

MSU Student Organic Farm

Strategic Plan

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Our mission is to cultivate knowledge and human capacity in organic and sustainable agriculture for students, farmers and educators.

A few words from a fellow traveler to relax the mind and focus the attention.

“I cannot but think that if we had more true wisdom in these respects, not only less education would be needed, because, forsooth, more would already have been acquired, but the pecuniary expense of getting an education would in a great measure vanish. Those conveniences which the student requires at Cambridge or elsewhere costs him or somebody else ten times as great a sacrifice of life as they would with proper management on both sides. Those things for which the most money is demanded are never the things which the student most wants. Tuition, of instance, is an important item in the term bill, while for the far more valuable education which he gets by associating with the most cultivated of his contemporaries no charge is made.”

“I think that it would be better than this, for the students, or those who desire to be benefited by it, even to lay the foundation themselves. The student who secures his coveted leisure and retirement by systematically shirking any labor necessary to man obtains but an ignoble and unprofitable leisure, defrauding himself of the experience which alone can make leisure fruitful. “But,” says one, “you do not mean that the students should go to work with their hands instead of their heads?” I do not mean that exactly, but I mean something which he might think a good deal like that; I mean that they should not *play* life, or *study* it merely, while the community supports them at this expensive game, but earnestly *live* it from beginning to end. How could youths better learn to live than by at once trying the experiment of living? Methinks this would exercise their minds as much as mathematics.

If I wished a boy to know something about the arts and science, for instance, I would not pursue the common course, which is merely to send him into the neighborhood of some professor, where any thing is professed and practiced but the art of life; - to survey the world through a telescope or microscope, and never with his natural eye; to study chemistry, and not learn how his bread is made, or mechanics, and not learn how it is earned; to discover new satellites to Neptune, and not detect the motes in his eyes, or to what vagabond he is a satellite himself; or to be devoured by the monsters that swarm all around him, while contemplating the monsters in a drop of vinegar. Even the *poor* student studies and is taught only *political* economy, while that economy of living which is synonymous with philosophy is not even sincerely professed in our colleges. The consequence is that while he is reading Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Say, he runs his father in debt irretrievably.

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden* 1854

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Student Organic Farm Strategic Plan Acronyms List

ANS	Animal Science Department
CANR	College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
CARRS	Community, Agriculture and Recreation Resources Studies Department
CBG	Chicago Botanic Garden (NGO)
CSA	Community Supported Agriculture (Marketing Program)
CSS	Crops and Soil Science Department
EFFS	Ecological Food and Farm Stewardship (RSO)
EFFS	Ecological Food and Farm Stewardship Graduate Specialization
ENT	Entomology Department
FFA	Future Farmers of America (Program)
FOR	Forestry Department
FSA	Farm Service Agency (USDA)
FSEP	Food System Economic Partnership (NGO)
FW	Fisheries and Wildlife Department
HEP/CAMP	High school Equivalency Program / College Assistance Migrant Program
HRT	Horticulture Department
HTRC	Horticulture Teaching and Research Center
IAT	Institute of Agriculture Technology
IIA	Institute of International Agriculture
JRN	Journalism Department
KBS	Kellogg Biological Station
LCC	Lansing Community College
MAES	Michigan Agriculture Experiment Station
MDA	Michigan Department of Agriculture
MFI	Michael Fields Institute (NGO)
MIFFS	Michigan Food and Farming Systems (NGO)
MLUI	Michigan Land Use Institute (NGO)
MSAN	Michigan Sustainable Agriculture Network (RSO)
MSU	Michigan State University
MSUE	Michigan State University Extension
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OFCP	Organic Farming Certificate Program
PLP	Plant Pathology Department
PSGH	Passive Solar Greenhouse (hightunnel, hoophouse)
RISE	Residential Initiative for Study of the Environment (Specialization)
RMA	Risk Management Agency (USDA)
RSO	Registered Student Organization
SAEA	Sustainable Agriculture Education Association
SAFS	Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems (Specialization)
SOC	Sociology Department
SOF	Student Organic Farm (Program and Place)
SOFI	Student Organic Farm Initiative (RSO)
SWOT	Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TIES	Training, Internships, Exchanges and Scholarships (Program)
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WCH	Windy City Harvest (NGO)
WMEAC	West Michigan Environmental Action Council (NGO)

1.0 MSU Student Organic Farm 2008 Strategic Plan Executive Summary

In May of 2007 the Student Organic Farm (SOF) management team met with the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) administration to discuss program development. At that time it had become clear that the SOF had grown from a project to a program and was in need of a sustainable business plan, codified organizational structure, clarity of mission and goals, and some level of recurring funding for the teaching programs and farm management. CANR administration commissioned a survey of university farms and provided the SOF with consultancy support for the strategic planning process.

The following nine months were spent developing our internal review of perceived roles, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, a comprehensive list of stakeholders, mission and strategic goals. The team developed a web-based survey to garner feedback from stakeholders and interviewed 15 key administrators. Time was spent developing an engaging and inclusive agenda for the strategic planning work sessions. Further, the SOF Steering Team, staff and students worked very hard to capture and tell our story as part of these sessions. In April 2008 nearly 70 stakeholders both internal and external to MSU met for two days to enter into the strategic planning process together. Participants were provided with a summary of the strategic analyses to that point. Break-out sessions were held to specifically work on prioritizing goals and roles for the SOF. The message was loud and clear that participants value what the SOF currently does and expect the SOF to continue what it is doing and to consider new initiatives.

Following the strategic planning work sessions, the SOF Steering Team spent two months deeply reflecting and interpreting what we heard from our stakeholders. During that time we also worked with the Institute of Agriculture Technology (IAT) and MSU Global to consider options for future growth of the Organic Farming Certificate Program (OFCP). As a result of this year-long process the SOF has identified the following strategic priorities:

1. Educational Programming
 - a. Collaboration with RISE, the Sustainability Specialization and Sustainable Agriculture and Food Specialization to create a hub with more formalized linkages among these undergraduate programs.
 - b. Serve as a model for transformative undergraduate learning with an emphasis on retention and persistence of non-traditional learners.
 - c. Commitment to offering the OFCP both in full for-credit program through IAT and as component parts of the program in both for-credit and non-credit modules.
 - d. Offer new packaging of OFCP curriculum to affiliate off-campus sites, urban and incubator farms via online and other distance learning methods.
2. Extension/Outreach
 - a. Increase passive solar greenhouse and season extension technical support and workshops across the state and Mid-west with MSUE and other partners.
 - b. Work with partners and MSUE to develop a train-the-trainer program dealing with general organic farming and small scale produce farming and gardening expertise.
 - c. Work with partners in Detroit, Flint, Chicago and other urban centers to support the development and growth of urban agriculture projects and incubator farms.

3. Research

- a. Starting fall 2008: Yakeley Hall Salad Greens Project to investigate: 1) factors and values influencing student choices; 2) mechanical harvester; 3) minimal geothermal heating; and 4) opening the MSU Dining Hall market to local farmers.
- b. Continue to work with faculty, departments and units across campus to incubate and develop organic farming related projects, such as vegetable transplants, protected fruit production, animal husbandry and field crop production.

4. International

- a. Explore partnerships with the Institute for International Agriculture (IIA) and others related to developing an international network of teaching farms.
- b. Develop a teaching and research partnership with EARTH University.
- c. Provide educational programs and curriculum related to small scale agriculture and organic certification for limited resource farmers and education programs.

In order to support the above priorities the SOF seeks assistance in four major areas. One is salary support for the current and enhanced student education programs. Another is infrastructure improvements on the SOF site, some urgently needed. A third is support for team management of the SOF and funding to help make that management secure. An additional need is for support for enhanced external communication vital to teaching and Extension/Outreach programs and cultivating increased participation from internal and external partners.

In order to support the above priorities it is essential to create and codify a SOF organizational and management operating structure. We have outgrown our current loosely defined management team structure and now need clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and decision making protocols that allow the inclusion of other faculty and staff. Further, we see value in the creation of an SOF Advisory Board to provide networking, resources, capacity building, strategic planning and development input for the SOF.

As the SOF continues to integrate projects across the missions and to grow into an interdisciplinary program with multiple congruent agendas outside the Department of Horticulture (administrative home) it is critical to our long-term viability that faculty and students from across CANR and the University have ownership in the program and that participating departments are recognized. In particular we are especially interested in the emerging synergies that exist between the new Sustainability Specialization, the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Specialization, and the RISE Program.

The members of the Steering Team are anticipating these next steps and future growth of the program. *Our mission is to cultivate knowledge and human capacity in organic and sustainable agriculture for students, farmers and educators.* We have developed a set of strategic actions and identified available, needed and potential funding to move these priorities forward. The SOF Steering Team is pleased that its programs are highly regarded by so many students, graduates, farmers, community and school gardeners, agencies and organizations and its cooperating faculty, departments, colleges and other units. It is equally pleased that the SOF and its programs are a shining example of the Boldness by Design Principles including enhancing the quality of the undergraduate experience and increasing stewardship.

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Strategic Planning—Nature and Purpose

Strategic Planning is a tool for strengthening organizations. It provides an outlook for guiding an organization to shape its future. It uses ‘strategies’ that are formed in response to opportunities and challenges ahead. The strategic planning process results in a Strategic Plan oriented to action—action with strategic direction and intents. It relies on possible visions of the future and what an organization could become. Thus, the actions are focused on building toward a future state.

There are many compelling reasons for an organization to undertake a strategic planning process. Among the reasons are the following that are germane to the Student Organic Farm (SOF) and its comprehensive programs:

- Examine likely future forces and conditions and develop a proactive response;
- Provide better awareness of clients’ and partners’ needs and of their related issues and environments;
- Help define the overall mission, vision and purposes of the organization;
- Focus on the strategic objectives of the organization and means of achieving them;
- Clarify strategic issues to be faced and how to deal with them;
- And, provide a common sense of direction, continuity, leadership and effective operation.

Strategic planning can help the organization, in cooperation with its partners and those served, to collectively and cooperatively gain control of its future and the destiny of the organization.

The strategic planning process is a disciplined process to produce fundamental interests and actions that shape and guide what an organization can and will become. It requires broad, effective information gathering and analysis, development and exploration of strategic alternatives, and formulation of a plan that recognizes the future implications of present decisions.

2.2 Commitment to Strategic Approach

At the Student Organic Farm, and in cooperation with the Department of Horticulture and the other units of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the decision was made that this was the appropriate time for the faculty and staff of SOF to undertake a Strategic Planning Process designed to fit SOF and its future opportunities and challenges. The success of the Student Organic Farm, its growth in innovative production and quality programs, its need for stable support, and its need for facilities improvements together necessitated that a strategic planning process help chart SOF’s possible future.

Further, the SOF faculty and staff chose to examine more thoroughly the question of how SOF and its programs could become even more a unit “of” the college as contrasted to a unit “in” the college. Like many units at MSU, SOF is a unit that addresses specific issues and needs that are complex, require multi-disciplinary knowledge and approaches, and necessitate actions beyond usual academic collaborations. SOF faculty and staff believe SOF can best achieve its mission and purposes through active cooperation with colleagues and stakeholders in other departments

of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, with those in other colleges and units of MSU, and with cooperators beyond the University in nearby communities, the state, and the nation. The SOF faculty and staff believe also that their innovative and successful production techniques and programs can contribute even more to the international mission of MSU as well.

Thus, of particular importance are the issues associated with "strategic networking", within the College, as with the Department of Crop and Soils Sciences, other departments, the Institute of Agricultural Technology, and the Institute of International Agriculture; and more broadly as with Michigan State University Extension (MSUE), the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES), the College of Natural Science and other colleges, and with University Outreach and Engagement. Especially important regarding internal networks is having a clear understanding of the roles that cooperators and other stakeholders in MSU expect of SOF, and the ways in which the agendas of SOF and the cooperators and stakeholders can be complementary and synergistic.

2.3 Processes Employed (developmental, inclusive, transparent and educative)

Throughout its Strategic Planning the faculty and staff of the Student Organic Farm were strongly analytical. In addition to being very analytical, the SOF's Strategic Planning process was strongly participatory, with a commitment to openness, inclusiveness, and transparency of process. Also, the SOF faculty and staff were committed to being strongly developmental and educative—sharing with others what ever information and insights would advance their understanding and potential contributions to the Strategic Planning Process. The many approaches used and the active participation that resulted—through SOF's initial SP scoping sessions, its consultations within CANR and beyond, cooperator and client surveys, extensive personal interviews with key administrators and stakeholders, preparation of its "SP resource notebook", the Strategic Planning Work Sessions, follow up group actions, and sharing of information throughout the process—underlie this report and are shared in it.

This resulting Strategic Planning Report is being shared in draft form for review and suggested additions and improvements. After its review by the core group most closely associated with the SOF and its administration, it will be shared more broadly for review by all those who participated in the Strategic Planning Work Sessions. After their input has been obtained and appropriate enhancements in the Report have been made, the document will be shared more broadly with CANR and University cooperators and stakeholders and with others in the nearby communities, across the state and beyond.

2.4 Commitment to Implementation

The documentation that has been generated is rich with suggestions about how SOF will chart its future and deal with potential opportunities and with the strategic issues that it must face. Also, it shows how the SOF can become more a unit "of" the College and the broader University. The SOF strategic analysis and plan contribute to cooperation, foster a sense of team, and build consensus of what SOF and its cooperators could do for the betterment of those served on campus, in communities of Michigan, and beyond.

SOF faculty and staff are dedicated to the implementation of the SOF Strategic Plan. Several of the actions identified as beneficial for SOF and its cooperators and stakeholders are already being implemented. The added parts of this Strategic Plan to be implemented next, the allocation of resources to support that implementation, and the organizational approaches to be used are yet to be determined. From the start, SOF has been dedicated to a solid strategic analysis and plan, and it has been committed to using the beneficial elements of the plan as soon as their use is possible.

No one expects the challenges that lie ahead to be easily addressed and achieved, particularly given the State of Michigan's fiscal challenges, and the current state of the Michigan and national economies. However, the resolve and dedication of the SOF faculty and staff, the creativity of the Department, Institute and College administrators, and the support of cooperators and stakeholders should help make the Student Organic Farm and its programs second to none in the nation.

3.0 SOF's Development and Accomplishments

3.1 Origin and Growth of SOF

a. Student Organic Farm Time Line

Following is a condensed chronological summary of important steps in development of the SOF. A more detailed summary of important activities and factors influencing the development of the SOF are summarized in Section 3.2.

1999-2000

- Early planning and discussions in the Michigan Sustainable Agriculture Network (MSAN) Registered Student Organization (RSO), What would a student farm look like? What types of student farms exist at other campuses?

2001

- Winter salad greens project funded – first 2 hoophouses and first fruit trees planted.
- “What is Organic?” selected topics class in spring semester.
- Student Organic Farm Initiative (SOFI) RSO formed fall semester.

2002

- Developed vision of year-round CSA funded teaching farm.
- W.K Kellogg grant approved for \$95,000 in July, USDA proposal not funded.
- Three more hoophouses built by MSAN students and volunteers during fall.

2003

- “What is CSA” selected topics class spring semester;
- CSA initiated with 25 memberships and ~ 1 acre in May. First summer interns.
- USDA Higher Education Challenge grant resubmitted and funded for \$100,000.

2004

- 50 CSA memberships, ~ 3 acres field production.
- Completed strategic planning with values, mission and goals identified.
- RISE seminar offered at SOF and many tours during fall semester.
- EFFS RSO started during fall semester.

2005

- Decision to not increase to 75 CSA memberships and to focus on teaching mission.
- Organic Farming Certificate Program (OFCP) planning started; APPR proposal submitted.
- CSA Core Group formed and SOF story, budgets and teaching plans shared.

2006

- New OFCP academic specialist with funding from the USDA Organic Transitions Grant.
- Permaculture / edible forest garden plot planted.
- OFCP program approved in August and new course development continued.
- USDA Risk Management Agency proposal for farmer outreach funded October 1.

2007

- Started OFCP in January with 10 students.
- Weekly campus farm stand and 25 summer CSA shares May through October.
- Started discussion with CANR administration regarding funding and strategic planning.

2008

- OFCP started in January with 14 full time and 4 part time students.
- Continued farmer outreach with a growing focus on PSGHs for urban agriculture.
- Started arrangement to provide salad greens for Landon Hall.
- Strategic Planning and evaluation of values, mission, vision and goals and strategic issues ahead.

Example Project Outcomes over the First Seven Years

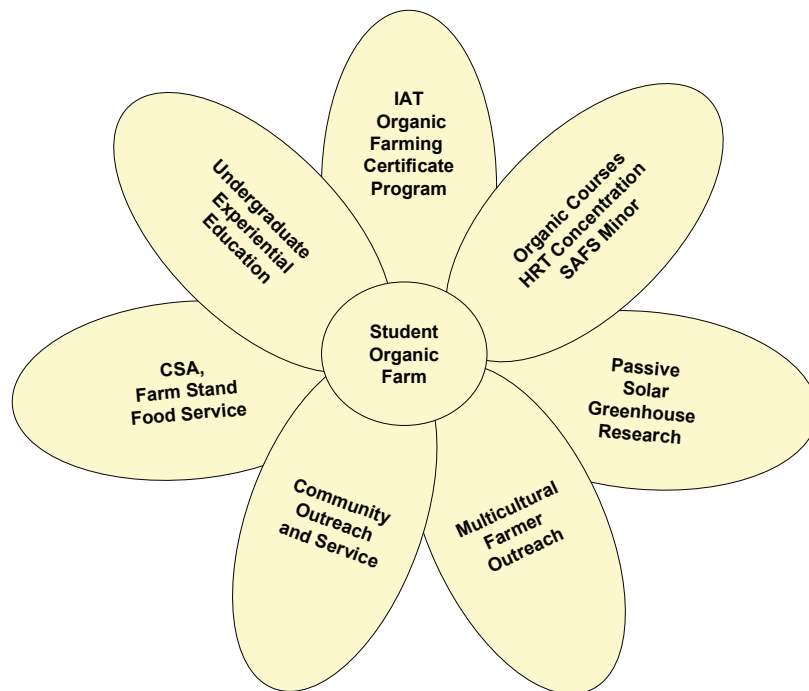
- On average 500 to 600 MSU and LCC students visiting the SOF per year.
- Three Plan B Master's Projects completed and available at www.msuorganicfarm.com .
- Over 40 undergraduate student employees over seven years engaged in transformative learning experiences and continuing in organic farming or related fields after graduation.
- A unique one year 44 credit Organic Farming Certificate Program that prepares students to support the expanding local food system and demand for nutritious, fresh, organic vegetables with 9 completing the program courses the first year and 18 starting the second year (2008).
- Year-round organic vegetable production outreach to 300-400 Michigan farmers and beginning farmers annually.
- Produce sales of ~\$100,000 in 2007 fund student labor, basic supplies and operating expenses, and part of the farm manager salary and allow the SOF to engage over 300 people weekly through the CSA and farm stand.

b. Integrated Research, Teaching, Extension and Outreach Programs

The Student Organic Farm programs developed over several years with the guiding vision of providing a place where development of new knowledge and the teaching and outreach programs to extend the knowledge were rooted in daily service of the MSU campus as well as local and Michigan communities.

Passive solar greenhouse research provided an opportunity for a unique teaching experience around year-round food production while supporting student requests for more hands-on learning experiences in a sustainable and certified organic farming operation. The hands-on learning experience evolved into multiple courses available to undergraduate students and provided in a one-year option as the Organic Farming Certificate Program (OFCP). The multicultural farmer outreach program is a continuation of efforts to serve previously underserved populations that need access to fresh vegetables and farming/gardening experiences. The integration of efforts provides consistency and an opportunity to expand the scholarship of learning.

The following diagram has been used to illustrate that the programs developed sequentially but with the continuous, conscious, intention of integrating research, teaching, extension/outreach and service.



c. SOF Farm: Site Layout and Current Facilities

The original request was for a site close to main campus that would allow easier student access and increased visibility. The Horticulture Demonstration Gardens and the 4H Children's Garden attract thousands of visitors each year and served as a model for development of the educational aspects of the SOF. Students met with University administrators and the Office of Land Management to identify possible sites around the north or main campus. The 2020 Vision Planning Document was cited as evidence that spaces near main campus would not be available for long. The location of the organic salad greens project at the Horticulture Teaching and Research Center was another main factor in shifting the SOF site to south campus.

The SOF is located at the Horticulture Teaching and Research Center (3291 College Rd, Holt, 48825). The original allocation was 1 acre and gradually grew to approximately 10 acres of the 160 acre HTRC. All the land in use was previously used for tree fruit research since ~1965). The soils are not ideal for intensive vegetable production due to the clay subsoils and poor drainage in locations. Earlier leveling of the fields also exposed subsoils in certain areas.

Initial facility improvements included installation of water and electricity lines which were funded from grants and with the support of HTRC staff. There are currently three structures 20' x 96' and two 30' x 96' for crop production (12,000 sqft). In addition a 30' x 48' and 18' x 50' greenhouse frame structures are available for materials storage and semi protected work or classroom space. Arrangement of the greenhouses and fields is noted on the following diagram.

Heated greenhouse space (20' x 96' hoophouse and 20' x 120' raised arch) is available on another part of the HTRC. This space is assigned to John Biernbaum for research purposes related to organic transplant production in exchange for space previously used in the Plant Science Greenhouses on the main campus. Cost of utilities and general maintenance of the heated structures are supported by the Michigan Agriculture Experiment Station.

Extensive effort has been made to improve the soil quality in the production fields through the application of lime and composted manure and growth of green manure crops. Drainage issues have been addressed by improving drainage ditches along the roads and drain tiles under the roads. Over time seven main fields, each approximately 0.6 acre, have been developed and are used for the primary crop rotation. Additional plots are being developed as the HTRC staff removes construction materials and supplies to other storage areas.

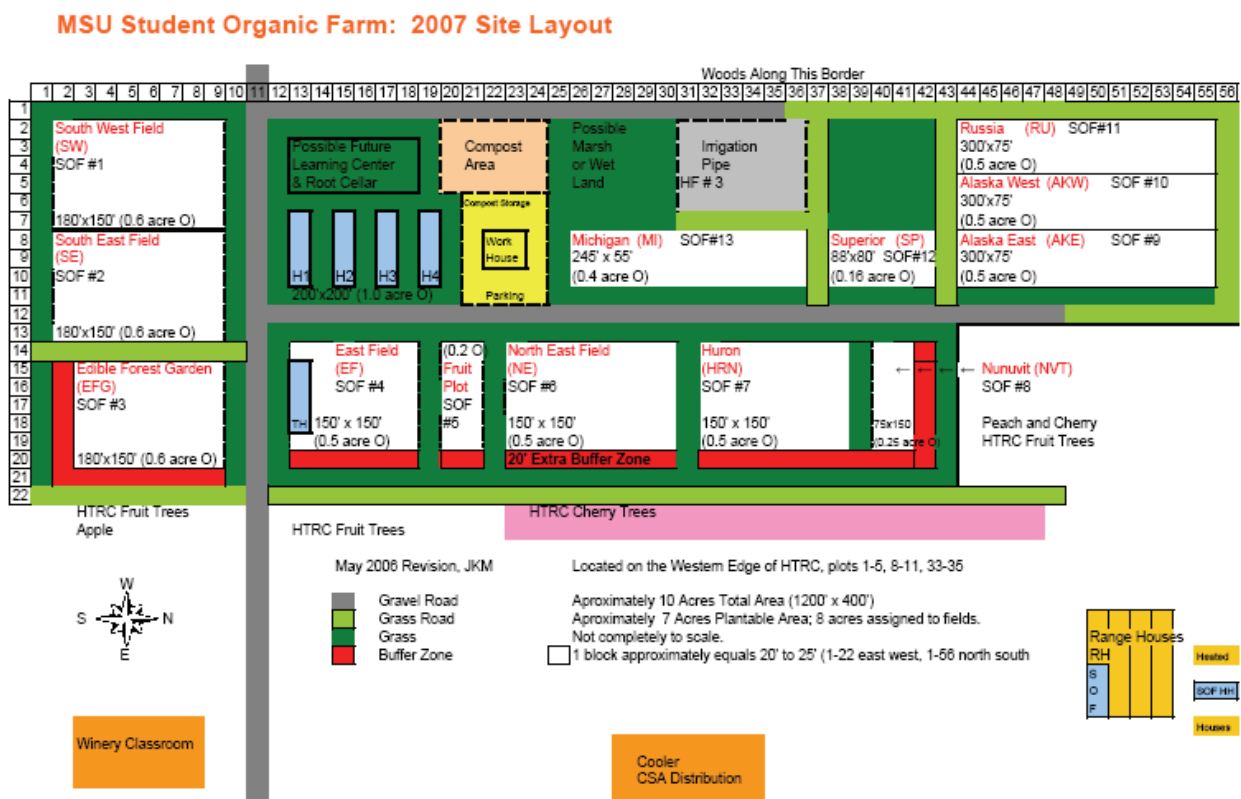
Each year the SOF submits a project request for an allocation of the refrigerated storage space available at the HTRC. Seeds are stored in the seed cooler. The primary storage area is ~ 12' x 25' cooler at 40F which is shared during winter months and a 10' x 15' cooler at 50F in the winter and 60F in the summer.

