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Adelard Produce was a unique partnership between Sammy Torres, an avid home gardener, and Paul Carbonau, an experienced market farmer. Neither had experience growing in a high tunnel before working in the Model High Tunnel for one season. Sammy had built raised beds and low tunnels in his backyard and had the time to tend to the plants since he recently retired from running his own business. Paul had been interested in the opportunity and had a clear idea of how to manage the project. The pair teamed up to grow winter produce from November until April and summer produce until the following November in the Model High Tunnel. The tunnel measured 30x96 feet and low tunnels were used for added warmth. They grew in the ground using plastic mulch to help control weeds and keep the plants cleaner. They tried not to waste any space by using grow bags to plant onions between the rows. They planted almost everything you can plant in a high tunnel. After the experience, Paul decided to build a high tunnel on his own property and Sammy is still trying to convince the city and his neighbors to build one in his backyard.



### MAIN GOAL: SUPPLY WINTER AND EARLY PRODUCE TO THE WILD RAMP MARKET.



**Crops:** Lettuce Mix, Spinach, Chard, Kale, Green Onion.

**Market Opportunities:** The Wild Ramp and partnering with other farms that operate CSA programs

**Target Customers:** Individual consumers that value locally grown produce and year-round availability

### What are some of the advantages?

Sammy: *Well, we were the only people growing produce for the Wild Ramp during the winter, so that was a huge advantage. We were also able to succession plant and harvest so that there were very few weeks that we did not have any produce to sell. The use of the low tunnels inside the high tunnel we were able to keep the temperature above 40, even with snow outside.*

### What are the challenges?



Sammy: *When the weather started to warm up in the spring, we started having more greens that we could sell in a short time period. We were not prepared with secondary markets, but were able to sell some larger volumes to a few restaurants and help other farmers with their CSA programs.*

Motivation: Challenge

Sammy and Paul wanted to take on a new project to grow winter produce for the Wild Ramp. They were able to achieve a lot in a short time horizon because they had a clear goal in mind. Along the way they had to solve many problems to keep plants growing through fluctuating fall temperatures and snow during the winter.

## GROWER PROFILE: CALL FARMS- CABELL & MASON COUNTY, WV

Zachary Call grew up farming with his parents and grandparents on a 100 acre farm located in Mason County. While his parents raised mostly livestock, he has always enjoyed growing vegetables. As a high school student in 2013, Zachary began to supply the schools with lettuce and received assistance from NRCS to build an 88 X 24 foot high tunnel. Zachary has since graduated from high school and decided to pursue raising produce and managing the farm as his full-time career. He now has two high tunnels and rents several acres of land for sweet corn, which he processes into cobbets. Zachary mainly sells his products to the Cabell County Board of Education and the Wild Ramp. He chooses his crops based on what he knows he can sell to the schools and has learned how to meet their needs as a buyer. Zachary was recognized as the top FFA seller in Cabell County in 2015 and supply the schools with over \$1,000 worth of product each month. In his high tunnels he grows directly in the ground and uses plastic mulch to control weeds.



### **MAIN GOAL: SUPPLY CABELL COUNTY SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE WITH FRESH PRODUCE.**

**Crops:** Romaine Lettuce, Cucumbers, Tomatoes.

**Market Opportunities:** Farm-to-School and The Wild Ramp

**Target Customers:** Food Service Director at Cabell County Schools and individual consumers at the farmers market.

### **What are some of the advantages?**

Zachary uses his high tunnels to meet the needs of his primary target customer, Cabell County Schools. The span of the school year from late-august until May, misses the main season for farm grown vegetables in our area. Zachary can use the tunnel to schedule crops so that they are available when school is in session.



**Motivation: Cash and Control**

Zachary enjoys the freedom that farming for a living income offers. He is ambitious and works hard to meet the needs of his Farm-to-School Buyers. Zachary only grows what he knows he can sell, a smart choice for a young farmer. He works well with his family, delegating deliveries when he can't make the trip.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

### Quiz: Determining your values

What are your motivations for starting a business? Remember the 4 C's!

What kind of work will satisfy your motivations?

What are your ethical principles?

What are your connections to the community? List non-profit service organization or civic organizations:

Do you want to work alongside your family and friends? What work will you be able to delegate to them?

If you may want to hire employees, what kind of relationship to you want to create or work environment?

What do you want to have on the natural environment?

### Summarize your values in a value statement:

My business provides what, to whom, when and/or how.



## What are your Goals?

**MAIN GOAL:**

**SHORT-TERM GOALS:**

## Is a high tunnel right for you?

What are your target markets? When are the highest periods of demand?

What demand is not currently being met? Will building a high tunnel help with unmet demand?

Does the potential growing capacity of the high tunnel complement the other enterprises on your farm? How does it affect your production plan overall?

How much time can you dedicate to the high tunnel each week?

What educational resources are available to you? (e.g. Extension or farmer mentor)

How will you finance the building costs of the high tunnel?

Need more help with developing your business? Contact Unlimited Future.

Visit [www.unlimitedfuture.org](http://www.unlimitedfuture.org) or call 304-697-3007

We have business start-up classes and business plan development assistance available.