Business Plan Module 01 - Getting Started with the Course

Unit 01 - Welcome to the Course

- No Video

Unit 02 - Setting up Disqus

- No Video

Unit 03 - Introduce Yourself

- No Video

Unit 04 - Quick Start Guide

- No Video

Business Plan Module 02 - Your Customers

Unit 01 - Intro to Your Customers

There are Four Types of Potential Customers:
- Restaurants
- Farmer's Markets
- Distributors
- CSA's
  - Not recommended to market to this group for the first year

Restaurants
- Curtis' primary customers
- Purchase a large amount of product
- Consistent orders of consistent products
- Valuable customer
- High volume
- Typical orders $300-$1000/week

Farmer's Markets
- Best place to start
- May have a waiting list to get a spot
- Sell what you have available for harvest
• Don't have to have consistent product week to week
  ○ Restaurants and Distributors require consistent product availability week to week
• Ability to meet people and prospective customers
• Simple
  ○ Just show up and sell what you have available that week

Wholesale Distributors
• Need consistency and volume of product
• Higher volume than restaurants
• Organic Delivery Services
  ○ New distribution system
  ○ Like a CSA
    • Source products from multiple locations/farmers
    • Assemble a box of products
    • Deliver the boxes to customer’s homes
  ○ Offer more products than a traditional CSA
• You must have reasonable volume
• Your prices must be low enough for the service to make money
• Need to have at least 50 units of a product available for sale
  ○ 100 units is better
• Not advised to market to this customer group for the first year
• A method to get rid of excess product
• They will only buy a subset of all of your offered products

CSA
• Not crucial to an urban farm
• There is not enough variety of product grown on a small, urban farm to support a CSA.
• You can't make $100,000/ 1/2 acre by selling to CSA’s
• Other possibilities
  ○ Work with other growers to do a collaborative CSA
  ○ Contribute to someone else's CSA
  ○ Act as a broker
    • Buy product from other growers
    • Lower margins on products from other growers
• CSA's force you to grow crops that:
  ○ Have low profit margins
  ○ Take up a large amount of space
  ○ Don't meet the criteria for profitable, small space, urban farming
Unit 02 - Restaurants

Characteristics of good, prospective restaurants
- Owner Operated
  - Typically small
  - Only a couple of staff
  - Change the menu all the time
    - Daily sometimes
  - Field to Fork
  - Want to work with local farmers
  - Are flexible
    - Don’t require consistent product weekly
  - Be open about being new to farming

Poor Prospective Restaurant Customers
- Franchises
- Large, well known in the area
- Hotels
- Resorts
- Wineries

Build a customer base of several small restaurants

Target orders sizes of $100-$250 / week
- Average $200/week in peak season
- Typical order
  - 10 lb. greens
  - 30 bunches of radishes
  - 2 lb. of sunflower shoots
  - 10 lb. box of tomatoes

Try to establish consistent sales throughout the season
- Eases cash flow

Chefs make the buying decisions

Who do you deal with:
- Small Restaurants
  - Executive Chef
  - Owner/Operator
  - Will make volume purchases
    - Larger orders than at a Farmers’ Market
- Chef du Cuisine
• Sous Chef/Executive Sous Chef
• Large kitchen
  o Executive Chef is not involved with food preparation or production
  o Chef du Cuisine
  o Sous Chef/Executive Sous Chef

Establish and maintain good relations with Chefs

The customer is always right, bend over backwards to make things right.
• If there is a problem:
  o Reimburse for the product
  o Give them something extra
  o Mistakes can be expensive

Chefs climb the ranks and move to different restaurants

What do Chefs look for:
• Taste
• Texture
• Appearance
• How does it plate
• Your story and your farm’s story
  o Delivered by bicycle
  o Grown within X number of miles/block
  o It is the hook of a song
  o Must be sincere
  o Corp Exec. Turned farmer
  o e.g., I combined my love of cycling, cooking, gardening, and the local food movement
• The price has to be fair

