

How do Growing Projects Work?

Farmers Market Model



Growing Hope Globally gives US communities the opportunity to respond to global hunger from right where you are through our unique Growing Project model. Growing Projects leverage local assets and create space for learning, spiritual growth, and community building.

Gather Participants: Most farmers market Growing Projects begin by securing the commitment of a group of vendors to contribute a portion of their sales proceeds for a certain period of time. Reaching out to the farmers market director is usually a great first step.

Promote the Project: Once the vendors have committed to sharing from their sales, it is important to make the public aware of the project so they can get involved by purchasing from participating vendors. Each vendor will need a sign to indicate their involvement and/or handouts to give to shoppers that explain the impact of their purchase. News articles, social media posts and other avenues can be used to invite shoppers to come to the farmers market and show their support. This benefits both the Growing Project and the vendors.

Celebrate and Educate: A special event held at the beginning or end of the Farmers Market season is a great way to thank participating vendors. It can also be a way to invite wider community participation and generate awareness about hunger in general, or about the specific program(s) the Growing Project is supporting. This event could also be used as an additional fundraiser for the Growing Project.



Choose the Overseas Program to Support: Visit GrowingHopeGlobally.org/programs for a list of all of the overseas programs currently in need of funding. You decide how your donations are used. Donations can be given to support specific programs or church related partners, or the overall work of Growing Hope Globally. It is important to let supporters know how their donations made an impact through e-mails, thank you notes, or newsletters.

If you are interested in making a lasting difference for people suffering from hunger, please contact us. We want to welcome you and provide you with support to help your project be as successful as possible. Together we are living out our faith, loving our neighbors, and growing lasting solutions to hunger.

Gainesville FL Growing Project

Farmers Market Model Example

The United Church of Gainesville serves as the coordinator of this Growing Project. Each year their committee selects the program they are going to support and sets their fundraising goals. In 2020, they decided to focus their efforts on Guatemala. The church collects donations toward their Growing Project throughout the year through online giving.

Each year, the committee reaches out to the farmers market director so they can set up an informational meeting for all of the vendors about Growing Hope Globally and share how the Growing Project works. At the meeting, they ask vendors to consider committing a percentage of their profits toward their selected program during the month of October.

In October, the Growing Project volunteers set up a table at the farmers market with information about Growing Hope and the project they have chosen to support. Each participating vendor displays a poster indicating that a portion of purchases made in their booth will support farmers in Guatemala and encouraging shoppers to stop by the table to learn more.



In early November the committee holds a dinner to celebrate the completion of the project for the year. All who plan to attend are asked to fast for a day before the event and then contribute what they would have spent on food toward the designated program. The fast ends with the celebration meal.

Getting Started

1. Reach out to us at Info@GrowingHopeGlobally.org to get connected with a local staff person. You can also find upcoming opportunities to learn more at GrowingHopeGlobally.org/events
2. Brainstorm a list of names of other people in your community that might be willing to be part of your Growing Project Team. Farmers market leadership and vendors are critical to the success of a project, but so are people that can manage outreach efforts, track receipts, seek donations, or coordinate events. Get together and see what ideas you can develop.
3. Once you have a plan, reach out to community members for support. Churches, local businesses, and civic groups are all good places to start.
4. Most importantly, get started this year. Nothing creates excitement like a plan that is in motion, especially when it is going to support a great cause.

