

# Diversifying Income Through Value Added Grain Infrastructure

John & Halee Wepking



MEADOWLARK  
ORGANICS

- Bickford Farms: adding value to the enterprise as a succession plan
- Lonesome Stone Milling & Value Added Producers Grant (VAPG), becoming Meadowlark Organics
- Community infrastructure, education, & sourcing

# Our origins





# Our *Why?*

## 3 pillars:

- Ecology and Soil Health
- Human Health
- Economic Vitality









PERENNIAL  
LEGUMES/HAY



CORN



BUCKWHEAT



WHEAT, RYE & SPELT



BEANS:  
SOY/DRY



OATS/PEAS/SUCCOTASH



SPRING WHEAT



PASTURE



# Vertical integration

*Diversified organic farm*



*Stone ground flour mill*

# Considerations

- Financial investment
- Labor resources
- Distribution
- Organic certification



# Benefits of Diversified Sourcing

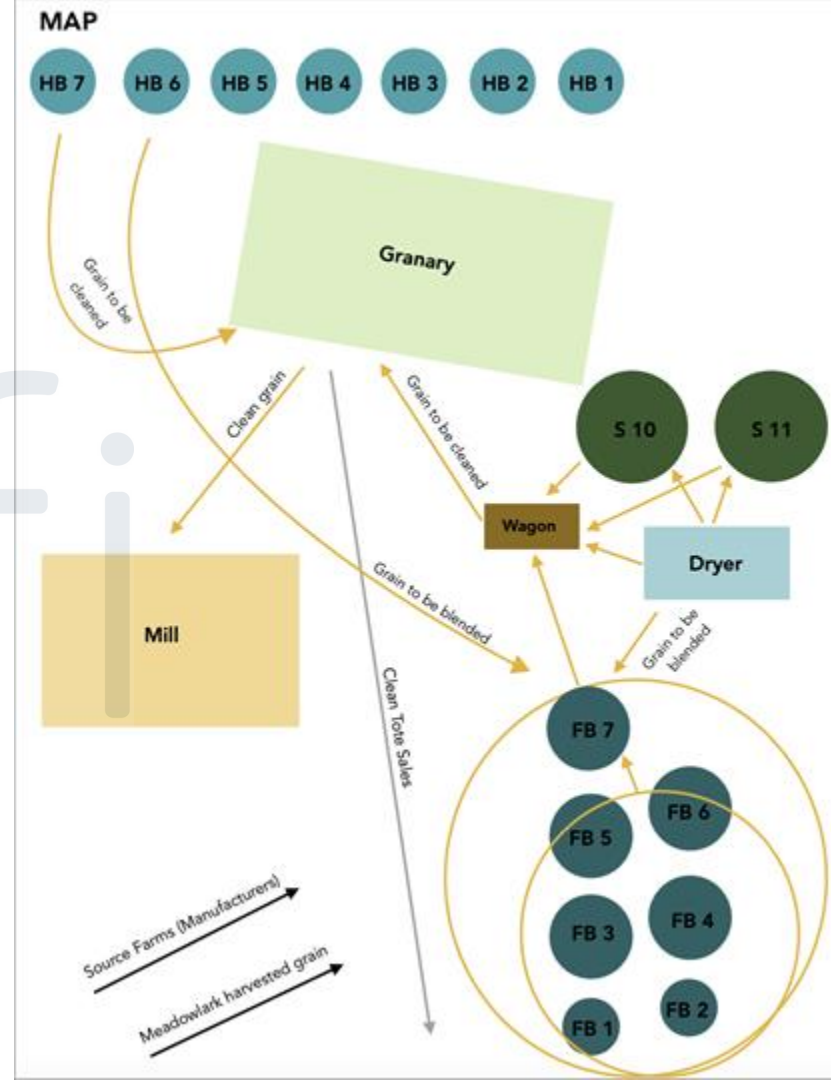


- Consistent, reliable grain supply
- Channels diverse grains into our foodshed
- Provides added revenue stream to neighboring farms
- Prioritize transparency and integrity



# How we get it done

- Repurpose existing infrastructure
  - Dryer
  - Silos
  - Granary building
- Purchase used equipment
  - Grain bins
  - Grain cleaning equipment
- Do the work ourselves
- RFSI grant















