

# Food Producers & Food Production in the city of Rosemount, Minnesota



Image: [www.mgfa.org](http://www.mgfa.org)



Image: [www.ci.rosemount.mn.us](http://www.ci.rosemount.mn.us)



Image: [www.twincities.com](http://www.twincities.com)

## Analysis and Recommendations

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# Scope of Presentation

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- Background info on Dakota County agriculture
- About our research
- Overall observations, trends
- What producers told us they need
- Our recommendations for Rosemount
- Helpful tools and resources to move forward

# 2012 US Agricultural Census Farming in Dakota County

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- 892 farms / 220,000 acres farm land
- Median size 70 acres
- Primary products include beef and dairy cattle, hogs and pigs, sheep and lambs, chickens and eggs, corn, wheat
- Vegetables grown on 154 farms; 16,000 acres. Most for processing
- 17 farms market directly to retail outlets
- 28 produced value-added commodities
- 9 marketed through CSAs

[http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full\\_Report/Volume\\_1\\_Chapter\\_2\\_County\\_Level/Minnesota/st27\\_2\\_043\\_043.pdf](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1_Chapter_2_County_Level/Minnesota/st27_2_043_043.pdf)

[http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full\\_Report/Volume\\_1\\_Chapter\\_2\\_County\\_Level/Minnesota/st27\\_2\\_008\\_008.pdf](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1_Chapter_2_County_Level/Minnesota/st27_2_008_008.pdf)

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# Dakota County Changes

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## 2007

- 1065 Farms
- 246,000 acres
- 606 full owners/62,000 acres
- 298 part time/157,000 acres
- 161 tenants/28,000 acres
- Principal operator living on farm 845 farmers

## 2012

- 892 farms
- 219,000 acres
- 435 full owners/50,000 acres
- 306 part time/146,000 acres
- 151 tenants/23,000 acres
- Principal operator living on farm 690 farmers

# Who We Talked To

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- Individual Farmers in Rosemount, Surrounding Area
  - Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA)
  - Farmers Legal Action Group
  - Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture
  - Community Gardeners
  - Urban Farmers
  - Shoreview Farmers Market
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# Interview Questions

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- Food production
- Farming operations
- How the city impacts their operations
- Aspects of sustainability and resiliency
- Trends and potential areas of market growth
- Connecting producers with wholesalers



# Observations, Trends

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- Farmers value anonymity, privacy
  - Uncertain of motives
  - Prefer direct, F2F relationships with customers
- General lack of communication

Producers	Residents
City	Wholesalers
Secondary Markets	Retailers

- Altered original research goals
  - Great potential!
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# What Producers Produce

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- Corn (multiple varieties)
  - Soy and green beans
  - Onions
  - Peppers
  - Tomatoes
  - Gourds (squash, pumpkins, cucumbers, etc.)
  - VAP (honey, jams, sweet breads, pies)
  - Flowers
  - Apples
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# What Producers Need

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- **Long-term access to affordable land**
  - Short-term leases currently
  - Takes several years to build up suitable soil
  - Hard to make long-term plans/commitments with frequent moves
  - Prohibits capital investment and sector growth

# What Producers Need

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- **A community commercial-scale kitchen**
  - Value-added products most profitable
    - Jams, honey, breads, pies, pickles, frozen foods, cheese, wine, etc.
  - Common facilities, shared space
  - Private, public, or hybrid model



# What Producers Need

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- **Marketing assistance**

- Grow and promote their brands
- Engage with local residents/consumers
- Education and outreach opportunities
- Develop network of relationships

# What Producers Need

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- **More sales outlets**
  - Stay close to fields
    - Multiple trips inconvenient, costly
    - Time away = less production
  - Local retailers/wholesalers
  - Want customers to come to them
  - One central location



# What Producers Need

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- **More communication with the city**
  - Meeting scheduling sensitivity
    - Time, day, season, harvest
  - Multiple information delivery methods
    - Fliers, paper, website, social media
  - Land management issues
  - Someone at city is listening



# Recommendations

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- Partner with HAFA
  - Add new features to city's website
    - Translated in English and Hmong
    - 'Local Food' link under 'Community' tab (or similar)
      - Farmers' Market
      - Food Producers
      - Food Wholesalers
      - Where in city to buy locally-sourced foods
      - Featured producer of the week/month
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# Recommendations

- Food Hub



Diagram: [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)

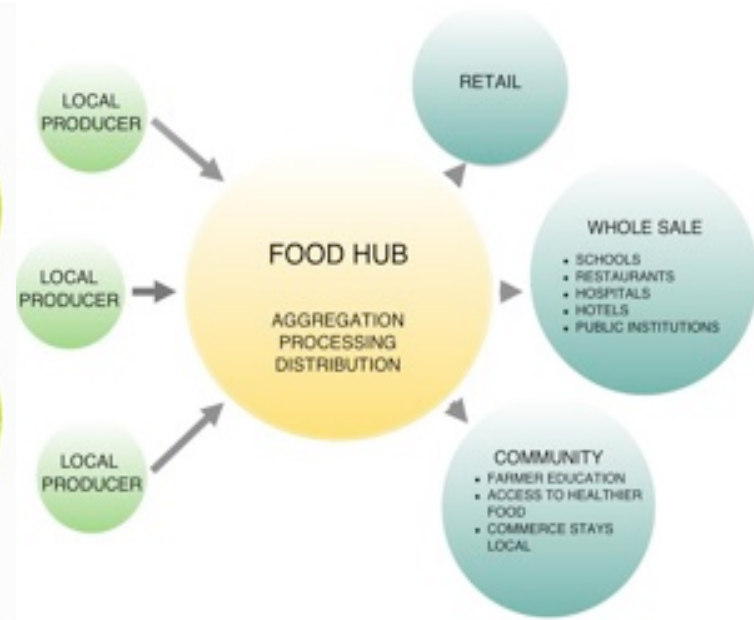


Diagram: [www.bizjournals.com](http://www.bizjournals.com)

# Recommendations

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- “Agrihood”
- UMore Park
- Host classes teaching techniques
- Online citywide cookbook
  - Locally-sourced foods/ingredients
  - Seasonal recipes
- Add local food producer venues at community events
- Encourage and enable residents to start dialogue
- All city departments: ‘Buy-local-first!’ initiative



# Helpful Tools (linked)

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- [Guide to Building Local Food Networks](#)
- [Janus Youth Programs](#) - see Village Gardens section
- ["Forget the Golf Course, Subdivisions Build Around Farms"](#)
- [A Community-Based Food System: Building Health, Wealth, Connection, and Capacity as the Foundation of Our Economic Future](#)
- [Food Forest Farm](#)
- [Regional Food Hub Resource Guide](#)
- [Building Successful Food Hubs](#)
- [Minneapolis Community Kitchens](#)
- [Minnesota Institute of Sustainable Agriculture](#)
- [Farmers' Legal Action Group](#)
- [Land Stewardship Project](#)
- [Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education](#)

# Thank You!

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