harvest
- Leading worker trainings, tractor driving,
- Tractor Work

My least favorite job is

- It was tiresome to do the market loading/unloading/setup/breakdown by yourself. Also, the loads of sanitizing at the beginning of the season was necessary of course but boring.
- working farmers market
- remay
- Sorting out rotten tomatoes
- Harvesting chard. Ugh.
- Repeating everything for another year
- Reemay

I would like ____ but our methods/tools are not great

- Assistant managing if it could be rotated (or any of the assigned specializations if they could be rotated, for a more holistic learning experience).
- irrigating
- Better tools/methods of direct seeding and irrigation. Not sure how this would look – different type of seeder?
- Making sure soil is free of old vegetation before making beds? More drip irrigation or easier access to hoses?
- I just think this is one area where we lose a lot of time and aren’t efficient.
- Watering GH and Irrigation
Training Good Workers

• What workers value

• California Institute for Rural Studies
• Best Labor Practices on Twelve California Farms: Toward a More Sustainable Food System
• Interesting Ideas
  • Respectful Treatment – “No Yell” Policy, Not hurrying workers
  • Non-traditional Benefits – Personal & Business Loans, Food from the Farm, Childcare, Tuition Assistance
  • Health & Safety – Limiting handweeding to 2 hr/day, growing shorter fruit trees

What Workers Most Appreciate

Attempts to rank workplace benefits are difficult, if not impossible, since ultimately, all benefits are important. Nonetheless, the following is a rough prioritization of benefits and conditions most appreciated by farmworkers, based on the frequency, order and enthusiasm of responses to that question:

- Respectful treatment
- Slower pace of work
- Fair compensation
- Year-round employment
- Health insurance
- Personal loans
- Food from the farm
- Paid holidays and vacation
- Flexible work schedule
- Healthy and safe work environment
- Housing
- Opportunities for advancement, training and professional development
- Diversity of tasks
- Involvement in decision-making processes
- Clear and effective grievance procedures
Training Good Workers

- You can do this!

- Try adding a new strategy or two each season

---

**Low, Medium and High Cost Practices**

**Low Cost Practices:**
- Respectful treatment
- Regular acknowledgement and appreciation
- Free food from the farm
- Personal loans
- Policies and mechanisms for communication and information sharing
- Clear grievance procedures
- Flexible work schedules
- Safe and healthy work environment
- Diverse tasks
- Opportunities for training, skill acquisition and professional advancement
- Surveys and other feedback mechanisms
- Assistance with social services
- Celebrations, team-building and appreciation parties

**Medium Cost Practices:**
- Bonuses and profit-sharing
- Year-round employment
- Paid time off
- Retirement plans
- Educational assistance

**High Cost Practices:**
- Higher wages
- Health insurance
Retaining Good Workers

- Worker Retention

- Year-round opportunities
- Returning workers
  - Raises
  - Management opportunities
- Focus on Learning
- Enjoyable work environment
Retaining Good Workers

• Year-round opportunities

• Winter CSA & Markets
• Planning & computer work
• Winter Businesses
• Other?
Farmer Sanity

• Hours, Pay & Benefits for the Farmer . . .

• Rested, happy people are better to work around
• Pay yourself a salary as soon as possible
  • GR Urban Growers found farmer/farmworker salaries of $4 - $10/hour in 2015
• Work reasonable hours as soon as possible
  • 40-hour weeks
  • Remember to include computer & planning time

"I typically put in 40 to 50 hours as a vet and 60 to 80 hours as a dairyman."
Farmer Sanity

- Hours, Pay & Benefits for the Farmer...

  - Grower to Grower: Creating a Livelihood on a Fresh Market Veg Farm, 2005
  - CIAS, Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems at UW, Madison

### Table 6. Hourly wage of owner for three farm sizes over three years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm scale</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;3 acres</td>
<td>$3.32-$6.57</td>
<td>$4.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 12 acres</td>
<td>$2.26-$16.92</td>
<td>$7.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;12 acres</td>
<td>$3.46-$14.90</td>
<td>$11.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Farmer Sanity**

- Hours, Pay & Benefits for the *Farmer* . . .

