ALBA advances economic viability, social equity and ecological land management among limited-resource and aspiring farmers.
ALBA owns and operates two organic farms with a total of 27 beginning and/or limited-resource farmers expected in 2009. More than 200 additional beginning and minority farmers attend workshops, field days and business expos each year.
Rural Development Center – 18 tenants with acreages ranging from 0.5 to 12 acres. Nearly all parcels have multiple plots.
Triple M Ranch – 9 tenants with acreages ranging from 1.7 to 10 acres. Parcels allocated to individual farmers.
Farmer Education Program
Programa Educativo para Agricultores (PEPA)

PEPA Pre-Courses:
1. English as a Second Language (up to 9 classes)
2. Computer Basics (6 classes)

PEPA Modules:
1. Leadership/Management Self-Eval (4 classes)
2. Market Planning (10 classes)
3. Crop Planning and Budgeting (8 classes)
4. Soil Fertility Management and Farm Equipment (9 classes)
5. Pest / Disease / Weed Management (8 classes)
6. Business Planning and Regulations (11 classes)

TOTAL: 172 hours over six months (December – May)
Access to Land: Farm Incubator System

ALBA Rate: $1,300 per acre/year  (Market Rate is $1,600 – 2,000)

Phase 1: (one-year leases only)
1. Beginning – 0.5 acre (20% of ALBA rate, plus irrigation/equipment)
2. Beginning – 2 acres as guideline (30% of ALBA rate)
3. Beginning – 3-4 acres as guideline (40%)

Phase 2: (three-year lease option becomes available)
4. Intermediate – 5 acres (50% of ALBA rate)
5. Intermediate – 10 acres (60%)
6. Intermediate – 12 acres depending (70%)

Phase 3:
7. Commercial – 12 acres (100% plus commercial equipment costs)

Years 8, 9, 10? – no formal deadline to “exit” the incubator
Access to Land: Tenure at ALBA

**Land Tenure of Farmers at ALBA: 2006**
- **Years Farming**: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
- **ALBA Farmers**: 4, 3, 2, 1, 0
- **Total Farmers**: 23
- **Types**: Beginning Farmers (blue), Intermediate Farmers (red), Commercial Farmers (green)

**Land Tenure of Farmers at ALBA: 2008**
- **Years Farming**: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
- **ALBA Farmers**: 3, 4, 2, 1, 0
- **Total Farmers**: 26
- **Types**: Beginning Farmers (blue), Intermediate Farmers (red), Commercial Farmers (green)

**Land Tenure of Farmers at ALBA: 2007**
- **Years Farming**: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
- **ALBA Farmers**: 3, 4, 2, 1, 0
- **Total Farmers**: 25
- **Types**: Beginning Farmers (blue), Intermediate Farmers (red), Commercial Farmers (green)
Access to Land: Irrigation and Equipment

**Irrigation:** ALBA provides all infrastructure to the “hydrant” / outlet

- Student is responsible for flat/drip lines (about $300 for 0.5 acre)
- Cost depends on electrical usage (peak / non-peak hours) and type of irrigation (drip or sprinkler)
- Recent Example: 3 acres for 3 hours by drip: $10.30

**Equipment:** ALBA provides the basics on a fee basis - 80” bed system

Options include: 3 tractors, discs, rototiller attachment, bed shaper, Lilliston-style cultivator, rotary and flail mowers, etc.

Examples: *large tractor w/ implement $20-40 per use
small tractor w/ implement $15-35 per use*
Incubator in Action: 2008

Costs on 3 acres:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxes/Packaging</td>
<td>$5,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Rent/Portables</td>
<td>$4,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inputs/Irrigation</td>
<td>$4,754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Use</td>
<td>$2,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permits/Fees</td>
<td>$520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cost</strong></td>
<td><strong>$28,214</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Income on 3 acres:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cucumbers</td>
<td>$28,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberries</td>
<td>$14,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beets</td>
<td>$6,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income ($16.6k/ac)</strong></td>
<td><strong>$50,112</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Profit was $21,989 ($7,300 per acre)

“Nothing has been given to me for free – it has just given me opportunities.”
Registrations and Regulations:

External Requirements:
Year 1: Farm Operator ID (county agriculture commissioner)
Years 2 and 3: Farm Operator ID and CDFA Organic Registration
Year 4 (or sooner) and up: All of the above, plus Organic Certification and Farm Water Quality Plan (required by Regional Water Quality Control Board)

Internal Requirements (annually):
Land Lease Contract and Farmer Policies
Equipment Use/Safety MOU
Workers Comp Insurance
Organic Farming Input Records
Soil Management Plan (compost or cover crop 50% of ground)
Access to Land: Post-Incubator

Since 2004, four farm families purchased three farms and one house with market garden. At least five farmers entered into land leases, and a 2nd year farmer became a farm manager.

