Mission

Our mission is to improve market opportunities and efficiency for small and mid-sized producers by implementing quality assurance programs and providing marketing and branding opportunities for local producers.
Goals and Objectives

- Connect small to mid-sized farms in Howard County with retailers and restaurants
- Implement food hub-based solutions to support local agriculture
- Centralize the auditing process for small and mid-sized farmers to increase affordability of food safety programs
- Increase demand for Howard County products through marketing initiatives
- Establish new platforms through which consumers can purchase local products
Current Conditions

Out of the 293 farms in the County, only 17 are producing fruits and vegetables.

A survey was designed and implemented to gauge consumer demand for local products.

Howard County consumers would engage in county events, Farmer’s Markets, and CSAs to buy locally.

Positive responses were received from our local interest survey.

Local consumers find buying locally inaccessible and too expensive.
HCFA
Howard County Farmers Association

Quality and Safety Programs
- Group GAP
- Beef Quality Assurance

Marketing and Promotions
- Harvest Festival
- Reward Card
- Summer Camp
Organizational Structure

- Howard County Farmers Association
  - 501-c-5
  - Works toward Local Harvest certified cattle production, GroupGAP certification, auction participation, and branding

- Membership
  - Four tiered pay structure

- Board
  - Made up of 5-7 qualified stakeholders (CPA, Attorney, Farmers, etc) to provide guidance and support
  - Association Manager reports to Board
Quality Assurance Programs

GroupGAP & Beef Quality Assurance
From GAP to Group GAP

Food Safety Risk
Market Access $1,400 Cost 17/293 Farms 110 Acres
Small-Mid Size Branding Cost Sharing
Group GAP Process

Quality Management System

Internal Audit System

From USDA Group GAP & GHP Certification Program User’s Guide
Beef Quality Assurance

Meyer Natural Foods Humane Handling Standards

- Local Harvest
- Wegmans current demand for local beef

Beef Producers:

- Low financial risk; whole cow disposal, paid for delivery weight
- Premiums based on beef quality
- Dutch auction platform to help determine consumer demand
## Start-up Expense Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QMS and Food Safety Plan Development</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDA Group GAP Application</td>
<td>$736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit Filing Fees</td>
<td>$1,020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contingency (5%)</td>
<td>$588</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$12,344</strong></td>
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</table>
## Financials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Association Manager Salary</td>
<td>$54,801</td>
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<tr>
<td>USDA Audit</td>
<td>$5,785</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Expenses</td>
<td>$19,440</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beef Auction Expenses</td>
<td>$204,390</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$284,416</strong></td>
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# Financials

## Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership Fees</td>
<td>$11,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>GroupGAP Fees</td>
<td>$17,939</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beef Auction</td>
<td>$234,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$313,439</strong></td>
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## Surplus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td><strong>$313,439</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td><strong>$296,833</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>SR</td>
<td><strong>$16,606</strong></td>
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## Projections

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<thead>
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<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Expense</td>
<td>$85,627</td>
<td>$91,621</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beef Auction Expenses</td>
<td>$757,560</td>
<td>$1,136,340</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership Revenue</td>
<td>$13,450</td>
<td>$15,750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beef Auction Revenue</td>
<td>$936,000</td>
<td>$1,404,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>GroupGAP Fees</td>
<td>$17,939</td>
<td>$17,939</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surplus Revenue</td>
<td>$124,202</td>
<td>$209,728</td>
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</table>
Marketing and Promotions

Promoting local food consumption through experiential programming
Summer Camp

Campers will learn about local agriculture and get involved in the whole food experience by visiting a different Howard County farm each day and participating in hands on activities to learn about local food production.
Budget

Total Cash Sales ($315 per camper with 10% discount for siblings): $80,092

Cash Paid Out: $68,823

Total: $11,269
Harvest Festival

A 2-day harvest festival is hosted in late September weekend at four Group GAP farms. Visitors buy tickets to participate in activities. Through the harvest festival, participants will establish relationship with local farms by join the harvest festival and visit the farms. Farmers’ sales can also increase during the festival.
Budget

Total Cash Sales (Tickets sales + Vendor rents): $54,800
Cash Paid Out: $7,782

Total: $47,018
Reward card campaign

The aim of the reward card system is to directly promote consumers to visit farmer’s markets more frequently and to eat at the participating restaurants, and indirectly promote restaurant to purchase more from local farms.
Reward card campaign

Cards distribution
Collect stamps from vendors and restaurants
Participate requirements for restaurants
10 stamps = a free meal / a $10 voucher
Pilot Budget

Cost of Printing 1000 Cards:
    $40

Cost of 20 Stamps:
    $400

Cost of Printing 500 Voucher:
    $100

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What Comes Next...

- It is imperative that HCFA continue to expand and innovate in order to continue to encourage small and mid-sized farmers and producers to be successful