The SOF is assessed a project fee by the Horticulture Department consistent with the standard departmental policy in proportion to the space used and activity at the farm. The assessed fee has been \$5000 but reductions to \$3000 in 2007 and \$4000 in 2008 have been made due to the teaching (as opposed to research) nature of the project.

There is no heated, dry or secure office or teaching space in association with the growing areas. Our farm managers and instructors also do not have any designated office space at the SOF. Storage space for tools, tractors, equipment, files, books is all temporarily housed in hoophouse structures which are not weatherproof. Teaching courses associated with OFCP is equally challenging. Several courses are now taught in the Spartan Cellars Winery meeting room which can only accommodate 15 people and is not designed for teaching and learning.

Currently the SOF area located on the west edge of the HTRC has no bathroom facilities. Students in the program do not have running hot water available on site for hand washing and dish washing. The closest heated buildings and bathroom facilities are located approximately 1500' (~1/4 mile) from the SOF site.

As we plan for the future growth of the SOF we would like the potential for expansion onto 10-20 additional acres at the HTRC. This additional land would allow for us to work towards a closed-loop fertility management system and further partnerships with CSS and ANS would benefit from this expansion. Expansion of the SOF beyond horticultural crops will require seeking support and approval from the HTRC staff and Horticulture faculty.



3.2 Historical Perspectives and Important Factors Contributing to the Development and Accomplishments of the Student Organic Farm

Three phases of development for the MSU Student Organic Farm (SOF) were initially outlined in the article “Development of a Student Organic Farm and Organic Farming Curriculum at Michigan State University” (Biernbaum et al, 2006). In this summary, an earlier phase is considered and details of the recently completed Phase 3 are presented.

- Phase 1: 1996-1999 – Background – Preparing Fertile Soil
- Phase 2: 1999-2002 – Start up – Sowing the Seed
- Phase 3: 2002-2005 –Cultivating and Growing a Strong Plant
- Phase 4: 2005-2008 --Setting and Growing the Fruit

The purpose of this summary is not to provide a complete timeline but to emphasize conditions and activities that using hindsight can be identified as important pieces of the larger picture of the rapid and successful growth of the MSU-SOF.

Phase 1: 1996-1999 Preparing Fertile Soil

- Michigan Sustainable Agriculture Network (MSAN) student group with a focus on seminars for graduate and undergraduate students started in 1994.
- Graduate assistantship *funding for a coordinator position* to assist students with activities and seminars (Ron Whitmore, Larry Dyer, Andy Fogiel) was provided by Richard Harwood, C.S Mott Endowed Chair for Sustainable Agriculture. The support of student activity was critical to providing continuity of the program and efficiency of effort and student participation.
- Susan Smalley, Extension specialist working with Dr. Harwood, worked with the coordinator and students to arrange high quality speakers, a for-credit seminar class, and to stimulate learning with an emphasis on participatory processes.
- During this period there was a diverse, highly motivated core group of students representing multiple departments including CSS, HRT, ENT, RD and others.
- The student organization used a steering team structure with a rotating meeting facilitator and note taker to foster shared responsibility and leadership as opposed to a traditional system of elected officers / leadership positions.
- In 1998, a new undergraduate specialization in connected learning called the Bailey Scholars Program (<http://www.bsp.msu.edu/>) was initiated in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Key components of the curriculum included personal identification of learning goals, course conveners in place of instructors, and emphasis on dialog and listening.

Phase 2: 1999-2002 Sowing the Seed

- MSAN members called a meeting in April 1999 to discuss student desires for a student farm and organic farming information in courses.
- In June of 1999, a report titled “Advancing Organic Agriculture in Michigan” was prepared by the Michigan Organic Advisory Committee for the Michigan Department of Agriculture. Seven recommendations for MSU included developing new organic courses and integrating organic into teaching, research and extension programs.

- MSAN and Bailey Scholar students including Seth Murray (CSS) and Lynn Rhodes (HRT) worked to start a new student group called the Student Organic Farm Initiative (SOFI) and to attract and engage students from a diversity of majors and interests.
- The ability to develop a broad complete vision for the SOF due to time invested and thanks to many farm visits and books including: *Reclaiming the Commons* by Brian Donahue, *Farms of the Future* by Traugher Goh and Steven McFadden, *Sharing the Harvest* by Robin vanEn and Elizabeth Henderson, *The New Organic Grower* and *Four Season Harvest* by Eliot Coleman.
- Lynn Rhodes contacted and visited other student initiated farms and summarized what worked and did not work.
- Seth Murray's work to contact campus administrators and land managers to identify possible sites for the SOF.
- A selected topics course around "What is Organic Farming?" provided the opportunity for a fairly consistent group of students to meet weekly and work through both important background information necessary for the future development of the SOF and conversations that lead to a plan for the SOF.
- John Biernbaum's initiation of the winter salad greens project to allow year-round farming and activity that also identified a place for the farm. His travel to New York for a three-day winter harvest and storage conference and to Maine to visit Eliot Coleman's Four Season Farm also provided key inspiration.
- The contributions of the Horticulture Department and Horticulture Teaching and Research Center (HTRC) staff to provide the 10 acre site and to assist with infrastructure development.
- The grant writing skills of Susan Smalley, Laurie Thorp, Diane Doberneck and others that worked with John Biernbaum to facilitate the Kellogg and USDA proposals.

Phase 3: 2002-2005 Cultivating and Growing a Strong Plant

- During the summer of 2002, at least five undergraduate students associated with the project completed internships on other farms around the country. University funding for faculty to travel to visit interns allowed John Biernbaum to visit farms in Colorado (Lynn Rhodes), New York (Jessica Long) and Michigan (Bev Ruesink) as well as keep in touch with Oriana Bosma in Washington State. On these trips the Colorado State student farm (100' x 100' plot and farm stand) and the Rutgers student farm (4 acres + CSA) were visited and provided valuable information. The following summer (2003) the same students were the first interns at the SOF and their prior experience and ability to work hard at farming were crucial.
- In February 2002, John Biernbaum met Michelle Ferrarese at the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference in Wisconsin and started discussions about the farm manager position at the SOF. Michelle was not able to start in the fall but started in January of 2003. Her unique educational and farming experiences, her knowledge of the broad ecological and social principles of organic farming and local food, and her patience working with all types of people were perhaps the most important factors in the early success of the SOF and CSA.
- Emily Reardon contacted John Biernbaum in 2001 prior to completing a season long internship on a vegetable CSA in New York. She started working on undergraduate horticulture courses and volunteering at the SOF for the fall 2002 and spring 2003. Her persistence and the high positive energy she brought to the SOF earned for her the assistantship as assistant farm manager and project manager. Her partnership with Michelle created an environment at the SOF that attracted students like a magnet.

- The selected topics class on Community Supported Agriculture in spring 2003 provided another important opportunity for focused discussion and learning that led to the organization of the initial CSA.
- While reasonable funding was available for undergraduate employees and graduate assistantships, the need for the graduate students to also take classes and eventually write a paper while managing a teaching farm with hundreds of visitors, employees, a CSA and volunteers, was well beyond reasonable expectations. It was the only option, given the funding requested / available, so more money for salaries should have been requested.
- Few of the students that came to the SOF and OFCP in 2004-2008 have had any prior farming experience. The farming experience and knowledge of the work necessary to get crops planted, maintained and harvested that the students in 2002 and 2003 brought to the SOF was a key.
- John Biernbaum's ability to guide students with greenhouse construction, often using personal tools and equipment not otherwise readily available to the SOF, contributed to getting the farm started on a limited budget.
- When the time came to start the CSA, there was already a list of persons wanting to join and be supportive of the students. In early surveys of CSA members, a key factor for their involvement was supporting the students.
- Our efforts to start a CSA Core Group to assist with management of the CSA were not as successful as we anticipated or desired. Our members who had an interest and desire did not have the time necessary for contributions like keeping records or organizing work parties or social events. The SOF steering team invested significant time in nurturing the Core Group but in the end the Core Group faded away. The time may come to attempt a rebirth of a CSA Core Group, perhaps in conjunction with the OFCP students.
- In preparation for Michelle and Emily's graduation, the steering team started in advance to find a new farm manager that would not be a graduate student. Jeremy Moghtader was able to step in and continue the traditions Michelle and Emily started. He also brought a unique set of educational and farming experiences to the SOF. He was also willing to serve for a time as coordinator for the new student group EFFF (Ecological Food and Farming Stewardship) when the new C.S. Mott Endowed Chair Mike Hamm decided to continue the coordinator position. He also accepted a less than appropriate salary for his level of responsibilities and experience because of his commitment to the project.
- During this early growth period, the new Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS) Executive Director Elaine Brown invited John Biernbaum to provide workshops to farmers about season extension, soil management and compost. The mentoring from MIFFS and the opportunity to build trust with the farmers helped establish what is now the SOF outreach program funded by the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA).

Phase 4: 2005-2008 Setting and Growing the Fruit

- The ongoing guidance and mentoring of the SOF steering team by Dr. Laurie Thorp fostered our retreat in January 2005 that helped with discussion about movement to a teaching program and development of courses.
- The Horticulture Department and particularly the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (Eunice Foster) and MSU Global (Chris Geith) supported development of a plan and a proposal. MSU Global's support and facilitation for an Audience Identification Mapping (AIM) session in December 2005 contributed greatly to gathering

input from stakeholders around Michigan. The one-day session resulted in a change of the proposed start time of the program (from September to January) and the name of the program.

- The review process for the curriculum and courses also helped the evolution of the plan and provided input from other faculty members.
- The first SOF Practicum course offered in the fall of 2005 by John Biernbaum and Jeremy Moghtader with four participating students provided valuable experience that later guided practicum courses in the OFCP.
- Jay Tomczak started in August 2005 as assistant farm manager and graduate assistant working on developing the edible forest garden. The plot was planted in spring 2006 and 2007 and provides an important teaching tool and a very diverse collection of plant species. He also provided important initiative working with the EFFF Student Group to start the on-campus farm stand.
- Significant effort was invested in identifying the OFCP coordinator and assistant farm manager starting in September 2005 and culminating in the hiring of Corie Pierce in February 2006. Corie's farming experience, management experience, and participation in the University of California Santa Cruz (CAFS) six month farmer training program all contributed a unique, valuable set of much needed skills.
- The fall of 2006 also saw the addition of Adam Montri as an academic specialist for hoophouse outreach with half-time funding from USDA RMA and half time from a research project with the CS Mott Group and MIFFS. During August, September and October he managed the construction and planting of the new teaching greenhouse that was necessary for the teaching program. In addition to helping new farmers across the state, the hoophouse farmer outreach program provided important statewide exposure for the farm. During 2007 and 2008 there has been a dramatic increase in the number of hoophouses / passive solar greenhouse built in Michigan.
- Corie Pierce spent the summer and fall of 2006 working to advertise the program and talking with and recruiting perspective students. Advertising was not allowed until the program was approved in July. The inaugural class of 10 students took shape in November and December.
- During 2007, a total of five new three-credit courses and eight new one-credit courses were taught for the first time. This took a great deal of effort from Corie Pierce and Jeremy Moghtader who taught all five of the new three-credit courses that included the challenging practicum courses, the foundation organic farming principles and practices course, and the field study course. Corie also developed the very important farm duty rotation plan and schedule that became a foundation piece of the SOF Practicum. John Biernbaum taught five new one credit courses and the team of Bridget Behe, Susan Smalley and Jim Bingen developed and taught the two new marketing courses.
- Tomm Becker joined the SOF team in Spring of 2007 and his quick contribution to farm management, due to his prior work experience at the SOF, made it possible for Jeremy and Corie to spend more time on teaching. Tomm also picked up a key part of the responsibility for the expanded season long on-campus farm stand that provided OFCP students with important experience. Equally important was his ability to continue in the tradition of Michele Ferrarese and Emily Reardon by providing a continuous positive attitude and smile to greet each visitor to the farm. Funding for the new position was provided by an addition of 25 summer-only CSA memberships and Farm Stand sales.

- Recruiting continued throughout 2007 and by late summer Corie Pierce had more than 20 applicants to consider and interview. Her investment in the process provided a greater degree of assurance of the success of the students in the program. By December 2007 a class of 14 new OFCP students was prepared for classes in January.
- The need for a funding plan beyond the OFCP start-up budget led to discussions with CANR administration and funding for a process to review other academic farms as well as a strategic planning process during the 2007-2008 academic year to strengthen the position of the SOF in the College and University.
- The OFCP class of 2008 has been a group of motivated learners that have supported the continued development of course and program content.
- Corie P. and Jeremy M. with the guidance of Laurie T. worked to develop competency based learning objectives for the OFCP Practicum courses and performance based assessment. The investment of time and effort in the program has had a major impact on student learning and satisfaction.
- The request for tours of the SOF and the participation of MSU students from many programs has increased dramatically in the 2007-2008 academic year.
- During the spring of 2008 a plan was initiated to provide salad greens for one MSU dining service program. With funding from Mike Hamm, the CS Mott Chair for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems, a new PSGH will be built for production of crops specifically for the MSU dining services so that in the future local farmers will be able to provide more produce for MSU students.

Summary

1. The passion, positive attitude and experiences of the many MSU students, staff and faculty involved in the program likely deserve the greatest share of the credit for the success of the MSU SOF.
2. A well grounded vision, properly balanced with the necessary tasks and modest funding worked together to provide the conditions for a successful launch.
3. The use of three selected topics courses to engage students on a focused topic provided for important progress at key times.
4. The integration of research, extension/outreach, teaching and service, the four corners of the Land Grant mission, also kept this organic farming program well grounded in an environment that not long ago was not accepting of, or conducive to organic farming.
5. A fifth phase can be envisioned as harvesting of the fruit and dispersal of many seeds to start the cycle again. Benefiting from our new strategic planning sessions we are positioning the SOF to begin a new three-year phase with great potential for growth beyond.

Literature Cited

Biernbaum, J., L. Thorp and M. Ngoajio. 2006. Development of a Student Organic Farm and Organic Farming Curriculum at Michigan State University. HortTechnology 16(3):432-436.

3.3 Nature and Strength of SOF Cooperative Partnerships and Relationships

Early in the development of the Student Organic Farm, 20 faculty and staff members were invited to be a part of the Student Organic Farm Advisors (SOFA). The purpose was to identify faculty and staff the students could readily ask for help. While the SOFA members continued to be supportive of the SOF, there was limited interaction with the students and involvement in the routine operation of the farm.

The following list of internal and external partners and supporters was drafted in the fall of 2007 and revised in January 2008. A second document that identified the roles that SOF served in each relationship was also developed. In February 2008, an Excel spreadsheet was developed from this list and additional stakeholders added to create the invitation list for the SOF Strategic Planning Work Sessions. The final complete spreadsheet list with indication of attendance at the work sessions is provided in the Appendix.

Inside MSU

SOF Faculty, Students, Staff:

- SOF managers/instructors/academic specialists (HRT faculty)

- SOF staff including grad and undergrad student employees

- SOF volunteers

- Organic Farming Certificate Program (OFCP) Students

SOF CSA Members (CSA for Community Supported Agriculture)

SOF Farm Stand Customers (students, staff, faculty)

MSU Student Body:

- Ecological Food and Farm Stewardship (EFFS) - Registered Student Organization

MSU Colleges and Programs:

- Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR)

- Natural Science (CNS)

- Michigan Agriculture Experiment Station (MAES)

- MSU Extension (MSUE); Extension County Offices/Educators

MSU Departments & Units:

- Horticulture (HRT) (Randy Beaudry /acting chair, John Biernbaum)

- Horticulture Teaching and Research Center (HTRC) (Bill Chase, farm manager)

- Institute of Agriculture Technology (IAT) (Eunice Foster, Associate Dean and Director)

- Institute of International Agriculture (IIA) (Dan Clay, Director; Karim Maredia, Cholani Weebadde)

- Product Center for Agriculture and Natural Resources (Chris Peterson, Director, Tom Kalchik)

- CANR Diversity and Pluralism (Brenda Alston-Mills)

- Crops and Soil Science (CSS) (Jim Kells, chairperson; Stuart Grandy, Karen Renner)

- Community, Agriculture, Recreation and Resource Studies (CARRS) (David Wright /act) (Mike Hamm, Susan Smalley, Jim Bingen, Kim Chung, Shari Dann, Phil Howard, Wynn Wright, Dave Krueger, Randy Showerman)

Entomology (ENT) (new chairperson; George Bird, Matt Greishop)
 Fisheries and Wildlife (FW) (Bill Taylor chairperson; Geoff Habron)
 Food Science and Human Nutrition (FSHN)(Gale Strasburg, chair; Katherine Alaimo)
 Forestry (FOR) (Dan Keathley, Chair; David Rothstein)
 Plant Pathology (PLP) (Ray Hammerschmidt, chairperson; Annemiek Schilder)
 Animal Science (ANS) (Karen Plaut, chairperson; John Shelle, Janice Siegford)
 Kellogg Biological Station (KBS) (Kay Gross, Director)
 University Farms (Kevin Shelle, manager)
 Housing and Food Service (Robia Piper and others)
 University Development/CANR Development (Sue Woodard and others)

MSU Programs/Offices/Groups:

Residential Initiative for Study of the Environment (RISE) Specialization (Laurie Thorp)
 CS Mott Group for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems (Mike Hamm)
 MSU Office of Sustainability (Terry Link)
 Master Gardeners (Mary McClellan)
 MSU HEP/CAMP (Luis Garcia, Director; Daniel Sousa)
 MSU Native American Programs (Nick Reo)
 Student Services - Minority Student Programs ; Dr. Rios; Pat Dyer-Deckrow
 Campus Food Group (Laura Delind and others)
 Bailey Scholars Connected Learning Specialization (Glenn Sterner)
 New Sustainability Specialization (Doug Estry, Geoff Habron, Terry Link, Laurie Thorp)
 New Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Specialization (Sieg Snapp)
 HealthyU
 Evening College (Alumni Association – Louise Cooley)
 Northern Michigan Small Farms Conference (Antrim County MSUE, Stan Moore)

Sustainable Agriculture Faculty & Staff Not Currently Part of SOF Management (33)

Mathieu Ngouajio (HRT)	Dave Krueger (CARRS)
Dan Brainard (HRT)	Randy Showerman (CARRS)
Ron Perry (HRT)	Dale Elshoff (CARRS)
Eric Hanson (HRT)	David Rothstein (FOR)
Steward Grandy (CSS)	Annemiek Schilder (PLP)
Karen Renner (CSS)	Dale Mutch (KBS)
Sieg Snapp (CSS)	Terry Link (MSU Libraries and Office of Sustainability)
George Bird (ENT)	Geoff Habron (SOC, FW)
Matt Grieshop (ENT)	Jim Detjen (JRN)
Doug Landis (ENT)	Laura Delind (ANP)
Rufus Issacs (ENT)	Katherine Alaimo (FSHN)
Mike Hamm (CARRS)	Kay Gross (KBS)
Susan Smalley (CARRS)	Arthur Versluis (Arts and Letters)
Jim Bingen (CARRS)	
Kim Chung (CARRS)	
Phil Howard (CARRS)	
Vicky Morrone (CARRS)	
Shari Dann (CARRS)	
Wynn Wright (CARRS)	

Partners Outside MSU

Michigan Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Organizations

Organic Growers of Michigan (OGM, Pat Whetham)
Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance (MOFFA) (Jim Bingen)
Michigan Food and Farm Systems (MIFFS) (Elaine Brown, Executive Director)

Other Organizations:

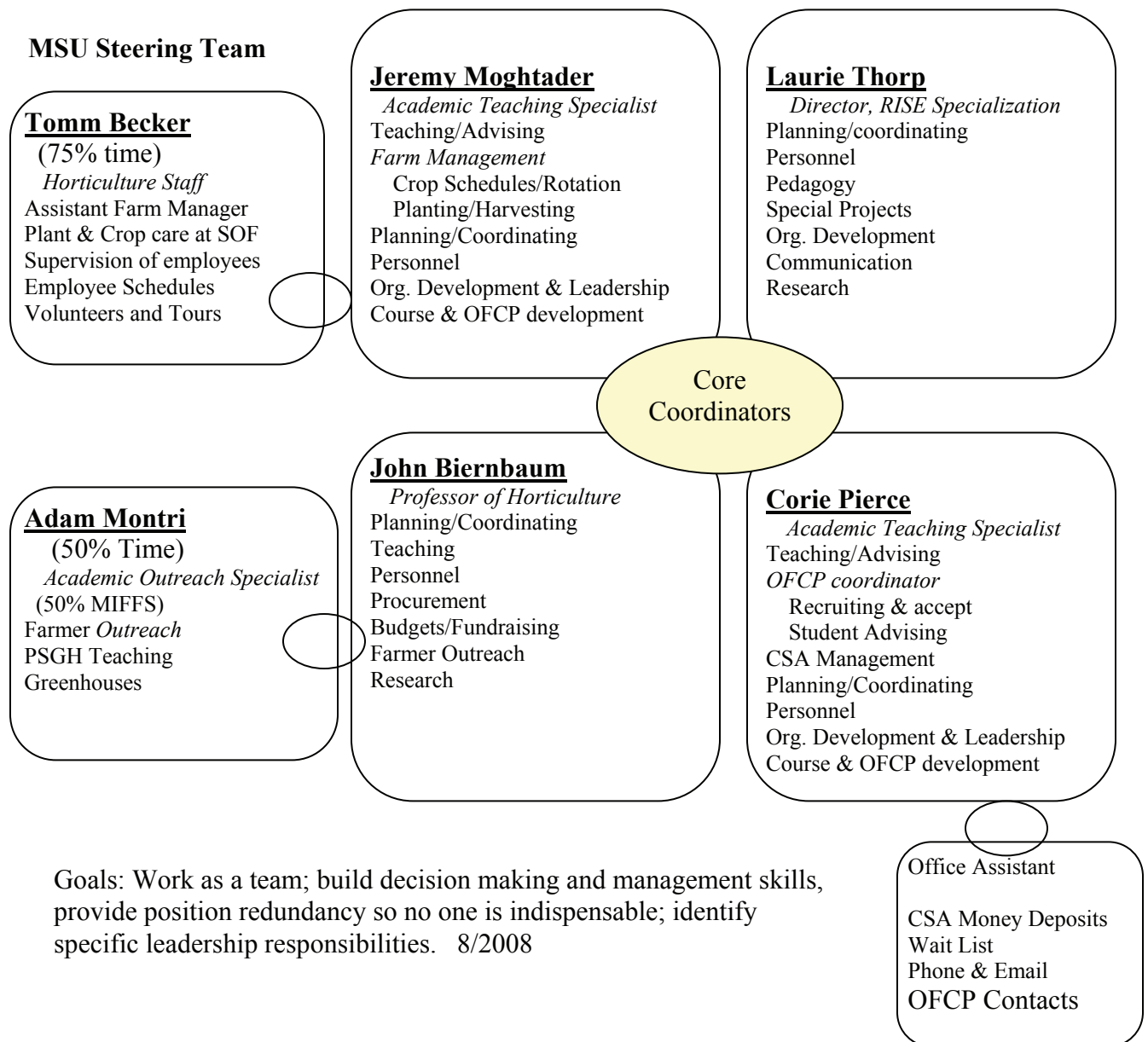
Giving Tree Farm (501c3) (Susan Houghton)
Greening of Detroit (Ashley Atkinson)
Lansing Garden Project (Greater Lansing Food Bank) (Anne Rauscher)
Allen Street Neighborhood Center and Hunter Park Greenhouse (Joan Nelson, Linda Anderson and others)
Mixed Greens and Blandford Nature Center of Grand Rapids (Lisa Rose Starner)
Lansing School District-Riddle Elementary (Katie Olander)
The Agrarian Adventure (Elissa Trumbull)
Seeds-Bioneers Traverse City (Sarna Salzman)
Bioneers Detroit (Ashley Atkinson)
Michigan Land Use Institute (MLUI) (Patty Cantrell and others)
Food System Economic Partnership (FSEP)
Grand Rapids Area Food Systems Council
West Michigan Environmental Action Council (WMEAC)
Bay Mills Community College and Native American Tribe (Mike Doyle, Larry Dyer)
Mount Pleasant Seventh Generation Program (Peter Vergluth)
Farm Research Cooperative (Leroy Ray)
Grand Traverse Land Conservancy (Glenn Chown)
Tillers International (Kalamazoo)
EARTH University in Costa Rica (Pedro Bidegarary)
Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) –(Colleen Collier for Organic Programs)
Sustainable Agriculture Education Association (SAEA) (Damian Parr)
Good Neighbors Garden (Trevor Johnson)
IMH Sustainability Center (Trevor Johnson and others)
Angelic Organic CSA Learning Center (Wisconsin and Illinois)
Chicago Botanic Garden (CBG) and Windy City Harvest (WCH) Project (Illinois)
Flint Community Garden Project (Terri Novak, Linda Patrick)
Michael Fields Institute (MFI)(Wisconsin)
Rodale Institute (PN) (Dan Sullivan, Jeff Moyer, Paul Heperly, Tim LaSalle (CEO))

External Funders:

W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Battle Creek
USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA)
USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA)
USDA Higher Education Challenge Grant Program

3.4 Current Academic Home, Organization and Management of SOF

The SOF is currently housed in the Department of Horticulture within the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The SOF is managed by a steering/management team comprised of: John Biernbaum, Laurie Thorp, Jeremy Moghtader, Corie Pierce, Adam Montri and Tomm Becker. This group is responsible for making decisions about the direction and focus of the SOF and its programs. Responsibilities also include program development and management, site planning, infrastructure maintenance and development, organizational development, and funding. Specific and shared responsibilities are outlined below. Leadership is shared as a “function” that is shared, and not as a single position. Leadership is shared for such matters as identifying and sharing new opportunities, anticipating and helping resolve or avoid problems, and sharing information freely with all other members of the team.



