FeedMeFarms

Getting Started on Other People’s Property

September 23rd, 2021

https://feedmefarms.com

Jake Jarecki is in his second year of growing for local markets. Last year he started at a synagogue he has connections with and a friend’s side yard. This year he expanded to a nearby church. All were former lawns that someone had to spend time and money on. At the synagogue he has a storage shed, washing room and water at his disposal. He employs a clever mix of DIY infrastructure and careful purchases of quality tools. Using a repurposed washing machine, room fans, simple pumps, PVC and 2 v 4’s, he constructed a very usable, affordable washing station.

Farmer Jake shares his experience: “I am very excited looking ahead at the future of the farm. I have learned so much in two seasons, and more importantly, built so many connections that are opening new doors. Next year, I hope to continue to grow our CSA customer base, diversify our crop profile, increase value-added products, and even expand into small farm-catered meals and events.

The balance between not biting off more than you can chew as a beginning farmer, along with the very real need to earn enough to live on, is a tightrope walk that I would warn other beginning farmers not to be discouraged by. For those interested in starting their own farm, I would recommend doing tons of preparation: read, work on another farm, secure land, secure some funding, plan, plan, and plan some more... file all your paperwork for LLC or 501-C3, licenses, insurance, land use agreements, bank accounts etc., in the fall or winter.

Take advantage of the winter days to get all your ducks in a row. You’ll be much too busy in the growing season to worry about all that come spring! My biggest takeaways from two seasons on my own are, 1) it’s a lot of work!, and, 2) don’t be afraid to ask for help. A small farm is a perfect conduit for building community, sharing skills, educating, and much more ... lean into those opportunities!”

The TC Metro Growers Network is a collaboration of the University of MN Extension and the Sustainable Farming Association of MN

Questions, comments, suggestions? Contact Network Coordinator Karl Hakanson, UMN Extension-Hennepin Co., khakanso@umn.edu or the TC Metro Growers Network web site: www.sfa-mn.org/twin-cities-growers-network

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