

The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library

## This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.

Help ensure our sustainability.

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search
<a href="http://ageconsearch.umn.edu">http://ageconsearch.umn.edu</a>
<a href="mailto:aesearch@umn.edu">aesearch@umn.edu</a>

Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.

Agricultural Outlook Forum U.S. Department of Agriculture

# Tuscarora Organic Growers Cooperative: Doing our part to make locally grown Foods more available

Presented: February 23-24, 2012

Jim Crawford

# Tuscarora Organic Growers Cooperative:

# Doing our part to make locally grown foods more available



















#### **New Morning Farm**

Hustontown, PA

- 45 acres in rotations
- 50-60 crops: vegetable, berries, and herbs
- 2/3 of sales: Retail at farmers markets in Washington, D.C.
- 1/3 of sales: Wholesale to Tuscarora Co-op
- \$600K sales annually
- 20 employees
- Certified Organic







# Barn raising for our present warehouse in 2004









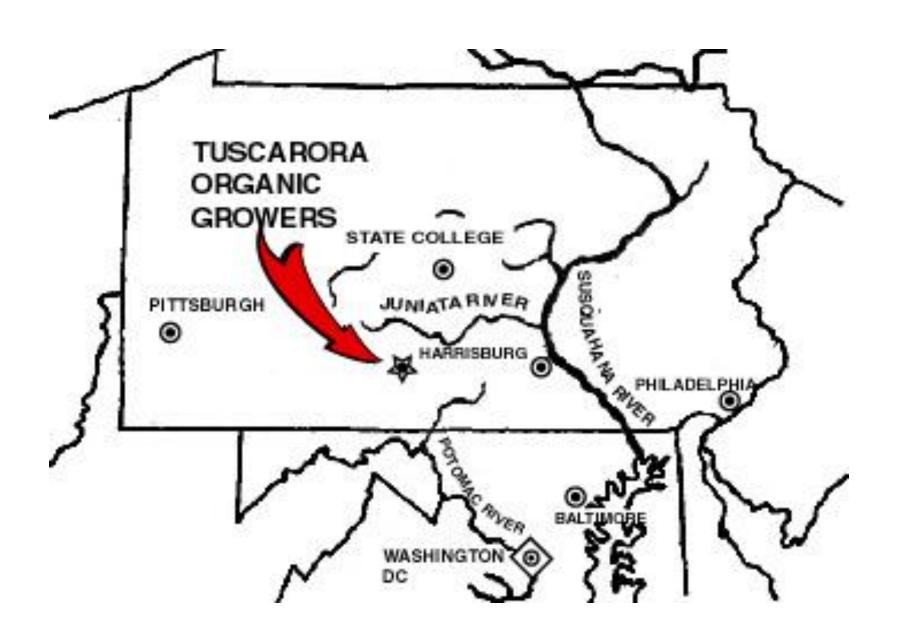
























- 4 Full-time staff and 12 part-time employees
- Over 100,000 cases delivered per year
- Twice weekly delivery, year-round
- 1200+ items on the annual production plan
- Marketing: retailers, restaurants, CSAs and our growers
- 47 Member-growers
- Directed by a board of member-growers

## **Tuscarora Co-op Functions**

- Pooling (aggregating) produce
- Planning production
- Staff services: marketing, sales, shipping, accounting
- All profits returned to member-growers
- Sharing expertise for crop improvement
- Group ordering of seeds and supplies

## Our Challenges as a Co-op

- NOT marketing or logistics!
- Production problems:
  - Inexperience of growers
  - Small scale of farms
  - Excessive labor costs & inefficiencies
  - Climate/weather problems compared with our competition in other parts of the country

### Suggestions for USDA

- Preserve and strengthen extension
- More research appropriate for our imperfect climates
- More research for organic
- Preserve and strengthen the SARE program
- New & beginning farmer programs
- Encouragement of formation of marketing cooperatives and food hubs
- Fix and expand H2A