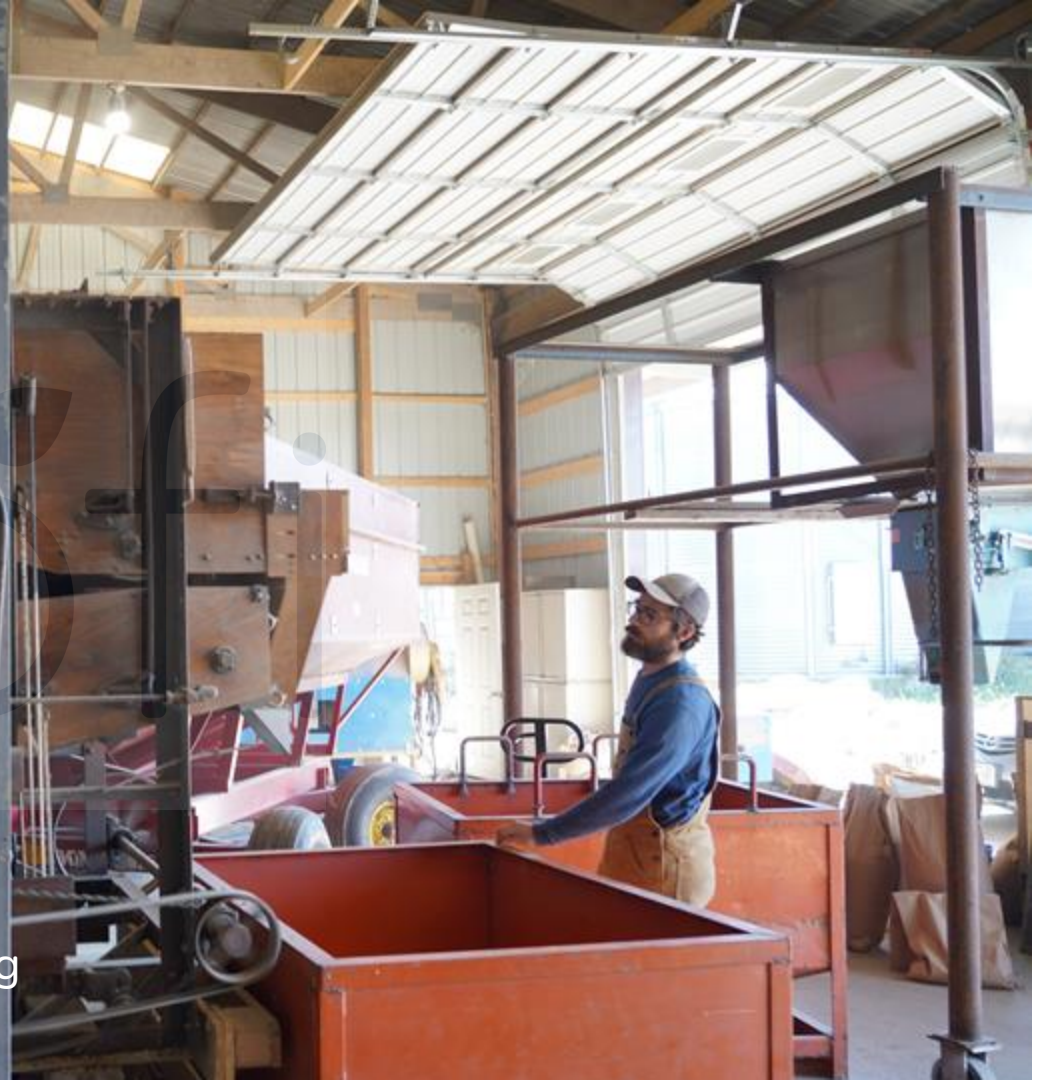






# Tier One: Granary

- Cleaning grain on farm
- Food grade premiums
- Seed selection
  - regional adaptation
  - In house seed
- Lab testing
- Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) impact on grain cleaning





