

BUILDING LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR ASPIRING AND BEGINNING MANAGERS ON ORGANIC VEGETABLE FARMS

Sarah Janes Ugoretz

PhD Candidate, Environment & Resources
Apprenticeship Program Manager, FairShare CSA Coalition

Advisor: Dr. Mike Bell
CIAS Mini-Grant Project - funded 2021

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT



Background:

- ❖ Interviews with organic vegetable farm owners starting in 2019 (supported by a CIAS mini-grant!)

Emerging Themes:

- ❖ Struggles to attract and retain employees from year to year
- ❖ Interest in building labor management skills

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Next Step:

- ❖ Interviews with farm employees beginning in 2020

Emerging Themes:

- ❖ Employees want to work on “professionalized” farms
- ❖ Employees are eager for leadership training - especially when they consider management positions



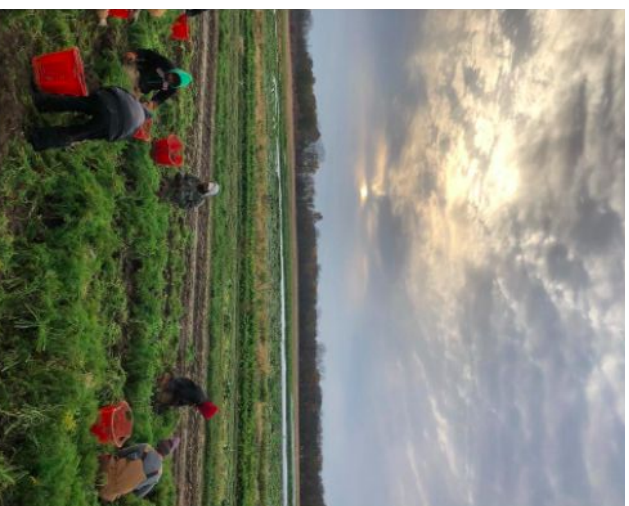
WHY THIS PROJECT?

“I struggle with management skills and knowing how to lead a crew. And I think that’s why I haven’t taken a management position yet—because it seems overwhelming.”



WHY THIS PROJECT?

“While I’ve been a manager on the farm in some capacity for several years, I’ve never done any formal learning about these topics. This was so useful and important—even for people who have been in a management position for many years.”



Farm Employee Workshop Series:

Building Management &
Conflict Resolution Skills

Claire Strader, Organic Vegetable Educator
Alexia Kulwicz, Labor Educator
Sarah Janes Ugoretz, PhD Student



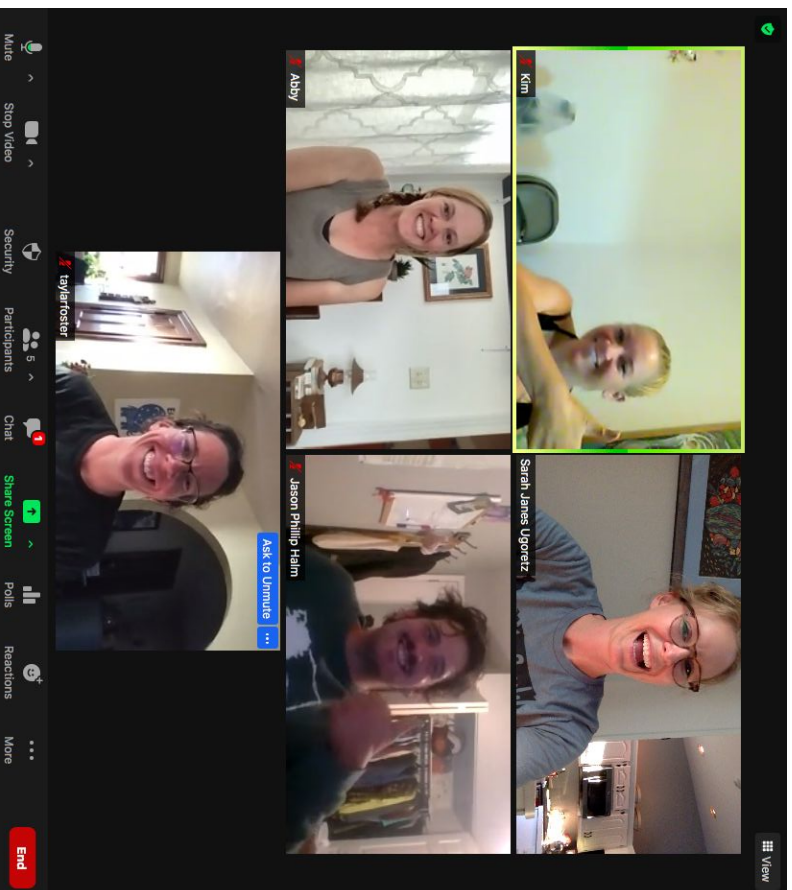
PROJECT GOAL

To create 90-minute sessions on the following topics:

