Capacity Building Programs:

*Explore Farming!*
Farm Employment
Farm Business Planning
*classroom / online*
Practical Skills Trainings
*horticulture / livestock*
Technical Assistance

Farmland and Infrastructure Resources:

*Incubator Training Farms*
*Farmland Matching Service*
*Access to Credit/Capital*
*Infrastructure Support*
*MPPU, Coolers, Equipment*
*Technical Assistance*

Access to Diversified Markets:

*World PEAS Food Hub*
-*multi-farm CSA*
-*low-income markets*
-*institutions*
Farmers’ Markets
Support Services
Technical Assistance

Amplifying our Success:

*Land Based Farm Incubators*
*Operational as of March 2012*

FarmerCorps
*Growing a next generation of farmers and ranchers*
Incubator Farm Timeline

• 3 growing seasons on farm
• **Rationale:** limited space; trial; establish records
• **Communicated multiple ways:**
  – Outreach, Applications
  – Farm Business Planning Course
  – Farmer Manual for Incubators
  – 1-1 TA sessions
• **Schedule:**
  – Year 1 – serious learning curve
  – Year 2 – start thinking about / doing land search
  – Year 3 – ID and prep land for next year transition
Metrics of Success

Over 12 years

230 graduates

85 incubator farmers

57 still farming

Success: active, commercially viable farm businesses
Transitioning Farmer Program

- Funded by SARE R&E 2005-2007 (view our annual reports online: LNE05-223)
- 26 enrolled; 8 transitioned over 3 yrs
- Launched our “transition” program
- Focus on Needs Assessments for Immigrant/Refugee farmers
- Goal setting, transition strategy
- “Tune-up” of reality of farming
- Initiated land access/matching program
- Coincided with Food Hub development
Needs Assessment

• Captured information such as...
  – production experience and knowledge
  – skill levels
  – language and literacy levels
  – physical resources
  – financial capacity
  – time availability
  – financial goals
  – production goals
  – marketing experience and outlets
  – farmland geography - proximity
  – and future farm business goals.

The initial assessments were intended to be documentation of a transitioning farmer starting point.
Farmer Transition Plan

- “Staff” binder (all interactions - pre-CRM)
- “Farmer” binder (farm / production records)
- Weekly field reports
- More intensive TA year 1; less yr 2-3
- Intensive farmland ID, matching yr 2-3
- Transitioned to online case management (Salesforce) – holistic view, foster better communications
Farmer Learning Goals

- Pre-season, mid-season, end of season check-in
- **Step 1:** Where am I now?
- **Step 2:** Where do I want to go?
- **Step 3:** How am I going to get there?
- Short-Term and Long-term Goals
Farmland Matching Service

- Key to transition support!
- Partnerships – if effective
- Case management
- Farmer Focused
- Goal-oriented
- Hardest part of transition
- Land is land, not a farm yet
Farmers connect with land and Farmland is conserved and utilized

Steps for Farmland Matching in Massachusetts

| Development of resource guides and workshops for landowners and municipalities on leasing land to farmers | Landowner Outreach and education to locate suitable farmland | Town Outreach (Agricultural Commissions, Con Coms, Land Trusts, Town-owned land, etc.) and education to locate suitable farmland | Site visits and Technical Assistance for Farmers and Landowners | Searchable Map and Database of Available Land for farmers | Development of Farmer Resources and Workshops on Finding Land and Land Tenure Options |

Key
- Landowners
- Farmers
- Overlap
Steps for Farmland Matching in Massachusetts
World PEAS Food Hub
Access to Capital/Credit

- Significant start-up costs
- Sources of Capital
  - FSA, SBA, NRCS cost-share
  - Crowdfunding
  - Microloans
  - World PEAS Food Hub Advance
- Financial Literacy
- Risk tolerance
- Credit scores
- Strategic, timely investments for business growth
Supporting Producers Post-Transition

Support involves:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding landscape of service providers and whom to ask for help.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmland access and lease support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing production support and technical assistance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer/network support.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The ability of organizations to provide this support varies greatly.
Keys to Success

• Clear communications/expectations
• Timeline – start early!
• Individual goals key
  – everyone has unique needs
• Markets, revenues
• Land tenure – allow time
• Use credit as a tool
• Ongoing mentoring, community support, farmer-to-farmer networking
Reflection - Considerations

• Representing full management decisions; foster critical thinking
• Avoid culture of dependency
• Should farmers or incubator program “move”?
• Business disruption
• Effort, costs to re-capitalise “stuff” and soils
• Safe space to “fail”
• Continuous learning journey – support to graduates? Are partnerships there?
• Other thoughts?
Aaron Newton

Lomax Incubator Farm

Cabarrus County NC
New Farmer Training

Field U2 Cody Hammel

USDA Certified Organic
2009 - 2016

- New Farmer Training
- CUMC Charity Efforts
- Community Garden
- CABREW Hops Trial
- Beekeeper Haven
- Tours
- CFSA Food Systems & Research

Field U1 Fall 2014
what is limiting you?

**Law of Maximum**

Optimizing features in module “A” or “C” will not produce a change in the performance of the application until the performance problems in module “B” are addressed.
Factors

Time
Experience
Money
Resources
Skills
Relationships
Land Access
Physical Ability
Management
Market Access
Passion
Factors

Skills

Unconscious Incompetence
Conscious Incompetence
Conscious Competence
Unconscious Competence
Factor development

Current situation
Assets
Resources
Opportunities
Needs
Motivators
People
Organizations
Lomax Incubator Farm

Transition +

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Access</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital/equipment access</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continued facilities support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development</td>
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</tbody>
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