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[Planting Resilient Trees & Growing Strong Communities \[1\]](#)

On Saturday November 2, 2013, our friends over at [GreenUP Ecology Park](#) [2] will be hosting an engaging workshop about creating stronger genetics in trees through regional adaptation and propagation methods with Ken Taylor from the [Green Barn Nursery](#) [3]. Ken will review breeding, selection and demand of edible trees to create a stronger local food source in our community. At the end of the workshop, there will be an auction of special Green Barn Nursery inventory.

Each participant will receive plant breeding and propagation material as well as the opportunity to make a purchase of edible trees and shrubs (available in the spring) through GreenUP Ecology Park at the event.

The workshop will be held from 9:00am - 5:00pm at [George St. United Church in Peterborough](#) [4]. Tickets for the event are \$30 (lunch included).

To register, contact Marcy Adzich: marcy.adzich@greenup.on.ca [5] | 705-745-3238 x 212
Registration deadline is October 25th.

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[Smart Risks, Hard Work and Fun Are Keys to Success in Farming \[6\]](#)

Last Sunday we continued our series of Farm Business Management Tours at [Cooper's CSA Farm & Maze](#) [7], just north of Uxbridge. Despite the busyness of the harvest season, 14 eager farmers made their way from all corners of the region to hear from experienced growers and business-folk, Steve and Lisa Cooper.

The Coopers have been building their business together for close to 20 years, and they were thrilled to report that the farm had recently become incorporated. Not only are both Steve and Lisa living comfortably on their farm income, they're also able to support their young family, as well as sustain several jobs for migrant workers and summer students every year.

Surely this is no easy feat. Growing a successful business takes both production and marketing savvy, both of which the Coopers have in spades. But Steve and Lisa are a testament to the fact that there is money to be made on a family farm.

Their home property (100 acres) supplies all the vegetables for their 500 member CSA, as well as their pastured poultry and pig production. The beef that can be added into shares is raised on Steve's dad's farm down the road. Their 10 acre corn maze is basically run by their kids and attracts close to 10,000 visitors to the farm each year. And their certified kitchen, where they produce prepared goods for their farm and web stores, is run by a whiz in the kitchen, who's a close family friend.

It all seemed rather daunting at first: 500 shares is a *lot* of vegetables. Once you got talking to Steve



and Lisa though, after seeing their farm and the way it runs, the whole operation began to feel a lot more manageable, even possible from a new farmers' perspective. Sure, it might take a few years to crack 50 or 100 shares, and your soil may not allow you to grow everything under the sun. But as Steve suggested, if you're able to get good at growing 7 or 8 crops, aren't afraid to take a few risks, and are able to listen to what the market tells you, with time success will come.

The take-home message was even simpler though: set realistic goals from the start, that are based in equal measure of lifestyle and business priorities. While being your own boss, working outside and eating healthy are great motivators for new farmers, Steve and Lisa strongly encourage new and transitioning growers to recognize their financial realities and to make business decisions with those realities in mind. That, and to learn from as many people as possible, as often as possible (the couple still attend farm tours when they have time). And also, have lots of fun!

Farms at Work would like to thank the [Ontario Trillium Foundation](#) [8], [Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada](#) [9] and the [Community Futures Development Corporation](#) [10] for all their generous support. The work we do would not be possible without the help of these fine folks.

Stay tuned for more fall event updates!

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Links

[1] <http://farmsatwork.ca/news/planting-resilient-trees-growing-strong-communities> [2] <http://www.greenup.on.ca/ecology-park/> [3] <http://www.greenbarnnursery.ca/> [4] <http://goo.gl/maps/l3aDK> [5] <mailto:marcy.adzich@greenup.on.ca> [6] <http://farmsatwork.ca/news/smart-risks-hard-work-and-fun-are-keys-success-farming> [7] <http://www.coopersfarm.ca/> [8] <http://www.otf.ca/en/> [9] <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/?id=1280434970527> [10] <http://www.cdc.on.ca/>