To appreciate the importance of shared leadership for the SOF, it is necessary to consider the originator's intentions. Much of the early decision making leading to the formation of the SOF was done by student members of a registered student organization with the guidance of a faculty advisor(s). Susan Smalley in Crops and Soil Science was the original advisor for the Michigan Sustainable Agriculture Network (MSAN) with responsibilities gradually shifting to John Biernbaum in Horticulture with the formation of a second student group (Student Organic Farm Initiative) and finally the recombining to one student organization (Ecological Food and Farming Stewardship (EFFS)). In all cases the students used a steering team model of management and were strongly adverse to the conventional leadership roles.

Each year the student groups were interdisciplinary with annual shifts in departments represented. The role of John Biernbaum as RSO advisor and the location of the SOF site at the HRTC were the primary factors determining Horticulture as the financial home. The SOF did not begin as a program of the Horticulture Department but did gradually gain support in the Department. The Horticulture Department did take steps to initiate the AgTech Certificate Program and likely would have preferred Organic Horticulture as the program name. Organic Farming was recommended by the steering team, not the Horticulture Department, based both on input from an Audience Identification Mapping (AIM) Session hosted for organizations first identified as probable supporters of such a program and based on the steering team members' desire to keep the program open for eventual growth into a cross-disciplinary program.

There was a gradual shift from student input through the student organization to student input through the farm manager positions. The progression at the farm could be described as going from 1) John Biernbaum as RSO advisor and the salad greens research project manager coordinating undergraduate student employees and volunteers to 2) the graduate student farm managers coordinating undergraduate student employees and volunteers. The day-to-day operation of the farm was under the direction of the graduate student farm managers with coordination of grant project implementation/funding and programs by John Biernbaum and Laurie Thorp. The paid student positions under direction of the farm manager also shifted farm decisions from the RSO to the farm manager.

Management of the farm together with required classes for an MS degree were more than a full load. Some other student farms started with University support for a full-time farm manager. The decision was made that the second farm manager would be a full-time staff position which was funded primarily by farm income. The assistant farm manager was an MS Horticulture graduate student dictated primarily by the availability of grant funds.

The originator's intent for the SOF was a cross-disciplinary program, not a faculty member's project or a Horticulture Department program. A number of factors influenced the path of development but should not limit the attainment of the goal. We also are committed to continuing the commitment to a form of management that provides for some student voice and shared leadership. The future growth of the SOF Program requires an organizational structure with shared decision making and the ability to attract new students, staff and faculty who desire variable degrees of responsibility and leadership.

4.0 Strategic Analyses

4.1 Key Elements and Sources of Information for SOF Strategic Analysis

a. Commissioned Study of Organizational Structures and Funding Mechanisms of Select Student Farms

The investigation was conducted for the MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources on behalf of the MSU Student Organic Farm. Using online research and phone interviews, data were collected about farm management, leadership, and finances on selected student farms. The farms were identified by the SOF based on earlier, less detailed investigation of other student or teaching oriented farms. The farms investigated have adopted a diversity of structures that are delimited, in part, by their answers to the following five questions:

- What is the most suitable administrative home for the farm?
- Who should serve as the farm’s administrator of record?
- Who will lead the farm?
- Who will be responsible for which farm expenses?
- How will the farm generate income?

The analysis summarizes the eight farms’ range of responses to these questions, demonstrating that there is clearly no organizational “best practice” and that each farm’s structure is largely a function of its context and preferred leadership model.

Farms Studied:

1. University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC)
2. University of California Davis (UC Davis)
3. University of Montana (U of Montana)
4. University of British Columbia (UBC)
5. University of Maine (U of Maine)
6. Evergreen State College (Evergreen)
7. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly)
8. University of Minnesota (U of Minn)

The complete report summarizes the methods, findings, and analysis from an investigation into the organizational structure of the eight student farms. The analysis is provided here.

Analysis

The organizational structure adopted by each of the investigated farms is a function of that farm’s unique context and preferred model of leadership. Given the diversity of structures adopted among a relatively small subset of student organic farms, there is clearly no organizational “best practice.” There appear to be, however, five major questions that each farm has considered. Those questions and the range of farms’ responses to those questions are summarized below to assist MSU’s Student Organic Farm with the development of an organizational structure well suited to its context and preferred leadership model.

1. **What is the most suitable administrative home for the farm?** Among the farms investigated, there are four basic types of administrative home:
 - Commercial enterprise of the university (Cal Poly)
 - College center, program, or activity (UCSC, UC Davis, UBC)
 - Department, as part of a larger program or partnership (Evergreen, U of Minn, U of Maine)
 - Nonprofit partner (U of Montana).

2. **Who should serve as the farm's administrator of record?** Among the farms investigated, there are five basic types of administrator of record:
 - Faculty member (UCSC, Cal Poly, U of Maine)
 - Academic coordinator (UC Davis)
 - Professional administrative staff (Evergreen, UBC)
 - Non-union staff (U of Minn)
 - Nonprofit staff (U of Montana).

Among the farms investigated, there doesn't appear to be any clear correlation between the type of Administrative Home and the type of Administrator of Record.

3. **Who will lead the farm?** The farms investigated typically identified a) a principal, b) the role of student leadership, c) other leadership team members, and d) additional leadership support structures.
 - Each farm investigated made a fundamental choice between having faculty (UCSC, Cal Poly), staff (UC Davis, Evergreen, UBC, U of Montana), or students (U of Minn, U of Maine) play the principal leadership role.
 - The administrator of record plays the principal leadership role at each of the farms investigated (UCSC, UC Davis, Cal Poly, UBC, U of Montana) except in the following two situations:
 - When the farm is principally led by students (U of Minn, U of Maine)
 - When a professional staff member responsible for a wide range of facilities defers to the farm manager to serve as principal (Evergreen).
 - At each of the farms investigated, the principal shares leadership responsibilities with others who receive compensation for their contributions.
 - Among the farms investigated, it is common to have other leadership support for the farms, either through a campus sustainable agriculture network (Cal Poly), a formal advisory group (U of Maine, UBC), or faculty advisors (Evergreen, U of MN).

4. **Who will be responsible for which farm expenses?** The farms investigated vary in their decisions about how different types of farm expenses would be covered.
 - Among the farms investigated, the university provides land, facilities, and utilities at no cost to the farm (UCSC, UC Davis, Cal Poly, Evergreen, UBC) except when students (U of MN, U of Maine) or a nonprofit (U of Montana) lead the farm.
 - Among the farms investigated, sometimes the farm is responsible for administrative expenses (Cal Poly, Evergreen, UBC) and sometimes a department (UC Davis, U of Minn, U of Maine) or a college (UCSC) provides administrative services at no cost to the farm.

- Among the farms investigated, there are three basic approaches to covering leadership and labor compensation:
 - The university or college covers the cost of all leadership and labor (Evergreen, U of Montana)
 - The university or college covers the cost of core leadership, and the farm covers labor costs (UCSC, UC Davis)
 - The farm covers all leadership and labor costs (Cal Poly, U of Minn, U of Maine, UBC).
 - In several cases, faculty members are donating uncompensated time to the farm and/or staff members are working well above the amount of time they are compensated for.
 - Among the farms investigated, the farm typically covers the cost of cultivation, seed, and other production materials and supplies.
5. **How will the farm generate income?** The principle sources of revenue among the farms investigated include a) produce sales, b) grants, c) donations, and d) fee-for-service income. Except in the case of UC Santa Cruz, where an apprenticeship program is offered independently of the university, most farms are not capturing tuition income.
- Among the farms investigated, produce are sold in a variety of ways:
 - CSA (the most common and lucrative strategy)
 - Roadside stands
 - Farmers' markets
 - Campus restaurants and coffee shops
 - Local grocers
 - Local restaurants
 - Special events.
 - Most of the farms investigated do not generate fee-for-service income, but some charge for tours, workshops, and camps to at least partially recover the expenses associated with those services.

The following themes also emerged from the “lessons learned” shared by representatives of the farms:

- **Universities reap significant benefits** from their student organic farms, including:
 - Concrete evidence of their commitment to the growing field of organic agriculture
 - Stronger academic programs
 - Increased student enrollment
 - Enhanced community relations.
- **It is unrealistic to expect a campus farm to be self-sustaining** like a commercial farm. Student labor is more expensive than local farm labor, and students and volunteers are less efficient than experienced farm workers.
- Regardless of where the balance between faculty, staff, and student leadership is struck, **it is useful to have a farm “principal”** who provides experienced leadership, expertise, and year-to-year “institutional memory” and stability.
- **Diversification in management and leadership roles as well as in sources of support and income help to reduce dependency and risk.** Through creative organizational structures, Cal Poly, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Montana, for

instance, are able to access the resources of both public university systems and the private nonprofit sector.

- **Organizational structure should be flexible** enough to accommodate both the year-to-year changes in student roles and responsibilities and the long-term growth of the farm.

b. Web-based Survey

Stakeholder Feedback for Strategic Planning

The SOF management team together with Ray Vlasin developed a survey questionnaire to garner feedback to evaluate existing programs and consider future directions. The survey was posted on SurveyMonkey.com for a period of thirty days. The request for feedback along with the survey link was emailed to 150 stakeholders one month prior to the strategic planning work sessions. Participants were asked to reflect both on the value to the individual and their unit regarding SOF functions/programs (either existing or potential) and their desire or ability to contribute or participate in some way. A 40% (60 completed surveys) response rate was achieved for the survey.

The following is a summary of responses from the survey:

1. Please check the categories that apply to you:
 - 54.1% (33) MSU Faculty/Staff/Admin
 - 23.0% (14) Food & Sustainable Agriculture Organization
 - 21.3% (13) SOF CSA Member
 - 18.0% (11) Farmer, Farm Owner or Operator
 - 13.1% (8) SOF Outreach Partner
 - 13.1% (8) Student/SOF Volunteer

Note: Respondents were asked to check more than one category if appropriate.

2. Please share your level of knowledge about the Student Organic Farm’s core functions and programs. With the scale provided, please indicate your knowledge of the following functions and programs:

CORE FUNCTIONS & PROGRAMS	How well do you know the function/program?			
	Not at All 1	Some Knowledge 2	Quite Familiar 3	Very Familiar 4
Site for undergraduate experiential learning	3.3% (2)	44.3% (27)	29.5% (18)	23.0% (14)
AgTech Organic Farming Certificate Program	3.3% (2)	49.2% (30)	29.5% (18)	18.0% (11)
Organic farming classes for degree students	6.7% (4)	58.3% (35)	23.3% (14)	11.7% (7)
Passive solar greenhouse season extension <i>research</i>	9.8% (6)	36.1% (22)	32.8% (20)	21.3% (13)
Passive solar greenhouse season extension <i>outreach</i>	13.1% (8)	34.4% (21)	27.9% (17)	24.6% (15)

Small scale intensive organic farming outreach	19.7% (12)	36.1% (22)	32.8% (20)	11.5% (7)
Multicultural farmer outreach	37.7% (23)	42.6% (26)	11.5% (7)	8.2% (5)
Year-round organic production & CSA program	0.0% (0)	14.8% (9)	42.6% (26)	42.6% (26)
Weekly (seasonal) on campus farm stand	6.6% (4)	23.0% (14)	45.9% (28)	24.6% (15)
Farm tours & activities for MSU and community	3.3% (2)	39.3% (24)	32.8% (20)	24.6% (15)

Respondents were most familiar with the CSA Program and Campus Farm Stand and least familiar with the multicultural farmer outreach.

3. Please share your views about the importance to you / your unit of the SOF functions / programs by *rating* them either as 1 (most important), 2 (somewhat important) or 3 (least important).

CORE FUNCTION	1 most important	2 somewhat important	3 least important
Site for undergraduate experiential learning	73.3% (44)	21.7% (13)	5.0% (3)
Institute of Agriculture Technology Organic Farming Certificate Program	74.1% (43)	22.4% (13)	3.4% (2)
Organic farming classes for degree students	55.9% (33)	37.3% (22)	6.8% (4)
Passive solar greenhouse season extension <i>research</i>	49.2% (29)	42.4% (25)	8.5% (5)
Passive solar greenhouse season extension <i>outreach</i>	56.7% (34)	36.7% (22)	6.7% (4)
Small scale intensive organic farming outreach	58.3% (35)	30.0% (18)	11.7% (7)
Multicultural farmer outreach	28.8% (17)	59.3% (35)	11.9% (7)
Year-round organic production & CSA program	73.3% (44)	23.3% (14)	3.3% (2)
Weekly (seasonal) on campus farm stand	35.6% (21)	55.9% (33)	8.5% (5)
Farm tours & learning activities for MSU Community	54.2% (32)	42.4% (25)	3.4% (2)

Respondents indicated all of the SOF core functions were important. The CSA Program together with the OFCP teaching and experiential education were highlighted by more respondents as most important.

4. Please share your views about the importance to you/your unit regarding the potential additional functions and programs that the Student Organic Farm could provide with appropriate support and partners.

POTENTIAL NEW FUNCTIONS & PROGRAMS	Importance of function/program to you?			
	Not important 1	Somewhat Important 2	Important 3	Very Important 4
For credit on-line or video (IVS) course access options	20.0% (12)	43.3% (26)	26.7% (16)	10.0% (6)
Non credit on-line or video (IVS) course access options	15.0% (9)	43.3% (26)	28.3% (17)	13.3% (8)
MSU Food Service / Dormitory partnership	11.7% (7)	25.0% (15)	33.3% (20)	30.0% (18)
Urban agriculture teaching & outreach	1.7% (1)	15.0% (9)	43.3% (26)	40.0% (24)
Community & school garden teaching & outreach	0.0% (0)	21.7% (13)	35.0% (21)	43.3% (26)
Integration of organic animal husbandry at SOF	8.3% (5)	30.0% (18)	41.7% (25)	20.0% (12)
Greater collaboration with other new farmer training programs and potential teaching farms in MI.	3.3% (2)	13.3% (8)	40.0% (24)	43.3% (26)
Cooking/nutrition demonstration & education at SOF	15.3% (9)	33.9% (20)	37.3% (22)	13.6% (8)
Student residential option at the SOF or on campus.	20.0% (12)	31.7% (19)	31.7% (19)	16.7% (10)
Research of experiential education/teaching methods	3.3% (2)	35.0% (21)	35.0% (21)	26.7% (16)
Provide available space/opportunity for MSU organic production research	5.1% (3)	25.4% (15)	39.0% (23)	30.5% (18)

Over 80% of respondents noted that greater collaboration with other new farmer training programs was either important or very important.

Nearly 80% of respondents indicated that community and school garden teaching an outreach was either very important or important and none marked the function as not important.

4b. Please feel free to provide specific comments regarding one or more of the potential new functions and programs:

- N=15
- Additional functions should include **research**
 - Organic production research
 - Hoophouse research
- Additional functions should further support **teaching and educational programs**
 - Organic agriculture
- Additional functions should further support **outreach**
 - Urban agriculture

5. What functions, programs or service should the Student Organic Farm, in cooperation with current or new partners, **be providing in the next 3 to 5 years?**

- N=41
- Strong theme of educational programming as a core function
- Wide range of educational programs mentioned
 - Integration of plant/animal systems
 - New farmers
 - Urban agriculture
 - “Scaled down” certificate program
 - Integrate into university curriculum
 - Demonstration farm
 - Season extension

6. As a part of its Strategic Planning process, the Student Organic Farm seeks your input about perceived internal strengths and weaknesses, and external opportunities and threats. Based on what you know about SOF and its programs, please share your observations on the four factors below:

a. What are the Student Organic Farm’s **strengths?**

- N=50
- SOF staff and students- very strong theme, top strength
 - Commitment of the staff and students is seen as a key
 - Knowledgeable
 - Leadership provided
- Experiential learning –very strong theme as key strength
- Year-round production

b. What are the Student Organic Farm’s **weaknesses?**

- N=45
- Lack of base funding for long term stability-university commitment
- Limited basic facilities (toilets!)
- Few linkages to other units
- Visibility across MSU community

c. What are the Student Organic Farm’s program **opportunities?**

- N=47
- Local food emerged as a strong theme
- Year-round production also a key theme
- Wide variety of education programming
- Growing demand for organic products
- Local, local, local coupled with MI economic recovery

d. What are the Student Organic Farm’s program **threats**?

- N=50
- Funding, funding, funding
- Faculty support
- University support
- Alignment with university mission
- Staff burn out

7. The Student Organic Farm’s staff wishes to maintain close communication with their partners and cooperators and others who are served. Listed below are various means that SOF staff might use to communicate with you. Please indicate which one, two or three would best suit your needs:

<u>84.7% (50)</u>	Electronic Newsletter
<u>67.8% (40)</u>	Up-to-date Web Site
<u>40.7% (24)</u>	Meetings or face-to-face discussions
<u>40.7% (24)</u>	List-serve
<u>32.2% (19)</u>	Fact Sheets
<u>23.7% (14)</u>	Annual reports
<u>18.6% (11)</u>	Other means—please explain
<u>11.9% (7)</u>	Direct phone calls and responses

Respondents indicated a preference for electronic newsletters and an up to date web site. Eleven respondents offered additional recommendations including the use of emails (3), once a semester forums or open houses that share the bounty and talk about recent developments, successes and challenges, participation in community related events, visiting departments during faculty meetings, on farm programs and workshops, and newspaper articles.

8. Do you have a **Vision** of what the Student Organic Farm might be in the future and if so could you please share it here?

- N=41
- Premier demonstration organic farm in the area...”
- “THE learning center in Michigan...”
- “The hub of a network of educational opportunities...”
- “A center of reference...”
- “A model for community based food production...”
- “A clearinghouse for food and sustainable agriculture activities in Michigan...”
- “An incubator and research farm...”

9. Related to question 8, do you see yourself/your unit partnering in that **Vision**, and if so, how?

- N=38
- YES!
- Market and farm management research
- Urban and community agriculture outreach
- Facilitate in the education of other farmers
- Providing farm to institution expertise
- Connecting my students to the SOF
- Linking researchers with the SOF
- Advertising the capabilities of the SOF
- Assisting with animal components
- “It is the goal of my unit to help achieve that vision.”

10. Please share any other suggestions or observations that you believe would benefit the SOF, its partners and cooperators, and others served.

- N=21
- Clear theme that we are a “well kept secret”
- Get the word out
- Need for marketing and publicity of SOF capabilities and achievements

c. Personal Interviews with Key MSU Stakeholders

Background

In addition to the electronic survey the MSU Student Organic Farm management team collected stakeholder information from key administrators (Department Chair, Endowed Chair, Program Director, college Associate Dean or Director, university Vice President or Vice Provost) by personal interview. All interviews were conducted prior to the strategic planning work sessions where thematic findings were presented to participants..

Method

- Interview protocol was developed by SOF Steering Team and Ray Vlasin.
- Protocol consisted of 6 broad questions concerning prior knowledge, core functions of SOF, cooperative relationships, and vision for SOF.
- Two Steering Team members were present at nearly all interviews and prepared written notes.
- 15 interviews were conducted with MSU Chairs, Associate Deans and Directors.
- Data were analyzed by Laurie Thorp and reviewed by SOF Steering Team for validity.

Results: Theme Areas

Economics

- SOF can serve as an engine for economic development.
- Focus on the role we can play in economic vitality of MI.
- SOF has a role in the local food movement for local economies.
- Extend SOF's unique expertise with season extension and economic viability for farmers.
- Economic gains meeting demand for products -- organic, local, nutritional "gap", MSU dining halls.
- Need to do more studies and economic analysis at SOF.
- SOF seen as having an entrepreneurial, innovative, economic niche.
- Organics seen as economic opportunity.

"Get the Science Behind It"

- Connect with other research faculty at MSU.
- This is the strength of MSU-science based knowledge coupled with outreach/extension, we need more behind what we do at SOF.
- Use research with hoophouse and season-extension to influence policy makers.
- Disseminate existing data with our outreach.
- Take advantage of benefits of undergrad student research with faculty.
- Position SOF to capture more organic research dollars.
- Foster the credibility of organics.

Under-served populations

- We do this well!
- SOF has a role in urban agriculture with Detroit, Flint, Lansing.
- SOF has a role to play in the recruitment and retention of non-traditional students.
- SOF has a role to play in attracting students that would not otherwise come to MSU.
- SOF has low boundaries, SOF is user friendly, more accessible than the larger university for community members.

Re-packaging, Re-framing of SOF and External Communication

- Need for effective new marketing materials.
- Increase SOF profile to the University and public.
- Address how to roll out the SOF "package".
- Tell a "winning story" for broad audience (not just organic community).
- Branding the package for replication.
- Think about a new way to frame what we do.
- Time for a name change?
- Packaging should include outcomes, people are looking for this.

Sustainability

- SOF as a key player in MSU sustainability, we are doing it.
- Use this in our “branding”, more inclusive.
- What we do is interdisciplinary: ecology, ethics, economics.
- People are clamoring for this.

Think Big

- Need organizational structure in place for growth.
- Get ready for growth.
- Don’t get hung up on short-term “tactical” survival issues.
- Housed at department level is limiting, we are bigger than a single discipline.
- A “Center” for...

Other Ideas of Interest

- Build an international component with small scale animal agriculture, well suited for Peace Corp students.
- Expand the Spartan Harvest Bean Burrito partnership with CSS, SOF and Dining Halls.
- SOF as a “service lab” to the university as justification for general fund support.
- SOF as site for agri-tourism package.

Final Thoughts

- Interviews were very positive and productive.
- All were interested in partnering in some way.
- Several offered resources.
- Many had limited knowledge regarding the scope of what the SOF does.
- The call for increased communication was substantial.
- Most suggested some recurring base funding is justified.

