

## NELSON ACRES, LLC Farm Plan

Owners: Michael Donodeo and Heather Smith (soon to be Heather Donodeo)

Executive Summary: Nelson Acres is focused on a sustainable lifestyle that contributes to ecological health that incorporates wildlife preservation into its plan. The location will be near Roanoke, VA. Nelson Acres will predominately be a hobby farm with a focus on being sustainable within five years of creation. The main commercial product will be heritage, foraging swine to high-end restaurants and honey to grocery stores, and You Pick it berries and fruits. After the first five years, will explore adding CSA to the plan. Additionally, the site will include Four Seasons Bakery, owned and operated by Autumn Williams (separate business plan to be developed)

Goal: To create an ecologically sound sustainable farm based on biodynamic principles.

Requirements: 20 acre property, 8 acres cleared, 12 acres wooded, water source, preferably a creek/river with a pond. Accessible to highway. 1 acre You Pick it berries: strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries. 1 acre You Pick it orchard: heirloom apples, peaches, plums, cherries. 1 acre residence, to include kitchen garden with season vegetables, herbs, and pollinator garden. Half acre: outbuildings to house horse, goats, swine, ducks, rabbits, and chickens and tractor. Three acres pastures. Half acre: bee hives. One acre: Four Seasons Bakery

Keys to Success: Three keys to success will be vital. The first is a consistent focus on sustainability to reduce costs. As much as possible, natural processes will be used to keep costs low and promote an ecologically healthy environment. Second, will be to develop slowly. As neither owner has farmed previously, the farm growth will be broken down into stages to allow for mentorship, education without harm to livestock, and mitigate need for debt. Third will be to develop partnerships with the community, veteran and environmental agriculture programs, and schools.

Products: First product will be developing You Pick It acreage and bee hives. As pastures are prepared, livestock will be added one species at a time. After the initial five years and farm is balanced, will explore a CSA.

Market: As Heather will be a stay at mom at this time, there will be a small store on the property for the You Pick It portion and bee sales. Honey will also be marketed to local grocery stores, in particular, smaller specialty markets. Swine will be marketed to high end restaurants in the area. In the long run, we will also plan fall Pig Roast for community to encourage sales of the swine and community interaction.

Management Team: Nelson Acres will be run by Heather and Michael. Heather is a USAF veteran who has studied agriculture and animal behaviorism as a hobby for decades. She uses her .25 acre in Fairfax, VA to experiment with different plants over the last ten years. She will be able to access veteran-specific mentorship and grants, specifically from the Veterans to Farmers Program. She also is an excellent writer and will work on the marketing aspect of the farm. Michael is a Network Security Director at a local university, but has a natural talent to repair anything mechanical or design mechanical processes such as irrigation and automatic feeders. Both have an abundant love of nature, wildlife, and fantastic food. Michael also has sales experience as a Sam's Club Store Manager.

Financial Plan: The sale of Heather's Northern VA house should net \$100k. \$50k will be used as down payment for property, and \$50k will be used for equipment, supplies, and livestock. She will continue to research veteran to farmers program for grants and loans. The first five years will depend on Michael's income while Nelson Acres is run more as a hobby farm to test markets and develop a customer base. [This portion will need further work and more specific numbers.]

### 1.1 Objectives

Three objectives for Nelson Acres:

1. Create a farm that is ecologically and financially sustainable.
2. Include wildlife preservation with sustainable agriculture and also function as a scientific experiment in doing so as well as profiting the family.
3. Focus on hard but enjoyable work that directly provided necessities for the family and allows them to develop a healthy, outdoor-focused lifestyle.

### 1.2 Mission

Nelson Acres will be focused on developing a farm that incorporates agricultural sustainability with wildlife preservation; in other words, agriculture that works with nature instead of against it. It will encourage community involvement through You Pick it products and eventually a CSA and community-oriented activities such as a fall pig roast.

### 1.3 Keys to success

1. Focus on nature and science to improve efficiency and reduce costs.
2. Focus on a happy farm where creatures are in their most natural environment and are part of the overall system.
3. Community interaction.

### 2.1 Company History

Nelson Acres has been in planning for ten plus years. To be close to kids, the farm will most likely be in the Roanoke Valley in VA. The plan is for a twenty-acre property, but may need to be adjusted once the property is identified and purchased. Financials during the Hobby Farm period will be meticulously kept to provide data for commercial operations.

### 2.2 Company Ownership

Nelson Acres is a VA LLC owned by Michael and Heather Donodeo. Heather is familiar with LLCs from a previous venture and feels it is the best way to protect the family from personal liability. Autumn Williams will own Four Seasons Bakery, with possible co-ownership by Michael and Heather Donodeo.

Plan to be continued.