We know two dozen more farmers in the area with origins at the RDC, and hundreds more graduates once farmed and/or advanced in their careers.

“Among values cited by Clarke was Monterey County open, irrigated farmland at the peak of $50,000, where it has been the past three years. The bottom of the range, however, moved from $15,000 up to $20,000.”
- Western Farm Press, June 10, 2009
Market Options:

- **ALBA Organics** (Wholesale Distributor)
- Distributors / Brokers
- Farmers’ Markets (grew from 4 to 8 in Monterey County from ‘05-'09)
- Farm Stands (schools and churches)
- Direct-to-Retail / Restaurant
- CSA / Home Delivery
- anything else that works!
ALBA Organics

Licensed produce distributor operated as a project of ALBA since 2002. On-farm cooler and packing facility funded in 2000 by EDA. Customers include Stanford Dining, UC Santa Cruz, New Leaf Markets, Whole Foods, hospitals, schools and social service agencies.

FY08 Purchases: $390,173
FY08 Sales: $512,358
Farm Incubator Manual  
(July 2009)

Topics:  
• Farm Incubator Overview  
• Obtaining Land  
• Land Management  
• Leases and Contracts  
• Equipment / Irrigation Policies  
• Infrastructure Requirements  
• Education and Training  
• Marketing and Sales  
• Farmer Policies and Relations  
• Risk Management (food safety, etc.)  
• Fees and Subsidies  
• Program Evaluation  
• Farm Transition Strategies  
• Organizational Structure & Administration

Appendices:  
• Leases/Contracts/MOUs  
• Incubator Models
Program Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E)

Tools:
M & E Framework by Program (PEPA, Incubator, Food Systems, and Biz Ed)
Workshop Planning Templates (indicators, evaluation plans)
**Salesforce.com** (client relationship database – farmer needs / interactions)
Success Measures Data System (business education partnership)

Benchmarks:
Farmer Competencies (targets by year)
M & E Targets (by program)

Processes:
Farm Partner / Mentor – staff-tenant partners
Winter Check-In Interview – review competencies
Spring Marketing Interview – confidential meeting with “third-party”
Fall Lease Renewal Interview – conducted by Executive Director
ALBA Staffing Plan for 2009

Executive Director
Deputy Director
Administrative Director
Comm./Development Associate (60% FTE)
Administrative Assistant (80% interns)

Programs:
Program Director
Ag Education Manager (50%)
Business Education Manager
Community Food Systems Manager
Incubator Manager
Food Systems Associate (40%)
Field Education / Farm Manager
Farm Maintenance Associate
MESA Intern – Demo Garden Coordinator

ALBA Organics General Manager
AO Sales Associate
Warehouse Manager / Delivery Driver (100 - 200% FTE)

Grad-Level Paid Interns (federal work-study provides 75% cost-share):
Quality Assurance (Evaluation)
Financial Analyst
Translation / Interpretation
Food Systems Assistant
Greenhouse operation managed by farmers at ALBA.
Strawberries are a compelling cash crop, but they are capital-intensive and require multi-year crop rotations.
Domitila Martinez presenting her strawberries to eager students at Stanford University.
More than 500 local schoolchildren experience the farms each year.

Small groups of college students visit ALBA regularly, often preparing lunch with freshly harvested foods.
Freshly harvested lunch prepared by San Jose State University students visiting ALBA.
Lilliston-style cultivator demonstration (and Tomasa) at a monthly farmers’ meeting.
Amparo hails from Guanajuato, Mexico and brings with him a history of family farming which anchors the RDC with experience and confidence. His extended family currently farms land in both Salinas and Hollister to bring hot and cool climate crops to established markets such as supermarkets, brokers, and ALBA Organics. Crops he plans to put in this year will include a sizeable strawberry field and strategically timed vegetables including romaine lettuce, squash, corn, celery and frisee when prices are right. His new label actually heralds the name of the city where other members of his family still farm (see boxes and various types of pack below).
For more information, contact:
Gary Peterson, Deputy Director
gary@albafarmers.org
http://www.albafarmers.org
or [facebook] search ‘ALBA - Agriculture’