In addition to the information presented here regarding perceptions and recommendations, the interviews included collection of information about ongoing projects and priorities for a wide range of units. Opportunities for possible partnerships were identified. The number of, or the opportunities for, congruent agendas were significant.

d. Work Sessions with Stakeholders and Cooperators

Two work sessions were held on Thursday, April 3 and Wednesday, April 9 from 8:30 to 4:30 at the University Lutheran Church adjacent to campus. Approximately 150 people were invited and approximately 75 responded and attended one or both of the two days. Invitation and participation lists are provided in the Appendix. Extensive preparation went into development of the agenda and supporting materials. Three ring binders with background material and supporting data were provided to each participant. Consistent with our focus on food, lunch of salad and soup from organic vegetables from the SOF was enjoyed for all participants.

The detailed agendas for the two days can be condensed to the following main topic areas.

Day 1 Morning

- Presentation by SOF Steering Team and Students about the Five Years of Growth and Change for the SOF. The people participating in the SOF grew and changed along with the farm and personal growth and transformations were a key part of the process.
- Presentation by Frank Fear, Associate Dean for College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, regarding perspectives, priorities and recommendations.
- Three panel presentations by SOF Partners covering: a) academic, b) research and extension and c) community, producer and organization perspectives of the contributions of the SOF.

Day 1 Afternoon

- Current roles to continue and future roles to consider.
- Reviewing and identifying possible strategic goals.

Day 2 Morning

- Review of Day 1 and clarification of roles and goals.
- Consolidation and prioritization of strategic goals.
- Discussion of Vision and Mission.

Day 2 Afternoon

- Discussion of partner priorities and needs relative to previous work session discussions and possible strategic actions for the SOF.

Day 1 Introduction: The Student Organic Farm: Five Years of Growth and Change

In the weeks preceding the work sessions, the steering team worked in cooperation with two SOF farm crew students to craft a creative, brief presentation that provides an SOF overview and history while conveying the impact and importance of the farm beyond the standard academic experience. Tim Heuer and Holly Markham used their creative and artistic abilities to produce a pictorial time line by selecting some of the hundreds of images of the first five years of the SOF. The image of a growing vine was also used on the cover of the information binder provided to each participant. The text of the presentation is included in the Appendix.

- John Biernbaum - The SOF is rooted in research.
- Adam Montri – Student Transformation
- Laurie Thorp, Faculty Transformation
- Jeremy Moghtader – Living out a Dream
- Tomm Becker – From Student to Manager
- Tim Heuer – Student Transformation and Leadership
- Holly Markham – Finding a home
- Corie Pierce, Another Perfect Fit
- Final Wrap Up

Day 1 Morning: Summary of Frank Fear’s Comments

(This is intended as a paraphrasing of concepts and not as quotes. This summary was prepared from a recording but is not intended to accurately reflect the order of presentation.)

- MSU has distinctive and unique way of launching new programs – we don’t fund them. If you have a good idea, you go see if you can get funding and do it. The SOF got the funding and has demonstrated that the idea was and is a good one.
- Now is the time to talk about transition from an initiative “in” the Horticulture Department and College to one “of” a department or college or the University.
- To grow from an initiative requires becoming a shared asset and deciding what is shared and who is sharing it. It is a challenge to share what you have carefully crafted. What is now mine will be ours and then yours. The time of transition can be exciting and scary. A shared principle of the Bailey Scholars Program is that nothing good comes out of anything that was not “stretch learning”.
- Participants in the strategic planning session have a challenge, burden and opportunity to influence the SOF in a fundamental way. I encourage you to be practical visionaries. A worst case situation would be for what comes out of the strategic planning process to be “blown off”. Recognize that this work is very important to all of us. You have to do it.
- The art of the possible is learning to be astute and artful in a political and strategic way while keeping the passion, sense of purpose and engagement. Take the ideas of a variety of stakeholders and possible funders and find connecting points between your agenda and theirs. Understanding the art of change is critical to how you maintain a foundation of principles but allow others with divergent perspectives to see what you do and value it. It is a waste of time trying to get others to understand your philosophy. Find at least one point of connection between what you see as wonderful and what they see as wonderful and find a way to celebrate it together. You make connections by building bridges that are intentionally managed in a way that fosters exchange but does not allow invaders to pillage and plunder your essential principles and functions.
- What the College does in some ways is considered “conventional” agriculture which implies that there is other “unconventional” agriculture. There are differences in approaches. A good goal is to move forward and cross boundaries by continuing to provide access for the mainstream. Move forward with change, not by diverging, but with the mainstream and the margins going together.
- The most powerful change in the world is when people are able to connect with each other and gain from each other.

- One of the challenges at MSU is that we are doing a lot of things, maybe too many things, so there are not monetary “allowances” for each. With a shared asset, administrators have to ask “how are we going to invest?” If you don’t think in terms of agendas and connecting things, this is not going to go anywhere. We are looking for “a convergence of congruent agendas”. An example to consider is the work of Terry Link who has been a facilitator of bringing people and agendas together around sustainability.
- Where is the road leading? Will the SOF still be the SOF in title or will it be known by a new name? Will the SOF be a program of the University or College or Horticulture Department? Will there be an international focus? Will the focus be teaching? Extension? Research? What might be a convergence of congruent agendas?

Day 1 Morning: Partner Panel Presentations

Partners were invited to present three to four minutes of perspective relative to what was important about the SOF. The comments presented below are extracted from notes of the session and are offered as examples of selected comments and not as a complete summary.

Panel 1: Student, Teaching and Other Academic Perspectives

Linda Anderson, Professor Emeritus Teacher Education and OFCP 2007 graduate

- From the perspective of an experienced teacher, Linda valued and respected the time her instructors allowed for students to think about possibilities and to allow mistakes to happen; that the learning process was more important than the facts.

Maggie Wright, Intern at Earthworks Garden Detroit and OFCP 2007 graduate

- Maggie shared the importance of the program not being too “tight” and that she learned about getting off the “me” plan.

Tim Heuer, Landscape Architecture Senior, SOF Employee

- The SOF was a place to experience and dialog about subjects he was learning on campus and to consider where he was going and what did he want to do.

Terry Link, Office of Campus Sustainability

- “I am bursting with hope and fear.” The SOF is an example of what the world needs from us – not more math and science – but the opportunity to be in communion with the Earth and each other. We are in a hurry, but we cannot be in a hurry. Please – engage in the political process!

Laurie Thorp, Director, Residential Initiative for Study of the Environment (RISE)

- Her scholarship of teaching and learning comes from the head but also the heart . She brings her students to the farm because direct experience is essential to deep learning. Where and when do we give students the license to observe—all good science is grounded in observation? We are educating for democracy by being in community. Students must belong – not belong in general, but belong in particular.

The emotion in the room following the SOF presentation and the first panel was at an unprecedented level for academic gatherings and later in the day was discussed as an important focus of “what it is important to save” as the SOF grows.

Panel 2: Research and Extension/Outreach Perspectives

Elaine Brown – Executive Director Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS)

- There is a huge hunger for knowledge around hoopouses; many people and farmers are not being reached. The SOF has done a good job with partnership and shares a passion for knowledge and wisdom. How do you work with others that don't have the same vision but are moving in the same direction? How do you build a bridge to the mainstream? There is risk of burnout.

Mathieu Ngouajio – Assoc. Prof. of Horticulture, Sustainable Vegetable Production

- Participation in the ASHS workshop was a good example of the importance of getting the word out to the country. The SOF has been an important help in recruiting graduate students and a place for initiating research ideas that can be expanded by others and moved to a larger scale off the farm.

Greg Vlaming, MSU Extension Educator, Southwest Region

- The SOF is a unique deeply fulfilling opportunity to feel a sense of place as expressed by Wes Jackson and others. The SOF is a healthy point of connection to a supportive community working on organic farming while he works day-to-day in a region where farming is more conservative and less accepting of organic.

Susan Smalley, Director of the C.S Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems

- Susan highlighted key roles shared by the SOF and the Mott Group including the importance of the certification program training tomorrow's farmers, helping people to see that they can become a farmer, and providing a tangible, physical place that models a new type of financially viable farming.

Panel 3: Community, Producer and Organization Perspectives

Katie Olender, Food Systems Program Coordinator, Lansing Northwest Initiative

- Katie confessed that as a student witnessing the birth of the SOF, she gave up on the SOF and doubted it would survive. Instead the SOF has supported her work in Lansing with hoopouse building, providing volunteers and interns, and providing essential mental and emotional support. Her Lansing elementary school students were able to visit a "huge" farm with a professional looking young woman (Emily Reardon) as a real farmer. Her program has been rescued by MSU resources multiple times.

Ashley Atkinson, Greening of Detroit and Garden Resource Collaborative

- Ashley was unable to participate in the morning but later in the afternoon shared the importance of SOF support for urban agriculture initiatives in Detroit.

Paul Mallon, Hoopouse Greens and Uncle Buck's Nursery, Laingsburg

- Paul attended a workshop and met Adam Montri who later visited Paul's farm and provided support and information that led to a new successful business venture involving the use of greenhouses, that were empty in the winter, to grow food.

Linda Patrick, Extension Educator and the Flint Urban Agriculture Collaborators

- Urban farming in Flint is emerging as an important program to promote healthy lifestyles and to turn vacant land into entrepreneurial opportunities. We want all the help we can get.

The three panel sessions allowed partners to learn about other related programs and to consider the wide range of current and possible roles and partnership possibilities. SOF roles, both current and future, were the topic of the next session.

Day 1 Early Afternoon - Current Roles (Summarized from wall charts and notes.)

Participants self selected into five groups. The charge was to discuss current roles, opportunities for points of connection and to identify possible new roles. The content was not distilled in an attempt to reflect the breadth of discussion.

Academic – Laurie Thorp

Participants in Group: Heather Borden, Tom Smith, Eunice Foster, Mike Hamm, Mikey Formisano, Emily Reardon, Geoff Habron, Maggie Wright

Observations or Outcomes:

- IAT certificate program is a very important role for SOF
- Education is key role

Current Roles to Continue:

- Training of new farmers (OFCP and farm crew)
- Educating consumers (teacher training, university classes, dining halls)
- Certificate Program
- Training transitioning farmers (extension/outreach visits, workshops)
- Experiential Education
- Networking / “clearinghouse” to refer students to opportunities
- Modeling small-scale farming – Booker T. Whately – living well on 25 acres)

Future Roles to Consider:

- Expansion / diversification of OFCP
- Training Ag Teachers
- Community College partnership
- Train tour guides (faculty, staff, students, community)
- Diversify crops and animals on farm (dairy, meat, grain)
- Partnerships with nutrition programs
- Bridges to high school Future Farmers of America (FFA), other rural and urban agriculture education programs
- Business plan experience
- 4 year program development
- Living / learning facility on-farm
- “Center for New Farmer Development”

Research – Jeremy Moghtader

People in Group: Mathieu Neugogio, Randy Beaudry, Tom Fernandez, Matt Grieshop, Bridget Behe

Observations or Outcomes:

- There is a need for broader faculty involvement

- SOF is currently the only certified organic land on campus.
- The scale of the SOF or current land base limits what can be done.
- There are possible benefits to organic at SOF being adjacent to non-organic research
- May be misconceptions about what happens at SOF – “students playing in dirt”?

Current Roles to Continue

- Production research
- Providing networking and resources
- Economic and marketing research

Future Roles to Consider

- Expanded Production Research such as soil quality, soil biology, compost tea, potting mixes, fertility and soil nutrient comparisons, etc.
- Next farm bill may have significant increases in funding for organic research.
- Foster and conduct economic, marketing research.
- Learn what other faculty are interested in like Bridget Behe on consumer research and Stuart Grandy on soil disease suppression and approach them with opportunities to advance their research interests by working with the farm.
- Connect with other areas including medical, health, social, human nutrition.
- Encourage teaching and pedagogy research,

Outreach - Adam Montri

Participants in Group: Ben Brown, Vicki Morone, Dixie Sandborn, David Conner, Dan Rossman, Lia Spaniolo

Observations or Outcomes:

- Focus has been on multicultural farmers; outreach efforts overall are still limited.
- Season extension with hoopouses / PSGH has many new possible markets.
- What funding sources other than programs for fees are available?

Current Roles to Continue

- Season extension with year-round production at student farm.
- Outreach and mentoring for farmers (workshops, demonstration, field days).
- Basic horticultural skills (scheduling, seeding, cultivation, harvest and post harvest).
- Research based / backed outreach.

Future Roles to Consider

- Tie-in with Extension offices; learn about audiences they serve.
- Agriscience and FFA programs – hoopouses and easy crops to grow.
- Sustainable funding for outreach – identify possible sources.
- Short courses for a fee for income generation.
- Newsletter for communication - develop better dialog for how to access information.
- Provide learning opportunities and experiences for Master Gardeners.

University Programs - John Biernbaum

Participants in Groups: Susan Smalley (Mott Group), Robia Pippert (University Dining Halls), Toby Salzman (Sociology)

Observations or Outcomes

- Many potential partners identified and some prioritization completed.
- Use the “low boundaries” of the SOF and the ability to attract previously underserved audiences of those less likely to look to MSU for help as an asset to support other programs with similar goals.
- SOF mission is very consistent with the MSU Boldness by Design (BBD) principles including undergraduate quality of experience, opportunities for research and environmental stewardship.
- University emphasis for funding from the Provost’s office is on *inter*college activities.
- As a new program, would need to be aware of past traditions, methods, linkages and communication strategies.

Current Roles to Continue

- Mott Group and MIFFS as two central partners with related missions.
- MSU Office of Campus Sustainability:
 - MSU Food Systems Committee.
 - MSU Spartan Green Project – University wide recycling to carbon footprint.
 - New University Recycling Center – for example compost.
- University Food Service and Dining Halls – emphasis on the “service” component and a strong probable “hub” for University activities that can combine teaching, extension/outreach and research.
- CANR Institute of International Agriculture (IIA) – currently providing tours for annual IPM Short Courses with other opportunities discussed including an international network of farms. Also completed recent strategic planning with new emphasis on collaboration.
- CANR Product Center – minimal interaction to date, opportunity to support innovation counselors. Also completed recent strategic planning with emphasis on networks and partnerships.

Future Roles to Consider

- Greater linkages with other CANR Units like CARRS, CSS, ENT, ANS (CARRS and ENT well represented but was CSS or ANS represented?) Others: PLP, FOR, FW.
- Linkage with Center for Service Learning – just celebrated 40 year anniversary, a model that SOF could observe and learn from.
- Presentations for MSU Evening College.
- Articles for MSU Alumni Organization and Magazine – advertising for OFCP and possible donors?
- Research collaborations with Medical School – just starting hoophouse project with Jeff Dwyer.
- Learn more about the Social Science Department – supports and ecological perspective.
- Learn more about the Urban Studies Group in Sociology mentioned by Tom Dietz.

Programs Outside the University – Tomm Becker and Corie Pierce

Group Participants: Terry Link, Elaine Brown, Anne Scott, Katie Olender, Patrick Crouch

Observations or Outcomes

- Farms are seeking connections to communities and communities are seeking to connect with farms.
- There are many opportunities to identify venues and markets.
- Basic education, inspiration, and opportunities as a hub for exchange are all important.
- Partners can create the venues for sharing and education to take place.
- Avoid “mission drift” but meet the needs.
- Be aware of the wide range of opportunities and needs that relate to organic and fresh local food from low income to very wealthy.

Current Roles to Continue

- Extension/Outreach in communities is a key role; workshops.
- MIFFS / SOF joint trainings as a good example to follow; Earthworks in Detroit is another example like SOF where the place is important to show what is possible.
- Broad – sharing of the SOF story, how it grew, what factors were important.
- Specific – technical applications of growing methods, season extension and urban agriculture.
- Season extension is an important message (also being supported by MIFFS and Mott).
- Research based information out for application.

Future Roles to Consider

- Sharing with partner organizations as opposed to sharing with partner organization participants; more of a train the trainer; including training about how we learn. SOF as a model to demonstrate connected learning.
- Not just dissemination of information, but a hub for exchange of information; not just to communities but to other institutions.
- Strategic leveraging of resources with partners.
- Collect and organize information and refer it to and share it with partners.
- Sustainability sharing – Terry Link can help create the venue for that sharing to occur.
- Broaden reach of connections in state and across nation.

Overall Breakout Session Summary:

The participants were outspoken regarding maintaining the current SOF core roles. There were no recommendations to reduce roles and many ideas and suggestions for possible new roles.

Day 1 Breakout Session 2 and Day 2 Breakout Session 1

Reviewing and Identifying Possible Strategic Goals for SOF and Its Partners –

In the weeks prior to the work sessions, the SOF Steering Team worked with Ray Vlasin to identify potential strategic goals for the SOF. A list of ten goal areas was developed. On Day 1, small groups formed by strategic goal areas to discuss draft materials on possible goals and

determine additions and modifications. Part of the process included clarification of the difference between a “*role*” and a “*goal*”. Based on input from the first day, seven goals from the original list were removed and eight added. On Day 2, six new groups (~ six participants/group) formed working with a tightened and revised list of strategic goals (see below). Participants were asked to prioritize the strategic goals, to briefly summarize or vote for the top four or five regarding their findings. Votes were tabulated and individual group findings were shared with the other groups.

Based on the information collected, the following strategic goals were judged to be of highest priority. *Key to goals listed below.

- Continue development of educational programs. (Specific goals G1-1, G2-1, G2-2, G3-1)
- Strengthen the funding and business model and improve communication and integration within MSU. (Specific goals G10-1, 3 & 5; G5-5; G6-1)
- Invest in site improvement and development. (Specific goal G8-1)
- Incorporate more train the trainer programs in order to reach more people. (Specific goal G4-2)
- Develop a network for placement of SOF students. (Specific goal G6-6)

Initial Draft Goals, Revised Goal Areas and Potential Goals

(Missing numbers indicate goals that were removed during the process.)

Goal Area 1: Providing education and experiential learning for a diverse group of students:

G1-1: Offer courses and information in a wider variety of formats.

G1-2: Create a track or focus area in urban agriculture.

G1-3: Package existing course info into a series of on-line courses.

G1-5: (New) Create a track or focus area in agriculture for developing countries.

G1-6: (New) Develop a strategic marketing plan to recruit diverse students.

Goal Area 2: Establishing the SOF as a university model for learner-centered, competency-driven, critical pedagogy:

G2-1: Continue to refine and develop competencies and performance assessment for OFCP.

G2-2: Continue to develop and refine OFCP programmatic goals, learning outcomes, and integration of courses.

G2-3: Advance adult education and changing adult behavior by partnering with MSU Extension and College of Education.

Goal Area 3. Fostering student and faculty research and scholarship:

- G3-1: Support opportunities for undergraduate student involvement in research and peer-reviewed scholarly publication.
- G3-3: Identify MSU programs related to urban agriculture and potential internal partners.

Goal Area 4: Conducting Outreach and Extension Education:

- G4-1: Offering OFCP courses and related information in a wider variety of formats.
- G4-2: Develop an MSUE “train the trainer” program focused on organic, year-round production.
- G4-3: Provide technical outreach and assistance for farms and farmers who request our services.
- G4-4: Increase events, workshops, and other community outreach opportunities at the SOF.

Goal Area 5. Establishing and maintaining cooperation with and support by partners and stakeholders within MSU:

- G5-1 Each semester hold a field day at the SOF for MSU faculty, staff and administrators.
- G5-2 Once per year co-host a session with the Mott Group and MIFFS to update the MSU community about organic / local agriculture developments and programs.
- G5-3 Expand relationships with MSU Housing and Food Services and model the potential for involvement of other farms.
- G5-4 Create a clear communication strategy for networking with internal stakeholders.
- G5-5 Create an active SOF advisory board.

Goal Area 6. Establishing and maintaining cooperation with and support by partners and stakeholders beyond MSU:

- G6-1 Create a clear communication strategy toward all of our stakeholders and partners.
- G6-3 Design, develop and implement a process that will assist communities and organizations to recruit from SOF student and graduate pool.
- G6-5 Advance international activities, study abroad, and international internship exchanges.
- G6-6 Publicize the concept of year-round community teaching and demonstration farms.
- G6-7 Promote the use of passive solar greenhouses for school gardens.
- G6-8 (New) Determine the extent of our current partnerships or resources and evaluate gaps in resources, partnerships and geographic areas. Develop a process to fill the gaps.
- G6-9 (New) Develop rules of engagement for each partnership; review and renew annually.

Goal Area 7: Diversifying Organic Crops, Practices and Applications:

G7-1: Identify, advance and test low-cost geothermal heating systems to increase year-round productivity of passive solar greenhouses.

G7-2: Test the viability of different-scale practices such as larger-scale vegetable production and small-scale production of grains and livestock.

G7-3: Develop a system to propose and evaluate (filter) new projects or goals for fit with the mission and current projects, funding required and available, and potential benefits.

Goal Area 8. Expanding and enhancing the SOF and related support facilities to enable quality place-based education, outreach and research:

G8-1 Create a clear plan for overall site improvement including structures (classrooms, houses, barns, office space, refrigeration, other infrastructure) and site plan (field layout, residential component, etc.) to allow the whole organization to be based at the farm.

G8-1B Provide a composting restroom facility in the field at SOF, built to code, by the fall of 2008.

G8-2 Expansion of the organic land managed by the SOF at the HRTC for research, field crops, tree fruit and berry production, and campus dining halls.

G8-3 Seek and identify possible donors and increase support for the Horticulture Department, CANR and University efforts to build a “green” teaching/support facility at the Horticulture Teaching and Research Center (HTRC).

Goal Area 9. Achieving enhanced physical and mental health and economic betterment of individuals, families, communities and the state:

G9-1 Partner with community and local health organizations and the MSU College of Human Medicine to develop and implement greater linkages between the food that is consumed and individual and community health.

G9-1b Evaluate what happens to the MSU-SOF-CSA weekly distribution, i.e. how much is eaten and when.

G9-2 Facilitate direct marketing opportunities and training for farmers through partnerships with FSEP, MIFMA, MI-FMAT, and other regional and statewide organizations that provide and promote direct marketing opportunities.

G9-4 Arrange to bring at least one other local farmer into a forward-contracted wholesale agreement with an MSU dining hall by the spring of 2009.

G9-5 (New) Arrange that at least one organic cash crop farmer will partner with SOF student graduates and effectively grow and market organic produce at a farmers market or CSA.

G9-6 (New) Arrange to place 50 percent of new SOF farmers in farm operations and track and quantify the economic impact.

Goal Area 10: Creating a viable organizational structure, operating plan, business plan (including an appropriate name)

G10-1: Develop a business model that includes a viable economic structure, clearly defined roles and responsibilities that allow for growth and development.

G10-3 Seek and obtain reliable funding sufficient for staff salary and benefits.

G10-4 Create an endowment fund(s) in addition to the scholarship endowment and publicize the ability for individuals and organizations to become donors or contributors to the SOF funds.

G10-5 Develop a position to assist in administrative duties at the SOF and hire another full-time staff member by 2009.

G10-6 (New) Create an annual calendar of events and who will organize them.

G10-7 (New) Create a two year plan with priorities for each SOF work/role area (farm-CSA/Farm Stand, OFCP, outreach/workshops, MSU food service, community engagement, etc)

Day 2 Morning Discussion of Vision and Mission

During the weeks prior to the work sessions, the SOF Steering Team developed a draft vision and mission statement incorporating views of the steering team. The draft statements were shared with work session participants. The original plan was to gain participants input regarding vision and mission by having individuals share comments in writing during the lunch session.

As part of the conclusion of the reporting out and large group discussion of prioritization of strategic goals, a question from a participant turned the focus to vision and mission. A decision was made to step back from the original agenda for the morning and to have a group discussion. There was some degree of aversion to providing specific editing recommendations. The opinion presented was that the responsibility of refining the vision and mission statement was the role of the organization more than the stakeholders. However, valuable comments were offered relative to process, contents and length of the vision and mission statement. One position that seemed to be supported was shortening the draft mission statement so it did not include a list of ways the mission is carried out and possibly expanding the vision statement to include additional information.

