

# East Lothian Climate Hub

## TYNINGHAME COMMUNITY FARM

Tynninghame Community Farm is a not for profit Community Supported Agriculture scheme serving the Dunbar & East Linton area with locally produced, ecologically grown, vegetables, herbs and flowers.

You can learn more about us at our website: [www.tynninghame.farm](http://www.tynninghame.farm) and if you have any questions you can contact us at [community@tynninghame.farm](mailto:community@tynninghame.farm)



### Getting started

Operations were started in 2023, between a team of six local directors with common goals and principles. Tynninghame Community Farm was able to become established through using some of the land that two of the directors had access to, after over a year of visiting other Community Supported Agriculture initiatives, planning and investigating different options for land.

After our first year of operations we are now cultivating about half of our 2 acre site; we have supplied 19 veg box customers, worked with around 40

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volunteers and built up an email list of 250 supporters. Next year we will expand to around 50 veg box customers, and eventually to around 120.



## Principles

Our primary goal is to grow the highest quality produce without the use of chemicals so that more people eat as well as possible in East Lothian. Our secondary goal is to promote the use of ecological growing techniques by working with volunteers, training new growers and becoming a hub for knowledge and experience in agroecological horticulture.

## How Tynninghame Community Farm Operates

Our key activities are growing vegetables, running volunteer sessions and communicating what we do. The critical aspects of our approach are that we aim for financial self-sufficiency by trying to build a functioning and efficient business without sacrificing our ecological principles.



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We actively involve volunteers as much as possible because it helps to grow our impact, spread the word about our project and drives cost-efficiency by helping out with the never-ending list of tasks on a working market garden.



We've found that there is a lot of appetite both for buying our produce (in fact we have a wait list for veg boxes) and for volunteering. People want to get involved, to learn more about veg growing and just for the fun of coming down to the farm on a sunny afternoon with like-minded people.



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## Any challenges and how these have been addressed

There are some key challenges however: foremost, as always, is money. An agricultural business needs up front investment in equipment and infrastructure. In addition, each individual growing season involves costs up front for seeds, labour and marketing that isn't recouped until the second half of the year when produce is ready for sale. We've had to be very disciplined about deciding what equipment we really need and finding grant funding to pay for it. Then we try to keep a tight rein on costs and will be using short term loans to help us get through the first half of the growing season.

## Funding

We've been lucky enough to receive grants from ELCAN, ELC, First Port and DELAP, which have enabled us to buy two polytunnels and construct a car park and packing shed.

## Engagement

We primarily engage with people through our website, via email and through events. We find that maintaining an email list is the most effective way to communicate as it reaches people more consistently than social media. We've also found that having lots of great photos of what we do helps hugely when producing a website, engaging emails and impactful printed material.

