A Presentation on Sandhills Farm to Table Case Study
Presented By:

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Business Profile

(SF2T)= CSA + multi-stakeholder cooperative.

Sandhills Farm to Table Co-op’s goal: *Meeting local food needs with local food*
Services

- Product delivery
- Aggregation
- Producer & Consumer Education/ Training
- Community Outreach
- Produce box subscriptions
  - Sample items:
    - Fresh produce.
    - Shelf stable items: honey, jams, dry pasta, and bread.
    - Special handling products: meats, eggs, and dairy.
# Subscription Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full Year (April to November)</th>
<th>Spring/Summer Season (April to August)</th>
<th>Fall Season (September to November)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard Produce Box</strong></td>
<td>• Weekly: 28 boxes</td>
<td>• Weekly: 18 boxes</td>
<td>• Weekly: 10 boxes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bi-weekly: 14 boxes</td>
<td>• Bi-weekly: 9 boxes</td>
<td>• Bi-weekly: 5 boxes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Double Produce Box</strong></td>
<td>• Weekly: 28 boxes</td>
<td>• Weekly: 18 boxes</td>
<td>• Weekly: 10 boxes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bi-weekly: 14 boxes</td>
<td>• Bi-weekly: 9 boxes</td>
<td>• Bi-weekly: 5 boxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Lite” Produce/Bread Box</strong></td>
<td>• Weekly: 28 boxes</td>
<td>• Weekly: 18 boxes</td>
<td>• Weekly: 10 boxes</td>
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Location

- Rural area.
- Whispering Pines in Moore County, NC.
- Local is Moore County and nine contiguous Sandhills Counties.
BUSINESS SITUATION:
INTERFACE WITH LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

SF2T helps
1. Local farms find economic viability
2. Residents gain access to local foods.
3. Provide conventional prices and education for healthy eating.
Multi-Stakeholder Structure

• Create solidarity between groups.

**Producer Membership**
• Producers
• Groups of Producers
• Processors, Distributors, etc.

**Worker Membership**
• Professional Employees
• Workers

**Consumer Membership**
• Consumers
• Clients
• Families of Clients
• Institutional Purchasers

“We’re all in this together.”
Entrepreneurial Focus of Study

• Success is highly impacted by:
  ▪ Unique organizational structure
  ▪ Community outreach
  ▪ Understanding and use of marketing, the supply chain, and growth challenges.
Marketing and Expansion

Current Market
- Most sales through subscription model.
- Social media sites and interactive website.

Opportunities for growth:
- Institutions, Wholesale, Online Sales
- more products to low income areas.
Supply

- Built a network of farmers and producers.
- The cooperative continues to grow:
  - Includes over 38 farmer members and 14 invested core growers.
Customer Base

• 2013-Cooperative delivered to more than 1,500 members.
  • Around 3.5% of households in the County.
• Retiree community.
• Military family from Fort Bragg.
Sales

2011 → sales increased 48%

2013 → sales levels of about $600,000; cooperative delivered 22,000 boxes.

Farmers receive 70% or more of retail price for their products.

$320,000 returned to farmers and artisans in 2013
Barriers to Growth: Producer Growth

• Limited to local farmers and producers
• Competition within the cooperative.
• Difficult and costly to become organic.
Barriers to Growth: Customer Growth

• Revising business plan to further explore how to capture a larger audience.
• Making changes and/or additions that better meet consumer needs.
Positive Outcomes

• Provided fresh local food to over 1,500 members.
• Provide producers with 70% of food dollars.
• 25 gathering sites are used for members to pick up their boxes.
  ▫ Host sites receive $2 for every box picked up.
Benefits to Community

• Started SF2T University (farmer training).
• Inspires other rural cooperatives.
• Donated more than 3 tons of produce.
• Donated about $40,000 to the community, schools, & churches,
• Works with schools to raise money and engage students.