

Good Food Farmers Network: A Replicable Model of Farmer-Owned Joint Marketing and Sales

SARE PROJECT FNE15-824

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Project Goals

- To develop a **model for farmer-owned joint distribution** that can be readily adapted by other farming communities and modified as desired.
- To specifically support **small-scale and beginning farmers** (anchored by more experienced growers) by offering an outlet that offers better prices and more control than selling through traditional wholesale channels and takes less time and resources than selling direct.
- To specifically support **holistic, regenerative agriculture** by only offering produce grown without pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, or genetically modified organisms, and animal products that are 100% grassfed or pasture-raised and fed only organic or non-GMO grains as appropriate by species.
- To expand demand for locally produced foods by offering **greater flexibility and convenience** for customers.
- To continue to raise awareness and support for local agriculture and build a more resilient food system by **fostering direct connections between farmers and customers**.

Project Outcomes

We are pleased with our work to date and our achievements thus far. We have built a distribution model that is farmer-owned and requires little start-up capital. It is replicable, scalable, and adaptable. We are grateful to NESARE for providing funding to help us develop this model. For more information, please see the guide we created available at goodfoodfarmers.com/for-farmers/ or contact Hilary Corsun at info@GoodFoodFarmers.com.



Sample contents of a Farmer's Choice 60 bag from Fall 2017. Contents include eggs, pork chops, goat cheese, mushrooms, pea shoots, carrots, celeriac, turnips, potatoes, and butternut squash. Retail price: \$60. Customer can fully customize if desired, or receive the default contents that we have selected here.

Evolution of Good Food Farmers Network: A very organic process

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Description	Similar to a multi-farm CSA; participating farms set prices	Similar to a multi-farm CSA with more add-on options available	Major shift in model; increased minimum order to \$45; increased flexibility for members	Continuation of new model; expansion of home delivery; full-year crop planning	Goals: Scale up by filling in gaps in existing delivery routes; add a second day; offer more products
Features	No customizing No holds Single payment	3 share sizes More add-ons Customers select frequency	Fully customizable orders Introduction of home delivery Customers pay by the week and can hold deliveries as needed	Expanded home delivery Increased product selection	Launching in 2018: Prepared foods (June launch), year-round delivery (successful)
Technology	FarmOS: open source CSA management tool; Quickbooks;Wordpress	Switched to CSAware for ordering platform; Quickbooks;Wordpress	CSAware; Quickbooks; Wordpress	CSAware; Quickbooks; Wordpress; Googlesheets	CSAware; Quickbooks; Googlesheets; website to be updated using custom platform
# of Farms	4 farms	6 farms	10 farms	12+ farms	12+ farms
# of Locations	One church	4 sites including a college campus, a restaurant, and two churches	2 churches + introduction of home delivery	2 NYC drop sites, plus home delivery and office drops in two original neighborhoods	Highly targeted home and office delivery plus site-managed drops
# of Members	40 members	80 members	55 members	110 members	180 members
Annual Sales	\$45,000	\$65,000; ave. spend \$23/week	\$65,000; min. spend \$45/week	\$120,000; ave. spend \$53	Goal: \$240,000



Early years were much like a multi-farm CSA. The van belonged to a member farm and was used one day per week for the project.



We built a cooler inside the van using a Coolbot and A/C unit for \$1500. A professional upfit for the van would have cost \$15,000.



Pre-packed orders in reusable bags in the cooler box in the van.

In 2017, to increase capacity in the van, we removed the cooler box and switched to plastic totes with insulated liners and reusable ice packs. This also increased vehicle flexibility as no A/C unit is required. Each plastic tote fits two reusable pre-packed bags.



We continue to use this method for all of our deliveries.