Day 2 Afternoon – Strategic Actions, Partner priorities and Needs

The SOF Steering Team together with Ray Vlasin made a decision to not implement the original plan for break out sessions to identify strategic actions. Our goal shifted to a less formal discussion with the focus being an opportunity for the participants to meet together and share personal and organization goals of their own and how they could relate to or inspire future SOF functions and strategic actions. In the process, possible strategic actions were identified and recorded. Small group discussions developed around topics including on-campus activities, farmer and community extension/outreach projects, and possible international projects. Later in the afternoon, as some participants left for other obligations, smaller groups eventually combined into one large roundtable discussion. The less structured agenda and the opportunity to share other matters were appreciated by the participants and contributed to a very positive atmosphere at the conclusion.

Strategic Work Sessions Summary

As many as 60 hours per week of combined steering team members' time were invested in preparation for the work sessions in the 10 weeks proceeding the two days with no relief from other teaching and farm responsibilities. A significant amount of time was spent on collecting and analyzing data from stakeholders in the form of a web-survey and personal interviews.

The sessions were well organized, orchestrated and well attended. The venue and process cultivated many positive comments with no negatives. From the approximately 150 invitations, we received approximately 75 responses with intent to attend. There were 57 attendees the first day, 36 the second, for a total of 63 attendees with 31 attending both days. (Participant list available.) The written records of the process, data collected, and session summaries will continue to provide a valuable long-term reference to guide future developments.

Important insight into perceptions and expectations of stakeholders and partners relative to current and future roles and important strategic goals were gained. Some participants shared relevant experiences and priorities from the growth and development of their organizations.

4.2 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT Analysis)

Based on our analysis of the survey SWOT data, feedback received during the work sessions, and interviews with administrators the following is a summary of the SWOT areas. Section 5 will build on these and transform them into key objectives and actions.

Strengths:

- Strong base of support amongst stakeholders.
- Passionate, dedicated, and highly competent staff.
- Low barriers for students.
- Active and highly engaged students.
- Year Round Food Production working demonstration farm and expertise.
- Passive solar greenhouse technology expertise for the world.
- Only Certified Organic land on MSU campus.
- Highly Inter-disciplinary by nature.
- Attract a broad range of students from many different colleges.
- Transformative place-based living laboratory for undergraduate education.
- Knowledge and commitment to learner centered pedagogy.
- Production of healthy, nutritious, local, sustainable food.
- High demand for SOF programming.
- Partnerships with organizations around the state working on local food issues.
- Training the next generation of small-mid scale sustainable farmers.

Weaknesses:

- Lack of secure funding source for SOF CORE program areas, particularly the IAT Organic Farming Certificate Program.
- Need to transition from being viewed as a project coordinated by one faculty member to being recognized and valued as an inter-disciplinary program with a core team of coordinators with share-leadership responsibilities and a desire for new faculty and staff participants.
- Need to develop an Organizational structure that allows greater clarity of responsibilities, a distributed decision-making process, low boundaries for participation by additional faculty, staff and students, and a secure, supportive academic home.
- Challenged to filter the multiple opportunities for extension/outreach and engagement without staff to accommodate.
- Lack of formal mechanism for stakeholder to be involved in an empowered, responsible, and supportive way with the SOF.
- Lack of appropriate infrastructure to support teaching, learning, outreach and research, (ie.toilets, classroom space, storage, kitchen, meeting space, barn).
- Will soon be limited by land, need for additional acreage to grow (ie, grains, animals).

Opportunities

- Contribute to the support and growth of small-mid scale farming in Michigan and the mid-west.
- Expand programming to affiliate sites around the state.
- Partnership with Earth University and other international organizations.
- Formalize our undergraduate transformative learning programming.
- Formalize partnership with Sustainability Specialization and Sustainable Food Systems Specialization.
- Growth and expansion of urban agriculture nationally.
- Increased demand nationally for low fossil fuel input production methods.
- Increased demand nationally for low carbon production methods.
- Increased national attention to health, nutrition, obesity/diabetes epidemic.
- Contribute to building a stronger local food system in our state.
- Web-based programming.
- Teacher training around use of farming and gardening for curricular enrichment.
- Educational programming for youth.
- Enhanced partnership with MSU Housing and Food Services.
- Growth of faculty organic research opportunities (certified organic land available).
- Creation of an advisory board or group to help support and guide the SOF.
- Creation of an organizational structure that allows strong shared leadership to develop and increases efficiency.

Threats

- Lack of sustainable business plan, despite high demand for programs.
- HRT Chair is currently supportive but position changes could lead to a change in the degree of support.
- Level of support from Horticulture Department is not clear and has not been quantified.

- Over commitment of staff to our stakeholders.
- Staff burnout.
- Continued perception that we are a faculty member's project and not an interdisciplinary program.
- If the SOF does not set itself up for growth, it will miss the above listed opportunities.

4.3 Knowledge of SOF Programs and Achievements Among Stakeholders and Cooperators

Considering the five-year history of the SOF, awareness of the program is good in the University and the associated organic farming community. However, interviews of 15 MSU administrators and the views of work session participants gave a strong indication of a need for better communication beyond the group of faculty, staff and student supporters in the University. The CSA Program was the most visible part of the program along with the undergraduate education. To better reflect the intentions of the SOF steering team, the awareness needs to be flipped from the CSA Program as the focus to the undergraduate education and new farmer outreach as the focus so the CSA Program and farmstand are not seen as what we do but as the “laboratory” or “practice field” for what we do.

4.4 Views on Importance of SOF Functions and Potentials for the Future

Information collected from the stakeholder survey and the strategic planning work sessions provide evidence that the current roles of the SOF are highly valued. The role of undergraduate experiential education and the Organic Farming Certificate Program as made possible by the year-round organic production and CSA Program are most highly valued. All the other core functions listed were also valued. The unique aspect of the year-round farm that grew from the winter salad greens production research was valued as a potential technology or tool for farmers but also as an essential component that allows the teaching program to be built on experiential programs during the academic year.

Information collected from the stakeholder survey and the strategic planning work sessions support the potential future roles identified by the SOF Steering Team in our visioning process. Greater collaboration with other new farmer training programs in Michigan and community and school garden teaching and extension/outreach were identified as very important. Other important future roles were urban agriculture teaching and outreach, integration of organic animal husbandry at the SOF, cooking and nutrition demonstration and education, a partnership with the MSU Food Service Programs and a student residential option.

4.5 Roles Expected of SOF by Stakeholders and Cooperators

Partners and stakeholders engaged in the process overwhelmingly expressed support for the core teaching, extension/outreach and research functions. A common theme is that the primary limitation to building a local food system is not consumer interest, available land or available resources. The limiting factor is consistently identified as *people* capable of the mentally and

physically challenging art and science of managing a profitable, diversified, ecological year-round farm. SOF stakeholders are depending on the SOF to attract and prepare the farmers needed today. They expect the SOF to teach at the margins of an emerging technology, going beyond an industrial, mechanistic approach to an ecological, integrated approach that also is socially inclusive and responsive. No current roles were identified for elimination and several new roles were recommended.

4.7 Stakeholders' and Cooperators' Vision of what SOF Might Become

Stakeholders shared a vision for the SOF to become a “hub” or “center” in the growing local, state, regional, national and international networks that are emerging in support of a new sustainable food system. The SOF stakeholders and cooperators recognize the potential and shared a desire that the program grow to become the model teaching farm and clearinghouse for organic/sustainable agriculture in Michigan.

4.6 Suggestions about SOF Communication with Stakeholders and Cooperators

Stakeholder comments regarding communication ranged from positive about some aspects to promoting a strong sense of urgency regarding the need to develop important targeted communication tools and strategies.

- The primary form of informational and process communication by the SOF is electronically through a weekly CSA Newsletter, the website (www.msuorganicfarm.org), and a listserv. These functions are handled as an additional / overload responsibility of a Steering Team member and not adequately supported relative to the importance.
- Face to face meetings are the basis for both teaching classes on campus and outreach workshops on and off campus.
- Campus and Lansing newspaper coverage has helped visibility as has the presence of the weekly Farm Stand on campus and events hosted by the student organization EFFF.
- The SOF needs to be strategic about communication to a wider range of stakeholders both in the University and outside the University to support the necessary increase in recognition as an interdisciplinary program of the University.
- Advertising about SOF Programs except the Organic Farming Certificate Program, has not been a priority because the current size of the program and staffing cannot handle the current requests for support and programs generated without advertising.
- The Institute of Agriculture Technology has provided a color brochure for the program and to date only limited visibility on an insufficient website. The opportunity and need for greater program support from IAT for the OFCP and other AgTech programs is great.
- Given the limited resources currently available, identifying points of connection with stakeholders and partners to leverage a focused investment of effort targeted at priority areas would be highly beneficial.
- On-line courses are believed to be an important potential new opportunity to both extend the teaching and provide a self-supporting education position if development time and resources are allocated to start the program.

4.8 Strategic Issues Facing SOF in the Next Three to Five Years

There are several over-riding issues that will challenge SOF, The Department of Horticulture and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources in the years immediately ahead. These strategic issues are summarized here and will be addressed in the subsequent sections of this strategic planning report.

1. How does the SOF secure the necessary resources with sufficient certainty to make current programs rock solid?
2. How does the SOF secure the resources necessary for the physical infrastructure that is vital for current and new functions?
3. How does the SOF engage other parts and programs of MSU to develop congruent agendas and shared resources?
4. How do we create a organizational structure that can address the necessary questions and projects and allow for inclusive growth?
5. What should be the organization, management and operating relationships be within the SOF, and how can it be resilient and flexible in dealing with uncertainties during the next three to five years?
6. How does the SOF secure the flexible support necessary to become more of a unit/ program “of” the college and University, engaging departmental faculty and students.
7. How does the SOF identify and secure flexible resources to foster engagement with Michigan, regional, national and international partners and networks?
8. What should be the administrative/academic home for the Student Organic Farm, and how can or will it relate to other units within the University? Should there be some formal or informal advisory group to counsel and aid SOF?

5.0 Strategic Plan—Addressing the Strategic Issues Ahead

5.1 SOF Direction—Its Mission and Vision

Draft Vision:

As citizens of planet Earth we recognize our interdependence and are learning how to live from an informed ecological perspective. We commit to personnel development and reconnecting to the land and each other in order to revitalize our ecosystems and communities. We know we must take and use less. Michigan has become a model state for self-reliance, organic production, season extension, and small-scale farming applications. The State has increased its economic diversity because of its large cadre of organic food producers and enterprise operators who are economically viable and socially responsible. Michigan residents contribute to the health, well-being, and enhanced ecology of our land. Urban and small scale intensive agriculture is providing jobs for people of all ages and has become a major source of fresh vegetables and fruit in all Michigan cities and communities.

As a vital part of Michigan State, a premier Land Grant University, the Student Organic Farm provides education, training, outreach and research in diversified organic agriculture in support

of new and existing farmers, agricultural educators, sustainable year round food production, school gardens, urban and community agriculture, sustainable local food systems, food security, and economic vitality. Through our partnerships with other organizations and the network of organic teaching farms we helped initiate, we build organic agricultural capacity in our state, nation, and world.

Education anchored in a solid foundation of knowledge, language and experience and provided through competency based and learner-centered approaches is embodied at the MSU Student Organic Farm. We are guided by a vision of disciplined practice of growing food and managing the farmscape in a way that builds personal confidence and is necessary for the long term health and wellbeing of our local and global communities.

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to cultivate knowledge and human capacity in organic and sustainable agriculture for students, farmers and educators.

5.2 Emphasis on Greater Integration within MSU and Increased Movement from Projects to Programs

The MSU Student Organic Farm has grown from a small student initiated project to include a full-scale Organic Farming Certificate program. Located in the Horticulture Department and Institute of Agriculture Technology, it engages students in a wide range of transformative educational experiences. In addition to educational programming it is engaged in organic farming outreach with organizations in Detroit, Flint, Bay Mills (Brimley), Lansing, and Grand Rapids. However, as a result of the strategic planning process, it is evident that many on campus still perceive the SOF as either a small student project or one of a single faculty member (namely John Biernbaum). Further, many stakeholders perceive the SOF as primarily a Horticulture Department project or program. The SOF is based in the Horticulture Department and has grown as a result of this relationship as well as its close relationship with the RISE program. Although the SOF is currently “housed” within this department, and we wish to maintain a strong relationship with this department, some believe this may be limiting the ability to work across disciplinary boundaries. The strategic planning process was an important first step in communicating the intention to make this transition from project to interdisciplinary program.

The SOF is seeking university partners that see the SOF as an institutional asset worthy of support. Greater integration within MSU will be accomplished by identifying other units, programs and faculty with congruent research, teaching and outreach agendas. The importance of engaging in scholarly activity at the SOF was underscored during many of the interviews with key administrators. If the SOF is to be an institutional asset it must engage in the central activities of a Tier 1 research institution. Currently scholarly research is underdeveloped in the portfolio of activities by the SOF.

5.3 Building on SOF's Strengths and Opportunities, Dealing with Weaknesses and Threats

Strengths and Opportunities

Based on survey findings from SOF stakeholders (N=50) key strengths include: knowledgeable and committed staff and students, opportunities for experiential learning, and technical expertise in year-round hoophouse production for the mid-west. Repeatedly respondents mentioned dedicated students and staff as front and center to the strength of the program. Complimenting this social dimension is the strength of knowledge and experience in organic vegetable crop season extension. In addition, other stakeholders had this to say:

“...Knowledge about year-round organic production and marketing. Outstanding and committed staff and faculty and students...”

“...Excellent product, hands-on learning, commitment of all involved...”

Opportunities for the Student Organic Farm revolved around the themes of local food, growing demand for organic products, year-round production, and our wide variety of educational programming. Coupling Michigan's economic recovery with current trends favoring locally grown agricultural products was viewed as an opportunity for the SOF. As one key stakeholder explained, educating the next generation of farmers to meet the current demand for local, sustainably-produced food is an opportunity for MSU and the SOF to be national leaders among Land Grant institutions.

In order to build on these strengths and opportunities the SOF management team recognizes the importance of continuing to develop the commitment to experiential learning for both the Organic Farming Certificate Program students and baccalaureate degree students. Corie Pierce and Laurie Thorp are currently working on programmatic and curricular revisions based on student feedback garnered over the past two years. Central to these revisions is a fundamental shift from “instructional paradigm” coursework and assessment to “learning paradigm” program design. The intent is to submit the first of these program changes for CANR curricular review by fall of 2008. Further, a key strategic goal is extending our educational programming across Michigan to several key affiliate sites in Detroit, Flint, Bay Mills, Grand Rapids and Traverse City. This expansion could include both web-based content for credit and site development for extension/outreach. The current University policy of returning 70% of off campus course tuition to the unit would possibly provide another income stream that could eventually support the increase in staff necessary for the expanded effort.

Building on staffing strengths and shared leadership we have renewed the commitment to create and identify a SOF organizational and management team operating structure and procedures. Currently we have a loosely formulated management team that needs written and clearly defined roles, responsibilities and decision making protocols.

Building on our strength of technical expertise in season extension and hoophouse production, plans are in place to begin building a sixth passive solar greenhouse at the SOF. This hoophouse

is a collaborative project between the SOF, C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Agriculture, MSU Housing and Food Services, and RISE Program. This project not only will expand the current season extension capacity allowing for advance contracting with Yakeley Dining Hall, but also includes plans underway to study the impact of student grown organic greens on dining hall patrons in Yakeley Hall. Two proposed technical innovations to be piloted and studied with the project includes: 1) a mechanical harvester for larger scale production and harvesting of salad greens and 2) low-level (32 degrees) heating to increase productivity.

Weaknesses and threats

Based on survey results similar themes were evident across both categories of weaknesses and threats to the SOF. A lack of base funding, lack of basic facilities, need for increased linkages to other units, poor university visibility and potential staff burn out were seen as key weaknesses and threats. External threats beyond the University were not viewed as significant.

Addressing the need for base funding has been a primary motivation behind this strategic planning process. It is our hope that this strategic plan will allow for key administrators to assist the SOF management team in identifying potential funding streams for stabilizing various components of the program. We are currently waiting for HRT and CANR administration to identify funds for the IAT OFCP coordinator and instructor positions that were funded by grant and non-recurring dollars during development of the program.

Improving linkages to other units is well underway and began in earnest as a result of this strategic planning process. As part of this process key department chairpersons were identified and interviewed, these one-on-one conversations were extremely fruitful in identifying shared interests and faculty who have compatible teaching and research agendas. Since that time exploratory meetings have been initiated with faculty in Crops and Soil Science, Entomology, Animal Science, Agricultural, Food and Resource Economics, and CARRS to name a few.

The limited visibility of the program has in part been intentional due to the fact that with our current staff size we are unable to handle any increase in communication from interested parties. This finding serves to remind us that we are limiting potential partnerships and resources by not improving our communication strategy. Developing a tenable and sustainable communication plan has been identified as an important goal for the SOF.

Dealing with staff burn-out remains a challenge that we continually face. Limited resources requires that our current full time staff must often work 12 hour days with frequent nights and weekends booked with outreach commitments across the state. Our hope is that we will eventually move towards a sustainable work/life balance as the program grows and matures.

It is clear from the survey with faculty, students, CSA members, farmers, school and community gardeners and other stakeholders that the SOF must find resources to substantially enhance external communications. Proposed here is the addition of a 0.25 to 0.5 FTE to work with the SOF co-managers to focus on external communication. This resource addition would assist in handling that portion of the SOF role that is now most underserved. Also, it would serve as a major deterrent to staff burnout.

5.4 SOF Core Roles and Functions plus New Opportunities with Potential

Current Core Roles and Functions

The Student Organic Farm is first and foremost an educational model small-scale farm. All of our programming is done in the context of teaching and learning centered on active participation in the local food system. We engage in the local food system and community through the CSA, the campus farmstand and the new university dining hall contract. Students, farmers, and community members engage in the farm and our programming through our certificate program, individual courses, volunteering, farmer workshops, informal workshops, research projects, tours and other SOF experiences. The SOF has three key areas where current efforts are focused: 1) Educational programming, 2) Extension and Outreach, and 3) Research.

1) Educational Programming

- Organic Farming Certificate Program (OFCP), Institute of Agricultural Technology
- Workshops for farmers and community members
- 4-year Student Internships and Apprenticeships
- Informal 4-year programming with RISE, EFFF, and other MSU faculty
- Tours for MSU, other MI colleges and universities, schools, etc.
- Workshop Series – community workshops
- 48 – Week Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program
- 25 week on campus Farm Stand sales
- Contract with MSU Dining Services – Yakeley Hall

2) Extension and Outreach

- Limited resources and minority farmers – workshops and tours (RMA grant)
- Passive Solar Greenhouse outreach – multiple forms of content delivery
- Field trips and other engagement with Lansing Area residents and others throughout Michigan, nationally and internationally (over 2000 visitors annually)
- Formal and Informal partnerships with various organizations around Michigan including:
 - Detroit – Greening of Detroit
 - Flint – Flint Urban Agriculture Collaborative
 - Traverse City – Seeds, GTRLC, MLUI, Leelanau Land Conservancy, NW
 - Brimley - Bay Mills Community College
 - Grand Rapids – West Michigan Environmental Action Council; Mixed Greens

3) Research

- Passive Solar Greenhouse Technology and Year Round Farming
 - Long-term yield and CSA distribution data collection
 - Economic impact on farms and farmers markets with MSU Mott Group
 - Yakeley Hall Salad Greens Study with RISE and MSU Mott Group
 - student perceptions
 - increased yield and mechanical harvesting
 - opportunities for farmer access to MSU Dining Services
- Organic Transplant Production with Mathieu Ngouajio in HRT

All of the above listed core areas are made possible by the farm as a working, living, learning farm laboratory where students get their hands dirty, work on the land with their peers in teams, and do “real, meaningful work”. **A key strategic action is to change the perception that the CSA Program, farm stand and year-round farming, as the most visible part of what we do, are the most important part of what we do. The teaching and extension work are the most important and hopefully soon the most visible part of what we do, and they are made possible by the CSA Program, farm stand and year-round farming.**

Educational Programs

The OFCP is where students engage most deeply in transformative, placed-based, hands on learning. The program is a year-long, full-time, intensive experience for students of diverse backgrounds interested in becoming change agents in our current food system. Students who are not already enrolled as 4-year students are typically those who participate in the OFCP.

Core Components of OFCP:

- Developing personal learning plan guiding project based, learner-centered learning.
- Carrying out farm management responsibilities, hands on management of the Student Organic Farm.
- Being an engaged member of the SOF learning community.

The OFCP is a 44 credit certificate program in the Institute of Agricultural Technology.

Four-Year Student Transformative Learning Opportunities

The Student Organic Farm offers multiple opportunities for students to experience farming, gardening, environmental issues, community, and other place-based learning. Some of the programming for existing 4-year students includes:

- Six to ten paid student farmer/worker positions during the academic year to plant, maintain and harvest crops.
- As many as 5 to 20 students a week come to the SOF and volunteer to work with student farmers to learn how to plant, maintain and harvest crops.
- Internships in organic farming – summer and school year employment/internship positions.
- Bee Team – students who are involved with the farm focusing deeply on one aspect – beekeeping.
- Workshop Series – several workshops in various aspects of community, land, food, art topics.
- Tours, volunteering, field trips.
- Taking courses on an individual basis, choice of student.

While compiling the Strategic Plan Summary Report, it became evident that there were not data to quantify the impact of the SOF on the many 4-yr students that have been deeply involved at the SOF. BS and MS graduates associated with the SOF are clearly staying involved in farming,

food or education related activities. They speak highly of the impact of the SOF on the quality of their MSU experience. The SOF is a shining star example of the Boldness by Design Principles including enhancing the quality of undergraduate experience and increasing stewardship.

In June 2008, 25 SOF students and alums were surveyed regarding transformative learning outcomes. *Distinctly different from their farm skill competencies, the intent was to assess other impacts of their affiliation with the SOF.* Both open-ended and Likert-type response questions were included in the survey. A 68% response rate (n=17) was obtained by July 15, 2008.

Key Thematic Survey Findings:

- Students placed a high value on the learning community they found at the SOF. This community often was described as empowering students to effect change on a larger scale. The SOF was frequently described as a safe place where they were able to test ideas, think freely, and gain self-confidence. As one student stated, “It has transformed me into more of an active, intentional, engaged human being.”
- The ability to engage in “real” work emerged as a key theme. As one student said, “...that kind of responsibility is very different from writing a paper and it repeatedly helped me create new habits of thinking.” This developed sense of responsibility was mentioned both in the context of caring for plants and animals, but also each other. Repeatedly students mentioned valuable lessons learned from being a responsible member of a group.
- Overall improved health and wellbeing were mentioned by numerous students as a result of their time spent at the farm. This included both mental health and physical health. Students spoke of improved eating habits, plant based diets and increased physical activity as an outcome. The farm was frequently described as a place that provides students with a refuge from the stresses of academic life.
- Nearly every respondent mentioned the farm as providing a much desired community with a common set of values. Here they also learned how to be a contributing member of a community because of the high tolerance and encouragement of self-expression.

While being at the SOF I learned:	Mean Score*
to be a more engaged citizen	4.62
to think critically about our food system	5.00
to be an agent of change in society	4.38
to be a responsible member of a community	4.62
how to be a better leader	4.54
to have confidence in myself	4.23

Because of my association with the SOF:	Mean Score
I decided to change my major	3.23
I decided to change my career path	3.46
I decided not to leave the university	2.83
I felt better about being at MSU	4.38
I was able to perform better in my other classes	4.08

*1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

New Opportunities

As our program matures and we graduate more students who become farmers, food activists, local food change agents, and teachers, we will continue to explore new opportunities to expand our current roles and audience. Opportunities for this type of extended programming include offering some of our course content online, partnering with community colleges and universities around MI to offer a different packaging of our programs, developing incubator farms around MI, and partnering with universities abroad to develop Study Abroad options for our students and international students. In addition we will continue to seek partners with congruent agendas for research at the SOF. For all of the above listed opportunities, we have begun partnerships with various organizations to explore development of these programs when the time is right for us and for them.

The most critical aspect of the new opportunities is not that we need to seek them out. Instead we need to have a clear mechanism for filtering the best options that keep the focus on the mission and goals and allows us to maintain successful, transformational programming at the SOF. It is of utmost importance that educational programs and the living, learning, place-based laboratory that is the SOF remains the foundation of what we are about and what we do. It is from this foundation that is a working educational farm and living laboratory that the SOF is able to base all current and future endeavors.

