

The Giving Tree Farm is a 501c that was established in 1992 to provide meaningful work and self actualization for people with disabilities. The farm has received numerous community service awards and the 22 acre campus in DeWitt Township includes a wood workshop, vocational center, 2 greenhouses, 5 hoop houses and several acres for naturally grown garden produce. Currently, one of the greenhouses and 4 hoop houses are receiving needed upgrades and for the last 2 years there has been limited use of the campus for garden production. In the past the farm provided organically grown produce for farmer markets, retail stores and CSA's. It is our objective at this time to identify potential growers who both individually and collectively would grow not only for personal use but participate in a collective effort to provide a CSA to 10-15 individuals along with supporting area soup kitchens. With identified individuals, we would like to host an organizational meeting by this fall and begin production by the spring of 2026. We have in the past actively produced produce year round and that would be another goal now along with increasing livestock production. Currently, we have a limited number of chickens that could increase and have considered adding possibly goats for milk, cheese and soap production.

We can offer any size of garden plots to individuals and groups, as well as access to the year round greenhouse and hoop houses that in the past we have used for cool weather crops using cold framing. At least in the initial year 2026 we would even buy the seeds that are identified. Giving Tree has been a certified organic grower but we have not kept up with the certification but we for sure want all produce to be natural without chemicals. Once individuals/groups are identified we would have organizational meeting at the farm hopefully by this fall. For the land and seeds, Giving Tree would want 10% of the produce grown that would be either sold at the road side market by our disable clients or to CSA members and we have a walk in refrigeration unit for the storing of produce. Since our main mission is to provide work and social skills for adults with disabilities their consideration would be respected and they may/may not be involve in produce work. We have some chickens, wood workshop and a vocational recreational center for the disable so their direct involvement is not essential. In the growing area there is a small building that has heat, restroom, refrig and rest area for garden personnel. At the present time we are upgrading the greenhouse and hoop houses and spreading compost over the proposed garden areas.

Giving Tree Farm has recently completed upgrades to the greenhouse and 1 hoop house. We have a cooperative agreement with the Greater Lansing Food Bank Garden Program. Currently, we have 2 people on board 1 is from Kenya and the other from Rwanda. They and families escaped the political turmoil in both countries and will make use of the greenhouse, hoop house and approximately 1 acre of land to plant, cultivate, harvest African egg plant that is one of their main staples with many nutrient vales including an anti-cancer properties. In addition, we are expanding the organic omega egg production, as well as the organic grain fed beef production. As activities evolve will keep you informed and would welcome any visitors who would want to visit the Giving Tree Farm. An additional plus for the farm is these expanded farm activities gives our special needs population more meaningful work. This past week we added 4 goats to our livestock population and we have at least 1 client with autoimmune issues that can only drink goat milk and use goat soap.

If you or others you may know would be interested in these efforts, please email Bob at givingtreeserv5644@att.net or call/text 517 490-1396. Thank you for your consideration and I would only add that local sustainable farming is critically needed and over the last 3 years three local growers have either cut or discontinued production.