

Location:

12525 Hamilton Road
Edinboro, PA 16412
rickwalkerfarms.com

County:

Erie

Description:

Business expansion

Total Project Cost:

\$140,000



Rick Walker Farms



People:

Rick Walker grew up trimming boughs on his grandfather's Christmas tree farm, and in 1985 he bought the 27-acre nursery. However, Christmas only comes once a year so Rick and his son, Richard, added two hydroponic vegetable greenhouses. Supermarkets couldn't get enough of their fresh, local, tasty tomatoes and cucumbers, so they set out to build a third greenhouse. "We had the demand, and I went to our local bank," says Rick. "He couldn't do it. ... He called me back and said, 'Hey, I was at this meeting with The Progress Fund and...'"

Progress:

In 2011, The Progress Fund helped Rick construct a third greenhouse. Seven years later, when supermarkets demanded

zucchini and more cucumbers, Rick turned to The Progress Fund again to add three more cold greenhouses and a tractor.

Impact:

In their season-extending greenhouses, the Walkers supply a precise mixture of nutrients and water to potted plants, efficiently producing delicious and disease-free fruit and vegetables. They adhere to stringent USDA Good Agricultural Practices, qualifying their fresh food for discriminating markets. Still, they have one confession to make: "We really don't like eating tomatoes," Rick says. "But the people who really love tomatoes can taste the difference in ours, and they'll ask for them by name."

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