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## Farmer Town Hall Final Report

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# Farmer Town Hall

Delta Food System Partnership (DFSP)

December 12, 2022



## CREW Research Findings

Interviewed farmers all had very similar concerns and drivers, which is positive because we can focus on solutions and programming that can benefit everyone.

EXPANSION CONCERNS	EXPANSION DRIVERS
Human Labor	Sustainability Methods
Natural Conditions	External Resources
Equipment	Value-Added Products
Market	Strategic Planning
Aging Population	Social Media

CREW identified a potential avenue toward expansion:

### STEP 1: Assist with **Strategic Planning**

This will do three things:

- 1) Work with Farmers to identify specific gaps within the production cycle.
- 2) Identify available resources that can bridge those gaps (Steps 2, 3, and 4).
- 3) Work with Farmers to outline a timeline to reach specific milestones.

### STEP 2: Identify and Implement **Sustainability Methods**

The farmer will implement the practices and resources identified that are likely to mitigate the impact of gaps identified during the strategic planning process. Interviewed farmers will? use these methods to do the following:

- 1) Improve natural conditions.
- 2) Reduce the need for human labor.

### STEP 3: Identify and Leverage **External Resources**

External resources include people and organizations that can assist the farmer. Interviewed farmers will? use external resources for the following:

- 1) Support sustainability methods financially or technically
- 2) Increase value-added production
- 3) Expand market

### STEP 4: Optimize the use of **Social Media**

The farmer will increase their social media presence to:

- 1) Expand their market.
- 2) Increase interaction with external resources.

\*For farmers interested in pursuing this process, CREW is available to do individual strategic planning sessions with farmers. The FCM activities many of our farmers participated in, as well as data collected at this town hall will be used by The Regional Food System Partnership (RFSP), including the Mississippi Delta Council for Farm Worker Opportunities, Inc. (MDCFWOI) to develop strategies and resources to support farmers in addressing these identified gaps.\*

**Community-Driven Solutions**

Town hall participants listed four themes as their top concerns:

<b>CONCERNS</b>	<b>SOLUTIONS</b>	<b>POTENTIAL RESOURCES</b>
Human Labor	Transportation for groups of farm workers.	Dr. Pam Chapman, Boss Lady Workforce Transportation
Refrigeration	Field cooling, refrigerated vans, on-farm refrigeration	RFSP, Warehouses4Good, MS Dept. of Ag. and Comm.
Market	Market roundtable to gather producers and consumers and discuss what is needed to create a stable produce market.	CREW, Mississippi Small Business Development Center
Funding	Grant writing assistance. Grant and loan application assistance.	CREW, Mississippi Small Business Development Center, Extension

**Action Items for DFSP**

- Market Roundtable event in-person in August 2023.
- Chemical Drift Roundtable event was held on March 3, 2023. CREW will host a Chemical Drift working group meeting for those interested in September or October 2023.
- Develop a strategic plan with individual farmers who want to participate.
- Create a Facebook group for farmers participating in this project to share thoughts and resources with each other.
- Create a MS Delta Farming Resource Guide in conjunction with RFSP and MDCFWOI.