FFA Chapter Resources

Getting Started Checklist

We've found that it's best to start a new Growing Project at the beginning of the second semester of the school year. Create a calendar of when you want to complete the following:

- ☐ Complete activities A1 - A6 in the International Agricultural Development SAE for All Career Kit to familiarize yourselves with terminology, career paths, and the challenges farmers face around the world.
- ☐ Visit GrowingHopeGlobally.org. Watch a webinar under the "Get Involved" tab to get inspired about the kind of programs your Growing Project could support. Read about our overseas programs under the "Support a Program" tab.
- ☐ Work as a chapter to write down your "why". Supporters will be excited to help if they know why your chapter wants to respond to world hunger.
- ☐ Brainstorm about people in the community that might want to participate in a Growing Project. Are there farmers market vendors, small businesses, print shops, churches, civic groups, or other organizations that might be supportive?
- ☐ Select a nearby farmers market to partner with. Consider proximity to school and size of the market. The more vendors who participate, the more funds you will raise.
- ☐ Make sure everyone in your chapter has a role to play in the project. Form committees that are responsible for Marketing and Communications, Record Keeping, and External Relations. Sample committee descriptions are available on the following page.
- ☐ Begin outreach efforts. Prepare a presentation, brochure or letter to share with the director of the farmers market, vendors, and other potential supporters. Be ready to explain what you are hoping they will contribute. Your presentation and letter should include: why your chapter is starting a Growing Project, an overview of your project, what you are asking them to donate, how their donation will be utilized, and how funds raised in the project will be used.
- ☐ Communicate with participating vendors to see how they'd like your chapter to work with them throughout the year, for example weeding or harvesting. This can attract more vendors and is an opportunity to learn more about the crops they grow.
- ☐ Plan and host a celebration event. Invite supporters to join you for an event where you thank them for their support and update them on how the funds raised will be used. If your chapter plans to continue your project next year, let them know. The wider community could also be invited to this event and it could be used as an additional fundraiser for your Growing Project.
- ☐ Choose the overseas program(s) you want to support with your Growing Project proceeds. Visit GrowingHopeGlobally.org/programs for a list of programs that need funding. Once you have made your decision, fill in a Growing Project Designation Form and send it to Growing Hope along with your proceeds.
- ☐ Create a report on your project. An end of year report can be helpful for students that do the project in the future.

FFA Chapter Resources

Sample Committee Role Descriptions

We've found that Growing Projects are most successful when everyone has a clear job to do. Planning well and assigning responsibilities enables the project to run smoothly and keeps supporters engaged throughout the year. You may need to create additional committees or assign additional tasks to complete everything your chapter wants to accomplish in your Growing Project.

External Relations Committee:

- With the rest of the chapter, brainstorm a list of businesses, organizations and individuals that can be asked to support the Growing Project with in-kind or cash donations. Develop a calendar that assigns responsibility to specific committee members for contacting each potential donor.
- Develop a plan for following up with each supporter. Do you want to send letters, emails, or make phone calls to update them on the project during the growing season?
- With the marketing and communications team, develop a presentation to share with potential supporters that explains your Growing Project and your chapter's goals.
- Create a list of tasks that the participating vendors want assistance with and make a sign-up sheet for dates when students can volunteer to help.

Record Keeping Committee:

- Create a budget for the project and a plan for tracking gifts, income, and expenses.
- Track the hours spent by each committee on the project.
- Collect the proceeds from each vendor at the end of the specified time period.
- Fill out the Growing Project Designation Form and send it along with your proceeds to Growing Hope Globally once you have chosen which program(s) to support.

Marketing and Communications Committee:

- Develop a marketing plan and calendar. Think through the marketing resources your group might need (signs, fliers, brochures, news articles, social media posts, etc.), and determine when they will be needed. Assign each item to a specific committee member.
- Ask the external relations team what they will need for reaching out to the community
- Consider which events in the Growing Project might be newsworthy (opening day of the farmers market, year-end summary of participation, or celebration event) and spread the word by doing social media posts and sending a press release to your local media outlets in advance.
- Find ways to publicly thank the supporters of your Growing Project
- Do you want to post a metal Growing Hope Globally sign to spread the word about your Growing Project? Growing Hope can provide you with a logo sign if you are interested.

Other possible Committees:

- Education and Events Committee: Plans and manages the celebration and other community events to raise awareness of hunger or the importance of food and agriculture, etc.
- Vendors Committee: With larger projects, assigning a dedicated team to work with vendors might make sense.