



Heart of the Valley Growers' Cooperative

Business Summary

- I. Business Description — Heart of the Valley is a marketing cooperative specializing in pasture-raised poultry and other specialty meats which provides processing, storage, sales and distribution services to a membership of producers.
- II. Mission — To support local farmers, who use practices that respect their animals and the environment, with marketing and resources.
- III. Vision — Successful farms, providing quality meats to our community.
- IV. History — Heart of the Valley Growers' Cooperative arose from several years of conversation and cooperative efforts, largely coordinated through Berggren Demonstration Farm along with non-profit Cascade Pacific, RC&D. In fall of 2015, the USDA granted funding to support the implementation of Heart of the Valley Growers' Cooperative. The co-op was incorporated in January of 2016.
- V. Organizational Objectives —
 - a. Access larger markets for locally produced food
 - b. Offer efficient distribution for smaller producers
 - c. Create niche product offerings under Heart of the Valley brand name (i.e. pastured chicken, game birds)
 - d. Support increase economic viability of producers

Membership Opportunities

1. Members products will be added to HOV product offerings and marketed to Heart of the Valley's customer base.
2. Cold storage will be maintained by HOV for products sold through HOV. Private cold storage for product not to be sold through HOV is unlikely.
3. Poultry transport crates are available for co-op members.
4. Access to ODA licensed processing for \$3.50 / bird.
5. Network of supportive producers, working together to solve production and logistic issues.

Membership Requirements

1. Annual membership fee of \$100.
2. Members must maintain a liability insurance policy greater than 1,000,000.
3. Members carry all necessary state licensing (ODA Prepackaged Meat Reseller's License required by law if members sell direct to customers).
4. Poultry must be slaughtered at ODA licensed facilities. Meat must be USDA inspected.
5. Service hours to the cooperative are encouraged but not required. Many members support the cooperative through committee service, sales support, or labor for building projects. Service may be required in the future.

Future Opportunities

The logistics and operational value of Heart of the Valley will steadily increase as our capacity builds and sales income increases. Our next steps include:

1. Continuing to building a client base locally.
2. Formalize a refrigerated distribution route to expand our product regionally.
3. Unify production schedules for poultry producers.
4. Increase offerings of pork, lamb, turkey, goat, and beef.
5. Share trips to Jenks Hatchery for chicks.
6. Purchase feed in bulk and team up on transportation of feed.

Heart of the Valley is a producer-owned cooperative. Members can impact the future of this organization through their representative Board of Directors. We can go as far with this cooperative as the membership wants.

Our entry into 2017 is an exciting moment. We must not question *if* we will grow, but focus on *how* we will grow. Our network is expanding and consumers are just waiting for groups like ours to support. Heart of the Valley Co-op is built to match the demand for high quality local meat raised by producers with values.