

# How do Growing Projects Work?

## Dairy and Livestock 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.

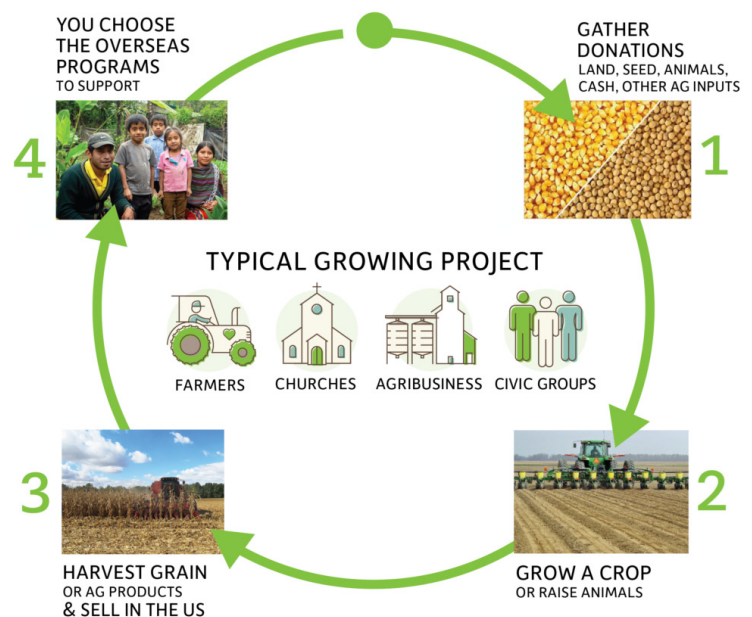
**Gathering Donations:** Most dairy or livestock Growing Projects begin with the commitment of local farm(s) to donate the milk or meat from one or several of their animals. Others have the opportunity to participate by “sponsoring” the animals or contributing toward their care. It is important to know how many animals are being contributed and how much it costs to feed and care for them. Donations might include veterinary services and supplies, feed and feed delivery services, nutritionist services and more. Donations can be in-kind or cash. Churches, civic groups, and agribusinesses are usually happy to help when they know what is needed.

**Raising the Animals:** The farmers in the project raise the animals as usual along with the rest of their herd. In the case of dairy projects, the milk need not be separated out - simply take the average production and multiply it by the number of animals involved. For meat animals, when they reach market weight, they can be sold through usual channels or they can be butchered locally and the meat can be offered for sale as an additional fundraiser.

**Celebrate and Educate:** Dairy or livestock Growing Projects provide a wonderful opportunity to educate the larger community about what farming is really like. A Farm Day celebration can be held to generate continued interest in the Growing Project and encourage non-farmers to learn more about agriculture.

**Calculating the Proceeds:** Farmers may or may not choose to actually use the donations generated by the project to care for the animals. In some situations, the animals are merely symbolic and are utilized to generate wider community engagement. In these cases, the sponsorship funds, and in-kind animal are monetized along with the milk or meat donation and all are contributed to the Growing Project. It is helpful for the farmers, suppliers, community organizations and others involved to meet two to four times a year to tally all of the donations, set sponsorship goals for the following year, etc.

**Choose the Overseas Program to Support:** Visit [GrowingHopeGlobally.org/programs](http://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.



# Red Arrow Dairy Growing Project

## Dairy and Livestock Model Example

In Southern Michigan, three churches, one dairy and five suppliers work together to raise funds for Growing Hope Globally. Grace, Heritage and Third Christian Reformed Churches in Kalamazoo raise funds to “rent” five cows from Red Arrow Dairy, located in Hartford, MI. The “rent” money is actually contributed directly to the Growing Project. The dairy continues to own, house, feed and milk the cows and donates their milk. They also connect with their veterinarian, animal health, nutritional and feed suppliers, inviting them to contribute to the program. The churches, dairy and suppliers each contribute about 1/3 of the total and the resulting impact is more significant than any of them would be able to do on their own.

The group comes together for a special Day at the Dairy event every other year. In addition to being a celebration of the way the group works together to address hunger, it provides an opportunity for families from the suburban churches to learn more about the dairy industry and see where their food comes from. The event includes hay rides, milking parlor and calf barn tours and even opportunities to watch a calf be born!



## Getting Started

1. Reach out to us at [Info@GrowingHopeGlobally.org](mailto:Info@GrowingHopeGlobally.org) to get connected with a local staff person. You can also find upcoming opportunities to learn more at [GrowingHopeGlobally.org/events](http://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 are critical to the success of a project, but so are people that can manage outreach efforts, track receipts, seek donations, or coordinate events like Farm Day celebrations. Get together and see what ideas you can develop.
3. Once you have a plan for how many animals are going to be involved, and have calculated the costs to raise them, reach out to community members for support. Churches, local agribusinesses, agricultural associations and civic groups are all good places to start.
4. Most importantly, get started as soon as possible. Nothing creates excitement like a plan that is in motion, especially when it is going to support a great cause.