

Farmer Story Lab 101:

v260521

Why Domestic Organic

90 minutes · 3 exercises · No wrong answers



No Clos Radio Vineyard, Oregon, TOPP Mentee Perry Heistuman (left) and TOPP Mentor Dan Rinke (right).

You have a story worth telling, you may not have found the right words for it yet.

In the next 90 minutes, you'll work through three things:

- Why you chose to farm organically
- Why domestic/regional organic matters, for the country, your farm, and your community
- Why your target audience cares, and how to weave that into your storytelling

The goal today is not a polished story. The goal is honest raw material.

Poll 1: Your Storytelling Confidence

Which of these feels most true for your farm right now?

- I have a good story but I'm not sure how to use it
- I know what I do but I struggle to explain why it matters
- I feel like my story isn't that interesting compared to others
- I'm not sure who I'm even talking to

How Today Works

0–20 min	Welcome & Framing	Why this is needed, workshop overview, storytelling introduction
20–60 min	Why Exercises	Why organic and domestic story creation and practice/feedback
60–80 min	Audience Relevance	Stories translated for your target audience
80–90 min	Reflection & Closing	Share takeaways, hear about next steps and resources

[GET THE WORKBOOK](#)

Why This Matters Right Now

The problem

- Demand for organic is growing, but domestic organic farmland is shrinking.
- Organic imports are filling the gap, which doesn't support our local farmers, soil, and economies.
- Organic is still confusing to many consumers.

The opportunity

- Farmers trust farmers more than anyone.
- Consumers trust farmers more than anyone.
- Farmers are often left out of the story, but we aim to change that.

Your voice + your story + your credibility = more powerful than any ad campaign. You just need a way to use it.

How To “FARM” A Good Story

Think of this as a checklist, not a formula. The more you bring in, the better it lands.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| F — Framing | Context and a hook that pulls people in and sets up what's coming |
| A — Arc | A movement from conflict to resolution — something had to change |
| R — Relationship | Keep it authentic to you and relevant to who's listening |
| M — Message | A clear takeaway or call to action |

Tip: "We care about soil health" is a talking point. "We stopped tilling in 2017 and the worm count has tripled" is a story.

Why You Chose Organic

FIRST-GEN ORGANIC

Pixar Method: Built for personal turning-point stories.

1. **What was life like before you went organic?** *What you were eating/growing. What was/wasn't working.*
2. **What was the turning point?** *The moment, person, or realization that shifted and made you change.*
3. **What happened as a result of that change?** *What you tried, what surprised you, and how life/farming changed.*
4. **Where do things stand now?** *What your life/farm looks like today because of that decision.*

MULTI-GEN / LEGACY FARM

Golden Circle: For a story that's bigger than you.

1. **Why did your founders/family choose organic?** *The founding purpose or core beliefs of the farm.*
2. **How do you farm differently?** *The practices, choices, or values that set you apart from conventional.*
3. **What do you grow or raise today?** *The products you sell and what you're building toward with the next generation?*

Peer Share: 10 minutes

SHARING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Farmer 1: Take 2–3 minutes to share your story out loud. It's okay if it's still rough.
2. Farmer 2: Listens, then give feedback.
3. Switch and repeat.

TIPS

- Take notes in your workbook while listening, and then again while receiving feedback.
- For feedback, focus on the most interesting part, what resonated most with you, and would make it tighter or clearer.

Benefits Of Domestic / Regional

There are many reasons to support domestic/regional food systems. For example:

- Buying local keeps more money in our regional economy.
- Domestic organic means a shorter supply chain and fresher, more delicious, and nutritious food.
- You know exactly where your food was grown and who grew it.
- Local farms support local jobs, local ecosystems, and local communities.
- Domestic organic standards are more regulated, audited, and verified.
- Domestic organic farms help keep American soil, water, and air healthier.
- A regional supply chain means a smaller carbon footprint because the food is not shipped around the world.
- Supporting local farms helps ensure that those farms will still be here next season.
- (other) _____
_____.

Why Domestic & From Your Farm

Focus on one or two domestic / regional benefits that resonate with you, and then add detail that's specific to your farm and region to personal your 'why domestic/regional' story.

Here in _____ (state / region), we grow the best organic _____ (crop / product), because _____ (why it's special here).

You'll love buying from us because _____ (benefits you chose).

Our customers also love that _____ (what you can claim that's hard or impossible for a generic conventional/international farm to claim).

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Why Your Audience Cares

AUDIENCE

WHAT THEY CARE ABOUT MOST

Consumers

Health, environment, local community, knowing and trusting the farmer

Retail Buyers

Differentiation, provenance, consumer demand, consistency

Manufacturers

Quality, reliability, traceability, sustainability claims, cost

Ingredient Suppliers

Cost, story, traceability, reliability

Review the Audience Profile Sheet in your workbook for deeper detail on each segment.

Make It Relevant to Your Audience

Read the profile for your primary audience (see your workbook) and take notes on what they care about most that you can deliver on, and then write a short pitch that will resonate with them.

When you buy from (your farm name) _____ you'll get (what this audience cares about most) _____, _____, and _____ because we (how you can deliver on their need, and why it's also important to you and your farm) _____.

Now note how buying from you is a win-win (good for them, for you, and the community, etc).

Volunteer Share

1. Tell us your audience.
2. Give us your pitch.
3. What's the win-win?

Let's Take the Next Step!

102 WORKSHOPS

Sign up for the 102 Workshop on Organic Farm Practices.

You'll go deeper by learning how to turn your organic farming practices into compelling stories.

KNOWLEDGE BASE

Use the Interactive Knowledge Base to tighten your story.

You can ask it questions, or even upload your 101 stories and have it help you write content!

GET SUPPORT

Attend Office Hours or schedule a 1:1 Support Meeting.

We'll have team members ready to help you with strategy, writing, graphics, and more. **Coming soon!**

Challenge: Write who/where you'll commit to sharing first at the end of your workbook.

Poll 2: Storytelling Confidence

Do you feel this training will give you more confidence in telling your story?

- Yes. I'm excited and can't wait to share!
- Maybe. I'm still feeling a little unsure.
- No. I'm still a long ways from confident.

Comment: How can we improve this training?

Poll 3: Additional Support

What additional support would you get the most value from?

- Office hours to ask questions and get feedback.
- A database with photos, story examples, and templates.
- 1:1 strategy, writing, graphics, support.
- Online community of farmer storytellers.
- Social media training.
- Regular reminder and content prompts.

LET'S GROW TOGETHER

STORY LAB 101 / WHY



Your Story Matters

Share it with the world.

Blue Sky Farms, Arizona