



Shadow Creek Farm

Eli Hersh
Fairfax, VT

Farm description: Shadow Creek Farm is a startup market garden farm in Fairfax, VT operating on 1 acre.

Purpose of Loan: Funding for Celli spader, root washer, 30x96 high tunnel, irrigation pump, cultivating sweeps, and potato digger

In business since: 2015

Employees: 0.5

Technical Assistance: Business plan was prepared with assistance from the University of Vermont's New

Farmer Program, the Beginning Farmer Program at the Intervale Center in Burlington, VT, and independent farm consultant Mimi Arnstein of Marshfield, VT. The Carrot Project assisted with financial planning & loan application.

Sources: Shadow Creek farm business plan, prequalification, loan coversheet and loan docs.

Farm Profile: Shadow Creek Farm is a startup market garden farm in Fairfax, VT, operating on one acre. The farm sells fresh salad greens to local restaurants, as well as cucumbers, radishes and hot peppers to regional distributors and processors. Some of Shadow Creek's main customers are Vermont Pepper Works, The Bearded Frog, Lazy Farmer and Deep Root Cooperative.

Owner Eli Hersh has an extensive background in commercial produce, from organic production to retail sales to restaurant preparation. Eli trialed a pastured duck operation and settled on vegetables as a better farm profit center to develop in the long run. In addition to six seasons of experience growing organic vegetables for CSA, farmers market, and wholesale production, Eli has also spent many years turning these vegetables into prepared meals at a variety of different restaurants. Before that, he worked in retail food marketing. This full-circle experience has given him not only the basic skills necessary to run a small farm operation, but also the understanding of what makes a product valuable and convenient to commercial consumers.

Shadow Creek is a part-time enterprise that Eli operates with a lease to land and equipment from his employer, River Berry Farm. Eli is able to benefit during startup from low overhead and a supportive mentor in farmer and River Berry owner, David Marchant. Eli also benefited from assistance from UVM Extension, Intervale Center and The Carrot Project, for a variety of technical assistance during his startup. The loan provided was a mix of farm supplies and working capital needed for the first year of operations.