Minimalism is very important in high end restaurants
• The product, when plated, looks like it did when it came out of the field
• What is important
  o Size
  o Shape
  o Color
• Baby root veggies
  o Require less preparation
  o Can be served as is
Chef, give me your feedback and I will grow to your desires
  • Modify characteristics of products already grown, not additional varieties unless demand dictates it

Beets are hard to keep consistent size
Carrots shouldn't have a core in many cases

Unit 03 - Farmer's Markets

Primary sales outlet for season 1

Easiest way to get started

Who are the customers at the Farmer's Market:
  • Diverse group of shoppers
  • 25-55 years or age
  • Health conscious
  • Fit
  • Primarily women
  • Not college students
  • Young families
    ○ With children
    ○ Do it for their children's health

What do the shoppers value
  • More than just the produce
  • The "experience"
  • Good products
  • Reasonable prices
  • Customer service
    ○ Personal service
    ○ Customers want to be engaged
  • Education on how to use the product
  • A connection to the grower
  • Understanding where their food comes from
  • Have their names remembered
    ○ Write down people's names
      • Mark down physical characteristics to help you remember people's names
      • Google Dale Carnegie's 6 Tips to Remember Names
    ○ Note what they like to buy
Farmer's Markets will help you find land.
- Your customers become a real estate sourcing network

There will be a learning curve at the beginning.
- You need to develop efficient systems

Customers talk to other potential customers.

About 20% of income comes from the Farmer's Market once you are established

Get to know the other farmers and trade products

Farmer's Markets are physically exhausting.

Finding your place in the market can be difficult at the beginning

Some growers will walk around and compare prices and then adjust prices to the competition.
- Curtis does not do this

Figure out what you are good at and capitalize on it.

**Unit 04 - Wholesale Accounts**

Should not be targeted in the first year of growing

Wholesale Accounts are primarily:
- **Grocery Stores**
  - Look for smaller chains
  - Margins are very low
    - Some products won't work due to these margins
  - May have to individually package large quantities of product
  - Micro-greens are a good product to sell to them
    - Faster and easier to package
    - Margins are higher
  - Only benefit is that they can move a lot of product
- **Distributors**
  - Deal in volume
  - May be able to bag the produce themselves
    - Reduces your labor cost
**Profitable**

**URBANFARMING**

- Look for distributors who sell to high end markets
- Will pay less for your products than other customer segments
  - Some want such a cost break that you can't afford to deal with them
- Know your costs to produce your products
  - Breakeven point
  - Minimum margin with overhead and capital expenses

These customers buy based on
- Price
  - Most important factor
- Quality

**Unit 05 - CSA’s**

Not recommended as a sales channel for the first year

- Not economical when farming on a small space
- A small acre farm can't produce enough variety
- A lot of work managing
  - Packaging boxes
  - Delivering
- Risky
  - Products must be consistent
  - Must be what was promised
- To work the farm should be at least 1/2 acre

You can collaborate with other growers
- Provides variety of product, but at a lower margin
- The box must be at least 1/2 of your products to be profitable
- Margin on products from other growers is only 25-35 percent
- Requires a lot of management and labor
- Don't try for the first couple of years growing
- Makes sense when you don't have access to a lot of restaurants
- Need a minimum of 60 CSA customers at $20/box for this to be profitable

**Business Plan Module 03 - Your Products**

**Unit 01 - Intro to Your Products**

Crops = Products = Product = Items

Five (5) Crop/Product Categories:
Profytable

URBANFARMING

• Greens
  ○ Most highly valued crop
  ○ Can sell hundreds of pounds per week
  ○ Long growing season
    • 8 months
  ○ Lettuce
  ○ Arugula
  ○ Mustards
  ○ Mixes
    • Salad
    • Spicy
    • Braising
  ○ Backbone of the urban farm
  ○ Responsible for the largest share of revenue

