

INTERIM REPORT FNE04-514

1. A Book on Why and How to Run Cooperative CSA. FNE04-514
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2. The goals of our project are to explain the benefits of multi-farm cooperative CSA, demonstrate the ways in which Local Harvest CSA has succeeded with this model and provide the reader with many tools and lessons learned from our experience.
3. Our farm, Flicker Farm, is currently not growing anything. Jill Perry has begun graduate work toward a Master of Arts in Teaching and Scott Franzblau has focused on his carpentry business.
4. Several Local Harvest CSA farmers have been interviewed extensively for the project because they have important roles in the organization. Others have played a lesser role but all have been asked for their input so that we may portray the cooperative experience accurately. As the handbook undergoes several revisions we will continue to utilize the CSA farmers as proofreaders and content editors.
5. We have been working with an outline of 10 chapters:
 - i. Prologue
 - ii. What is Multi-Farm CSA (MFCSA)
 - iii. Why is MFCSA good for farmers and customers
 - iv. Short History of Local Harvest CSA (LHCSA)
 - v. Crops and Bids
 - vi. Legal Framework, Taxes, and the Cooperative Board
 - vii. Membership and Bookkeeping
 - viii. Documents to run a MFCSA
 - ix. MFCSA profiles from around the country
 - x. LHCSA looking towards the future

What remains to be done is polishing off each chapter, copy editing, and working with our publisher to send it off to be printed in a 6 x 9" book format. Then we will immediately send it off to the list of people who have requested copies already. We will send out a press release to many agricultural publications that copies are available for free. Jill Perry is presenting a workshop at the NOFA-NH Winter Conference titled Cooperative Marketing for Small Growers and Producers in which she will discuss the handbook and her research while writing it. This is the first of several presentations by the authors or CSA members that will take place this spring and summer around New England.

6. We have completed 90% of the research and writing necessary to complete the book. The only part remaining is updating a few sections since another growing season has passed and changing the "Membership and Bookkeeping" section since the CSA changed how this is structured.
7. No natural conditions have affected the process of writing and editing that we are going through.
8. There have been no relevant economic findings related to this project and Flicker Farm.
9. Our project will result in exactly the source of information Local Harvest CSA has

been seeking to help manage inquiries about the CSA's methodology. The handbook will synthesize years of policies and procedures developed by Local Harvest growers so that other groups may use the information in structuring their own operation.

While compiling the book, we have stimulated new ways of looking at our crop tracking systems, including charts that show weekly crop purchasing. We have conducted interviews and asked questions that have led to fruitful discussions on CSA philosophy and projections of where the Local Harvest CSA is headed in the future.

Once our project, including outreach, is complete the next step will be to monitor the successes and failures of cooperative or multifarm CSA's around the country. Our hope is that cooperative and/or multifarm CSA will be increasingly seen as a viable way for small growers to make a living farming, thus strengthening local agriculture and communities centered around agriculture.

10. We have published an article in the NOFA-NH quarterly newsletter announcing the upcoming publication of our book and giving contact information on how to receive a free copy. We have also spoken with the NH chapter of the Farm Bureau about publicity once our book is finished. As stated above, Jill Perry is scheduled to present a workshop titled Cooperative Marketing for Small Growers and Producers at the NOFA-NH Winter Conference on March 4, 2006. We have compiled a list of names of people interested in receiving a copy once it is published. We plan on sending more press releases to all of the relevant national agricultural publications once the book is printed. We will also try to get the book mentioned on all of the NOFA and sustainable agriculture websites.

January 22, 2006
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