

CASE STUDY: EAST NEUK MARKET GARDEN

A HORTICULTURAL CSA IN RURAL FIFE



Established: 2019

Type: Producer-led

Legal Structure: Partnership but looking to become a cooperative

Paid staff: 3 FTE (Three people)

Trainees: 2 FTE (Two people)

Volunteers: 0.4 FTE (Two people)

Produce: Vegetables and fruit

Members: 85

Member radius: 10 miles

Shares: Year round - some winter buy-ins

Land: 4 acres rented on short-term 5-year tenancy from estate

CSA turnover: £45k

Non CSA income: £26k - restaurants / shops and other direct sales

Buy in to supplement produce: To support other local producers occasionally

Infrastructure: Four polytunnels, packing shed and cold store

Approach: No-dig, permaculture, agroforestry

And... Their connection to the Bowhouse local food hub is invaluable in getting the message across

The seed...

Tom and Connie set up the CSA as they wanted to be an active part of the wider movement to relocalise food systems. They saw CSA as a way of producing on a small scale and minimising their investment risk while building up a local profile and community around food.

They weren't planning to start as rapidly as they did. Their landlord was actively looking for tenants and was incredibly supportive. Basic infrastructure was installed for them: rabbit and deer-proof fencing, as well as water and electricity.



Grew...

They got their start-up costs from personal savings and help from family. They have worked with schools but hope to do more of that as time goes on.

The pre-existence of the Bowhouse food hub in the area has really helped them get started and attract customers by seeding the idea of local food as a positive option. Connie also works for Scotland the Bread as a miller at Bowhouse which has also helped them develop contacts and trust.

And...

The team are working to expand membership numbers and trying to work with other start up growers so that they can form a collective of mutually supporting growers in the area. They see the future as an interconnected web of local food producers. They are also planning to support local starter growers to begin producing commercially by offering them a stable market through their CSA.