• Root Crops
  ○ Beets
  ○ Radishes
  ○ Turnips
  ○ Carrots
  ○ Different varieties and colors of each
  ○ Very popular crops
    • Especially with restaurants
  ○ Beets and carrots growing times are longer
    • Less turnover of beds
  ○ Radishes and turnips
    • 21-28 day growing cycle
    • Could potentially grow more of these than greens if you have the market for them
    • Sells very few at the Farmers’ Market
    • Sales are mainly to restaurants
  ○ All root crops are grown to “Baby” size
    • Shorter days to maturity
    • Command a higher price when this size
    • This is the size that restaurants want
    • Coreless carrots
    • Radishes and turnips grown to ping-pong ball size

• Summer Crops
  ○ Primarily tomatoes
    • Grown in greenhouses
  ○ Categories of tomatoes grown
    • Cherry
    • Saladette
      • Plum-sized
• Roma
  ▪ San Marzano
  ▪ Saucing or canning
• Heirloom
  ▪ Oxhearts
  ○ Pattypan squashes
    ▪ Picked small
    ▪ Command a much higher price
  ○ Peppers
  ○ Eggplants
• Herbs
  ○ Smallest amount of crops grown
  ○ Basil
    ▪ Available to sell mid to late May
  ○ Parsley
  ○ Cilantro
    ▪ Spring and fall
    ▪ Bolts quickly
• Micro-greens
  ○ Command a very high selling price
  ○ Only need 400 sq. ft.
  ○ Can be grown in:
    ▪ Greenhouse
    ▪ In your house
      ▪ Garage
      ▪ Basement
    ▪ Workshop
  ○ Production scales easily
  ○ Turnover of crop is 10-14 days
  ○ A specialty crop
  ○ Less market demand
  ○ Not common
  ○ Expensive
    ▪ Require a lot of seed
  ○ Are high risk
  ○ Popular at the Farmers’ Market

**Unit 02 - Greens**

Spring Mix
• Largest volume of crops
• Sells to both the market and to chefs
• Variety of ingredients in the mix
• Convenient to grow
• Ingredient ratio can vary
  ○ Flexible
  ○ Varies by what is available to harvest
• Mix Ratios
  ○ Restaurant Mix
    • Bolder flavor
    • Lots of color
    • Varied shapes and texture
    • 50% Lettuce
      ▪ Red
      ▪ Green
    • 50%
      • Arugula
      • Mustards
      • Beet greens
      • Mizuna
        • At times
      • Red Russian Kale
        • At times
  ○ For the Farmers’ Market
    • Makes a less spicy mix
    • Mainly lettuce
    • Mizuna
    • Beet Greens
• Chefs like it because it is already mixed
• High-end restaurants don’t like it
  ○ It’s too easy to make a salad with a mix to justify a high-end restaurant price
• Number 1 product at the Farmers’ Market
• One of the earliest crops available at the market

Salanova Lettuce
• From Johnny’s Seeds
  ○ Only supplier in the US and Canada
• Expensive seed
• Hybrid
• When it gets bigger the leaves don’t get bigger
  ○ People don’t want large leaves
  ○ Rather than the leaves getting bigger as the head grows, it grows more leaves
• Harvest with a knife
  ○ A new head will grow back
• Sometimes in the summer sold standalone

Mustard Greens
• Red Giant Mustard
• Bolts quickly
  ○ 2-3 cuts per planting in spring and fall
  ○ 1 cut in the summer
  ○ Arugula is the same
• Why added it to the salad mix:
  ○ Adds Color
  ○ Adds Flavor
    • Spicy

Beet Greens
• Great summer green
• Planted mid-May
• Direct seeded
• Red Wonder Beet
  ○ Green and red stem
• Bull’s Blood Beet
  ○ Darker red stem
• Planted like a green
• Will not form beet roots
• Get many, many cuts/planting
  ○ Up to 10
• Have to keep on them
• Plant shorter beds
• Harvest the whole bed at once
• Harvest when around 3"

