



## Marketing Strategies for New Organic Farms

**Project Director:** Christopher Brown – Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association (ALBA)

**Situation:** This project addressed marketing risks faced by beginning and socially-disadvantaged (BSD) farmers as they launched and scaled-up farm businesses. The project provided intensive, land-based training in food safety and marketing strategies to a target audience of 75 aspiring and existing farmers in ALBA's farm incubation program in Salinas, California.

The program provided hands-on technical assistance in crop planning, quality control, and food safety to qualify for entry into markets. In addition, farms were assisted in identifying and establishing sourcing relationships with new clients and helping streamline procurement.

By providing a window into the marketing barriers faced by start-up, small-scale organic farms operating in California's competitive and highly regulated agriculture sector, the project demonstrates the farm management potential of underserved immigrant farmworkers and their ability to overcome barriers with dedicated risk management assistance at early stages of farm enterprise development.

Methods of delivery included four workshops, two panel discussions, and at least 50 one-on-one consultations on marketing and food safety compliance. Two workshops focused on market strategy development using a new tool which aids in decision-making. Panel discussions featured ALBA alumni sharing their experiences in marketing produce through various sales channels. David Mancera Business Consulting met with 20 farmers on marketing strategy, complementing ALBA's field monitoring of farmers' crop quality and packing. Two more workshops introduced farmers to food safety compliance standards and record-keeping, followed by one-on-one technical assistance with Carlson Food Safety Consulting in preparing for 3rd party food safety certification.

**Outcomes:** As a result of this project: 75 Farmers gained knowledge on the pros and cons of various marketing channels and on how to develop a marketing strategy; 55 Aspiring and start-up farms at various phases developed marketing strategies to enable scale-up; 80 Farmers learned about food safety fundamentals, plans, compliance requirements and record-keeping; 32 Farmers obtained third party food safety certification and 32 Farmers kept records documenting food safety related actions.

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**"More buyer-seller mixers and marketing workshops, please! It is much easier to meet buyers on the farm and show them our fields than by calling."**

**– California Producer**

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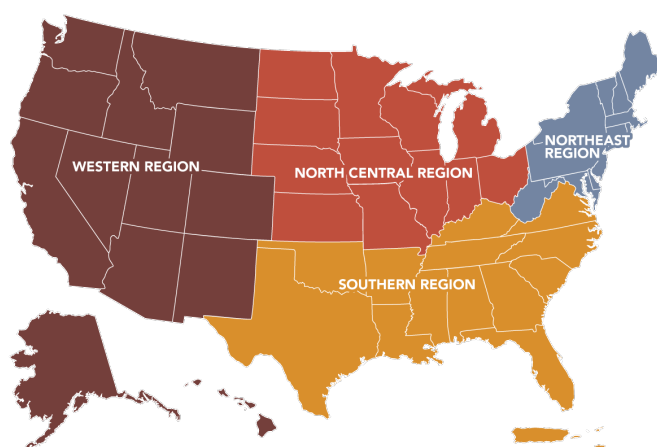
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## “Educating America’s farmers and ranchers to manage the unique risks of producing food for the world’s table.”

**Extension Risk Management Education (ERME)** is delivered through four regional centers that provide grant funding and leadership within their regions.

Projects are producer-focused, results-based and encourage public-private partnerships. Funded projects must identify targeted results that will help producers manage risk and then describe how the project will measure those results.

Extension Risk Management Education has funded innovative programs that have generated tangible results for producers in every state. ERME is committed to funding results, providing transparent accountability, and encouraging collaboration. View the accomplishments of all funded projects on our website.  
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