

ELFCO'S EXCITING NEW FARM MARKET PROJECT

ELFCO'S PLAN IS TO OPEN A YEAR-ROUND FARM MARKET STORE that provides access to organic and locally produced foods, such as produce, meat, dairy products, baked goods, maple syrup, and honey. Locally made non-food products, together with some bulk food items, will be included as well. A main goal is to establish a market that would prioritize, in an environmentally sustainable way, the concerns of local producers and help create a vibrant local economy. We are also working to provide underserved parts of our community with easier access to fresh, nutritious food at a reasonable cost. As education is part of our co-op's mission, we plan to provide community programming to help all residents better understand the benefits of healthy, organic, and sustainably produced foods and of contributing to the local economy.

HOW WE ENVISION ELFCO'S RELATIONSHIP TO FARMERS & OTHER PRODUCERS: Currently, we envision a relationship which would provide local farmers with a nearly direct market that does not require them to staff a table as with a traditional farmers market. The store will be open all week, giving these farmers increased exposure to customers. Farmers will:

- continue to own the produce they sell
- set their own prices, with guidance from our staff when necessary or desirable
- receive a fixed percentage of the sale price, with the ELFCO retaining a small percentage in order to maintain market operations (e.g., 70/30, 75/25, possibly 80/20)
- receive biweekly payment for products sold, and an individualized biweekly sales report

PROJECTED COST: \$300,000

- Buildout: \$200,000
- Other start-up costs (personnel, consulting, advertising, etc.): \$100,000

PROJECTED IMPACT:

Based on numbers from a similar model based in Ann Arbor (Argus Farm Stop,) we expect to reach, within two years from opening:

- \$1,000,000 of annual revenue from Michigan farm product sales
- 3 or 4 full-time and 10 or more part-time job positions

WHAT WE ARE DOING & HOW YOU CAN HELP: To reach these goals, we need to find the right organizational partners. We have our list of wonderful prospects, and are looking forward to beginning this process almost immediately. If you have a particular interest or some experience with this type of networking, contact <board@elfco.coop> or <staff@elfco.coop> and we'll get back to you.