

# Growing Tomatoes Outdoors for Processing

Tim Wilcox

*Kitchen Garden Farm, Sunderland MA*



# Our Farm

- Located in Pioneer Valley, MA
- Started 2006 with 1 acre
- Now growing on 60 acres, 40 acres crops (10 acres dedicated to value-added crops)
- Wholesale Organic Vegetables
- Value-added products



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# Our Product Line

- Sriracha: Original, Habanero, & Ghost Pepper
- Salsa: Tomatillo & Roasted Chili
- Passata (tomato puree)
- Giardiniera (mixed pickled veg)
- Dried Whole Chilies (10 types)
- Chili Powders (smoked paprika, chili flakes, chipotle powder)
- Dried Herbs (oregano, thyme, sage, & rosemary)



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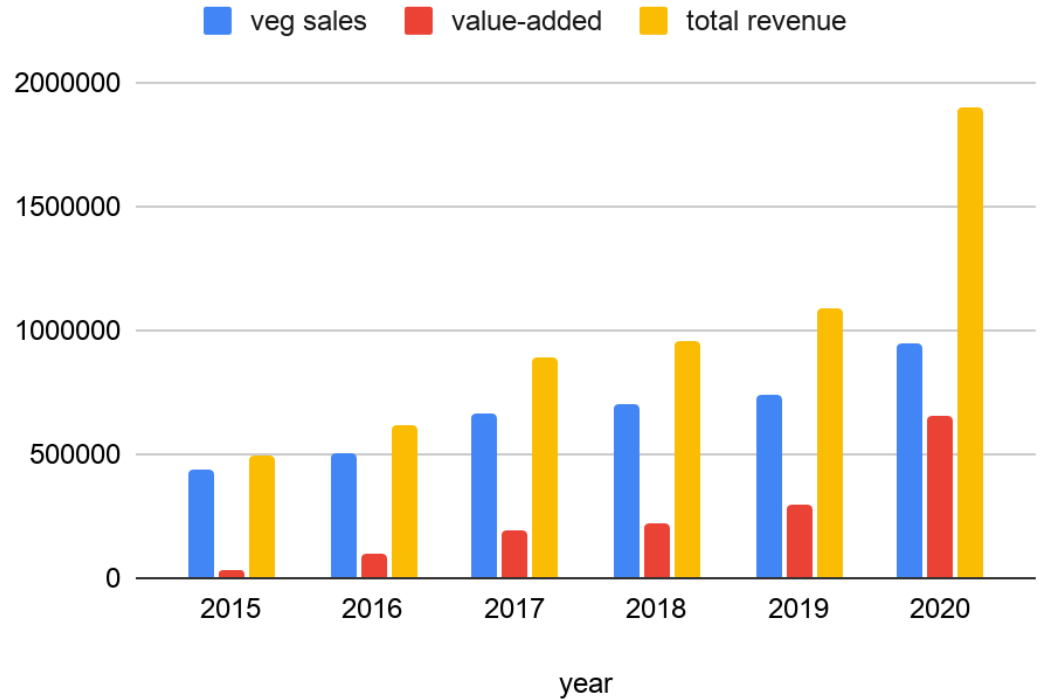
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# Our Farm Business

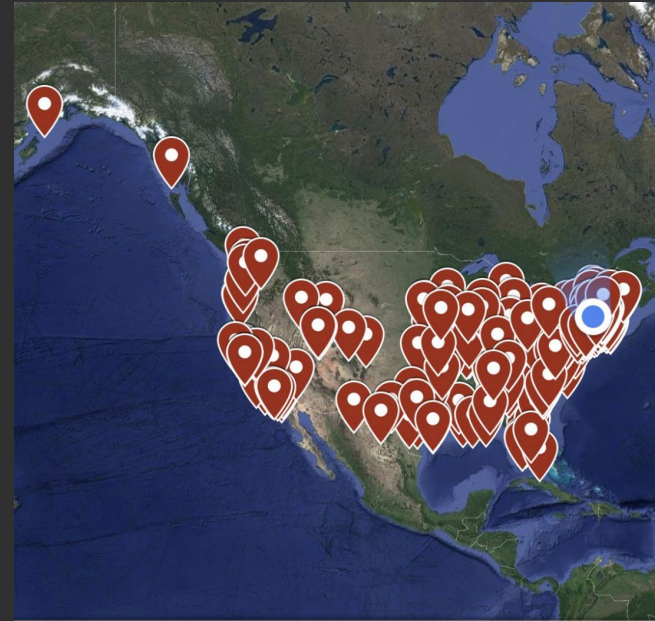
- Value-added products as a share of the business have increased even as vegetable sales have increased
- Value-added products have allowed us to tap into a vast market of specialty food retailers
- Our goal has been to grow the company without adding additional cropped acreage