- Grower to Grower
- 2005

### Table 4. Farm finances for three farm sizes, per acre and per farm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm scale</th>
<th>Labor hours per acre</th>
<th>Gross sales per acre</th>
<th>Net cash income per acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;3 acres</td>
<td>933-2,994</td>
<td>1,957</td>
<td>$8,888-$25,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-12 acres</td>
<td>402-1,443</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>$6,267-$15,276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;12 acres</td>
<td>462-613</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>$6,750-$14,466</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm scale</th>
<th>Total farm* labor hours</th>
<th>Total farm* gross sales</th>
<th>Total farm* net cash income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;3 acres</td>
<td>1,229-4,972</td>
<td>2,464</td>
<td>$11,316-36,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-12 acres</td>
<td>3,004-8,646</td>
<td>5,045</td>
<td>$32,040-138,759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;12 acres</td>
<td>9,697-37,879</td>
<td>19,450</td>
<td>$228,567-783,979</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total farm figures refer to vegetable or fruit enterprises only, not other enterprises such as pastured poultry.*
Succession

- Bringing on Business Partners

- Simplifies Succession
- Long-term retention
- Better Farms!
Succession

• Finding Buyers

• Set a fair price
• Be transparent
• Spread the word
• Work with new farmers for a good transition
• Be open to lots of options
  • Cash sale
  • Lease
  • Land Contract
  • Worker-owned cooperative
  • Partnership
  • Etc.

Groundswell Farm for Sale

Own a successful organic farm in West Michigan

Groundswell Farm grows 6.5 acres of organic vegetables near Grand Rapids and Holland, MI. The farm sells $200,000 worth of produce through 160 CSA members, 3 farmers markets, sales to health food stores & restaurants and a wholesale contract for garlic seed. Although the farm is financially successful, the owners would like pursue other dreams and are looking to sell. We prefer farmers with 2 or more years of farm experience and would like the chance to meet and work with potential buyers. We welcome people to contact us with any questions at groundswellfarm@gmail.com or call Kara at 616-885-7776. More info on the farm can be found at groundswellfarm.org and more info on the farm sale is at www.groundswellfarm.org/farm-for-sale

Open house: Thursday, September 22nd
6-8:30 pm at 6027 Quincy St, Zeeland MI 49464
7 - 7:45pm at 6075 Polk St, Hudsonville MI 49426

Open House: Sunday, September 25th
10am - noon at Quincy St. & 12:30 - 1:30 at Polk St.

Quincy St. Farm
6027 Quincy St, Zeeland MI 49464
$160,000 in annual sales
7 acres of muck soils with 50% organic matter (Carlisle Muck)
32'X50' wash station with walk-in coolers, dry storage, barrel washer, conveyors, washer, 3 wash lines of tanks
24'X40' unheated hoophouse with rollup sides
16'X36' heated propagation greenhouse with tables, vents, rollup sides
Tool shed, office, break room, garlic drying tanks
30 HP Tractor, 165 JOHNS CUMMINS, 5000 gal. hydraulics, rice equipment
Cultivation Tractors - 3, 550 lbs. Chainers O Tractor w/ 3 row cultivators
Rototiller with row winder, brush hog, Leistin cultivator, 10 disk, chisel plow, plastic mulch layer, underplow harrows, 3 row potato equipment (planner & planter), 1 row potato digger, 12 collapse, subsoiler, wagon, backhoe
2) 12 ft. delivery trucks (cab over engine) and 10 pickup truck
Full range of farm & shop tools and harvest supplies from 11 years farming
Turn-key farm with crop scheduling spreadsheets, farm manual, crop manual, food safety manual, crop rotation, worker training power points
Quintessa, Great website (www.groundswellfarm.org), farm name, brochure
160 CSA customers, 3 busy market stalls, 4+ retail accounts, wholesale garlic seed business
Farmers are willing to stay up to 1 season or until you are comfortable with systems & equipment
Several farmworkers plan to return in 2017
Certified organic through DEPPA
Sales revenue can pay land loan, $19,000 farmer salary, $75k payroll & overhead, $15k in all other expenses based on 2015 sales & expenses
Asking price $195,000

Polk St. Farm
6075 Polk St, Hudsonville MI 49426
$40,000 in annual sales
10 acres of sandy loam (silty + sand, no clay content) Gifford & Grantbury Fluvial Till
27'X32' Propagation greenhouse
1 Pickup truck (1500 Chev 1500, 100K miles, runs good)
30 HP Tractor - Ford 4600
Tractor Implements - Rototiller with row markers, brush hog, 2-row cultivator, manure spreader, 3 bottom plow, drag
Asking Price $55,000
Questions??

Training & Retaining Great Farmworkers

Katie Brandt & Tom Cary
Groundswell Farm