- ❖ Farm Managers as Leaders
- ❖ Communication and Delegation
- ❖ Delivering and Receiving Feedback
- ❖ Recognizing and Addressing Conflict



WORKING MEETINGS



The Land of
Zoom!

PROGRAM LAUNCH!

Leadership Training for Current and Aspiring Farm Managers

Wednesdays in March

6:00-7:30 pm CST over Zoom

March 2: Farm Managers as Leaders

March 9: Communication and Delegation

March 16: Delivering and Receiving Feedback

March 23: Recognizing and Addressing Conflict

PROGRAM LAUNCH

Session #1



SESSION OVERVIEW

- ❖ What is leadership?
- ❖ Emotional intelligence
- ❖ Styles of leadership

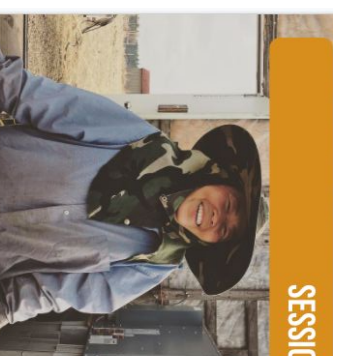
Session #3



SESSION OVERVIEW

- ❖ Why do we need to give feedback?
- ❖ Different types of feedback
- ❖ The importance of receiving feedback

Session #2



SESSION OVERVIEW

- ❖ Why does communication matter?
- ❖ The many ways in which we communicate
- ❖ The art of delegation

Session #4



SESSION OVERVIEW

- ❖ Conflict and Farm Culture
- ❖ What causes conflict on the farm?
- ❖ Conflict styles
- ❖ Tips for addressing conflict
- ❖ Conflict management process

PROGRAM LAUNCH!

Session #3 Activity

BEFORE WE SAY GOODBYE...

Let's break out into groups and come up with 3 phrases that we'll all be able to refer to after today. They can be:

- ❖ Used for delivering feedback to another - maybe starting the conversation with someone
- ❖ Used for inviting feedback from someone
- ❖ Used for accepting feedback from someone
- ❖ A tip you have based on your own experience
- ❖ Something else you think is useful!



PROGRAM LAUNCH



Registration Data/Demographics:

- ❖ 145 registrants for the entire series (261 overall)
- ❖ 73% are farm employees in a management role
- ❖ 80% of registrants identify as white
- ❖ 8% of registrants identify as “Hispanic or Latino”
- ❖ 9% of registrants identify as “Non-binary”
- ❖ Registrants from 27 states and 3 countries

PRELIMINARY FEEDBACK

“What are you planning to DO as a result of this session?”

“Use the lens of emotional intelligence to check in with myself during the season”

“Work on my self-regulation skills, try different leadership approaches with different tasks/teams, and share what I learned during this session with my farm leadership team!”

“Reflect more during and after work about how I employed these leadership skills as a manager and how I might improve my style in that context.”

“One thing is to manage my time better so I can be out in the field more and more attuned to morale.”

“Look more into the specific aspects of emotional intelligence - especially the ones I want to practice more like self-regulation and self-motivation. I am hoping to share some of these resources with the farm owner so we can better implement healthy leadership for the crew.”

“Keep attending these sessions to learn more :-)”

PRELIMINARY FEEDBACK

“This is exactly the kind of programming I and so many of my farming friends have been wanting and looking for for a long time.”

“This is such a necessary program for farm managers. I’ve been to a bunch of sessions on how to actually run a farm, but it’s never about how to relate to your crew on an emotional level and in a way that makes people feel good and makes people good farmers.”

NEXT STEPS



- ❖ Deliver the remaining 3 sessions!
- ❖ Gauge interest in longer-term support and community/connection
- ❖ Evaluate farm managers' existing needs and gaps
- ❖ Talk with potential longer-term partners
- ❖ Invite, prepare, and support additional farm manager co-trainers
- ❖ Pursue additional funding to support this work

**THANK YOU!
QUESTIONS?**

Sarah Janes Ugoretz
sjanes@wisc.edu