

# Supplementary Materials

**Table S1.** First and second level codes.

Name	Description	Participants (#)	Freq. (#)
Environmental goals	Participant's goals and values toward the environment and agricultural land	39	145
carbon footprint	reduce personal contribution to fossil fuel use	7	9
don't cause harm	not trying to achieve any grand goals, just don't leave the land worse than when you started	4	4
health	preventing diet-related disease or - cide sickness	22	29
minimal inputs	put as few external resources into the system as possible; conserve resources	8	9
mitigate degradation	be part of the group of farmers that's not degrading soil but mitigating env impacts of farming as a whole	10	11
no chemicals	chemicals are descruptive to the environment and people; don't cause pollution	13	16
preserve-promote natural biodiversity	preserve natural systems or promote them	11	14
price premium	practice organic to get a higher price for products	1	1
regenerative	create healthy soils, not deplete them	12	18
responsible	personal responsibility to sustainability	3	4
show it can be done	set an example that minimum inputs works, you can grow food without being destructive	6	6
spread the movement	inspire other people to be small farmers	1	1
support life on earth	reverse the current path of environmental degradation to support future generations	9	9
waste reduction	reduce contribution to landfill	1	1
work with nature	work with nature's natural cycles and ecosystems instead of against it and trying to control and manipulate	12	13

Table S1. Continued.

Name	Description	Participants (#)	Freq. (#)
Finances	The financial components that had to come together to make the farm happen	38	76
bank loans	received a loan from a bank	2	2
cosign loan	had someone else cosign to get a loan	3	3
credit card debt	spends for farm on credit cards	3	4
second job	has second job	6	6
family land	inherited family land	4	4
family loans	family provided loan	7	7
growing slow	growing slowly so no large up-front capital necessary	7	7
inheritance	inherited money	1	1
investments	used capital gained from investments	1	1
lease	got a lease instead of buying	2	2
loans	got a loan, but source unclear	1	1
no debt	debt averse	1	1
not about profit	costs aren't as important as mission	1	1
raise start-up capital	did a go fund me or some fundraising to get funds	3	3
second income	another person in the household has income	8	8
small start-up costs	low start-up costs from the beginning	2	2
sold house for profit	sold a house that had appreciated over time and used profit	5	5
USDA loan	Received a loan from USDA	2	2
Inspiration	What inspired the farmer to start their farm	38	62
Book, program or course	The farmer read a book, enrolled in a program or course that inspired them	16	27
Other farms	The farmer saw other farms succeeding	29	35
Personal satisfactions	The benefits that a farmer received from farming	34	76
beautiful	enjoy looking at a beautiful farm	3	3
being grounded	farming keeps them in the moment	2	2
being happy	farming makes them happy	2	2
being outside	enjoy being outside	6	6

Table S1. Continued

Name	Description	Participants (#)	Freq. (#)
beneficial lifestyle	love health benefits of farming	4	4
brave	get to be an image of bravery	1	1
offering at-risk ppl a job	hiring at-risk populations	1	1
eat fresh food	enjoy eating fresh food	4	4
emotional attachment	feel an emotional attachment to land	1	1
feeding people	enjoy feeding others	5	5
feeling accomplished	feel good after a hard day's work	3	3
finding balance	escaping the stress of traditional "work"	1	1
food movement	knowing you are doing positive work	1	1
happy customers	seeing customers enjoy their food or company or the experience	12	12
having good time	having a good time working on a farm	1	1
helping environment	contributing to a healthier physical environment	2	2
learning	love to learn something new every day	3	3
less stress	less stress than a traditional desk job	2	2
making money	enjoy making money doing something they love	1	1
no office job	don't have to be indoors, sitting at a desk	4	4
pleasing others	seeing others enjoy their farm/food/etc	1	1
seeing family enjoy	seeing their family enjoy the farm and food benefits	2	2
learning	love to learn something new every day	3	3
less stress	less stress than a traditional desk job	2	2
making money	enjoy making money doing something they love	1	1
no office job	don't have to be indoors, sitting at a desk	4	4
pleasing others	seeing others enjoy their farm/food/etc	1	1

Table S1. Continued.

