



The Garvey Farm

## SOLUTIONS IN THE LAND

The Garvey Farm  
South Haven, Michigan

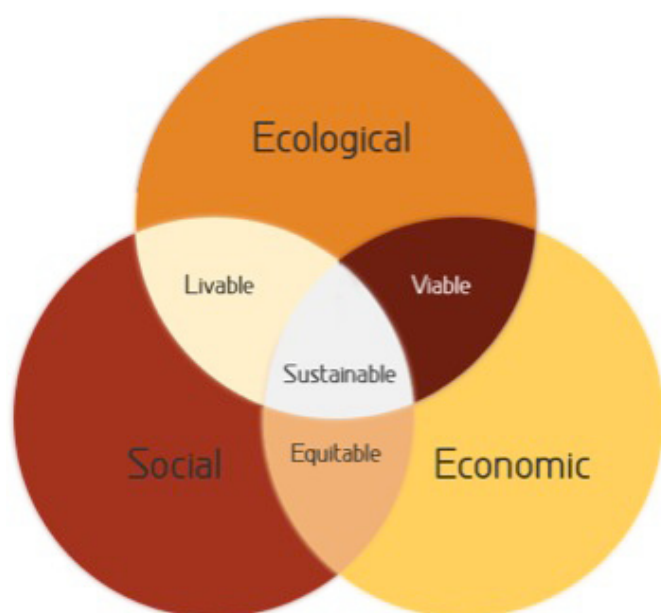
Located in Geneva Township in Van Buren County, MI is The Garvey Farm. The farm is comprised of 95 acres with 47 of them farmable; the 48 acres of non-farmable land contain a high percentage of native plants and is environmentally sensitive.

The question before us is: Can the Garvey Farm lead the way to new sustainable agriculture in this one of a kind location while providing inspiration and demonstration for others? The opportunity exists to model a reintegration of social involvement with fertile land, natural resources and the impacts of human activities on the farm. The preliminary report explored a broad base of options to achieve those outcomes.

Any long-term plan must have market-based solutions to the challenges of sustainability. The Whole Farm Plan looked at fresh market vegetable production, an on-farm store, perennial crop production, small-scale livestock production and monetizing the flow of environmental services on the farm.

We need to collaborate with others to leverage our strengths when combined. Caution must be used to select collaboration with those who share our belief, ambitions, and convictions. We must embrace diversity in all things, in all ways - diversity in crops, practices, and collaborations. Collaborations need to exist across sectors, disciplines, and affiliations. We can manage some risk for a processor while they manage some risk for the farm. Educators with clients and funding can use our outdoor laboratory as a classroom. Eaters from all backgrounds can connect with the activities of the farm in a synergistic manner. In the whole farm plan, we need to map relationships to understand the give and the get to avoid misunderstandings.

In a discussion of serving the public the questions quickly emerge of whom are we teaching, what are we teaching, who is doing the teaching and where is the funding? If we first focus on the complexity of folding together all the pieces to craft a sustainable farm, education, and outreach activities will emerge organically in the journey. These fundamental questions will get answered as we evolve the farming systems.



Model for Whole Farm Planning



Perennial cropping