Opportunities being discussed with partners or potential partners include:

1. Extension of year-round farming and passive solar greenhouse technology with Greening of Detroit and the Fair Food Foundation of Ann Arbor.
2. New programming, affiliate sites in partnership with the MSU IAT at locations or community colleges in Detroit, Flint, Bay Mills, Grand Rapids, and Traverse City.
3. Potential development of incubator farms in partnership with the Grant Traverse Land Conservancy, Traverse City Commons and Ann Arbor Township.
4. Development of an international network of educational farms in collaboration with EARTH University and in partnership with MSU IIA.
5. Development of new research projects focused on Yakeley Dining Hall local food impact (Thorp, Kaplowitz), organic animal husbandry (Siegford, Grieshop, Rozeboom, Thorp), and development of a Carbon Neutral Farm Plan (Skole)

A key strategic partnership for development in 2009 is found amid the overlapping goals of the SOF, the RISE Program, the newly formed Sustainability Specialization, the Office for Campus Sustainability and the SAFS Specialization. We can envision the SOF serving as a hub, link or “practice field” for transformative undergraduate learning and co-curricular experiences for these programs. In addition we see great promise in advancing the discussion for a sustainable living learning community on MSU’s campus. The RISE Program and the Charles Drew Science Scholars have initiated discussion with MSU Housing and Food Services and Residential Life and the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education to begin participation in the planning process for a future sustainability “neighborhood” in the Brody Complex. We anticipate that the SOF and the Sustainability Specialization will enter into this process in 2009.

5.5 SOF Strategic Priority Objectives

As a result of the strategic planning process we have identified new priorities in each of our three core functional areas: educational programming, outreach; and research, and one new strategic priority area, the development of international partnerships. Below are listed new priorities associated with each key area.

1. Educational Programming
 - a. Commitment to offering Organic Farming Certificate both in a full for-credit program through IAT and to begin offering parts of the program in both for-credit and non-credit modules.
 - b. Offer new packaging of OFCP curriculum to our affiliate off-campus sites via web and incubator farm/urban agriculture sites.
2. Extension/Outreach
 - a. Increased passive solar greenhouse and season extension technical support and workshops across the state and mid-west with an emphasis on new farmer training, jobs and economic development.
 - b. Work with MSUE and possibly CANR Agriculture Product Center to develop a train-the-trainer program dealing with passive solar greenhouse and general organic farming content expertise.
 - c. Partner with Greening of Detroit on development of the Eastern Market Entrepreneurial Market Garden Training Center.
3. Research
 - a. Initiated for fall 2008 semester: In collaboration with RISE and MSU Mott Group, Yakeley Hall salad greens study for student perceptions, yield data, mechanical harvesting and opening MSU to local farmers.
 - b. In planning and discussion process: Collaboration with ANS on pastured pork production and organic animal agriculture practices, Economic analysis of SOF profitability.
 - c. Future: Collaboration with Department of CSS to explore greater organic field crop production at the SOF or other teaching site.
4. International
 - a. Development of EARTH University partnership
 - b. Collaborate by providing TIES- Mexico Universities internships at SOF
 - c. Future: Explore partnerships with Institute of International Agriculture and others

Listed in the table below for each of the new priorities are the corresponding “strategic actions” to carry them out.

5.6 Key Strategic Actions to Achieve the Priority Objectives

Priority Topics	New Priority Objectives	Early Strategic Actions
<p>Educational Programming</p>	<p>a. Commitment to offering Organic Farming Certificate both in full for-credit program through IAT and begin to offer component parts of the program both as for-credit and non-credit offerings. Continue transition to a “learning paradigm” based instructional model.</p> <p>b. Offer new OFCP off-campus programming to affiliate sites via web and incubator farm and urban agriculture sites. Sites selected based on locations where PSGH outreach has already established strong working relationships over the past two to three years.</p>	<p>Corie Pierce and Laurie Thorp are taking the lead on this project - curriculum review meetings, feedback from students, workshops with all instructors, additional program development</p> <p>Corie Pierce and Laurie Thorp will begin work with potential partners in key identified areas - Detroit, Flint, Bay Mills, Traverse City and Grand Rapids. IAT will be involved in constructing formal partnerships</p>
<p>Extension /Outreach</p>	<p>a. Increased PSGH and season extension technical support and workshops across the state and mid-west to support development of new farmers.</p> <p>b. Work with MSUE to develop a train-the-trainer program dealing with PSGH and general organic content expertise to support new farmer and urban agriculture training.</p> <p>c. Assist Greening of Detroit with development of year-round market garden at the Eastern Market site and development of entrepreneurial small-scale farming program.</p>	<p>John Biernbaum and Adam Montri will provide leadership for these extension programs</p> <p>John Biernbaum will meet with Tom Coon to discuss options and formalize partnership. Relevant NC-SARE PDP “train the trainer” proposal is pending</p> <p>John Biernbaum as lead and will eventually involve the SOF management team.</p>
<p>Research</p>	<p>a. Continue on-going; organic vegetable transplant production methods with Mathieu Ngoaujio and AJ Nair (PhD candidate) in Horticulture.</p> <p>b. Fall 2008; Yakeley greens impact and yield data</p> <p>c. Future: Collaboration with CSS to explore greater organic field crop production</p> <p>d. In discussion and development phase: Collaboration with ANS on pastured pork production and organic animal agriculture practices</p>	<p>John Biernbaum has prior research in this area and has been on this project since 2007.</p> <p>Laurie Thorp and Adam Montri are leading - execute schedule for build and seeding, meetings with partners (HFS, Mike Hamm, ect), set up research projects. Jeremy Moghtader to take lead - next meeting with Jim Kells, work with HRT Chair to gain additional land.</p> <p>Laurie Thorp to take lead - next meeting with Matt Grieshop, and HRT Chair.</p>

<p>International</p>	<p>a. EARTH University and SOF student internship exchange and multi-university study abroad teaching program.</p> <p>b. TIES Mexican exchange practicum.</p> <p>c. Future: Explore partnerships with IIA and others regarding an international network of teaching farms and possible study abroad or internship partnerships</p>	<p>John Biernbaum to take lead – see detailed report submitted by JB to CANR for next steps.</p> <p>John Biernbaum and Corie Pierce to take lead - host students summer 2008, assess how first year goes, make plans for 2009</p> <p>Develop network of teaching farms; explore IIA new study abroad capacities.</p>
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5.7 Developing New and Stronger Partnerships

The SOF currently has working relationships around shared outcomes with several groups and organizations both on and off campus as detailed in section 3.3 Nature and Strength of SOF Cooperative Relations. In order to develop new and stronger partnerships, the SOF must create both appropriate external and internal networks or structures for the engagement of partners. Some of these may involve structures related to administrative and academic home as well as SOF internal organizational structure and will be detailed in 5.10 and 5.11 respectively. The SOF will use the steering team and its proposed advisory board to network with organizations both inside and outside of the university and identify congruent purposes and agendas in which coordinated or partnered mutually-supportive actions and outcomes exist.

In addition to regular meetings with partner groups, SOF will create an annual report as well as quarterly electronic newsletters to inform partners and others of our ongoing programming as well as opportunities for future development. Annual report and newsletters will be distributed across the university as well as to outside organizations. These mechanisms will enhance communication and marketing and allow the SOF to achieve stronger more sustainable outcomes. Partners will benefit from possible enhancements in external communications.

5.8 Engaging Clients, Partners and Stakeholders in Programs and Their Support

The SOF will continue to value and seek input from its clients, partners and stakeholders as we work with them to improve our current programming and develop new programming. We will use evaluative tools to continually assess programming and partnerships focusing on increasing the efficacy, efficiency and sustainability of programs for our desired outcomes.

5.9 SOF and University Development Strategy for Enhanced Support

Currently the SOF has not formalized a way for visitors and private, corporate, and other donors to easily contribute to the farm. With several thousand visitors per year, the SOF is poised to be a place that captures donation dollars and alumni contributions. The SOF is working with the CANR Development Office to set up an endowment and another account for donors to contribute directly to the SOF operations. An account is already in place for an endowment to support OFCP students and student programs.

The SOF is in the process of designing a donation pamphlet, formalizing a fee structure for tours, and a simple system to collect cash donations at the farm. Ongoing, the SOF will regularly be in contact with the CANR Development office to provide names of potential donors, alums, and other interested parties. The main contact in the Development Office is Jackson Kayguri .

5.10 Administrative and Academic home for SOF and its Programs

Through the interviews, surveys, and work sessions the concept of the SOF as an entity beyond the scope of any single discipline or department was reinforced. The SOF engages students from across the university in transformative place-based educational experiences and is inherently interdisciplinary. This interdisciplinary or trans-disciplinary context is in fact core to the transformative nature of the place and the programs. Neither the Steering Team or our stakeholders wish the SOF to be limited to horticultural crops. We would like to address broader food systems issues including the social and pedagogical dimensions. It is recognized that the fabric of this type of transformative experience is rooted in skills related to disciplines from across several departments and colleges. Specifically the current SOF Steering Team is interested in forming partnerships with faculty in the following CANR departments:

- Community, Agriculture, and Recreation Resource Studies
- Animal Science
- Crop and Soil Sciences
- Forestry
- Entomology
- Plant Pathology
- Food Science and Human Nutrition
- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Economics

Based on discussion to date with the CANR and Horticulture Department the current plan is to identify the SOF as a program of CANR and Horticulture as well as possibly other departments, that is housed in the Horticulture Department. The Horticulture Department has indicated the desire to continue to be the academic home for and handle financial records for the SOF. The department faculty have not yet had the opportunity to consider SOF intentions to increase the cross disciplinary nature of the program and the desire to expand programs at the HTRC.

5.11 Internal SOF Organization, Management and Operating Relationships for the Future (with flexibility and resilience)

The current six person steering team is a mix of faculty and staff. Biernbaum has been responsible for season extension technology and applications, budgets, grant management, facilities, position management, and course and program approval for the OFCP. Thorp has co-authored key funding proposals and provided essential expertise for expanding and improving the quality of the educational experiences and student engagement at the SOF as well as leadership for new project areas including poultry and honey bees. Two academic teaching specialists (Moghtader and Pierce) coordinate the OFCP and the Farm programs, teach core OFCP courses, and significantly contribute to organizational and programming development and management. In addition, an academic outreach specialist (Montri) who manages hoop house outreach and workshops, and an assistant farm manager (Becker) who is responsible for day to day production operations at the farm) participate in some aspects of the management team.

A current weakness of the SOF as identified by the SOF Steering Team, is the need to clearly identify the responsibilities of the SOF positions and the Steering Team operation to allow for efficient program, project, and organizational management, decision making, accountability, coordination and networking. In order to become a more effective and efficient organization we must either refine and improve the current structure or move to establish a new organizational structure that allows for the evolving-growing roles/responsibilities of the academic specialists, clarity of roles, leadership, and responsibilities. The improved or new structure must also allow the SOF to bring into the fold additional key faculty who wish to contribute to the support and direction of the SOF. Currently there is not a good mechanism for these supporters to play an active and engaged roll in the SOF. Finally, the organizational structure must provide stability to the organization, allowing for program growth and turn over in faculty and staff. The Steering Team is committed to an organizational structure that is not dependent on any particular person for its functioning. The improved or new structure and clarity of operation protocols will help us address the growth and evolution that occurs with newer organizations and set us on stable footing for engaging a broader range of partners in a more sustainable and efficient manner.

One option is to take the current shared-leadership approach currently built around four core coordination positions and improve it. Essential changes as previously outlined include 1) clearly articulated and documented position responsibilities, 2) decision-making protocols, and 3) a structure and mechanism that makes it easy for additional faculty or staff to participate either in a core coordination position, as an advisor, or in some other role. Use of the facilities at the Horticulture Teaching and Research Center would be facilitated if one faculty member of the shared leadership team was from the Horticulture Department. A mechanism like the advisory board as previously proposed could be defined to work with the shared-leadership team.

A second option proposed for consideration is the development of a new organizational structure more typical of both non-and for- profit organizations where paid staff would be responsible for operations, management and direction of the organization and programs while working with an active, involved, empowered and accountable advisory board who provide oversight, support and input as outlined below.

Advisory Board

Who: Group of key non paid/(not compensated from SOF funds) faculty or staff advisors from around the university as well as some key external stakeholders as appropriate. Current expectation is for a small group of four to six.

Role: Provide networking, resources, capacity building, strategic planning and development input for the SOF. Meet regularly with the Coordinator(s) and Program Managers to discuss these matters and make decisions effecting the broader policies, governance and development of the organization, but not operational or management decisions, which are made by paid staff (Coordinator(s), Program Managers and their staff). Serve as resource persons for specific projects or programs. Support and protect the integrity and sustainability of the SOF at all times.

Paid Staff

Coordinator(s): responsible for overseeing operations of the organization and for providing leadership and direction including management of organizational budget, coordination SOF programs and program managers, partnerships and collaborations, hiring of program managers with input from program staff and advisory board. Meet regularly with the Advisory Board on issues of organizational policy, governance and development.

Program Managers: responsible for program development, budgets and implementation including supervision and hiring of program staff with input from Coordinator(s) and student workers, and handling of all program level decisions in the context of the broader policies of the organization as laid out by the director(s) and the advisory board.

Program Staff: responsible for implementation of program objectives as laid out by program manager including supervision of student employees and volunteers.

This structure could allow for greater participation by key supporters as well as clarity of leadership and responsibility within the organization resulting in a more effective and efficient SOF which can grow and be sustained well into the future.

5.12 Revisiting the Strategic Issues

Throughout development of this strategic plan (particularly sections 5.1-5.11) we have been mindful of the eight strategic issues facing SOF in the next three to five years (see Section 4.8). The new vision and mission, the array of specific priorities goals, and the many other planned explorations and actions will help SOF in coping with and resolving the eight issues. These issues will be front and center in all assessments of SOF progress.

6.0 Implementing and Adjusting the Strategic Plan over Time

We are deeply committed to the implementation of our strategic plan and look forward to conversation and feedback from key administrators and stakeholders once disseminated. As a first step we would like to request regular meetings with CANR Associate Deans Fear, Brandenburg and Foster and the Horticulture Department Chairperson in order to seek guidance on how to proceed. We are also committed to continual monitoring of our progress and see this plan as a dynamic document which will serve as a guide and touchstone to our core. To ensure that the plan remains dynamic, the Steering Team will revisit the plan at least once each year to assess progress against the plan and to see if this three to five year plan warrants some adjustment.

7.0 What We Need to Move Forward

1. A recurring base allocation for the IAT OFCP coordinator and instructors (1.5 to 2.0 FTE) and other supporting personnel as requested at the start of the strategic planning process (Summer 2007) and more specifically in February, 2008.
2. Infrastructure improvements: toilets, classroom space, barn for storage and office.
3. Discussion with Horticulture Department regarding development of a cross disciplinary program and access to additional land.
4. Formalize partnerships identified in Key Strategic Objectives (Sec. 5.4).
5. Formalize SOF management and leadership organizational structure.
6. Resources to advance external communications.

8.0 Appendix

Appendix A. SOF: Five Years of Growth

Appendix B. Survey data open ended question responses

Appendix C. SOF Current and Proposed Budgets from farm production activities.

Appendix D. Core Roles, Functions, Strategic Priorities and Actions

Appendix E. Strategic Planning Partners and Invited Participants

Appendix A. Five Years of Growth (narrative from SP Work Session) Student Organic Farm – Five Years of Growth

Introduction

Our purpose is to introduce the Student Organic Farm by sharing our personal growth and transformations that occurred during the growth of the farm.

John Biernbaum - The SOF is rooted in research.

Remember sabbaticals? I had one once, in 1994. It helped foster a personal awakening to a wide range of opportunities. Following the sabbatical, organic edible flowers led to meeting Susan Smalley and Dick Harwood, traveling to the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference and a new CRIS project with a focus on Organic Greenhouse Crop Production to Support Small Scale Organic Farms. Thanks to Susan I became involved in the Michigan Sustainable Agriculture Network student group. All of these things were parts of a transition from floriculture to food and soil chemistry to soil biology and quality.

With Susan Smalley's guidance, the MSAN student group, a combination of graduate and undergraduate students with a paid coordinator, accomplished several semesters of stimulating "for credit" sustainable agriculture seminar classes, a very successful sustainable agriculture research symposium with Wes Jackson as a key note speaker, and many great field trips including Bell's Brewery and an overnight camping trip to farms in the Traverse City area. In April 1999, nine years plus or minus a week of today, Ron Whitmore arranged a meeting of the group to determine interest in starting a student farm somewhere on campus. The meeting was well attended, with at least 15 undergraduate and graduate students, staff and faculty present. Laura Delind was there, and she told me about two books I should read, *Reclaiming the Commons* and *Farms of the Future*. Eventually it was the stories told in those two books that provided the vision for the SOF.

There were more several more meetings about a student farm. The MSAN student group spun off a new student group called the Student Organic Farm Initiative or SOFI with the help of Seth Murray and Lynn Rhodes. Most of the students were in both student groups.

My research grew from organic edible flowers to organic transplants to organic salad greens. Both the transplants and salad greens required compost which was not available. The new greenhouses built at the Horticulture Farm provided space for the first lettuce/salad greens production in a heated greenhouse. The next step was unheated greenhouses and a proposal submitted to the MSU Sustainable Agriculture internal grant program in January 2001 that laid the groundwork for the first two hoopouses at what would become the site of the Student Organic Farm.

It was the combination of the research to demonstrate the potential of year round local food with ideas about a student farm that helped make the difference. The Kellogg Foundation asked us to combine a research proposal with a student farm proposal. It was the same combination of teaching farming and sustainable agriculture during the academic year by using hoopouses and

a 48 week CSA that was the basis of the proposal to the USDA Higher Education Challenge Grant.

The edible flower, organic transplant and season extension research together with compost trials were a foundation for the transition to organic and the start up of the organic farm and eventually the classes that followed.

A personal goal for me was to help foster a place where research, outreach, teaching and service could be integrated in a productive way. I will leave it to my colleagues to tell the other pieces of the story.

Adam Montri – Student Transformation

Like all good liberal arts undergraduates who don't enter into education, I had one of two options a few years after graduating. The first was to continue to wait tables and bartend, the second was to return for another degree. Thanks to a good friend who graduated from MSU's Department of Horticulture I saw that agriculture was an actual viable career choice, not just something that you did in the summer around the house, when you went to grandma's, or during that annual trip Fall trip to the orchard for cider, donuts, and, oh yeah, apples. So in the Fall of 2002 I re-entered MSU to pursue Landscape Architecture.

All Horticulture undergraduates are required to take HRT 221: Greenhouse Structures and Management with John Biernbaum. The Fall of 2002 happened to be the time when the second phase of building unheated greenhouses at the Student Organic Farm was happening. John had said in passing one day in class that if anyone was interested in learning how to build greenhouses it was happening at the Student Organic Farm. Over the next 10 weekends a group of students, most of who had never built much of anything and very few of us who had ever used a power tool (me included), built three structures in sun, rain, sleet, and cold. We were all the better for it.

But there was no satori, no epiphany, and no wake up one day to find everything around me had changed and that I was no longer pursuing Landscape Architecture. It was more subtle than that, less fairy tale. I enrolled in a selected topics course called "What is a CSA?" where guest speakers like Laura Delind, Susan Houghton, and others engaged in CSAs around the state, shared with us students what CSA was, how it functioned, and how it could work at the SOF. Out of this course came the schedules for what would be planted and distributed that first Spring of 2003 at the SOF CSA.

Were there hard days? Of course there were. Were the days where I didn't want to get out of bed and go out to that farm on College Road? Sure. But there was also something that said "Do it." And we all did.

After that first season of the CSA I went off to Penn State to pursue a Master's in Horticulture at a research site with 36 unheated greenhouses. I think John and I knew that I would be coming back to MSU sometime in the future. In the Summer of 2006 we found the right fit, the right grant, and the right position for me to return.

On many days when I am at the SOF I think of my dad. He grew up on a multi-hundred acre potato farm in Monroe County selling to Better Made and Frito Lay out of Detroit. He's got the stories everyone that was farming at that time has—sleeping in the fields all summer and missing almost every day of school in the Fall to help with harvest.

Like most people in his generation my dad worked hard to get off the farm. He went to night classes while he and my mom raised three boys, spent years in middle management, and ultimately became an automotive executive. You could imagine his surprise when I called him one night in the Fall of 2002 to tell him how I spent my day. After all that he did and all that he worked for to be able to provide something that he didn't have—a life off the farm and away from the drudgery of manual labor—he couldn't have been more proud that his son had seen the sun go down while digging, crating, and hauling potatoes out of the field.

Laurie Thorp, Faculty Transformation

2002 was my first year back at MSU. A freshly minted 40-something PhD, pulled home by the death of my father and searching for a place to call home, a place to truly inhabit. I was also seeking a community of practice, my head still swimming with the scholarship of teaching and learning, critical pedagogy, place-based curriculum, food and culture I was ready to stretch these muscles at my new institution.

That same year I was invited to attend the first WK Kellogg Foundation Food and Society Conference along with several energetic students from the Bailey Scholars Program. 2 of these students—Lynn Rhodes (an undergraduate in Horticulture) and Seth Murray, (an undergraduate Crops Soil Sciences) had a vision for MSU and CANR. They were dissatisfied with both the content and pedagogy of many of their courses. Their dream along with a cadre of other visionary undergraduates was nothing short of a paradigm shift for the college, they wanted to secure a place for experiential learning with the focus on small scale organic agriculture. At the FAS conference Seth and Lynn were able to meet with program directors from WKKF and talk about their vision. They were encouraged by Oran Hesterman to submit a concept letter to the foundation for the first round of FAS funding. I can still see Seth sitting next to me in the passenger's seat pounding out ideas on his laptop during the long ride home from Pittsburgh. Later that week Seth and Lynn sat at my kitchen table wordsmithing their concept letter to the foundation. A full proposal eventually went forward and was funded for 95K. I always tell a version of this story every time I bring new undergraduates to the farm...you see, I tell them, you can make a difference, never, never underestimate the power you hold

With this funding the vision began to take shape and grow. We were able to hire two amazing young women to manage the farm: Michelle Ferrarese and Emily Reardon. We are forever indebted to these strong smart women for their tireless energy and leadership those first two years at the farm. Emily rallied the troops with her songs and positive outlook and Michelle with her zen-like calm and patience. Somewhere along the way that year, I realized I was finally home. I had found my community of practice.

Jeremy Moghtader – Living out a Dream

Growing up spending a lot of time at my grandparents farm a ½ hr from here in Charlotte MI, turned out to be deeply impactful in my life in a way I could never have imagined at the time. After taking courses in organic farming at Evergreen State Collage and working on a handful of organic farms, I decided to go to graduate school to study agro-ecology at the University of MI school of Natural Resources and Environment. While there I became heavily involved in local food systems-work, helping form what is now the Food System Economic Partnership, where I currently serve as the Farm to School Committee chair. I also co-founded an educational non-profit, The Agrarian Adventure, that connects youth, food, and farming and continue to serve on its board of directors. So this work is my passion and my life and when after finishing graduate school this opportunity to run a student organic farm at MSU right here in my beloved state of MI arose, I could not believe it. As I said in my interview running an educational farm had become a dream of mine that I thought might take a lifetime to achieve. But what I found at the SOF in the summer of 2004 was a vibrant amazing place, with incredibly committed students, faculty and staff who were growing local organic food year-round in Michigan, engaging students from across campus in farming and operating an incredible CSA program. I also saw amazing potential for expanding the educational offerings to include formal courses in organic farming and to increase the depth of the learning experiences students were having at the farm.

The farm has been constantly growing since it started with no two years the same so when I arrived the farm was also in transition. The group of undergraduate students who had started growing that first season and helped create the farm from the ground up had already graduated and many of the next group who new them directly were also graduating... so in my first month along with the original farm manager we hired a new group of students for whom the SOF was an something that already existed, an amazing and captivating place to work and learn, but not something they created. We worked to make sure that as we grew and changed these new students developed a strong sense of ownership and care for the SOF, its land and people. The farm was also seeing a shift as I became the first non-student farm manager. One time plans to have graduate students cycling though as farm managers, gave way to realizations that stability at the farm manager level was needed for us to sustain and grow our efforts. In that first year I was here we made some major decisions, some more lasting than others, but all that would shape to course of where we are today...

