

Cala Farms “Origenes”



Juan Rodrigo and Juan Carlos Cala, with their families, form the Cala Farms. The Cala brothers were raised on a family farm, growing their own food as well as gaining experience selling and negotiating prices in the local markets. Coming to Minnesota, the brothers knew they wanted to continue to farm. They enjoy being outdoors and working the land. And eating their own organically grown food is a definite plus.

Taking a major step in increasing their operations, the Cala brothers purchased a tractor this year. Juan Rodrigo says he enjoys using new technology and learning more about efficient ways to farm. The brothers are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about how to use a variety of new tools to improve their crop yield. And of course the idea of making more money from their farming is also appealing.

This is the second year at MFA for Cala Farms. The brothers have learned from the last year—how to time planting, local weather conditions, what plants do well, and new techniques for planting. They have gathered information from a variety of books and catalogues about farming and how to use different types of farm tools. But their practical experience in the field has been the greatest teacher.

This year Cala Farms will be farming 1.5 acres. They will be growing tomatoes, bell peppers, hot peppers, tomatillos, calabasa tatume, squash blossoms, verdalago, papalo, cilantro, and alfalfa. Some of the biggest challenges the brothers face farming in Minnesota are centered around marketing and distribution. It takes a lot of time to deliver product into the Twin Cities and it can be difficult and time-consuming to sell directly to a variety of retail outlets. So this year they will be selling their product through Big River Foods in addition to Saturdays at Global Market Farmers Market.

In the long term, the Cala brothers hope to purchase land and expand their farming enterprise. They are looking to using greenhouses and hydroponics so that Calas Farms can be growing crops all year long.