

Project Profile



Location:

HCR-71, Box 168-B
Hustontown, PA

County:

Huntingdon

Description:

Business Expansion
Loan

Total Project Cost:

\$180,000



Tuscarora Organic Growers Cooperative

People:

Since 1988, the Tuscarora Organic Growers Cooperative has been a model for doing well by doing good. TOG's member farmers cooperatively distribute chemical-free, locally grown produce to Pennsylvania farm stands and Washington, D.C. gourmets. Over 15 years, they saw their sales increase 30-fold. Future growth, though, was restricted by their 2,700-square-foot warehouse, and the financing needed to expand wouldn't grow on trees. Banks didn't understand the cooperative business structure, and sought more collateral than the cooperative had.

Progress:

Luckily, TOG's roles in feeding visitors and exporting product fit right in with The Progress

Fund's effort to stimulate agri-tourism. The Progress Fund agreed to lend \$65,000 for equipment using funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Progress Fund also provided a \$75,000 bridge loan until a state agency could replace that capital.

Impact:

TOG added 3,600 square feet to its warehouse, and now has enough space to dramatically increase shipments, recruit more family farms, and hire more employees. "Projections are that we'll double volume in the next five years," says TOG Manager Chris Fullerton. You can't go wrong with fresh, organic produce – or fresh, local financing.

The Progress Fund is an Equal Opportunity Program. Discrimination is prohibited by Federal Law. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington DC 20250

