



Dave Trumble, Good Earth Farm, Weare, NH. Dave raises organic seedlings (vegetables, herbs and flowers) and specializes in tomatoes and root crops.

“I farm organically because on a day to day basis, I could never see handling the chemicals that it would require to farm non-organically. I would not want to touch them myself, nor use them on the land or on the produce that is grown. In the long term, organic farming forces us to think about soil stewardship. Soil is the key for organic farmers to grow healthy crops. Soil is a resource to be taken care of and improved, rather than a

place to grow crops. One of our farm goals is to leave our farm and gardens in better condition for the next generation. This is not to say that non-organic farmers don't have the same love of the land that we do. I am just saying that being an organic farmer makes that a necessity.

We grow a handful of crops for Local Harvest CSA: bedding plants, greenhouse tomatoes, onions, garlic, carrots, beets and peaches. We ran our own 100+ member CSA for over ten years before Local Harvest. Then we had two children and I became a stay at home dad. Switching from growing 40 crops to growing a smaller number of crops was the only way for me to remain a farmer.

Like a lot of things, the best and hardest parts of something spring from the same root. Farming is both a way of life and a job. Farming is right outside your door and is with you every day throughout the seasons. It is a real blessing to live on a farm and have such good work to do each and every day. The hardest part is treating farming like a job and applying a financial perspective to your work as well.

In addition to farming, I have a part-time winter job and my wife, Linda, is a school teacher. We could not exist on our farm income alone. The farm pays for itself, including all repairs and equipment needed, and also provides a share of our family income. If we were to add up all farm income and subtract all farm expenses, we make about \$10-12 an hour as farmers.

We grow a lot of heirloom varieties as bedding plants for our home gardeners. Also, our garlic, of which we plant over 5,000 cloves each year, is a true heirloom. My aunt's father brought some garlic with him on the boat from Italy about 100 years ago. He gave some to my uncle who gave some to me about 20 years ago. We save 20% of the crop each year as seed garlic and plant. I know of at least twenty other people in NH who are now growing Uncle Hank's garlic.

I would encourage my children or grandchildren to become farmers and would be glad to help them in any way I could. On the other hand, I would never want to push them into farming. I think everyone is happiest and does their best work if they do something that they love. Farming is hard work and the financial rewards are low. Mostly I watch my children find the things that they love to do and encourage them with those activities.”