Name	Description	Participants (#)	Freq. (#)
seeing family enjoy	seeing their family enjoy the farm and food benefits	2	2
seeing food grow	watching the growing process from seed to harvest	12	13
teach others	enjoy being a teacher and educator	1	1
Fairness	Balancing fairness to customers and farm finances	37	61
accessible	want food to be accessible to all income levels	4	4
calculate out	use spreadsheets to calculate food prices	1	1
customers will pay	a fair price is one customers are willing to pay for	13	13
difficult to sell at premium	would like to set a higher price but can't sell it	4	4
donate	donate extra food to food banks or other charities	5	5
don't charge enough	feel like prices are a little low and they could get more	2	2
don't want to undercut other farmers	don't want to de-value another farmer's prices by charging less	6	6
efficiency helps	being more efficient behind the scenes help lower prices and increase profit margins	1	1
feel bad selling high	sell high to make a living but feel bad doing it and doesn't want to do it	2	2
food shouldn't be cheap	people are used to cheap food at the grocery store because of subsidies, but it shouldn't be	2	2
hard to set price	still navigating how to be fair	2	2
have to make a living	maybe would lower prices but can't afford it to survive	6	7
modest income	can keep prices low because income is low	1	1
profitable	a fair price is one that customers are willing to pay	4	5
specialty items	have to charge more for items difficult to produce	1	1
want to sell cheap	want to sell at lower price but have to make a living	1	1

Table S1. Continued.

Name	Description	Participants (#)	Freq. (#)
worth hard work	higher prices are worth the hard work that went into producing it	4	4
Risk		36	142
aging	ageing bodies are prone to injury	1	1
community connectedness	risk of being isolated	3	3
community relationships buffer	already know people in community	2	2
confidence buffer	confident in production practices to take the leap	4	6
crop fails	risk of crop failing for any of a multitude of reasons	6	6
debt	risk of getting deep into debt	5	5
disappointing others	business fails and can't repay don't want to let people down who believed in them	1	1
experience buffer	have experience so know what they're getting into	3	3
failure	fear of failure and risking embarrassment to everyone who knew they were starting a farm	5	6
finding employees	worried they won't have anyone to hire	1	1
hard work	worried it will be too much physical work	1	1
income diversification as buffer	planned for multiple revenue streams to buffer financial risk	9	9
inexperience	risk of having little to no practical farming experience	5	9
lack of knowledge	there's some information they just don't know	2	2
location	might pick a location that's not good for growing on	1	1
losing land	could lose gifted or leased land	1	1
losing pride	feel ashamed if they fail	3	3
money	losing money	12	14
naive	too idealistic	3	3
nature	natural catastrophe, pest or disease outbreak	2	2
new community	not knowing anyone	3	3

no going back	not being able to go back to previous career once they leave	1	1
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Table S1.

Name	Description	Participants (#)	Freq. (#)
no market	risk of having no one to sell to	10	10
not producing enough	risk of having a large market but not enough to sell	3	3
nothing grows	risk of nothing growing on land	1	1
nothing to lose	no risk, nothing to lose	2	2
outside income buffer	buffered by another source of income	6	7
overconfident	was confident but probably shouldn't have been	2	2
physical injury	risk of getting injured and no one to take over the work	4	7
regret	risk of failing and thinking they didn't try hard enough	2	2
risk averse	wouldn't have done it if they thought there was a lot of risk	3	4
slow as buffer	grow slowly to avoid large financial risks	3	3
specialty crops	risk of growing all specialty crops because if it fails that's your only crop	1	1
stubborn	unwilling to give up or quit	1	1
unreliable market	risk of inconsistent customer base	3	3
wasted time	nothing to lose except the time "wasted" on the endeavor	3	3
weather	weather events like hurricanes, tornadoes, rain, dry spells, etc	7	8
weeds	risk of having weeds take over farm	2	2
Why farming	Why the person decided to start a farm	40	234
Challenge	Enjoy a challenge	4	4
College job	Got a job in college and ended up liking it	5	6
Connect to land	wanted to be closer to nature	5	5
Didn't like previous job	Wanted to leave job because they were unhappy	13	16
Educate	Wanted to be able to teach others about benefits of farming	3	3
enjoyable	They enjoy it	16	17

enlightenment	They felt like they an "aha" moment and realized they needed to be involved in the "food movement"	5	7
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Table S1. Continued.