veg sales, value-added and total revenue



# Market Opportunity

- Not a lot of other farms competing in this space
- Products nonperishable, can be easily shipped nationwide
- Compared to Farmers Markets and CSA, the market is vast and untapped
- Our products are sold in all 50 states, with California being one of our biggest markets
- More profitable, theoretically scalable



## Kitchen Garden Farm Store Locator

Please call ahead to make sure our products are in stock before visiting a store

[VIEW MAP LEGEND](#)



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# Biggest Challenges

- Requires running a second business
- Requires warehouse, cold storage, and production infrastructure\*
- Requires up-front working capital for labor, packaging, etc, with delayed payback
- Requires additional seasonal labor
- Regulatory compliance
- Risk to crops
- Limited time during harvest season

\*There are many different grants to support building infrastructure



# Growing for Processing

- Has significant advantages over growing for wholesale or markets, or even CSA
- Grow a lot of one thing, harvest it all at once
- Makes everything from seed through harvest more efficient
- 1 person can pick about 1,000 lbs of tomatoes in 5 hours
- Straight run produce comes into kitchen, 100% used, no waste
- Don't make the mistake of trying to make products out of 2nd quality only





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# Varieties We Grow: San Marzano

- Tiren (Johnny's Seeds) for overall best yield and disease resistance
- Bengala (Salerno Seeds/TopSeed) for appearance, fresh sales
- Centopercento (Salerno/TopSeed) for making whole peeled tomatoes, flavor and texture 100%
- All indeterminates, staked





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- To get the Italian seed varieties email Etulia at [sales@salernoseeds.com](mailto:sales@salernoseeds.com)
- To view full commercial line visit [www.topseed.info](http://www.topseed.info)
- These seeds are the real deal, commercially produced and used by growers in the DOP region





## Passata (strained tomato puree)

- 2,000 lb tomatoes
- Wash, chop, heat, strain
- Pass through mill
- Reheat, add salt & lemon
- Bottle at 195F



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- There are a lot of additional costs (labor, packaging, utilities, facilities)
- We sell 1 jar for \$6
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Tomatoes cost of Production

Seed to planting	amount	unit	cost per unit	total
Seed cost	8	M	55	\$440.00
Potting soil, VC	0.5	sling	800	\$400.00
Trays (multi use)	160	50 cell	0.375	\$60.00
Seedling labor	30	hours	18	\$540.00
Tractor expense	12	hours	50	\$600.00
Operator labor	12	hours	18	\$216.00
Fertilizer	50	bags	28	\$1,400.00
Plastic Mulch	4	rolls	120	\$480.00
Drip Tape	3	rolls	160	\$480.00
Planting Labor	36	hours	18	\$648.00
<b>Total Planting Cost</b>				<b>\$5,264.00</b>
<b>Maintenance</b>				
Stakes (multi-use)	4000	stakes	0.75	\$3,000.00
twine	16	box	8	\$128.00
Staking, 1st pass	160	hours	18	\$2,880.00
Staking, subsequent	50	hours	18	\$900.00
Cultivation/Mowing	12	hours	18	\$216.00
Grass seed	1	Bag	50	\$50.00
Mower & Fuel	1		100	\$100.00
Spraying, Chemicals	3	times	50	\$150.00
Spraying labor	6	hours	22	\$132.00
Cleanup Labor	80	hours	18	\$1,440.00
Disposal	1	Estimate	200	\$200.00
<b>Total Maintenance</b>				<b>\$7,556.00</b>
Harvest	(1 person+ 8 hours=1000 lb)			
Harvest labor	480	hours	18	\$8,640.00
Truck & Fuel	\$25	per day	24	\$600.00
Crates (multi-use)	250	crates	\$0.50	\$125.00
<b>Total Harvest</b>				<b>\$9,365.00</b>
<b>Total Production Cost</b>				<b>\$22,185.00</b>
<b>Total Yield (lb)</b>				<b>60000</b>
<b>Cost per pound</b>				<b>\$0.37</b>

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