Investing in Young Farmers

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THE CHAMPLAIN VALLEY: AN AGRICULTURAL HUB IN THE HEART OF THE ADIRONDACK PARK
A History of Farming and Conservation

• SOILS:
  • Clay and glacial till left behind from the Champlain Sea and glacial recession are some of the best in the state

• A TRANSPORTATION HUB:
  • For people and animals

• CONSERVATION HISTORY:
  • Park-wide and local conservation ethic
EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES AND DEMAND: The Need for a New Model

- New Partners
  - Flagship farm; Relocating farmers
  - Private donor

- New Research
  - Split Rock Wildway; Climate Change Modeling

- New Threats
  - Market Rebound
  - Big Ag

- New Market/New Needs
  - Young farmers
NEW MODEL FOR FARMLAND CONSERVATION:

THE LEASE-TO-OWN APPROACH
BENEFITS

• Benefits to Conservation Organizations
  • Conservation Outcome
  • Success in incubating viable ag business
  • Time to apply for state and federal funds
  • Revolve private dollars

• Benefits to Farmers
  • Lower start-up risk
  • Time to build loan qualifications & equity
  • Confidence- get the business rolling!
CHALLENGES AND RISKS

• Landlord/Tenant Relationship (sort of)
  • To allow business to grow, lease-to-own must be more flexible than a traditional lease
  • There will be unforeseen expenses!

• Liabilities

• Risks
  • Operational Viability - new business
  • Farmer focus - career path development; farming is hard!
Case Study:
North Country Creamery
Ashlee, take it away… anything you'd like to say.
North Country Creamery, Keeseville, NY

Already tagged
Locals & Tourists
Café
Building Community
Challenges: Systems, Supply & Demand, New Farm & Cows...

Striving for Balance & Quality of Life!
TAKEAWAYS

1. Targeted Model (doesn’t work everywhere)
2. Can be highly effective
3. Can also be highly risky to the fiscal sponsor
4. Strong partners, close relationships, and thorough vetting on both sides are key

Additional Needs:
Financial Services
• Loans
• Microloans
• Farmland Investors