

New Roots Farm Incubator



Simeon Bakunda, originally from the Congo, is a grower with New Roots. When he moved here eight years ago, he began saving seeds from an eggplant and now grows a wide variety of vegetables for farmers markets and restaurants in the Fargo-Moorhead area.



Board members Jason Bergstrand (standing left), Verna Kragness and Noelle Harden (sitting on left) gather with 8 farmers who will be growing with New Roots Farm Incubator in the 2020 season.

New Farmers, New Roots

As commercial agriculture continues to expand across the landscape, new growers face a challenge to access affordable and suitable land for farming. The farm incubator model is one solution that removes the land access barrier, and connects growers to affordable equipment, training, and connecting to markets to develop skills to launch a business.

Verna Kragness, Executive Director of Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society in Moorhead, Minn. saw an opportunity to connect new growers with land, and founded the New Roots Farm Incubator on leased land in Dilworth, Minn. PartnerSHIP 4 Health, along with West Central Initiative has helped to fund and support their efforts.

New Roots Farm Incubator is accessible to farmers with fewer than 10 years of experience, or those who are New Americans, Native Americans, people of color, veterans, or women. Verna states that “The goal of New Roots is to create widespread opportunities to help support beginning farming efforts. We are in a food access crisis in this country, so we are trying to develop support by providing land, technical support, and coaching.”

Growing for the Future

New Roots is a critical stepping stone for beginning farmers to work toward operating a farm business. By having good records and showing some income, growers will have the opportunity to apply for loans toward a business start-up.

For more information on connecting with New Roots, contact Verna Kragness at verna.kragness@gmail.com or 218-331-4099. For more information on farm incubation, contact Jason Bergstrand with PartnerSHIP 4 Health at 701-306-5280 or Jason.Bergstrand@co.clay.mn.us.

DATE: March 2020

LOCATION: Dilworth, MN

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Jason Bergstrand
PartnerSHIP 4 Health
701-306-5280

Jason.Bergstrand@co.clay.mn.us

Verna Kragness
Northern Plains SustainableAg
218-331-4099

verna.kragness@gmail.com

