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EXTENSION

**GROWING A NEW GENERATION  
OF ILLINOIS FRUIT AND VEGETABLE FARMERS**

# THINKING BEYOND THE FIRST YEAR

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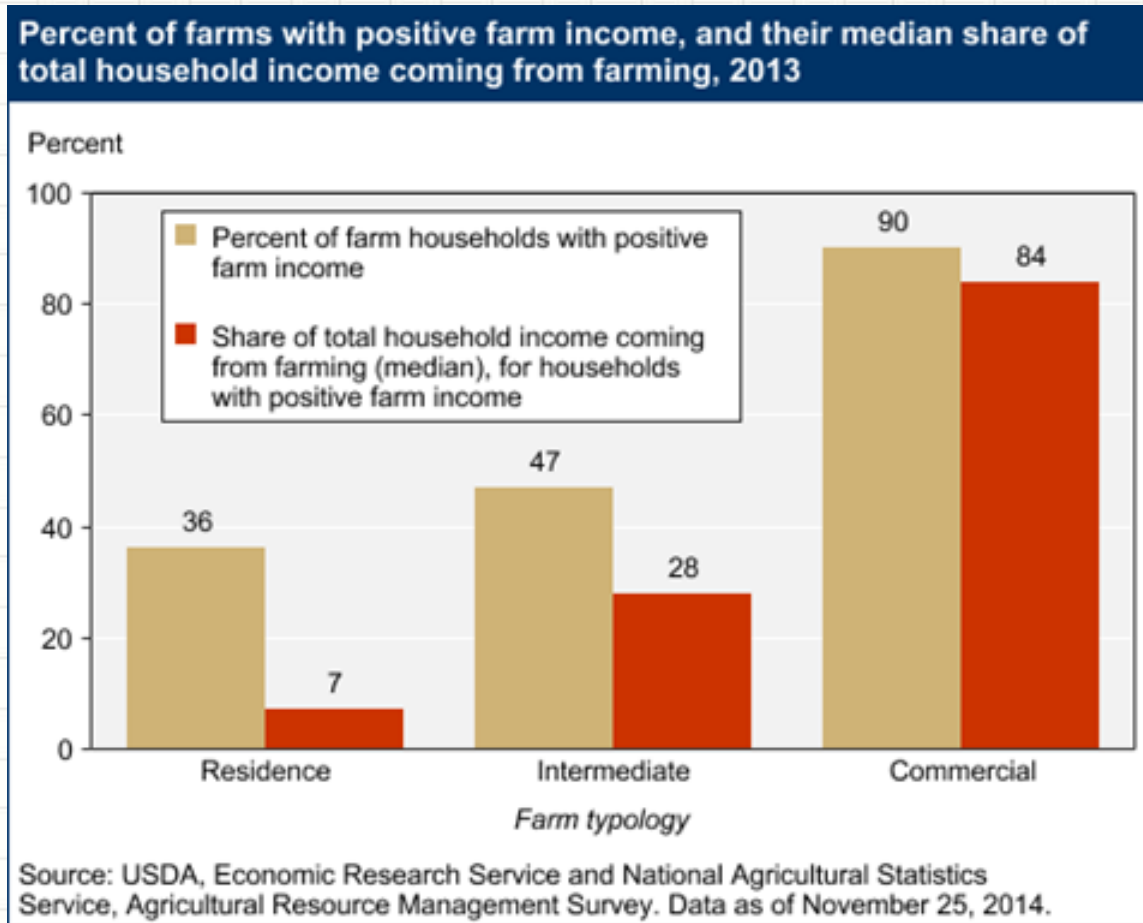


# Objective

- Emphasize things you have already heard
  - Income goal
  - Labor and retention
  - Grow with your experience
  - Reinvestment
  - Marketing and market development
  - What to do in the face of adversity

# Income Goal

- A realistic number, and a plan to reach it



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# Labor and Retention

- You will probably need hired help sooner than you think...
  - \$ gained or saved necessary to justify hiring
  - Hourly help vs. contractor vs. employee
  - Learn to use industry standard hiring practices



Credit: [USDA](#)



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# Labor and Retention

- Decent wage
  - Depends on responsibility and geography
  - Pay that incentivizes performance



Credit: [Jeremy Keith](#)



Credit: [USDA](#)

# Labor and Retention

- Decent working conditions
  - Safe equipment and proper ergonomics
  - Positive work environment



Credit: [Rick Gordon](#)

# Labor and Retention

- Professional development
  - Take the time to teach and give feedback
  - Increase responsibility or ownership



Credit: [Suzie's Farm](#)

# Grow With Your Experience

- Work on someone else's farm



Credit: [Suzie's Farm](#)



# Grow With Your Experience

- Start small, consider renting
- Put in the time, sweat equity
- Build your skills, brand, and market



Credit: [Jeremy Keith](#)

# Reinvestment

- Capitalize to increase efficiency and productive capacity, reduce labor
- Buy bigger than you currently need



Credit: [Jared and Corin](#)

# Marketing and Market Development

- Constantly evaluate your marketplace
  - What is missing?
  - What is new and trendy?
  - What can I produce efficiently?



Credit: [Marcy Leigh](#)



Credit: [SatrinaO](#)



Credit: [Plant Chicago](#)

# Marketing and Market Development

- Don't underestimate the potential of wholesale markets



Credit: [USDA](#)

# In the face of adversity...

- Learn from each year's challenges
  - Gather advice from peers and advisors
  - Go to Plan B, or Plan C
  - Accept help
  - Know when to fold 'em...



Credit: [Michael Quick](#)

# Summary

- Set an income goal and plan for profitability
- Find good help, and keep them
- Grow your business with your skills/demand
- Prioritize your capital investments
- Constantly evaluate your marketplace
- Learn from mistakes, and accept help

# To reach us

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## Contacts

## Contact information

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