



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE SYSTEMS

Grower to Grower Sustainable Local Foods Marketing Resource Kit

Robin Trott, University of Minnesota Extension Educator, Douglas County 2023



SARE Partnership Grant [ONC21-095](#)
Ron Branch, Berry Ridge Farm, Alexandria, MN
Jeff and Jane Way, Ida Valley Farm, Garfield, MN
Becky Haffner, Haffner Family Farm, Eagle Bend, MN

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This resource kit is the project of Robin Trott, UMN Extension Educator, Local Foods in partnership with Ron and Ann Branch, Berry Ridge Farm, Jane and Jeff Way, Ida Valley Farm, and Becky and Will Haffner, Haffner Family Farm. Setting yourself apart from other local producers can be frustrating and confusing. We have gathered these marketing resources together in the hope that local foods producers will find their direction in marketing the products of their farms and gardens

Berry Ridge Farm
1301 Fireman's Lodge Rd SW
Alexandria, MN 56308
Ron and Ann Branch

I am completing my 33rd year of growing and marketing fruits and vegetables on our farm, just west of Alexandria MN. Our produce is marketed on the farm and at the Alexandria Farmers Market. We have used high tunnels in our production program since 1992. I am active in the Minnesota Farmers Market Association, MN Fruit and Vegetable Association and local agriculture organizations. - Ron Branch



Berry Ridge Farm was opened in 1988 by Ron and Ann Branch. Starting its 36th year, the couple grows everything from raspberries, blueberries and strawberries to potatoes, squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, flowers and more. When asked what keeps them growing year and year, Ron said, "It's also the people. After 35 years, you get to know families and they get to know you and there is that connection. It's fun to see families bring their kids to the market and they pick out fresh produce and then hopefully go home and prepare a meal together."



Haffner Family Farm
19832 County Road 18 Northeast, Eagle
Bend, Minnesota 56446

My name is Becky Haffner and I am a local farmer. I farm with my husband in Douglas, Todd, and Otter Tail counties. We raise crops and livestock. We raise pasture raised meat and direct market most of that meat direct to consumers. We sell beef, pork, lamb, chicken, and turkey. Our sales consist of on farm sales and direct to consumer deliveries. We are proud to supply our community with locally produced meats from our farm.

Will and I moved to our farm in 2013. We have 5 children: Quenton, Carson, Graham, Benjamin, and Greta. Will grew up on a farm and decided he wanted to farm alongside his dad John Haffner. We bought our 200 acre farm north of Rose City and went all in. We had a dream to farm as our only source of income and that's what we are doing today. Today we farm around 1,100 acres in Douglas, Otter Tail, and Todd counties. We raise corn, wheat, rye, soybeans, and alfalfa hay. We also run our animals on around 100 acres of pastures. Our main passion is raising animals humanely and producing premium meat. We raise British White and Angus Cattle, Berkshire and Berkshire cross Hogs, and Katahdin Hair Sheep, along with Dorper hair sheep and registered Columbia Sheep. Our farm is a very diversified farm. We hope you will get to know us and get to know our farm and choose us to be your farmers. We are proud to be a small Minnesota family farm.



Ida Valley Farm
7487 Buckskin Ln NW
Garfield, MN 56332

We are Jane and Jeff Way and we grow vegetables on a couple of acres with two high tunnels to help with season extension. We consider ourselves sustainable farmers. Making compost, using cover crops - working to improve soil health using only natural inputs, drip irrigation where we irrigate. We only use organic pesticides when necessary We have been producing vegetables for sale since 2010 starting part time. Since 2014 Jane has worked the farm full time with Jeff working another fulltime job as well. We sell our produce primarily at the Alexandria Farmers Market and to a couple of local restaurants. We also sold produce through Local Harvest Market an online market connecting local producers and customers for about 5 years. We are looking into using email and Facebook to connect with potential customers in the off season with produce we have available.

Resources

The following resources have been of great use to the farmers and ranchers involved in this project.

Resources available in Google Drive

These include information about:

- General Marketing Techniques
- Farm Business Management
- Farmers Markets
- Agritourism
- Marketing Beef
- Marketing for Profit
- Selling Minnesota
- Wholesale and Online Sales

You can access these resources at: <https://z.umn.edu/MarketingToolkitResources>

Helpful websites and web content:

- Farmbytes: The basics of marketing local food:
<https://extension.umn.edu/smallfarms/farmbytes-basics-marketing-local-food>
- USDA releases Local Food Marketing Practices Data:
<https://www.nass.usda.gov/Newsroom/2022/04-28-2022.php>
- Marketing Local Foods? How to Stand Out from the Competition:
<https://cfaes.osu.edu/news/articles/marketing-local-foods-how-stand-out-from-thecompetition>
- Selling Strategies for Local Food Producers:
<https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/g6222>
- Local Food Sales Continue to Grow Through a Variety of Marketing Channels by Stephen Martinez <https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2021/october/local-foodsales-continue-to-grow-through-a-variety-of-marketing-channels/>
- Direct Marketing for Farmers and Ranchers, Jeanne Carver
<https://www.sare.org/resources/direct-marketing-for-farmers-and-ranchers/>
- Growing Your Brand, Mississippi State University.
<http://www.ext.msstate.edu/farming/agri-tourism/growing-your-brand>
- Agritainment, Pennsylvania State University. <https://extension.psu.edu/agritainment>
- NCAT Marketing Tip Sheet Series. <https://attra.ncat.org/publication/ncatmarketing-tip-sheet-series/>

Recommended Books:

- Behind the Table: A Guide for Farmers Market Vendors by Pam Benik
- Market Farming Success: The Business of Growing and Selling Local Food, 2nd Edition, Lyn Buczynski
- Ready Farmer One: The Farmer's Guide to Selling and Marketing, Diego Footer Nina Galle
- Big Ideas, Small Farm: A marketing guide for attracting customers, increasing profitability, and building community Jason McClure
- Marketing Your Farm: A practical guide to attracting loyal customers and increasing sales by Myrna Greenfield