



SOUTHEAST

TRANSITION TO ORGANIC PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

LIFE FARMS: GROWING MORE THAN FOOD IN CLEARWATER, FLORIDA

On the edge of Clearwater, tucked within nearly six acres of certified organic farmland, Life Farms is proving that local agriculture can nourish far more than just the people who eat its food. Since planting their first crops in spring 2013, Life Farms has grown into a thriving community-centered operation dedicated to producing clean, fresh, organically grown food while strengthening connections between farmers, consumers, and the local food system.

From the beginning, the team at Life Farms never considered farming any other way. Organic practices have been at the heart of the farm's mission since day one, guiding every decision they make. Today, the farm produces a diverse range of vegetables, herbs, fruits, flowers, and microgreens without synthetic fertilizers or pesticides, providing the Tampa Bay community with nutritious food harvested at peak freshness.



Malabar spinach, cucumbers and summer squash are thriving in the garden, and are some of the first fall crops as Life Farms begins its season.



Cut organic flowers, like these sunflowers are an important part of what makes Life Farms so special, and profitable.

What started as a small farming venture has blossomed into a vibrant hub for local food. Through their Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, farmers markets, restaurant partnerships, and on-site farm store, Life Farms connects their community directly with seasonal produce and other locally sourced products. The farm also collaborates with neighboring producers to offer pasture-raised meats, eggs, mushrooms, baked goods, honey, and fermented foods, creating a one-stop destination for supporting local agriculture.

Behind the success of Life Farms is a dedicated team. Founder Rowland Millam partnered with Bob Hummer to bring the farm's vision to life, while Mimi Houston oversees the farm's flourishing flower production and organizational systems. Farm Manager Victor Heidman helps guide day-to-day operations, ensuring crops and customers alike receive the attention they deserve.



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In 2025, Life Farms reached a major milestone by becoming certified organic. Their certification journey was supported through the Southeast Transition to Organic Partnership Program (SE TOPP), which connected them with mentorship, technical assistance, and peer support. Former SE TOPP mentee Shivanni Sheinman, already a customer of the farm, helped Life Farms develop their Organic System Plan under the mentorship of organic farmer Nick Batty of Inyoni Farm.

That commitment to continuous learning and improvement made Life Farms an ideal destination for a farm tour during the final Southeast TOPP Annual Partner Meeting held in Tampa in September 2026. Representatives from across the Southeast visited the farm to see firsthand how organic producers are building resilient businesses while serving their communities. Participants toured the fields, learned about Life Farms' recordkeeping systems, explored their flower and microgreen operations, and heard directly from the farmers about their organic journey.



SE TOPP partners from 7 states, and two territories toured the farm as part of their last annual meeting in September.



Intercropping, cover crops, plastic mulch and tower growing systems are some of the ways Life Farms makes the most out of their small but efficient farm.

The visit highlighted what makes Life Farms special. Beyond growing exceptional food, the farm demonstrates the power of collaboration. Whether partnering with neighboring farms, mentoring future organic producers, or opening their gates to fellow growers and educators, Life Farms embodies the spirit of community that helps organic agriculture thrive.

Like many farms, Life Farms continues to navigate challenges, particularly around expanding markets and reaching new customers. Yet their story is one of optimism, innovation, and unwavering dedication to organic farming. Most importantly, the team remains grounded in the reason they started farming in the first place: serving their community.

After more than a decade of growing food and relationships, Life Farms continues to show that organic farming is about much more than crops. It is about cultivating healthy soils, supporting local economies, building meaningful connections, and creating a stronger food system for everyone.

"Our community is what drives us to do the hard work of farming the highest quality produce. This is especially true when we get to see firsthand the positive impact it has had on our community."

– The Life Farms Team



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