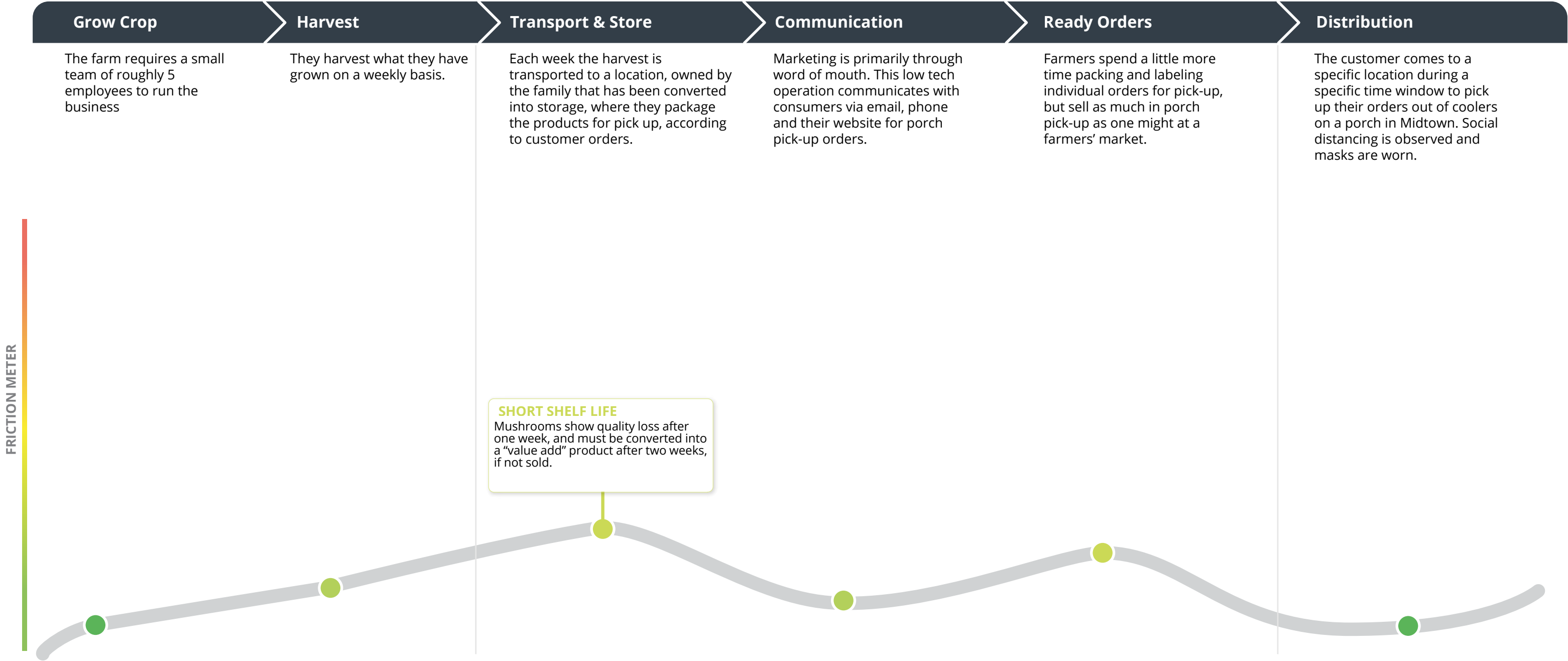


# Crop Farmer Journey | Geospatial Hackathon 2020

For the crop farmer journey we spoke with an employee of a local mushroom farm, who was furloughed at the beginning of the pandemic due to the loss of restaurant buyers. After beginning to sell directly to consumers via co-ops and CSAs, the farm is actually making more money than before the quarantine, and our farmer is back to work.

The interview participant expressed that the assumption Covid-19 had a negative impact on his business is false. He works with a niche product and business is better, thanks to changing business strategy because of the Covid-19 pandemic.



## INSIGHTS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Mushrooms are considered a niche market, so they do not sell the same as staple consumer produce.
- Prices are a bit higher, but it's not necessarily due to Covid-19. "We felt our prices were about as high as we could go."
- Farmer is not worried that the application needs to consider health regulations.
- Farmers are extremely mobile and may drive long hours. They need to be able to work on a desktop and a mobile phone.

## THINKING & FEELING

- Farm owners are usually in their mid-60s and not tech savvy.
- Consumers are diverse. Very few are tech illiterate. "We get the occasional 'I don't know how to' weird problems they are having with the site [from elderly customers]."
- "The real people hurting are the restaurants."
- Farmers will make relationships with chefs that go with the chef as they change jobs.
- The extra work packing the individual orders worth the return on investment.

## VALUE

The profit margins may be as slim at 10% for crop farmers. So, they have experienced applications that sought to connect them with the general public (ex. *Farmplcity*) over the years with negative outcomes, because those apps wanted to take a cut of the profits.

"The problem is that for farmers, small farmers to make a living they have to have control of the product from seed to where it gets sold to. If you lose out on the middle part you get no money or not enough money to make it worth farming."

The Wholesale side of the business has shrunk to a third of what is used to be. The direct-to-consumer exploded. The more we could grow the more we could sell. We can hardly produce things fast enough.