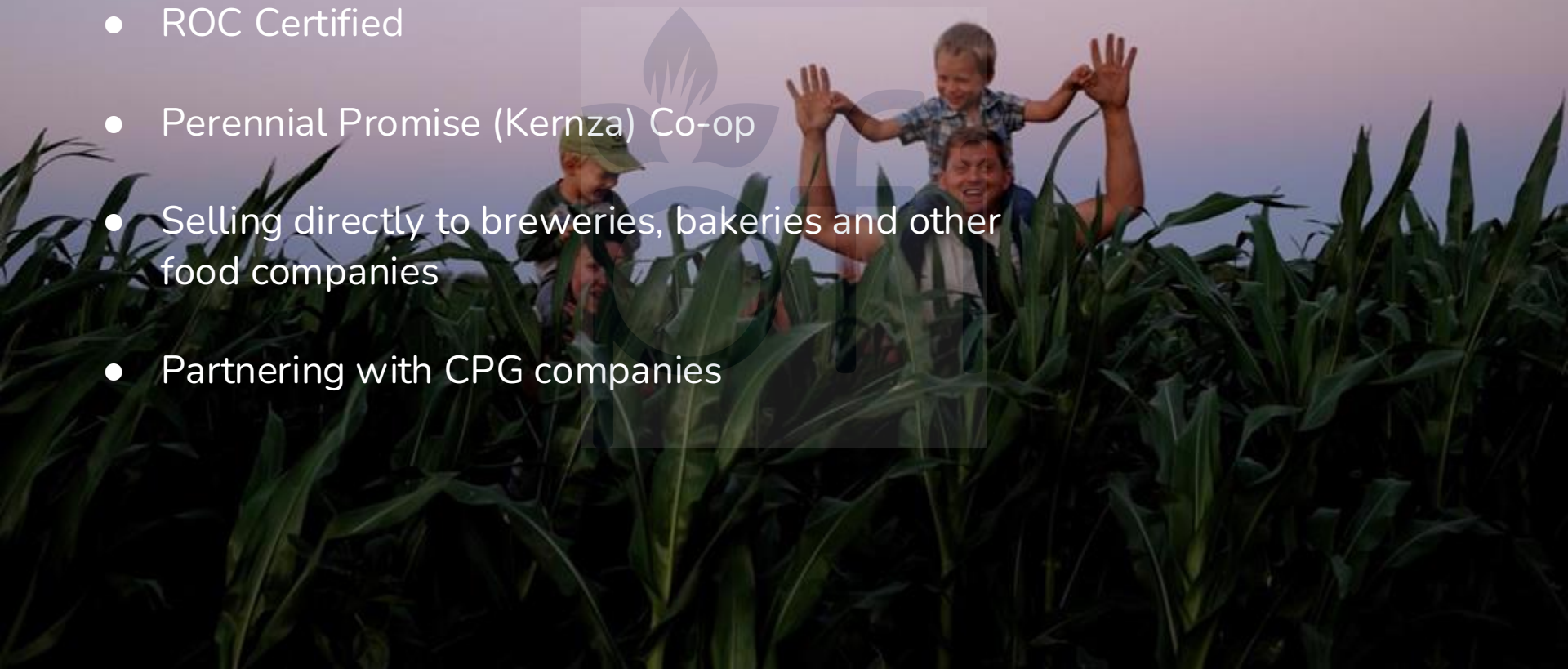
## Tier Two: Whole Grain Processing

- 50 lb bags and 2K lb totes
- High value grains into culinary market
- Organic compliance, OSP handling requirements



# Example: A Frame Farm, Minnesota

- ROC Certified
- Perennial Promise (Kernza) Co-op
- Selling directly to breweries, bakeries and other food companies
- Partnering with CPG companies



# Tier Three: Wholesale & Retail Flour Brand

- Customer service:  
Bulk & Direct to  
Customer
- Marketing
- Food Safety  
compliance
- Distribution





# Farm to flour at different scales



# Farm to Distillery/Brewery





# Farm to Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG)

**teffola**<sup>®</sup>  
NUTTY TEFF GRANOLA



# Another model – stacked enterprises, shared ownership





Thank you!



# Recommended Resources & Contact Information

Artisan Grain Collaborative



Meadowlark Farm and Mill

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# abstract

Grain farms are often reliant upon concentrated income generated on a seasonal basis, while expenses remain constant year-round. Value-added solutions can diversify income streams and increase the resilience of an operation, and can be as focused as a seed-cleaning enterprise or as robust as a full-service flour mill. John and Halee Wepking of Meadowlark Farm and Mill will share what they've learned on their journey to becoming a vertically integrated diversified grain farm.

Notes:

Considerations, Benefits and Challenges:

- Scale
- Financial investment: equipment, branding, labor
- Labor requirements
- Distribution
- Organic certification

-include farm map from RFSI

-growers map to demonstrate grain supply.

-providing ex's of others doing this- look at AGC network (Mud Run Farm, Janie's Mill)

Available resources: AGC- include a handout to share at PFI- look on AGC website