Dear U.P. Farmer:

We ask for your participation in a U.P. wide survey of farms that sell directly to consumers. You may remember a similar survey that we conducted in 2011 with some of the same project partners. This time, we hope more farms participate and believe that the opportunity to win a $400.00 Tractor Supply gift card may serve as a good incentive.

We are interested in hearing from all U.P. producers of hay, vegetables, meat, poultry, eggs, fruits, mushrooms, fiber, maple syrup, honey, flowers, and plant starts regardless of growing practices. Our survey is inclusive of conventional, natural, and organic farms of all sizes. We are especially interested in hearing from those farms that do not currently participate in the USDA Ag Census.

This survey is being conducted by the U.P. Food Exchange, a collaborative effort led by the Marquette Food Co-op and MSU Extension in conjunction with the Western U.P. Health Department. The U.P. Food Exchange (UPFE, The Exchange) is an entity created in November of 2012 with funds from a Regional Food Systems Grant from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. UPFE supports local food activities already taking place within the Upper Peninsula’s distinct regions (eastern, central, western), and assists with the development and ongoing maintenance of the three successful regional food hubs. UPFE serves as a resource portal for farmers, businesses, and individuals looking to connect with and actively participate in their local food system.

In order to serve your needs, we need to get an accurate picture of who you are. The information we collect from farmers will be folded into a larger economic impact study of the U.P. local food system that we have commissioned Ken Meter of the Crossroads Resource Center to conduct. Learn more about the Crossroads Resource Center at www.crcworks.org. We anticipate sharing the combined survey results at the three Local Food Summits that will take place across the U.P. this fall.

We encourage you to take the survey online at www.upfoodexchange.com as this makes it easier for us to compile the data. If you don’t have computer access or aren’t computer savvy, we are happy to take your responses over the phone. Simply give us a call at 906-225-0671 ext. 11. The deadline to fill out the survey is Wednesday, July 31st at midnight. Please pass the word about the survey to as many U.P. farmers as you can. The more producers who fill out the survey, the more accurate our picture of the U.P.’s local food system will be.

Thank you for helping us with this project. A member of our project team may follow up with you via phone to answer any questions and receive comments that you may have. In the meantime, if you have questions, please contact us at 225-0671 ext. 11.

Sincerely,

Michelle Walk, MSU Extension, UPFE Project Co-Lead
Natasha Lantz, Marquette Food Co-op, UPFE Project Co-Lead
Ray Sharp & Sara Salo, Western Upper Peninsula Health Department, UPFE Project Partners

To Protect Your Privacy
• No individual farm information will be published under any circumstances.
• All of your responses will remain completely confidential.
• No names or addresses will ever be connected with the information provided.
• The questions about income are asked strictly to help us get a better understanding of the total financial contribution local farmers are making overall to local economies and will in no way be linked to your farm in the compiled survey results or reported to the IRS.
• Only compiled information will be shared with survey participants, the agencies working on the project, state officials, and those interested in U.P. agriculture.
ATTENTION FARMERS! 
Stand Up and Be Counted! 
Win a $400 Tractor Supply Gift Card

Participate in the U.P. Ag Assessment. It’s easy.

Go to www.UPFoodExchange.com or call us at 906-225-0671 ext. 11 and give us your information over the phone.

All individual farm information is confidential, and you will be entered into the Tractor Supply gift card drawing simply for your participation.


www.upfoodexchange.com