Name	Description	Participants (#)	Freq. (#)
Family history	Old family history of farming and wanted to connect back to that (skipped 1 or more generations)	3	3
Family values	Wanted to promote healthy family dynamics like spending time together at home and outside	8	8
Fate	Found it at exactly the right time in life like an intervention	3	3
good at it	Found out they were good at it	2	2
Grow good food	Want to grow healthy, nutritious food	8	8
Happiness	Want to be happy	1	1
help environment	Want to be a positive influence on physical environment	12	16
Idealistic	Committed to ideals of sustainability and sustainable agriculture	1	1
Improve health	Improve personal health like physical ailments	9	9
Improve public health	Promote healthy communities, not just themselves and their family	5	5
in control	have control over their day and life	1	1
independence	wanted to be their own boss, work on their own schedule and run a business on their terms	16	21
love to learn	love to learn something new every day	1	1
make a difference	want to make a positive impact on the world of sustainable agriculture	5	5
meaningful	find they are doing something that makes a difference	3	3
Necessity	Had to make an income to started farming	2	2
Other farms succeeding	Saw others doing it and doing it well	5	5
Part of identity	Felt like it was always part of them	1	1
Passion	Love it and couldn't imagine doing anything else	3	3
rewarding	see the fruits of your labor in the field after hard work	4	4

Table S1. Continued.

Name	Description	Participants (#)	Freq. (#)
satisfying	feeling like a day's work well done	2	3
spiritual	connect to land through spirituality	1	1
Studied in college	Found farming in college courses	1	1
Transition from gardening	Had a garden or parents had a garden so it was something they "knew"	9	9
transition from restaurant biz	found farming through working in restaurant kitchens	2	2
variety	love being able to do a variety of activities as part of one job, always new, never boring	7	7
Want to be an inspiration	want to show others that they can do it too	2	2
Want to be outdoors	love being outside	21	29
Want to change system	want to contribute to a sustainable ag system	7	8
want to feed people	want to offer good food to people	6	6
Wanted to start a biz	Was going to start a business anyway	5	5
WOOF	Had no direction, wanted to travel so enrolled in WOOF and fell in love with farming	1	1



**Table S2.** Educational-related sources of inspiration.

Education Descriptor	Participants (#)	Freq. (#)
aquaponics	2	2
beyond sustainable	1	1
biodynamic	1	1
climate	1	1
composting	1	1
cover crops	1	1
crop spacing	1	1
ecosystem	1	1
energy conservation	1	1
expanding	1	1
opportunities		
good food	1	1
hoop houses	1	1
organic	3	3
permaculture	1	1
practices	1	1
profitable	8	9
raised beds	1	1
soil management	2	2
urban ag	1	1
variety selection	1	1
water conservation	1	1
worms	1	1

**Table S3.** Farmer-related sources of inspiration.

Education Descriptor	Participants (#)	Freq. (#)
aesthetically pleasing	1	1
authentic	2	2
committed	1	1
confident	1	1
disciplined	2	3
eclectic	1	1
efficient	2	2
encouraging	2	2
experienced	1	1
generous	5	5
good at budgeting	1	1
good at	1	1
compartmentalizing		
good communicator	1	1
hard worker	1	1
innovative	1	1
inspiring	2	2
knowledgeable	3	4
organized	1	1
persistent	1	1
risk taker	1	1
successful	2	2
the bomb	1	1
willing to help	2	2
work ethic	1	1