

## Tomatoes Tour 2014 A Cultivate Michigan Video Transcript

[ Music ]

Shakara Tyler: This is Jose Luis Vargas's farm. He is a farmer member of the only Hispanic cooperative here in Michigan called: Farmers on the Move, that Filiberto organizes. He is one of the 14 farmers that's in the cooperative. And they have a variety of fruits and vegetables grown here.

Filiberto Villa Gomez: We are alone in above management. We have a lot of help from MSU extension educators. Increase the production is the big challenge now. Because the customers this morning say: "Hey for next Sunday I need a hundred pounds."

Shakara Tyler: I mean I know Filiberto and the farmers are really interested in selling to institutions because it can be more money, and the volume orders can be larger. My role in Cultivate Michigan is to bring a voice of farmers to the table. Help them become aware, and get involved in the Cultivate Michigan campaign. And since many people are beginning to eat more meals away from home, it just makes sense to get that food onto the plates of schools, and hospitals, and universities.

Jeanne Hausler: The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development supports farm-to-institution work in Michigan. Through participation on the statewide farm-to-school work group, and also the farm-to-institution network. We also provide food safety information to farmers and institutional food buyers. To make sure that the way they're serving their food is safe. And we help promote farm-to-institution and the Cultivate Michigan program through special events, and also through our social media outlets.

Filiberto Villa Gomez: Jose been together for years learning, learning, learning. Now it's working good. We call the next year, next two years will be lot of production, because we can extend with that in the same month. You can taste this product, it's a good flavor. It's a good size. It's a excellent product.

Jeanne Hausler: With farm-to-institution in Michigan everybody profits. The institutions have the ability to serve healthy, local foods that are more nutritious and less traveled. And also the farmers benefit again with new market opportunities, and being able to sell their products without having a lot of overhead costs, or transportation costs. And finally, the consumers profit because it is a healthier diet. There are too -- You can have more choices in the food that you're eating, you can have healthy, nutritious, locally grown food. And it's a boon to our economy overall. Because buying locally keeps that money circulating in our local economy.



Erik James: I'm always reminded that the closer you are to your food, usually the healthier the food is. And I like that concept. I kind of like knowing where my food comes from. And knowing that it's not been sitting on a truck, or on a freight train or something for a few weeks before I get it. So I'm all for local farms.

Shakara Tyler: Filiberto is really working hard to get the Farmers on the Move name out there. So the more people that can come to the farm, the better it is for him and the farmers. To make more money, and to keep the land that they're growing preserved. And to continue to reap locally grown food.

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