We decided not to grow the CSA larger, but instead to focus on developing our educational offerings. We moved forward on creating an organic farming program in IAT which would use the farm as its central platform for learning. We experimented with a work requirement for CSA out at the farm. We started a CORE group of CSA members to help guild the CSA and build community. With all this planned growth and activity we had outgrown our casual organizational structure and with my background in non-profits I began to push our team to work out an organizational and decision making structure for the group that would take into account our stakeholders and make our efforts more effective and efficient. This early work helped lay the foundation for the work we are doing here today.

As we grew, we strived to weave together the different and changing aspects that all made up the student organic farm: Research, Food Production, Undergraduate Engagement and Ownership,

Outreach, and Teaching and to do so in a way that was both respectful of everyone involved past and present and moved us forward toward our fuller potential.

Tomm Becker – From Student to Manager or Farmer?

When I first came to the farm in the summer of 2004 it was because I wanted a job, and I was just beginning to learn the joy of growing food. I was studying English at MSU and saw farm labor as a good way to learn something interesting and work outside, which I have always loved. I was soon drawn in by the community of the SOF, and with the responsibilities that Michelle entrusted to me, I very quickly began to take ownership of the farm as something I could invest myself in with certainty that dividends would be returned. Since then, my role has changed a lot. After some time off post-graduation, I was hired on as assistant farm manager. I have the amazing opportunity to be instrumental in an organization that I value deeply. That's something remarkable about the SOF; for a motivated student or worker the opportunities for personal growth here are extraordinary. It's the kind of place that puts knowledge right into your hands where you can really learn what to do with it.

Since I've been at the farm, so much has changed! Even in the past year we've grown so much. We're now fully into our second year teaching and training through the Organic Farming Certificate Program, and have been investing a lot of energy in developing and refining our curriculum to optimize the experiential learning environment at the farm.

We continue to offer our seasonal weekly on-campus farmstand to make our produce available to more at MSU and in our community and to teach our students another viable direct marketing strategy.

We recently entered into an agreement with the Landon dining services to supply baby leaf salad mix at the dining hall, and are planning on adding another entire hoophouse at the SOF to begin to accommodate these students' demand for fresh local produce. We're very interested in continuing this partnership while helping to form connections between Landon and other local farms.

We continue to accommodate tours for MSU classes, area schools, community groups, farmers, and all those interested in learning about organic farming or season extension.

We are pleased as well, of course, to work with many wonderful volunteers who give of their time to help at the farm because they want to learn about the growing of food, or to obtain the skills of farming or horticulture, or simply because they like to work outside with plants and soil.

In addition, we remain committed to season extension outreach, and have built many passive solar greenhouses around Michigan and provide technical support for over 70 farms with passive hoophouses. We are expanding Michigan's capacity to produce food for itself by encouraging and enabling farmers to grow and supply food year-round. All this amounts to a very complex organization undertaking a huge amount of valuable work in sustainable agriculture. It amazes me how much has grown at the farm, and in me, since the I met Michelle on that hot summer say in 2004.

Tim Heuer – Student Transformation and Leadership (2005)

In 2005, I was wandering through the Plant and Soil Sciences Building on Campus and I stopped for a moment to read a flyer that was posted on the wall. As with most flyers or posters that people are still talking about years later, this one would prove fateful. The ad was for a newly offered class on the Principles of Organic Farming, and I stood there thinking about the possibilities of such a course for a long time. In what was to become a “dry run” of sorts for the basis of the Organic Farming Certificate Program, three other students and myself headed out to the SOF once a week and fully submerged ourselves in the experiential learning that was happening there. The class was co-taught by John Biernbaum and Jeremy Moghtader, and through four months of Tuesdays in the classroom, Thursdays on the Farm, and page after page of journal entries with too many exclamation points to count, us students became increasingly attached to not only what we were learning, but also the ways in which we were doing it. Meanwhile, John and Jeremy were observing the successes and working through the challenges with the design of a more comprehensive practicum in mind. Those four original students were so enthralled by the experience that we all ended up spending the better part of the remainder of our time at MSU with a deep connection to the Student Organic Farm.

Holly – Finding a home.

I walked onto the Student Organic Farm in the fall of 2005. I spent the grey fall morning harvesting flint corn in the South Field. I loved unwrapping the ears of corn, behind each husk was a surprise. I knew that I would be back, that there were so many surprises I had yet to experience. Ever since my first visit to the farm, I felt connected to both the place and the people, like I had found my niche. Being a part of the farm has taught me so much during my time at MSU and has provided me with a safe place to grow and learn and make mistakes. Places like this are invaluable in big university systems.

In 2004, with the help of coordinator Jeremy Moghtader and a passionate fisheries and wildlife student named Jay Tomczak, the financial support of Mike Hamm, as well as some committed undergrads and faculty, the student group EFFS was formed. Ecological Food and Farm is dedicated to creating opportunities for students to participate in sustainable agriculture and food systems activities link the farm community to the student community on campus. Through various events, such as workshops, guest speakers, farm visits and volunteer days, EFFS works to educate its members on issues in sustainable agriculture, all while building a strong network of students who are dedicated to healthy food systems. Currently we are working with the student housing co-op system to implement gardens at the houses so they can grow their own food.

One of our most successful projects as a group is the creation of the on campus farm stand. EFFS club volunteers and Student Organic Farmers began selling produce at an on campus farm stand in fall of 2006. Now a very important part of the farm, the farm stand has been a great success for student shoppers and student farmers alike.

Some people wonder why we call ourselves EFFS. The idea for the group name came from the agrarian vision of John Biernbaum,

Friends and Families using Facts and Feelings to Physically, Faithfully and Fearlessly Farm Fields, Forests and Front yards for Food, Feed, Fiber, Fuel, Flowers, Fertility, Fun, Freedom, and the Future.

Corie Pierce, Another Perfect Fit

I knew when I was 16 that I wanted to teach farming – to help create a place that grew lots of food, fostered curiosity and care and that at the center of the farm, people learned about farming. During high school and college, I worked on a vibrant, successful, family run vegetable farm and I became forever connected to the food system, or more specifically the healthy, local, organic food system. In my early career in business and education, I kept the goal of wanting to run a teaching farm alive.

The summer of 2005, I returned to working on a farm in California and met John B. and learned about what MSU was working towards. Needless-to-say, it peaked my interest. A few months later I came across a posting announcing a job at the SOF for a co-farm manager and teacher position - I couldn't have imagined a more perfect job. I was stunningly surprised and extremely excited. After getting the job and with barely a speck of hesitation, I came to a foreign place to help design, develop, coordinate, recruit for, promote, launch, and refine a farming program. And so the Organic Farming Certificate Program was launched...

Now in year two, with double the number of students from year one, we are teaching organic farming to 19 new AgTech students. Additionally, 20+ undergraduates take the courses for their degrees. The SOF as we knew it before January 2006, remains intact and improved, if not jostled around a bit, but now we have students devoting a year of their life to learning how to become organic farmers.

The Program is not just a pile of courses and practicum. It is 44 credits worth, but it is a learning community, based around managing a working organic vegetable, fruit, flower, and herb farm. It offers students a year to connect to a place and to a peer group, to take ownership of their own learning, to learn from each other, from us, from other farmers around Michigan, and from the land. In this year they are acting on a calling they have to learn to grow food organically, in accordance with nature's laws, and while maintaining the principles of health (of themselves and the land), ecology, fairness and care.

And so we charge forward, teaching and reflecting, and improving the program. We feel the pressure to train 200 new farmers each year, but also know that in these first critical years we must give each student the care and nurturing they need to be a successful new farmer. We urgently feel the gap that has widened between the old-timers who know how to farm because it is in their blood and the vast majority of us now who are relearning the craft and are working against time to regain farming knowledge.

Final Wrap Up

So here we are today. Hopefully you have a more complete picture of the farm – who we are made up of, where we have been, what the farm looks like, and where we are headed.

Now we call upon all of you to help us chart our course. The time is right here in Michigan. MSU, the Student Organic Farm, and all of us doing work in local food systems have a chance to work together and make a huge, positive impact on agriculture and Michigan.

As an organization, our commitment to all of you is to train the next generation of organic farmers for MI and for our region and to bring innovative new technologies to existing farmers with the overall goal of increasing the economic viability of small-scale, organic farming.

Beyond that, the sky is the limit.

Today we will hear from various people who have interacted with the farm to help paint a broader picture of what we do and can do. We will also break into small groups to do some brainstorming and to get your ideas.

For these two work - days we ask you to be creative, innovative and participatory. We ask that you select to go to break out groups that are applicable to what you have expertise on and where you can contribute most.

The real work for all of us comes after these two days – when we process all of the ideas and proposals you have given us. One major challenge for us will be to continue to engage this community and work together. We need you to take ownership in your partnership with us.

The End

Appendix B-Data from Stakeholder Survey

MSU-SOF Stakeholder Survey Open Ended Questions

Question 4b. Additional Comments (16)

1. The student O farm is just that; a student O farm. That should be the first and most important function for the farm...
2. You switched direction for the options -- very confusing!
3. It is very important that we provide urban agriculture teaching and outreach; Community and school garden teaching are very important for our communities;
4. Most everything you list is worthy.
5. I feel it is important to ensure any new programs fully integrate teaching and research. This will make sure the overall program continues to align with the overall mission of the University. Will help ensure the long-term success of the SOF.
6. MSU is on the map as one of the few land-grant universities offering meaningful organic ag education and outreach. Organics is the fastest growing sector of the food industry.
7. I believe they are all important to the success of the student, just some more than others
8. If I understood correctly I tried to answer the previous two questions from my perspective specifically not thinking about SOF as a whole.
9. There are few places one can conduct research ON CAMPUS and it would be ideal for a grad or upperclass student to be able to do a research on farm project on campus
10. I do not think that SOF should model itself after extension or do the things that extension is now doing. Rather, SOF should play to its people and place-based strengths.
11. The SOF has been very helpful in teaching the hoopous concepts developed through research at the SOF. The information is very valuable. This research has also allowed MSU to reach audeinces that MSU never reaches through its traditionalagricultural programs
12. just because things are less important to me or my "unit" doesn't mean they shouldn't be accorded more weight given your onsite particulars.
13. MSU organic production research is very important, but not necessarily on SOF land. The U. should dedicate additional crop land for organic production research.
14. I would love the opportunity to collaborate and learn from other farm around michigan. Especially since i am a new farmer myself.
15. Youth Farm Styand Project and SOF could be, and are already, important partners in outreach with lowincome and minority populations, and urban agriculture applications.
16. I don't think you guys have the capacity to expand to animal husbandry. I think teaching and outreach are critical, but it's too easy to overextend and hard choices need to be made. Other people do research on teaching methods - let them and then learn from them, it's not your area of expertise. Non-credit course options and course delivery options could help your bottom line - but might be more than you can handle now; be careful. Residential option would be cool, but again - do you have the capacity to even dream about it?

Question 5 Potential New Functions in next 3-5 yrs (44)

1. I'd like to see an internship program from the MSU Student O system to the outlying farms that MSU has. We could start with Clarksville this summer...!!! O Apple project...
2. assessment of learning outcomes across undergrad, grad, certificate and outreach functions. need to demonstrate educational "worth" to better foster support from MSU
3. More student-to-student interaction. From my experience at the SOF there is a great emphasis on production and income-generation. I understand the need for money and its purposes at the SOF but they should NEVER overshadow the opportunities of reaching out to students that are committed and want to learn on a limited time frame. Possibly offer a weekly campus club membership or something similar in which devoted individuals may learn, possibly from the current farm crew at the SOF... therefore farm income won't be spent.
4. Continue season extension (limited energy input) research and extension.
5. I would to think about educating kids about the environmental importance of how our food is grown and distributed.
6. Research, teaching and outreach on small scale, organic farming businesses
7. We should provide, as an institution, online or video courses as access options; there could be more outreach to the reest of the state of Michigan for new farmer training and teaching farms such as in Saginaw which is a very soil rich agricultural valley,
8. Hands on learning opportunities as well as research support for small diversified agricultural operations
9. Functional integration of plant/animal systems Redesign of CSA Develop tax incentives for CSA Rotational grazing systems
10. I hope the student farm will build an enthusiasm and knowledge base for organic farming and eating organic food. Outreach and serving as a demo for organic methods is important.
11. A residential option, perhaps. continued expansion of the certificate program. continuing outreach and research.
12. Increased educational programs for our Michigan agricultural community.
13. Integrated into teaching programs and curriculum at the University.
14. Education and learning to the MSU community and expansion of CSA program with priority on students.
15. more fruit trials studies on preservation options
16. The focus should be on the passive solar greenhouse program. Consumers are interested in local production, not necessarily organic. Continued work on the economics of this production, especially as it relates to extending the season, will be important.
17. Closer connection with the 4-H Children's Gardens and outreach efforts to schools and 4-H clubs across Michigan.
18. Incubator farm training. It would be excellent if MSU could help crack the nut on land access for new farmers.
19. I would like to see participation with my neighboring group (Holt Community Arts (Culture) Council, and other outside groupsas well, to provide opportunities to become a partner in cultural and "green" endeavors not limited to SOF displays (booth), tours, CSA presentations,etc. to help promote locally grown and organic items.
20. partnerships to create a comprehensive beginning farmers/urban gardeners program

21. Work with MSU's Evening College to promote SOF to greater Lansing community via personal enrichment educational programs while providing teaching opportunities for SOF staff and graduate students who desire to teach the older adult students.
22. I can see something like a master organic gardener or a scaled down certificate program being very popular and needed. It would help volunteers and staff within our program build their skills and perhaps we could partner to find funding to sponsor individuals.
23. Research methods class integrated with research on the SOF 1 credit special research project for senior student More wholistic approach to farming that includes small animals or maybe just poultry and possibly even aquaculture and integrate with veg and fruit.
24. CSA, degree programs, hands-on experience for students and community members.
25. an introduction to urban agriculture and the nature of food self reliance of ecological regions within the state a greater connection between growing methods and social and cultural issues.
26. Expand the research into urban centers so that the residents in large urban centers in Michigan can see the research and how they can benefit from it.
27. incorporating local urban youth interns
28. A residential student community on-farm, and greater knowledge of and partnership with other agriculture education and teaching farm programs in Michigan, so that there is a network to meet the various needs, skills, and financial situations of people who want to learn through experience in agriculture.
29. Greater technical assistance on hoophouse construction and management. Satellite farm sites, CSAs, and certificate programs throughout the state, linked with other institutional buyers (hospitals, schools) in those areas.
30. Breeding or trialing of seed varieties for small scale michigan organic growers. More outreach to urban ag. more fruit and nut culture
31. Experiential training
32. Selfishly speaking 1. off site educational opportunities 2. collaboration w/ and support for other agricultural activities/programming in the state of MI
33. Expand community involvement - greater access to CFA, organics in dorms, possibly partner with East Lansing Food Co-op, greater visibility of program through outreach to consumers who do not already seek out organics.
34. Continue focus on year-round production and helping others learn to do it; Continue and enlarge connections to urban ag (Detroit and Lansing and other urban areas in MI); Keep up the good work on the Cert. program!
35. develop "farmer residency" programs at quasi-public properties (e.g., the Barns property in Traverse City) Basically, the farmer residency would be an opportunity for an experienced student to take the next step in being responsible for their own farm operation without having to take the full capital plunge of buying land, equipment, etc.
36. I would like to see classes around specific aspects of the farm such as livestock, fruit/veggie production, permaculture, season extension, CSA, etc.
37. If it makes sense, I would love to see the program expand into other areas of Michigan, providing the services and learning experiences to farmers in other areas of the state that may be unable to go through the on campus program.
38. Greater integration of other forms of organic farming beyond vegetables. Increased learning opportunities for potential/new farmers

39. Looking to the future - what are the "new" issues. Being on the cutting edge has been one of the strengths, so what is on the horizon? A couple of things come to mind - food packaging safety - "e-coli" etc. And water management issues
40. It should serve as a research location- helping farmers from all backgrounds (conventional and otherwise) be more successful in the industry. This could include more outreach programs with specific crop focuses (maybe more on grains and integrated livestock). Perhaps create a more unified network of people who would like to seek alternatives to conventional methods. NOT an "organic only" club- but a network of people who can support this new trend of environmentally friendly growing. (But that's not really the job of the SOF- still it could be culminated by demonstrations at the SOF).
41. The SOF is an important learning space, where emerging organic farmers, researchers, and growers can research, outreach, and connect at. The SOF is a sort of HUB of community and organic agriculture development.
42. I believe the SOF should be a leader (opinion leader, resource leader, educational leader, etc) in the state - and the midwest - in year-round and organic and small-scale and community partnerships and all those things you do best. I'd love to see your reputation and visibility and outreach and influence grow. What you do is important and becoming more in demand. I want you-all to be instrumental in setting the direction for the solutions we all need.
43. Something that will grab non-foodies, and people that don't yet "get it." A fully funded community outreach position. This would cover schools, community gardeners, other MSU students and faculty, etc.
44. I'd like to see the SOF "mentor" area farms into year round CSA production (and have a term limit on SOF membership, to get new folks involved.)

Question 6a Strengths

1. students
2. it exists, the passion of those involved, CSA
3. Experiential learning, an almost perfect functioning farm, passive solar production
4. Staff, research base
5. Timely, important, needed
6. Talented, dedicated staff; good location
7. Outstanding students and work crew;
8. Commitment by staff, Local support, ability to work farmer to farmer, potential to tap MSU expertise or other land grants when challenges arise, ability to seek other partners
9. knowledge base and commitment of SOF's staff
10. Changing administration view of organic farming
11. run by students
12. ideas, community
13. Heart, soul, health - production!
14. Apparent strong support by MSU horticultural department
15. Experiential learning for students and overall increase in awareness of organic farming which will result in long-term support.
16. The students, advisors, and people who work the farm
17. Year round program, teaching and learning, animal husbandry
18. its wholistic and experiential

19. Hoop houses, local production
20. Location; commitment of the students involved; knowledgeable faculty and staff; narrow focus
21. Strong leadership the students look up to.
22. Learning by direct/ actual hands on experience at the SOF and with CSA
23. Great initiative and student, faculty enthusiasm and commitment
24. Knowledgeable leader and specialists; commitment to existing programs; passion for organic production and hoophouse production
25. Their product
26. strong network of motivated folks working to grow and learn about organic food production. Many resources within the SOF network i.e. CSA members with a variety of different backgrounds and skills to share
27. ON campus site for students to learn how to farm in a sustainable way
28. locally grown products that are grown with little negative environmental impact
29. Well-organized, providing valuable service to the community, meeting community demands, keeping up with ag trends by expanding scope (i.e. egg project) and offerings (i.e. ag tech certificate)
30. great leadership and skilled (if overworked) managers; dedicated students
31. fitting in to the sustainability model
32. It presents a fresh set of research information and education to audiences that have not been reached by MSU agriculture.
33. solidly grounded in the western scientific model
34. Community, Passion, Corie Pierce
35. Intelligent, caring and committed staff; experiential education
36. Availability for farm tours and an experiential learning site, CSA, hoophouse outreach
37. demonstration site, learning resource
38. fresh produce, articulate friendly students and staff, openness to teaching and learning
39. Combination of teaching, experiential training and CSA
40. 4-season harvesting, great staff, academic environment, name recognition and good will
41. excellent product, hands-on learning, commitment of all involved
42. innovation, year round production, demonstration site, certificate program, future farmers
43. Knowledge about year-round organic production and marketing. Outstanding and committed staff and faculty and students.
44. established year round production model, access to students, potential to change perception/perspective of agriculture, established certificate training program
45. An amazing group of individuals committed to furthering the local food movement. You are a creative bunch that have given new meaning to local food and the connection it brings.
46. It's innovative, it offers hands on experience and a free thinking and creative environment
47. Amazing staff, place, energy.
48. Student involvement in the management/decisions made in respect to the farm.
49. fairly experienced growers, strong leadership/passion for agriculture, good work ethic of most involved
50. Community, focus, groundedness, leadership with Corie and Jeremy, student engagement
51. MSU land grant context; excellent staff (knowledgeable, creative, energetic, committed); vision; facility

52. Large following and well known among "foodies." Physically very attractive space. Adds worthwhile programs and additions (Certificate program, permaculture plot, chickens) at a quick pace
53. knowledge, expertise, innovation

Question 6b Weaknesses

1. we may be trying too many things at one time
2. distance
3. Field teaching from individuals with a short amount of experience, most of the "experts" teach in the class but not in the field, time devoted to communication
4. don't know
5. Confusing process for making decisions; too little integration with departments beyond HRT; unclear process for becoming involved; critical need for some basic facilities -- toilets!
6. MSU, as an institution, should provide more resources for more programs;
7. limitation to scale (not scale of operation but ability to reach others, need to prioritize activities (can't be all things to all people), no stability in base funding to ensure that staff are "doing the right work at the right time"
8. unsure
9. Additional land and facilities required for expansion
10. I would think the demand might outgrow the supply
11. standing within the university
12. Probably little budget.... and it's largely an unknown jewel?
13. Lack of SOF membership participation
14. I'm not sure, yet I sense a lack of recognition from other University units when I mention SOF. Perhaps this is not fair, as the U is a big place and I would not expect everyone to recognize or know about SOF. But they should!
15. Lack of attachment to formal teaching programs in departments and therefore support from these depts
16. Quality is sometimes poor, too expensive for students, long waiting list, response time to member concerns has been slow (unless you have a close relationship with Corie)
17. distance from main campus - it should be right in the middle. people should walk by it everyday and realize that food is grown and cared for!!
18. Focused leadership
19. Location - transportation to the site; narrow focus
20. Limited support from the university.
21. Best kept secret in the area - only a few of my neighbors know about you.
22. Still not highly visible on campus--or at least discussed in departments.
23. initiating new production projects without doing business plan to look at profitability/income loss possibilities; somewhat disorganized; over committing team and burn out
24. Linkages with other MSU units
25. competing with local farmers and operating within the institution
26. Keeping up with the farmer outreach and educational programs from experiences on the farm eg csa, hoop house

27. limitations of size and resources provided at MSU
28. Not well integrated into the general CANR community.
29. the lack of long term support for its managers and mechanisms for democratic decision making
30. letting people know about them
31. It does not have the capacity to reach enough people around the state, especially in urban centers where fresh food is most needed for nutrition and economic help.
32. cultural diversity
33. Comprehensive strategy and clearly-defined roles, clear and consistent marketing, outreach, and educational tools
34. could use some areas on the farm focused on small scale production for market gardeners
35. Lack of infrastructure, need to for more mechanization of some activities, reduced space
36. beurocracy, only one location, lack of business training, young program
37. sometimes we preach to the choir - need to promote more to people who are not already our "friends"
38. more opportunities than current resources can sustain
39. Too little support from MSU, perhaps because they don't know about the strengths. Too few people giving full-time or nearly full-time attention to the farm on a daily basis, due to limited resources.
40. university beauracrcy, perceived reputation of U. in community-at-large
41. The burocracy involved with being a part of a large university that changes slowly.
42. my understanding is that it might be underfunded, which limits the services the farm can provide
43. Community Outreach (HS/Elem school, etc.), Diversity of types of farming
44. Focus could be expanded to be more "farm" enterprise oriented. other marketing options
45. a close-mindedness of concepts in the larger agricultural world, unrealistic expectations for some programs and people
46. Lack of diversity in students and staff, has many stakeholders with (at times) competing agendas, constricted by MSU hort/ag policy and priority
47. vision (too much too soon with too few resources?); insufficient university resources/ciommitment?; conflicting roles? (CSA vs research vs outreach vs education?)
48. Sometimes a little disorganized when there are things happening that do not fall directly into someone's job description (ie. when some classes take field trips)

Question 6c Opportunities

1. establishing MSU as the "go to" site for Upper Midwest Organic Education and opportunities
2. sky's the limit; small size restricts possible collaboration with campus food service??
3. More cohesion and overlap of programs (putting the community, farmers, and educators) in a closer functioning capacity
4. Increased extension and policy initiatives
5. education, outreach, entrepenuerial
6. Be one of MSU's flagship programs; lead the way for MSU organic work;