Mizuna
• Doesn’t grow in the summer
• Low yielding crop
• Hard to keep clean with multiple cuts per planting
  ○ Best way to harvest is to cut by hand
    • Time consuming
    • Inefficient
• Curtis is growing less and less of it
• Grown for its shape
  ○ Interesting looking green
• Is never sold standalone
• Could be cut from the mix
  ○ It is a hassle to grow
• Curtis does not recommend growing this

Spicy mix
• The mix consists of whatever is ready in the fields
  ○ May change week to week
• Typical components:
  ○ Mizuna
  ○ Mustard
  ○ Arugula
• Non-lettuce based mix
• Large demand for it
• Only sold at Farmers’ Market
• Flavor is important
• Some color
• Some different textures
• All of the greens are grown separately
  ○ This is more efficient and less wasteful
    • The components have different days to maturity

Arugula
• Sells a lot of it both in mix and standalone
• Sold for flavor
• Planted every week
• Yields only 1 cut per planting in the summer
• Sold standalone
  ○ Restaurants
    • 10-20 pounds / week
  ○ Farmers’ Markets
    • 80 - 1/4 lbs. bags / week

Scarlet Frills Mustard
• Very low yielding
• Plants 1 bed every 2-3 weeks in the spring
• 1 bed or short beds in the summer
• Adds beautiful
  ○ Color
  ○ Flavor
  ○ Texture
• All for its dynamic presentation

Bok Choy
• Grown only in the spring
• Could grow longer
• Transplanted
  ○ 400 plugs every couple of weeks
• Harvested and sold as heads
• Quick growing
• Popular in both restaurants and the market
  ○ Chefs would buy it all season long if possible

Do not mix greens seeds and plant them for a mix

Lettuce types:
• Lettuce is normally sold as part of a mix
• Red Salad Bowl
• Green Salad Bowl
• Red Sails

Mustards:
• Grow fast
• Grow one bed at a time
• Harvest whole bed at a time
• Low yields

Kale
• Varieties grown:
  ○ Red Russian
    • Quick growing
    • Many cuts / planting
      ▪ Over 10
    • Seeded densely
    • Make sure that the bed is totally weed free before planting
    • Very popular
    • Sold to chefs as a baby crop
      ▪ Like the jagged shape
      ▪ Colors
      ▪ Holds dressing well
      ▪ Very robust
      ▪ 1" of stem at most
    • Not as much demand at the market
  ○ Winterbore
  ○ Darkbore
• Hard to get seed
• Extremely popular veggie right now
• Handpicked, not cut
• Steady crop
Primarily grown in Bi-rotational plots
- Sold in 1/2 lb. bunches
- Done by the end of July
  - High aphid pressure at that time of the year
  - Replaced by a fall crop
- Mainly sold at markets

Spinach
- Grows a lot of it
- Varieties grown:
  - Broad leaf variety
  - Baby variety
- Huge harvests
- Best as an overwintered crop due to Curtis’ climate
  - Planted during the first week of Oct.
  - Starts to harvest mid-March
- Bolts when the soil gets hot
- Doesn’t germinate or yield well in hot soil
- Sold to chefs in the early spring
  - Diverse, many uses
- Sold consistently at the market
- Getting consistent leaf sizes is difficult
- It is never added to a mix

Chard
- Steady crop
- Grown in a Bi-rotational bed
- Grown and harvested just like kale
- Bunched and sold by the bunch
- Bright Lights is the main variety
- Curtis doesn’t grow a lot
- Not very popular
- Sold to chefs and at the market
  - 10 lbs. to restaurants
  - 20 bunches at market
- Only plants one bed for the season
- High yielding
- Grows back quickly

Tatsoi
- Early Asian green
- Goes into Salad Mixes
- Never sold standalone
• First direct seeded green of the season
  ○ Seeded in greenhouses the first week of Feb.
• Called Asian spinach
• Robust
• Lots of flavor
• High yield
  ○ 1 cut may be 30 pounds
• Planted like Arugula
• Thick, same texture as Bok Choy
• Easy to harvest
• Starts to bolt in mid-May
  ○ Let it fully bolt and harvest stems
  ○ Leave it in the field for an extra week after it starts to bolt
  ○ Market the stems as Flowering Bok Choy
  ○ High-end restaurants love it
  ○ Not a big marker for the stems

