Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s
Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership
Mission Statement

To empower faith communities, farmers and neighborhoods to build rural-urban alliances and create innovative partnerships for just and sustainable food systems that promote community health.
Community Gardens

Examples

• Managed by an outside organization
• Food bank garden
• Traditional community garden
Best Practices for Community Gardens

- Committee of engaged members
- Solicit donations
- Long term sustainability plan
- Garden management plan
- Partner with other groups
Community Kitchens
Sharing your congregation’s kitchen with your neighbors
Types of Community Kitchens

• Provide “soup kitchen” meals
• Organize volunteers to make food products for food pantries
• Food literacy, preservation, and cooking classes
• Host cooking clubs
• Nurture start-up micro businesses
• Host or cater meals for other nonprofit groups
Best Practices for Community Kitchens

- Address anxiety over “control” of the kitchen
- Start small
- Create a kitchen schedule
- Discuss liability questions with your insurance carrier
- Discuss cleanliness standards and operational procedures
Benefits of Community Gardens and Community Kitchens

- Building bridges
- Social involvement
- Efficient use of space
- Building food security
- Building skills
Buying Club

Combining collective purchasing power to get wholesale prices
Farm Stands

Farmer sells goods in a faith community setting
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

• Participants pay an upfront cost for a weekly delivery of produce
• Faith communities can serve as a weekly drop-off site
Fresh Food For All

- Raise money to purchase a CSA for a family who can not afford one
- Buy leftover produce from the farm stand and donate it to a food pantry, community meal, or cooking class
- Donate unclaimed shares to a program serving low-income populations
- Federal nutrition assistance programs (SNAP, WIC, and senior’s coupons)
- Use experience to help shape public policy
Best Practices

• Think through the logistics
• Ensure there is sufficient support from your congregation
• Recruit a volunteer to be the main point person for the farmer
• Educate your congregation
• Be aware of language barriers or cultural differences
Potential Benefits

• New access points for fresh, local food
• Greater understanding of the challenges that farmers face
• Opportunity to deepen understanding of relationship to the earth and of justice issues
• Opportunity to try new foods
• Community building
• Opportunity to learn about another culture
• New marketing opportunity for farmers
Building Relationships