7. The Certificate program is a great opportunity;; CSAs are great and so is the U Pick 'em site
8. Partner with nontraditional entities (health care for example), be identified as an sustainable opportunity during Michigan's economic recovery discussions
9. assist with emerging farmers
10. Development of a system perspective of agriculture
11. to many to list
12. lots and lots...current organic movement and the number of people excited about it
13. Educate campus and community in a non-threatening joyous atmosphere.
14. Demonstration of practical sustainable agriculture
15. To shine more brightly by advocating more strongly in the overall University community. Make sure more folks know of the unique educational opportunities that are afforded by SOF.
16. More connection to dept teaching (curricular) programs
17. Capitalize on interest in local food among students and wider MSU community
18. helping us use food as the connector to a more sustainable future
19. Local production, hoop houses
20. Develop stronger partnerships with other campus units and organizations; meet needs of general public interested in organic gardening
21. The growing organic marketplace and the passion of young people to be part of meaningful change.
22. Most intelligent people know what is healthy for them, the opportunity is bring them to the trough!
23. Create more partnernships with traditional ag departments
24. expanding partnerships and project work in SE Michigan; increasing demand for hoophouse training and local food;
25. Offer more community programs to MSU Alumni and community members via the MSUAA Evening College. Also expand membership so more MSU staff and community members can join. MSU's Evening College publicizes courses in over 70,000 printed and mailed catalogs every year and also advertises to MSU alumni via the web. Great exposure for the SOF when offering personal enrichment courses through Evening College.
26. serving as a clearinghose of oppourtunities, volunteering, jobs, workshops realted to organic food production as well as community and school gardening in michigan
27. to collaborate with MSU ANR researchers, combine tech and degree students (build on that exchange/learning oppourtuny)
28. to further educate the public of the imprtance of sustainable agriculture
29. Capitalize on consumer demand for organic products by training future organic farming experts and provide organic products for local community.
30. increasing student involvement; increasing awareness of MSU community in the meaning of llocal and organic food production and access; increasing the amount of SOF and locally raised food in MSU dining halls; increasing the connection among soil, seed, food and culture
31. The opportunity to fit into the sustainability model
32. To reach more people with the wonderful research that it is doing.
33. long term knowledge and skills

34. To be not only the new frontier of Organic Farming Training Programs, but a real life example of a viable local organic farm system.
35. Expansion, both on-site and throughout the state; institutional buyers
36. what aren't the opportunities, the sky is the limit
37. Link production and marketing
38. innovative partnerships and collaborations, to change the face of conventional ag (returning to conventional roots pre-1950) by being located in the land-grant institute. disseminate info and ideas
39. greater partnership with other programs, campus food service and community
40. you have listed them in #4
41. The SOF could be the area's premier site for demonstration of year-round organic production and marketing (it already is among those who know, but the opportunity lies in spreading the word and building the SOF reputation among a new audience.
42. facilitate experiential learning/ training opportunities throughout the state, usher in a new generation of entrepreneurial farmers
43. On farm living/experience to find out what it means to be a farmer.
44. continued and expanded partnership opportunities and geographic expansion
45. Connecting to more young farmers in the state!
46. access to technical advice, growing organic industry, MSU's desire to appear eco-friendly or "green"
47. Continued foray into experiential learning, urban agriculture applications, outreach to minority and urban grower applications and areas of research and outreach
48. I don't know anything specific - but see answer to #5 above
49. Bringing out non-foodies. The space is so beautiful and comfortable that we could hopefully get other people caring about food that don't already.
50. See #5 above-helping other farms go year round

Question 6d Threats

1. grow too fast, or become too output oriented (sales and produce)
2. lack of funding and hard core financial support
3. Having the chickens take over :), I don't know of any threats, possibly the University's pressing for a better image, which may downplay the effectiveness of the SOF and its goals
4. State budget issues
5. don't know
6. Burn out staff; fail to match growth in program with growth in resources; inspire competition
7. We need to expand more and a few acres more with more students and volunteers would help,
8. lack of focus, being seen as not relevant in current discussions relating to the recovery of the state, resolving how they are similar or different than those in private industry doing the same work
9. funding?
10. Lack of administrative and faculty support
11. money and support

12. institutional restraints...stagnation
13. It's not a money-maker for U? Research may be the key?...
14. MSU eventual apathy
15. The mainstream University and lack of understanding of how the mission of the SOF aligns with that of the U.ty and
16. Funding, burnout
17. None that I can think of right now
18. lack of support from all areas of campus
19. ?
20. Big Agribusiness, entrenchment.
21. Chemical farming, invasive technology, imported items that may cost less, those with only goal to make wealth instead of producing healthful produce
22. declining economy; need for more staff to implement programs--where will funding come from?
23. Financial
24. ? staff burn out? always a possibility? -- insitutional and or grant support levels changing? not really sure?
25. That it competes with farmers. It does not have a stable source of funding so ends up being too much about making money and not enough about offering and creating educational opportunities
26. cost prohibitive to many people
27. Unsure.
28. getting too bureaucratic; becoming a top down institution; not involving students and others in hands on work and creative projects
29. funding
30. That the funding for the research stops. It does not use the research to reach the most denied audiences in Michigan who need food most and these people are denied fresh wholesum food.
31. lack of applicability to young minority males and under resourced.
32. Lack of University Funding
33. Threat of becoming committed to too many different projects
34. The university structure does not support it and its staff in the way it could or should
35. Big Organic,
36. Is the farm a part of CANR or connected to CANR?
37. being swallowed by the MSU behemouth, being tied to a single particular agenda, loosing funding
38. funding, space, need to ensure ongoing broad commitment so that success doesn't depend on a few strong personalities
39. do you have enough internal/administrative support?
40. The university could cut support; the rest of the Hort Farm could reclaim space (e.g., in building where CSA is held); SOF could lose organic certification if the rest of the Hort Farm expanded area of spraying pesticides.
41. isolation from the reality of small scale organic production (Univ. setting & grant-driven programs provide buffer)
42. Apparrantly the new farm bill and its restrictions on converting corn land into diverse vegetable crops

43. again, insufficient funding would be a big threat
44. Other Ag programs - young people are leaving state, or not going to school because of perceived lack of good "Ag" programs.
45. On going funding
46. Lack of funding?, bad economy, increased tuition--> making agricultural education an even less appealing option since returns are not always high
47. Diverging from in-depth focused priorities, unsupportive relations with MSU
48. I don't know
49. MSU bureaucracy!
50. long waiting list for members

Question 8 – Vision

1. It would be great if an internship program were initiated for 2nd and 3rd year students to operating O farms in the region!
2. a place that is fully integrated into MSU both academically and culinarily. a place that is a highlight and draw for students, faculty and community
3. It would be interesting to have an organic camp for high school students to come and learn about organics in a fun way - as well as hands on working and learning.
4. SOF would focus largely on teaching and outreach, partnering more closely with MSU partners such as MSUE, Bailey Scholars, CANR departments, Mott Group, Product Center, etc., AND with not-for-profit partners such as MIFFS, MOFFA, farmers markets, etc. Specific agreements would be developed with each partner, outlining reciprocal benefits and obligations between the partners.
5. Yes, I would like to see this concept expanded around the state of Michigan to other institutions; I see the great potential this has of serving our communities; Urban areas need this kind of input,
6. A center that is recognized for its excellence and responsiveness in bringing together diverse groups of individuals that champions long term solutions and vision for the food and agricultural industries in the state. This should be based on sound economic models that account for various costs. One question to raise is who currently speaks to food policy issues in the state from a broad perspective?
7. Redesign Michigan Agriculture by combining ethnic, ecological and physical attributes of Michigan
8. I hope that the SOF can serve as a model for other universities and school system in the future
9. Partner with 4H and 4H Children's Garden? The SOF is a marvelous scale to teach kids and adults even small take-home ideas. Partner with elementary schools? Partner with local chefs & restaurants?
10. Hopefully, wide spread influence and presence throughout the state of Michigan
11. I think a lot about sustainability and wonder how close (or how far off) SOF is to meeting this benchmark. Many research programs on campus are not reliant on the University for \$\$ support and in fact supply money to the University (kind of like having solar panels and pumping back to the grid). It would be great if SOF reached this point.
12. More connected to formal teaching programs, more integral to the university, staying true to work with partners in community, being a place for learning and exploration.

13. everyone on campus knows about it and takes pride in it. it becomes the centerpiece of our movement toward sustainability
14. An incubator and research farm proving the economic and environmental benefits of organic farming, training new farmers, and helping them gain access to land and succeed in the marketplace.
15. To become more self reliant with full use of wind turbine technology, geothermal for heating and cooling, interconnected solar panel system with controls to keep temp, humidity and light at more constant levels and direct computer generated / assisted growing methods combined with total automated recycling for a completely sustainable environment.
16. Complete organic farm including both animal and plant-based products
17. The Student Organic Farm can play an important role in teaching young people about organic and hoophouse horticulture. In the future, with its network of graduates and partners it can be a stronger force in moving MI to more production of local fruits and veggies and suppling the food needs of urban communities.
18. A larger organization with broader outreach to local MSU alumni and community members. Few people know about SOF and when someone new is interested in becoming a member, we are told there is no room to join.
19. Again having MSU be an innovator and clearinghouse for food and sustainable ag activities in MI -- perhaps a partnership between SOF/ CS Mott/ MIFFS? Now it can get slightly confusing at times. Having SOF focused first on its farm, then on greater lansing community, then on the state of michigan as demonstration sites for research and outreach /demonstration of SOF principles. Perhaps having ways that low income individuals/ comunity members can participate in the SOF -- I.e. University of Montana PEAS program offered a "volunteer for veggies" program. Where 4 hours of volunteer work would yield 1/2 share I think. Or perhaps a job training prorgam?
20. A place for students, under and grad to conduct research either in ag or extension(creating publications/media of learning). A place where students can work even for a week to learn about the food production system
21. I would like to see more members or more of my neighbors getting locally produced, organic foods.
22. SOF as a model of community-based food production that builds soil and culture simultaneously. It can educate (and help to feed) the MSU community. It can inspire a hands on commitment to the value and inseparability of ecological and cultural diversity.
23. student residential option
24. I have give some of it away already, but to expand to large urban centers and provide education and research to those who live there about fresh, healthy food.
25. more diversified, yet continuing with its present strengths...
26. More hoophouse production dedicated to institutional buyers, like MSU
27. My vision is for it to be the midwest's version of UC santa cruz's farming program, except better.
28. A recognized resource for those wanting to engage in community based ag. and also a spot where knowlegde is transferred and practices shared and a center for opportunities for all ages to access the wealth of working with the land.
29. A center of reference in the sub-region

30. taking over the entire hort-farm and bringing MSU's focus to human-scale organic ag. figuring out how to fund that vision w/o getting beholden to monsanto. spreading the practicality of small-scale farming across the state by creating an amazing network of partners and graduates.
31. Expand to offer CSA to more people - promote organic production methods by offering more "field days" etc. where public will have more contact with farm and the farm becomes more well known to the public.
32. keep doing what you are doing and add the things listed under question #4
33. I see SOF as the premier demonstration organic farm in the area, with both a thriving CSA and market as well as educational programs. While these are already thriving concerns, I see the farm as even larger, while still doing these central missions well. Greater size would allow integration of livestock, and also a kitchen/food prep area for marketing as well as education.
34. I think the SOF could become a critical spoke, if not the hub, of a network of educational opportunities (e.g., CRAFT type programs), experiential learning (internships, etc), farm transfer facilitation (connecting retiring farmers with wanna-be farmers)
35. I see a sustainable house being built on some land that would act as a dorm for those individuals who want their lives to revolve around a farm as they learn rather than be part time workers
36. I would love to see young people interested in agriculture view the SOF as THE learning center in Michigan. I would also like to see a greater connection with other farms in the state...let's start connecting students with farmers!
37. As stated previously, a place to conduct research for agriculture- but also a place to cultivate the next generation of farmers.
38. A learning space for student engagement and university outreach in community and organic agriculture
39. see #5 above
40. It would train future organic farmers, but also help them find land on which to farm. It would hook ex-certificate students and partners into communicating with others so that not all information coming from the farm is from an "academic," which some people may take less seriously. ANIMALS! An MSU student destinate for visiting, like the Dairy Store or Botanical Gardens. Somewhere that people could come to just hang out and tour the place, without being bugging farmers.
41. A source of new organic farmers in Michigan

Question 9 - Partnering with the Vision?

1. Yes, I'd like to help by facilitation where I could
2. sure. i look forward to linking the SOF to the sustainability specialization efforts.
3. I could certainly work on a camp like program
4. Yes. Perhaps the farm could develop a board or council of friends/experts/partners to help core staff further develop the SOF.
5. Yes. I would like to involve myself as a worker and as a contributor to this vision;
6. I would be glad to help where/when appropriate.
7. I developed that vision in a proposal but it was not carried out to its full potential. That could be done and I could share the proposal and results. (SHG)

8. I work with the New Agriculture Network -- hosted by MSU, Purdue and U of IL -- and would like to see the student farm send more info about its outreach and methods to the Network so that surrounding states benefit, too.
9. In order to accommodate more groups and programs, the SOF may need to provide code-compliant facilities relating to accessibility and health. Program need will obviously drive how far one takes site improvements.
10. Personal encouragement of the student farmers and participation in their activities where possible.
11. Internships for students, classes co-listed in the department, connecting to research and service with partners in the community
12. yes. telling the story, helping get resources for it, involved in helping revisit the vision of the way forward
13. Partnership in the school gardening area.
14. Yes. Our organization is also interested in training and outreach. We've also developed an online organic training course.
15. Yes, to promote and support the CSA / SOF in all endeavors and continue to learn new technology that will facilitate my skills to assist in designing sustainable environments for SOF/CSA's
16. Assisting with the animal-based components
17. Yes, we would be a partner in the process.
18. Yes, MSU's Evening College can support SOF with extensive exposure and advertising when and if SOF is willing to offer Evening College personal enrichment courses for all adults.
19. On the first, not so much. On the second and third, we have a number of low income gardeners (often unemployed or under-employed) that would love to build their skills and learn more about organic farming -- We could help with connecting these people. Also have a number of community and school garden sites that would love to benefit from the skills of those involved with SOF -- not sure of the best ways to connect this information. Is this off-farm information valid for publication in your newsletter?
20. yes, I could help link researchers with opportunities you folks create about organic ag research. Help with survey of needed info by organic farmers so the SOF research can be refined to farmer driven.
21. I can be a spokesperson for sustainable agriculture and locally grown foods. My job and other outside activities prohibit me from being active. When there are member activities I always have a work commitment.
22. I would enjoy connecting my students to SOF activities and building cooperative programs in the arts and humanities.
23. I can not answer or the anonymity of the survey will be compromised
24. Yes
25. unknown...
26. Yes, providing farm to institution expertise and assistance, support, and additional research or other educational materials
27. Um, sure. You want to hire me?
28. sure, volunteering when there is more time in my life...retirement
29. It is the goal of my unit to help achieve that vision
30. i'm a partner and a potential host for graduates and off campus educational efforts

31. I see myself continuing to learn from SOF while trying to replicate some of its work on a smaller scale in urban ag ventures. As SOF serves as the model and the educational center, more local citizens can learn about food production and healthy food choices. Not every Lansing-area resident can belong to the CSA or buy at the Farm Stand, but every one can benefit in some way from what SOF helps to teach us all about local food choices. So, how I see myself partnering is in continuing to learn from SOF, then passing what I've learned along to others.
32. YES...as a farm host for internships, and, down the road, as a potential remote instructor
33. St. Mary's Organic Farm could provide a venue for internships and classes for permaculture, and oak savanna restoration.
34. Work at a school with young people interested in AG. Want to send them onto SOF after they graduate!
35. As a farmer i would be happy to facilitate in the education of other farmers and helping with research if necessary.
36. With Youth Farm Stands, and CS Mott group. YFS: urban and community ag outreach activities, also opportunities to engage low income and minority populations in trainings, workshops, etc based at SOF
37. I'm available for brainstorming, consulting on development or implementation, general "cheerleader" support. Sorry - I don't have any connections or fundamental knowledge to share.
38. Yes. However I can! I'd love to help publicize the farm to non-foodies.
39. Market and farm management/economics research

Question 10. Any other Suggestions or observations.

1. I really like the overall integration of plants, animals, people and the marketplace. More integration with large animals may be a strong next step...where is Animal Science on the Farm?
2. It's something special and the people who are apart of it are an unique group of individuals... I hope that isn't ever forgotten within all of this.
3. The farm is a magical place. Those who started it had to hold tightly to their vision in order to bring it into being. It may be very difficult for them to let others in to broaden the vision, which will be needed for the farm to survive and thrive.
4. Let's look for Grants
5. The SOF has a lot to be proud of to date. They appear to have taken a deliberate course that has raised their visibility and established their credibility. They appear to be in a similiar position as any small business that is in the turbulent waters as it "grows to the next level". Another words they are not unique in their challenges and maybe we can learn from other small business entrepreneurs as we move forward.
6. SOF is a wonderful development and should be supported as part of the MSU Environmental Stewardship Program
7. Increased state-wide publicity of the SOF program and increased support of our state's similar programs
8. At times it is overwhelming to think about how to contribute without getting sucked in big time. I've been sucked in in so many directions I can't even count them.
9. wear your love like heaven!!!!

10. Community awareness, marketing, and using sustainable technology to train and educate the people that provide one of the best links for us to enjoy a more healthy lifestyle.
11. Contact Louise Cooley, Director of Evening College, 57 Kellogg Center, MSU, phone 355-4562, email COOLEYL@msu.edu
12. Think you guys have built up an amazingly strong program/ farm/ network in the relatively few years you have been in operation. Keep up the great work.
13. SOF is a well-kept secret; perhaps some marketing would be fruitful.
14. There is a need to balance technical skills and horticultural science with story, song, memory, culture, and the art of community making if people are to inhabit a place on earth and not just use it.
15. let others know what is going on...keep website updated, partner with the department better
16. Keep up the good work, get the word out about what you are doing. Get young farmers knowing what you are doing.
17. NA
18. you are rock stars, keep up the energy, enthusiasm and building good will. hire more people.
19. Great job thus far- the farm has morphed into a very idealistic version of a real working farm- but has served its purpose.
20. I think the farm has stayed very true to principles of student engagement and open learning. Although it is hard to stay focused and grounded with so many distractions, the farm has done a good job with it, and I hope that is supported and continues into the future.
21. I love you guys - you're doing something very important and doing it very well!

Appendix C. MSU Student Organic Farm Proposed Farm Program Budget
Does not include Extension/Outreach or Teaching funding.

FARM PROGRAM BUDGET
08-09 Proposed

Income		Projected	Notes
CSA	Fall	29400	60 shares @ 490 ea
CSA	Spring	24500	50 shares @ 490 ea
CSA	Summer	29400	60 shares @ 490 ea
CSA	Summer only	17500	25 shares @700 ea
Farm Stand	May-June	5000	
Farm Stand	July-Oct	10000	
Landon Sales		12800	40lbs BLSM/wk@\$10/lbs for 32 wks
	Program Total	128600	
Expenses		Projected	Notes
Crew wages	July – Aug	7776	3FTE@\$7.5/hr + 8%fringe
	Sept – Dec	9600	2FTE@\$7.5/hr
	Jan – April	9600	2FTE@\$7.5/hr
	May-June	7776	3FTE@\$7.5/hr + 8%fringe
	Total	34752.00	Total
Assistant Farm Mngr	July-Dec	12355.20	40hrs/wk@\$13/hr for 22wks 8% fringe
	Jan-June	17472.00	40hrs/wk@\$13/hr for 24wks 40% fringe
	Total	29827.20	
Clerical Support	on call hourly	2700	5 hrs/wk@\$10/hr for 50 wks 8% fringe
Specialist 1 Teaching	20% of time	14000	includes 40% fringe
Specialist 2 Teaching	20% of time	14000	includes 40% fringe
	Total	28000	Total
Seeds		3000	
Supplies		6000	
Equipment/repair		6000	
Hort Farm Payment		4000	
	Program Total	114,279	
Balance		\$14,320	

Appendix D. Core Roles, Functions, Strategic Priorities and Actions

SOF CORE Roles and Functions	Priority Objectives	Strategic Actions
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Education		
Ag Tech Organic Farming Certificate Program (OFCP)	Continue refining program	Workshop courses, refine overall program structure, add tracks and core courses
	Explore other offerings - non-credit, online	Develop model for non-credit, figure out how to offer both (non and for-credit)
RMA Workshops for farmers	Continue work with these farmers	Continue to apply for grants
Workshop series – lifestyle classes	Continue to offer this series	Gather feedback from workshops, schedule for 2009
4-Year internships and Apprenticeships	Develop more formal internship opportunities	Develop internship structure (build off of existing model)
Programming with RISE, EFFFs, SAFS, other MSU programs	Work with these specializations to construct overlaps and partnerships	Meet with SAFS, Sus Spec, RISE and others to formalize programming
LCC Tours - 50 annual tours	Decide structure	Make time to discuss benefits and costs to current system, communicate with LCC desired structure

Production		
60 shares for 48 Week CSA Program	Maintain, improve crop production	Implement new crops - strawberries, asparagus, work on compost production, continue to build soil fertility and field drainage
25 shares for 20 week summer CSA	Maintain, improve crop production	see above
On campus farm stand	Maintain, improve crop production	see above
Landon Dining Hall Contract	Develop management plan for this house	Create crop plan, work with Robbia to develop order form and desired crops and amounts

Outreach		
Limited Resource and Minority Farmers	Continue to work with these farmers	
PSGH outreach - multiple forms	Work with MSUE more directly	Propose to Tom Coon formal partnership around hoophouse training, train the trainer opportunities
Tours, field trips, community workshops	Develop protocol for free or fee-based tours	Discuss desired structure, what we can handle and communicate (website, email, others who have used the farm) our new policy

Statewide partnerships	Multiple organizations - potential formal partnerships	List all existing partners, prioritize projects and decide which to pursue and which to put on hold
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Research

Landon Hall Project	Develop research project and management structure	Work with Laurie, Vennie, Mike Hamm, Adam to construct research project and timeline
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Infrastructure

Office space	Obtain workable office space at the farm	Create proposal for Randy, Tom F, and Bill to obtain space to use as SOF office at farm
Temperature controlled space at farm - barn or farm house (or both)	Fundraise for barn or farmhouse	Work with development to make a plan for fundraising, work with MI Barn Preservation Society
Landon Hall Hoophouse	Build, begin growing	Select date, build, prep site, begin transplants

Management

Steering Team structure	Figure out workable management structure that will account for growth and change	Once funding is secured for current programming, divide tasks and create positions and organizational structure, clearly define roles and responsibilities, structure a way to handle new growth
	Empower program managers to have autonomy over what they do - program development, budget, staff	Create expectation for program managers to report to team on goals, timeline, budgets

New Opportunities

Consulting	Work with Greening of Detroit on Eastern Market project	Continue with current plan with Ashley
	Work with Oran on Fair Food Foundation projects	Contact Oran, set up a meeting
New OFCP programming, affiliate sites	Detroit, Flint, Bay Mills, TC, Grand Rapids, Ann Arbor	Prioritize which to do first, Detroit, then?
Incubator farms	GTRLC, DeYoung, Barns, Maplebay, Private in TC	Decide which to pursue, decide who to be the PI on these, set up meetings and move forward
	Ann Arbor Township	Contact Oran, set up a meeting
International	EARTH U partnership	Follow up from John's trip to Costa Rica, determine next steps

E. MSU Student Organic Farm Strategic Planning Partners and Invited Participants

Code: 1=MSU Administration, 2=MSU Faculty, 3=MSU Staff, 4=MSU Students, 5=CSA Member
6=Farmer and 7=outside MSU partners

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Fusiliers	6		Fusilier Family Farm		
Gross, Steve & Chala	6		Green Eagle Organics	-	517-628-2301

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MSU Administration	1	30				
MSU Faculty	2	42				
MSU Staff	3	40				
MSU Students	4	5				
SOF-CSA members	5	9				
Farmers	7	21				
Partners	7	45				
		192				