Braising Mix
• Spicy Mix
• Tatsoi
• Red Russian Kale
• Only sold in the early spring

Unit 03 - Herbs

Cilantro
• Variety called Calypso
• Direct seeded crop
• Harvested and bunched in the field
• Selling price $2/bunch
• Sold to both restaurants and customers at the market
• Planted in half beds
• 1/2 bed cilantro, 1/2 bed parsley
• Harvest for 3 weeks in a row
• Plant succession planting 1 1/2 -2 weeks after the preceding one
• Curtis does not sell a lot of herbs
• Doesn’t need to be dried
  ○ Displays the bunches wet at the market
    • Helps it keep longer
• Does not like high temperatures
  ○ Need to tighten successions in warm weather
Parsley
- Treated like Cilantro for
  - Planting
  - Harvesting
  - Bunching
- Will not bolt like Cilantro
- Established beds can be covered with a poly-tunnel in the fall to extend the season
- Versatile
- Chefs love it
- Consistent demand all season

Basil
- Takes a lot more work than Cilantro or Parsley
- Must be careful with
  - Cold temperatures
  - Moisture
- Rather finicky
- Prices fluctuate greatly
- Once other growers have it the price drops
- Try to get it to market early, before everyone else
  - Mid-May
  - Sell for $16/lb.
- Prices are low in the fall
- Sells better at the market
- Is a commodity in the restaurants
  - Not worth selling if it is less than $8.00/lb.
- Sweet Basil is the best variety
- Pick the tops
  - Will create fuller plants
- Do not separate into individual leaves
- Do not pick when wet
  - It will turn black and rot
- Keep the Basil covered in a greenhouse or low poly-tunnel to keep it dry for harvesting
- Picking it will keep it from bolting
- It is possible to sell the flower buds in some instances

Dill
- Grow as Baby Dill
  - Called Fernleaf Dill
  - Expensive seed
  - Needs to seeded densely
• Sold in 2oz. Bunches
• Plant in a 10 or 12 foot bed
• Very profitable crop
• High-end restaurant product
• Demand at market is only in the fall for canning season
• High aphid pressure plant
  ○ No effective method of controlling
• Good demand from chefs

**Unit 04 - Root Crops**

**Turnips**

• Hakurei
  ○ Also called Tokyo Turnips
• Grow quickly
  ○ Grow much like a Radish
  ○ Date to maturity is only 10 days longer than a Radish
• Can grow a lot in a small space
• Chefs love them because
  ○ Of their very sweet taste
  ○ The greens are edible
  ○ The whole plant is edible
  ○ Present well
  ○ Minimal prep
• Presented with a little bit of the stem left on them
• Not as popular at the Farmers’ Market
  ○ Because of the small size, people think that they are Radishes
• The largest size grown is golf ball sized
  ○ Mainly grown to just smaller than a ping-pong ball size
• Some Chefs will take them of any size
• Also grows Scarlet Queens at the request of some Chefs
  ○ Harder to grow
  ○ Taste the same as the white ones
  ○ More prone to pest problems
  ○ Not as popular as the white turnips

**Radishes**

• Three (3) Varieties:
  ○ French Breakfast
    • One of the first crops of the season
    • Germinate fast
    • Grow fast
    • Get woody and hollow if left in the ground too long
The harvest window is short
- 3-4 days in the summer
- Longer in the spring due to cooler temperatures

Chefs love them
- Funky
- Colorful
- Unique
- Mild in flavor

- Easter Egg
  - Most grown variety at Curtis’ farm
  - Colorful
  - Dynamic
  - Funky
- White Icicle
  - Does not grow as many of these
    - Grown for specific Chefs
    - 1 bed every two weeks
    - Not as much demand for these
  - Unique
  - There are some challenges to growing these
    - Sometimes they grow crooked
    - Will grow very large
    - Greens will break off
  - Very watery

