



Our Mandate

Direct Farm Manitoba (Direct Farm) is a member-based, non-profit association representing and advocating for farmers and farmers' markets within Manitoba that sell agri-food products directly to consumers.

Direct Farm is structured as a cooperative, a type of organization founded on principles of democratic member control and organizational autonomy. A cooperative is an organization that it is governed by and responsible to its members.

Direct Farm works to advance the interests of direct-marketing farmers and farmers' markets within Manitoba by advocating on their behalf to government and the public and by connecting them to farm business development opportunities

Our Background

In recent years, there has been much energy and effort towards strengthening the local food system in Manitoba. Activities such as the Small Scale Food Manitoba working group chaired by Dr. Wayne Lees and the resulting recommendations and report in 2015 along with the Small Farms Manitoba website and events have shown some of the opportunities and challenges that are present in this sector. Conversations that started around dinner tables have evolved to include a multitude of farm leaders, food businesses and organizations within the industry.

Direct Farm Manitoba grew from the consensus within the sector that there was a need to have an organized voice for this group of unique farmers. Direct Farm Manitoba was officially created in March 2016, building from the member-owned cooperative Farmers Market Association of Manitoba (FMAM).

Since then, the organization has started to offer individual memberships for farmers who are involved in direct farm marketing. Direct Farm now represents markets *and* producers within the direct-marketing farm sector of Manitoba.

In late 2016, Direct Farm partnered with Small Farms Manitoba and Kalynn Spain (Founder of Small Farms) to combine their activities, avoid duplication and improve their common goal of furthering the interests and business development of direct market farmers and farmers markets in Manitoba.

As of January 2017, the website, social media platforms and activities of Small Farms Manitoba have transitioned to Direct Farm Manitoba.



Our Board of Directors

Direct Farm Manitoba is run by a board of nine Directors elected by the membership present at each annual general meeting. All of them are direct farm marketers and some are also directly involved with farmers' markets.

Phil Veldhuis – President (Phil's Honey, Starbuck)
Brad Anderson – Vice President (Anderson Farms, Cypress River)
Bruce Berry – Treasurer (Almost Urban Vegetables, St. Norbert)
Leanne Fenez – Secretary (Fenez Follies Farm, La Barriere)
Stefan Regnier – Director (Blue Lagoon Organics, St. Francis Xavier)
Rudy Reimer – Director (Watersong Farms, Warren)
Chuck Leibert – Director (Emma's Garden, Bird River)
Lydia Carpenter – Director (Luna Field Farm)
Danielle Mondar – Director (Fort Whyte Farm)

Direct Farm members have the opportunity to join the board at the AGM each year. Directors serve on the board for 2-year terms.

Our Members

Direct Farm Manitoba represents a wide range of direct-marketing farm producers and markets across the province. Its members sell their products directly to consumers through various means: farm gate, u-pick, direct delivery, urban and rural farmers' markets and independent retail outlets and distributors

Direct Farm members include Community Shared Agriculture farms (CSAs), U-picks, cattle farmers, beekeepers, sheep/wool producers and small grain processors

Some of Direct Farm members farm full-time, while others maintain off-farm jobs. Some members are running farm businesses within the commodity markets and are working to grow their direct-marketing businesses on the side, while others are direct-marketing all of their farm products. All of the members share one commonality, however, in that they are working to build relationships with consumers and remain transparent in the information they provide to customers.



Member Benefits

Through advocacy efforts, government relations, public awareness and other means of outreach, Direct Farm works to create the conditions for its members to succeed.

Direct Farm Manitoba is just over a year old and we want to set our priorities via members feedback and participation. Together, we will shape the organization to meet the needs of us all. While diverse, there is much that unifies us as small, direct-marketing farm businesses.

ADVOCACY AND REPRESENTATION

Direct Farm Manitoba provides a voice for farmers and farmers' markets across the province within multiple levels of organizational and political discussions.

Direct Farm has already made progress as a representational organization in Manitoba in its advocacy efforts supporting direct-marketing chicken production. Through a few scheduled meetings with the Manitoba Chicken Producers (MCP), media attention and formal appeal, Direct Farm has voiced its position against MCP's proposed Specialty Quota program and will continue to inform its membership about this issue. You can read about it [here](#).

MARKETING TOOLS

Direct Farm runs an online farm directory and local food resource that attracts over one hundred daily visitors looking to connect directly with farmers. Members can create an individualized profile that provides an overview on their farm or market and places them on the local farm map. You can learn more about this marketing opportunity for members by visiting directfarmmanitoba.ca.

We'll get your profile started using the information you provide, and then you can edit and modify it to suit your needs. The listing in the directory is optional.

MEMBER EVENTS

Direct Farm ran the third annual Direct Farm Conference in January 2017. Members receive a discount to all events hosted by Direct Farm. Direct Farm is also a partner of the Direct Farm Marketing Conference - held in March of each year - that is organized by Manitoba Agriculture. Other possible member events for this year include networking mixers (chefs, farm workers) and public farm tours.



BUSINESS RESOURCES

Direct Farm aims to offer a range of services to its members to assist them in developing and growing their direct-marketing businesses. This includes facilitating the sharing of knowledge within the farm community through various means as well as keeping members informed of opportunities available.

One resource for members is the ability to post on-farm working opportunities on an online Job Board that attracts students, workers and interns who want to learn about small-scale agriculture and direct farm marketing.

Direct Farm offers its group members (markets) the option of joining a liability insurance program that runs for one full year starting May 1st. The program has \$5,000,000 general liability that provides third party property damage and bodily injury. The cost of this program is \$125. Based on feedback from members in 2017, Direct Farm may explore offering group insurance to its individual farm members.

Membership Pricing

1) **GROUP - DIRECT FARM MARKET**

A farmers' market or other such organized direct farm group marketers operating within Manitoba;

2) **INDIVIDUAL - DIRECT FARM MARKETER**

A food or farm-product producer who sells farm products directly to consumers

	Producer/Individual	Market/Group
Cooperative Membership Fee (one-time payment to join association)	\$50.00	\$50.00
Annual Membership Fee	Waived for the first year of membership	\$15 x the average # of vendors attending the market (annually)

Send your Membership Application (separate document) and Payment to:

"Direct Farm Manitoba" 270 Cathedral Ave. Winnipeg, MB R2W 0X5