

**Steve Fulton, Blue Ox Farm, Enfield, NH.  
Steve is an engineer as well as a farmer. He  
farms 10 acres, and three high tunnels.**

“Before I farmed for market, I grew a garden for my own use, and always avoided chemical inputs for food safety issues. It seemed natural to extend those methods when I began to market my produce, and especially because it seemed that more people were interested in buying organically grown foods. Ten years ago I had read a Gene Logsdon book that promoted small farms and cottage industries and that stuck with me. I enjoy being outdoors and wanted a business of my own and decided to try farming. I ask myself several times during the season "why do I farm?" because I find it very difficult to make any sort of money farming.



I have a small CSA of my own, along with Local Harvest, and also sell to restaurants, so I grow the full range of crops. I also grow a lot of lettuce, tomatoes, shallots, onions, peppers, carrots, beets, and winter squash because I have good markets for them

Profitability is the biggest challenge, that and drainage of the fields. Farming is the reward, yet questions about financial sustainability persist.

I have been involved with Local Harvest CSA since year one. It has been good to work with other farmers. I think that it has helped my farm's profitability. CSA is better than Farmers Markets because everything that is harvested is sold, and I don't need to pay someone to work at the Farmers Markets. CSA is a steadier source of income than restaurants and offer the benefit of direct sale prices which are far better than wholesale.

I grow heirloom tomatoes because I have markets that pay decent prices for them. Mostly I grow hybrids because they yield very well. I have found that most people are way more interested in cosmetics than flavor! At the Farmers Markets I sell far more regular tomatoes than heirloom despite what you would think based on how much press attention heirloom produce gets. High end restaurants in the area buy my heirloom tomatoes. I grew heirloom melons for a while, but not any longer. I found that hybrid melons tasted just as delicious as the heirloom varieties.

For financial reasons, I would not encourage young people to farm, aesthetically maybe. I recommend that anyone that wants to farm get a good education in a profession or trade, like accounting, engineering, teaching, etc. so that they can afford to farm or have some skill/training to fall back on.”