These are uncommon varieties
- Not seen in grocery stores

Sells hardly any at the market
- 10 bunches

Sells 400 bunches/week to restaurants

Versatile
- Slice very thin
- Shredded
  - Sushi
- Braised
- Roasted

Available most anytime during the year

Beets
- Golf ball sized for restaurants
- Work better direct seeded than transplanted

Thin harvests them
- Harvest the perfect size
- Go back and harvest when the next batch is the proper size
Repeat
May harvest 1 bed for up to 3 weeks

- Beet varieties
  - Golden
    - Very popular
    - Don't bleed their color
    - Much like the Red Beets
  - Red
    - Very popular
    - Good for cooking
    - Color bleeds
      - A salad will turn red from the color running
  - White
    - Least popular
  - Candy Stripe
    - Popular
- Likes growing them
- Always sells out
- Can't grow enough
- Chefs love them
- Popular at the market in the early season
  - Stops taking them to market in June
  - Too much competition in the summer
- Demand is high throughout the season from restaurants

Carrots
- Popular crop
- Can't grow enough of them
- Longer growing season
  - 75-80 days
- Can't be transplanted
- Varieties grown:
  - Rainbow
  - Mokum
  - Nelson
  - Purple Haze
  - Atomic Red
- If only growing one variety, grow Mokum
- If growing two varieties, Mokum and Rainbow
- Different carrots cannot be planted together due to different times to maturity
- Restaurants want coreless carrots
  - Medium to small carrots
  - High-end restaurants like micro-carrots
• Plants in 12 1/2 foot beds
• Very profitable product
• Often used for a special event
  ▪ Wedding
  ▪ Charity event
  ▪ Sweet 16 party
  ▪ Etc.
• Plant every month
  ○ Plant enough to last 3-4 weeks
• Carrots are more forgiving than Radishes when it comes to harvesting
• Farmers’ Markets like carrots too
• Don’t thin carrots

Scallions
• Not a large part of Curtis’ operation
• Grows Kincho variety
  ○ Consistent
  ○ Purchase from West Cost Seeds
• Red Baron
  ○ Purple
  ○ Funky
  ○ Doesn’t grow this variety any more
  ○ Good variety though
• Sells majority of crop to restaurants
• 10 - 20 bunches to the market
  ○ 4oz. Bunch
• Direct seed
  ○ 7 rows/ 30" bed
• 1 bed/month
• Takes a lot of processing work
  ○ Soak
  ○ Trim roots
  ○ Peel
• Sold by the pound to Chefs
  ○ Pencil sized
  ○ Roots removed

Grow things that you can’t find in a grocery store for Chefs

Chefs usually want some amount of greens left on root vegetables
Unit 05 - Summer Crops

Summer Crop - any crop that is a transplanted, fruiting crop
- Fruits many times during the season
- All are considered "steady" crops

Patty Pan Squash
- Summer squash
- Like a Zucchini
- Varieties
  - Sunburst
    - Yellow
  - Peter Pan
    - Light green
- Grown to the size a ping-pong ball
  - Will fruit more consistently when picked
  - Commands a higher price at this size
- By July must be picked every day or at least every other day
  - Fruit grow very quickly
  - Grow close to home for this reason
  - Curtis had his in his front yard
- Sliced in half or served whole
- Does not sell them at the market
- Chefs prefer the small sized squashes
- Larger sized can be cut up and pickled
- Sort the squash by size when harvesting
- Grow equal amounts of yellow and green

Zucchini
- Grown to small size for restaurants
- Larger go to the market
- Raven variety
- Sometimes grows yellow varieties
  - Golden Glory
- Much like Patty Pan Squash

