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

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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
Next Step:

❖ Interviews with farm employees beginning in 2020

Emerging Themes:

❖ Employees are eager for leadership training - especially when they consider management positions in "professionalized" farms.

❖ Employees want to work on their farms.

Troy Farm
“Why this project?—because it seems overwhelming. 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. I struggle with management skills and knowing how to lead a crew.”
Why this project?

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

Conflict Resolution Skills
Building Management Skills
Farm Employee Workshop Series
Project Goal

To create 90-minute sessions on the following topics:

❖ Farm Managers as Leaders
❖ Recognizing and Addressing Conflict
❖ Delivering and Receiving Feedback
❖ Communication and Delegation
Zoom!
The Land of
WORKING MEETINGS
March 2: Farm Managers as Leaders
March 9: Communication and Delegation
March 16: Delivering and Receiving Feedback
March 23: Recognizing and Addressing Conflict

Leadership Training for Current and Aspiring Farm Managers
Wednesdays in March
6:00-7:30 pm CST over Zoom

Program Launch!
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:

- Sometimes else you think is useful
- A list you have based on your own experience
- Used for accepting feedback from someone
- Used for initiating feedback from someone
- Starting the conversation with someone
- Used for delivering feedback to another - maybe

Activity

Session #3

Program Launch!
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
- 9% of registrants identify as “Non-binary”
- 8% of registrants identify as “Hispanic or Latino”
- Registrants from 27 states and 3 countries
Preliminary feedback

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

"Keep attending these sessions to learn more :)"

"Better implementation healthy leadership for the crew."

"Use the lens of emotional intelligence to check in with myself during the season. I am hoping to share some of these resources with the farm owner so we can look more into the specific aspects of emotional intelligence - especially the ones I want to practice more like self-regulation and self-motivation."

"One thing I am trying to manage my time better so I can be out in the field more and more attuned to morale."

"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."

"Reflect 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!"

"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!"

"Use the lens of emotional intelligence to check in with myself during the season."

"What are you planning to DO as a result of this session?"
"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."
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
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Thank you!

Questions?