

FARMERS: Some questions – and answers – about Iroquois Valley

Why this company?

Iroquois Valley was started in 2007 to provide land access to those who want to farm organically. As David Miller, Co-Founder and CEO, says, “We built our business to support the businesses of our farmers.”

Iroquois Valley starts with the farmer. You decide on the land that works for you and bring that opportunity to the company. We know that you may need particular land to build your operations, properties that may just come on the market once in a lifetime. The Iroquois Nation provides us with inspiration: “In every deliberation one must consider the impact on the seventh generation.” We are NOT a farmland trading company. We provide family farmers the land security that will help you regenerate soils and build businesses.

Who are our farmers?

Our farmers grow beans, corn, legumes, hay, wheat, nuts, fruits, vegetables and more; they milk cows and raise beef cattle, chickens, hogs and ducks. They farm more than 10,000 Iroquois Valley-purchased or -financed acres in 14 states. 68 percent of our tenants are millennials. Most are from established farm families.

We are looking for farmers who want to improve their soils while growing healthy food. Iroquois Valley invests only in those who have farming experience, usually with organic production or grass-based operations, and who have a financially viable operation. It is helpful if you have a family history of successful farm operations, but we know not all have had that opportunity.



Farmers from [Main Street Project](#) and [Engelhard Family Farms](#)

What are our terms?

When we purchase land for you to farm, we provide five-year leases, with automatic two-year renewal provisions. Our goal is to provide you a lifetime lease, if that is what you want. Rent is based on the purchase price of the land. There is a base rent and then a variable rent payment when your operation reaches a certain level of profitability. We would work with you to create a fair economic structure for you and for us.

For our mortgage funding, we provide five-year fixed rate terms with interest-only payments (no principal). Our mortgages also have renewal provisions. We have provided refinancing, to help farmers consolidate their debt, as well as financed new purchases. We will provide more specifics as we begin discussions with you.

May a farmer buy the land after leasing?

Once a farmer has completed seven years on the lease (initial term and one renewal period), they have the ongoing opportunity to purchase the farm in question. There is no obligation to purchase, however. For many of our farmers, having lifetime, secure rental arrangements are the best option as they build their operations and purchase land elsewhere.

Why use Iroquois Valley rather than other lenders?

If you have a trusted lender who provides good terms and has a long-term commitment to you, take advantage of that! Sadly, however, many lenders do not understand organic and grass-based livestock production systems; others are squeezing sustainable farmers and even getting out of farm financing completely. No lender can beat Iroquois Valley's commitment to its farmers and their businesses. If we partner with you, we would work hard to ensure your success.

Who funds Iroquois Valley?

Iroquois Valley is a "public benefit" corporation, which means we -- and our 400 investors -- want a financial return but we want to make sure that return is consistent with our values as well. These investors provide capital for the company with the understanding that the company needs that money long-term in order to help farmers. Our investors live in more than 40 states and countries.

We are a good model, as our investor base is broad. In contrast, when you partner with individual investors, their priorities sometimes change and they have been known to sell out from under you. In addition, dealing with individual investors can be time-consuming, and they can become too involved in the running of your operation.

I am interested, what do I do next?

The word is out among farmers about Iroquois Valley! We have an extensive pipeline of farmers who are eager to receive our help. However, the company is always looking for good opportunities to help farmers, so please contact us if you think we might have a good potential partnership. We will chat with you first. If we move forward, we will ask for detailed financial information, information on the property you want us to buy or finance, references and whether you are part of farmer networks that help you continually improve your farm.

When should you contact us? When you think you may have a property you would like us to purchase or for which you would like us to provide mortgage funding. We are very busy and do need adequate lead time. Although we are agile, it is unlikely we can purchase land at auction 30 days out without knowing you and your situation first.

Remember....

Our farmers make their own business decisions and run their own operations. If we invest in you, we will not ask you to be laborers in someone else's farmland investment business plan. We will help you through your challenges so that you will thrive.



From left: harvesting cabbage at [Featherstone Farm](#), conservation strip at [Vilicus Farms](#), cows grazing at [Creambrook Farm](#)

Thank you for your hard work growing food and nurturing the land!

Contact: Claire Mesesan at (847) 859-6645 ext. 2 or cmesesan@iroquoisvalleyfarms.com

In the Northeast U.S., contact Sally Dodge & Dale Guldbrandsen at (802) 233-2498 or sdodge@iroquoisvalleyfarms.com