Cherry Tomatoes
- Largest percentage of tomatoes grown on Curtis' farm
- Steady crop
- Have the longest season of the tomatoes
- Go into the ground in mid-May
- Start producing in late June
- Varieties
  - Sungolds
• One of the top sellers
• Not a Hybrid
• Don't produce as prolifically as Sakura
• Great taste
  • Taste deteriorates towards the end of the season
  • Sakura
    • Most prolific
    • Somewhat large
    • Good taste, consistent
  • Sweet Baby Girl
    • New for this year
    • Combines good traits of the two varieties above
• Everyone loves Cherry Tomatoes
• 10oz Basket for the market
• Majority are sold to restaurants
• Characteristics to look for in new varieties of Cherry Tomatoes
  • Production
  • Taste
  • Looks

Slicer Tomatoes
• Generic looking tomato
• Hybrid slicers produce prolifically
• Mountain Magic variety
  • Huge producer
  • Good flavor
• High demand
• Sold almost exclusively to Chefs

Heirloom Tomatoes
• May be a saturated market in your area
• Look for other avenues
• Oxhearts
  • Is a type of tomato not a variety
    • Comes in different colors
  • Indeterminate plants
  • Incredible production
    • 30 lbs. / plant in some cases
  • The taste is incredible
  • Good slicer
  • Good sauce tomato
Saucing tomato
- San Marzano
  - Good for canning
  - Salsa
  - Meaty, thick
  - Store well
  - Don’t bruise easily
  - Like a Roma
  - More prolific than Romas
  - More demand than for Romas
  - Need warm temperatures
- Do well at both markets and in restaurants
- 50 lbs. at a market
  - 12 or 14 oz. packages

Grow all your tomatoes in greenhouses
- Extends the season by 3 weeks
- Gets tomatoes to market 2 weeks earlier

Determinate tomatoes set fruit and ripen all at once.
- Bush like plants
Indeterminate continue to grow and set fruit throughout the season.
- Vining varieties

Peppers
- Very minor part of the business
- Grows for himself and 1 or 2 Chefs
- Varieties
  - Ace
  - Purple Islander
- 10 plants
- Inter-planted in greenhouses with tomatoes
- Low value crop
- On occasion will grow jalapenos for market
  - Used to put on the market table for marketing
  - Increases the look of abundance and variety
- The days to maturity is too long for peppers.

*** Look for niches that you can exploit with your products. In most cases, move opposite of the herd.
Unit 06 - Microgreens

Microgreens - Seeds grown until they have very small true leaves

How do microgreens affect the farm:

• Critical part of the system
• Bridge out the shoulder seasons
• Would start the season with much less income without them
• Help stabilize cash flow
• Smooths out average weekly income in the spring and fall

Sunflower Shoots

• Most popular of the microgreens
• Popular with
  ○ Fit, healthy people
  ○ Juicers
  ○ Wheatgrass shooters
• Highest yielding microgreen
  ○ 2 lbs. / 10"x20" flat @ $15.00 = $30.00 / flat
• Versatile
  ○ Use to beef up your Salad Mix
  ○ Use during the winter when lettuce production is down
  ○ Market customers like this
• Most Chefs are familiar with microgreens
  ○ Average order is 1-2 pounds
  ○ Packaged in big bags
• For Farmers’ Market
  ○ Compostable clamshells
  ○ 6oz. Bags
• Will stay viable for 2 weeks if kept dry

Pea Shoots

• Easiest to grow
• Like wheatgrass
• Not a true microgreen
• Don’t have fungus issues like Sunflower Shoots
• Seed is the least expensive
• Yield is lower than Sunflower
  ○ Just under 1lb. / tray
• Just as popular as Sunflower Shoots
• Very forgiving crop to grow
• Can be grown in unheated greenhouses
• Will stay viable for up to 2 weeks
Radish Shoots

- China Rose variety
- Mostly used by chefs
- Spicy
- Sells 10 - 2oz. bag at the Farmers' Market on occasion
- Sells 10-20 pounds to Chefs
- Yield over 1 lb. / tray
- Market customers need to educated on
  - What they are
  - How to use them
- Shortest shelf life
  - Last around 5 days
- Harvest timing is critical

