



Miles Smith Farm Loudon, NH

Small-scale beef producer aggregates cattle from nearby farms to open up meat sales at local hospitals and other institutions.

AMS GRANTS AWARDED

Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) 2012,
Grant for \$70,735

Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) 2014,
Implementation grant for \$92,120

Project types: General Market Analysis, Marketing
Materials, Equipment & Labor Costs for Start-Up
Businesses

HISTORY OF BUSINESS OR PROJECT

Miles Smith Farm is a 36-acre farm near Concord, New Hampshire owned by Carole Soule and Bruce Dawson. The 36 acres combines part of a farm owned by Miles Smith in the 1850's and two neighboring farms. The Scottish Highlander and Angus cattle they raise are pastured on the home farm and about 300 acres they lease around the state. Miles Smith Farm provides wholesale USDA-inspected beef, pork and lamb to retailers, restaurants, hospitals, and schools. They also run a historic Inn on the farm and host events.

Miles Smith Farm received two USDA AMS grants over the past decade: an FMPP grant in 2012 followed by an LFPP implementation grant in 2014. The two grant projects both aimed to develop markets with healthcare and senior facilities for local beef. Miles Smith Farm acts as the central distributor for their beef and beef from up to 5 other area farmers. The relationship with some, but not all, of the facilities has continued past the grant period.

The FMPP project's purpose was to facilitate a partnership with 20-30 New England meat producers to educate about and sell fresh, locally-raised meat to health care institutions in local food deserts.

The LFPP project's purpose was to partner with 5 New Hampshire beef producers to provide locally raised beef to health care institutions in New Hampshire. This project was more modest in scope, based on the experiences gained in the first project.

WHY THEY CHOSE TO APPLY FOR AN AMS GRANT/WHAT AN AMS GRANT MEANT FOR THEIR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION?

Carole Soule shares that she would have attempted to develop these markets even without the grant funds, but she feels she would not have been nearly as successful. The grant funds were instrumental in developing marketing materials, covering the costs of meetings, beef tastings, coordination of producers, processing, and distribution logistics. Much of the original work continues to this day, just with fewer facilities. The ones that do continue to purchase her beef do so on a regular, predictable basis.

“Marketing makes all the difference. Of course we have a great product but getting the message out is as important.”

– Carole Soule

KEY IMPACTS OF THE GRANT, SHORT-TERM AND LONGER-TERM

Miles Smith Farm has been in business for over a decade and built on their existing supply chain relationships and experience to start supplying local healthcare facilities. They recruited a set of farmers who could meet their production specifications, work directly with the processor on consistent scheduling and cutting instructions, and serve as a regional distributor. They also conducted an extensive education and outreach campaign with hospital personnel on how to incorporate local beef and different cuts into their menus. The project benefited the farmers and increased business for their processor. As of 2019, three of the four facilities are still buying from them.

WHERE THEY WOULD LIKE TO GO NEXT

Carole applied for and was denied an additional USDA AMS grant to develop a “delivery hub” where several farms combine resources to deliver their products in the region. While they continue to envision and dream of new ways to build market and income streams from their farm and for local meat producers, they are focusing on solidifying their existing customer base, creating more efficiencies, and diversifying enterprises on the farm. Organizing and hosting events on the farm, renting out farm animals for parties, and running a historic Inn are a few examples. There is no shortage of creativity at Miles Smith Farm.

REFERENCES/LINKS

<https://www.milesmithfarm.com/wholesale.html>

<https://www.milesmithfarm.com/healthy-beef-nh-healthcare.html>

<https://www.farmtoinstitution.org/story/farm-hospital-miles-smith-farm-meat>

Photo Credit: USDA

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This case study was created in fulfillment of a cooperative research agreement between the Marketing Services Division of the Agricultural Marketing Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA AMS) and Oregon State University's Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network (NMPAN).

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