Very lucrative if you have the market for them.
Low input cost
High risk crop
Date to maturity is very short
Production scales quickly

Gateway crop to bigger things

For a $1000 investment, you can get started
- Cash flow within a month
- Use the cash to expand your business

Grown to the market demand, not for growth itself

Business Plan Module 04 - The Weekly Sales Plan

Unit 01 - How Much Do You Want to Earn

- No Video

Unit 02 - What Products Will You Sell

- No Video

Unit 03 - Who Will Buy Your Product

- No Video
Unit 04 - How Much are You Earning Each Week

• No Video

Unit 05 - Create and Review the Weekly Sales Plan

• No Video

Business Plan Module 05 - The Planting Plan

Unit 01 - Crop Data - Yields & DTMs

• No Video

Unit 02 - Creating the Planting Plan

• No Video

Unit 03 - Seed Buying Guide

• No Video

Business Plan Module 06 - Branding

Unit 01 - Define Yourself

Your Name + Logo
• Can be simple
• You don’t have to make it hard

Run your proposed names past other people
You have to like the name regardless of what others think

Don’t make the name too generic
Cuteness sells
• Look for a name that fits your customer demographic

Silliness in a name usually doesn't work

Use softer lines in your logo
• Sharp lines don't have a good connotation when used in conjunction with a farming logo
Develop multiple name ideas
  • Develop the business name and decide on your name early in your farm setup process

Consider hiring a graphic designer to create your logo

Keep your website simple
Develop a Mission Statement
  • Keep it short and concise
  • Who, What, Why, How

Your values
  • Communicate your values through your actions
    ○ Demonstrate
  • Don’t be self-righteous
  • Don’t preach

You want people to come see and interact with your farm

Leverage the bio-intensive facet of urban farming

Reality and transparency are powerful concepts and create customers for life.

Unit 02 - Create a Simple Website
  • No Video

Unit 03 - Introduce Yourself to Your Customers
  • No Video

Unit 04 - Social Media

Social Media

Facebook
  • Very beneficial
  • Medium to communicate with the world at large
  • Urban farming is a unique concept
  • Having fans outside of your area helps you gain local customers
  • Educational content
    ○ Engage gardeners
      • They are good customers
• They want to learn techniques from you
  ○ Engage other urban farmers
• Urban farmers are connectors
  ○ They function as a hub
• Post pictures and videos of day to day activities on the farm

Post everything that you post to Instagram
• It can be setup to post to Facebook and Twitter at the same time.
• Curtis doesn't post to Twitter much

Instagram's limits are frustrating
• You can't post your picture directly from a PC, you must use a phone or mobile device

Hootsuite manages social media posts
• Cannot post to Instagram
• Will post to multiple social media sites

Hashtags are searchable within the particular social media platform that was used to post them

Social media can be an incredible waste of time.
• Allot yourself a certain amount of time per week for social media
• Be disciplined

Business Plan Module 07 - Business Administration

Unit 01 - Register Your Business
• No Video

Unit 02 - Bank Account
• No Video

Unit 03 - Liability Insurance
• No Video

Unit 04 - Taxes
• No Video
Unit 05 - Accounting Options

• No Video

Business Plan Module 08 - Marketing

Unit 01 - Farmer's Markets

• No Video

Unit 02 - Restaurants

• No Video

Business Plan Module 09 - The Numbers

Unit 01 - Measure Everything

• No Video

Unit 02 - Income

• No Video

Unit 03 - Expenses

• No Video

Unit 04 - Profit

• No Video

Business Plan Module 10 - Your Team

Unit 01 - The Roles

• No Video
Unit 02 - Methods of Compensation

- No Video

Unit 03 - Attracting the Right People

- No Video

Unit 04 - The Interview

- No Video

Unit 05 - Make a Selection

- No Video

Unit 06 - Hire Your New Employee

- No Video

Unit 07 - Letting Employees Go

- No Video

Unit 08 - Helping Employees Grow

- No Video