

Local Grower Profile



T. Dykstra & Sons, Inc., - Hudsonville Michigan

As very young men, Mike Dykstra and his brother Steve partnered with their father to start farming. Their dad backed the venture, launching a partnership that has lasted over 30 years and continues strong even after his retirement and passing. This year, Mike and Steve will harvest 10 acres of green peppers and 50 acres of hard squash which yields about 20,000 plus bushels a season per commodity. Focusing on just two vegetable crops has allowed Mike and Steve to become experts in growing quality produce.

Mike Dykstra feels that the biggest challenge that he faces is the weather, but he still enjoys what he does each day. "I really enjoy going to work everyday because I love to see things grow and see the changes from seed to harvest." The farm location 15 miles east of Lake Michigan allows them to realize benefits of the moderated climate and bountiful moisture.

Crop rotation is a regular practice to maximize crop performance and minimize weed and insect pest problems. The Dykstra's have an arrangement with a neighboring corn farmer and rotate acres between their two farms annually.

Food safety is a top priority on the Dykstra farm. Primus has audited and certified the farm's growing and handling practices for the past seven years. You can be assured of safe, quality produce from the Dykstra's.

Seeing things mature and grow was only one of the reasons that the Dykstra brothers got into business so early in the first place. Mike and Steve also liked the fact that they would have the freedom of working for themselves and focusing on production, while Superior Sales takes care of the marketing of their product.

When not harvesting peppers or hard squash Mike and Steve enjoy operating a greenhouse, where they grow bedding plants and cuttings that they sell to other area growers and retailers. The greenhouse operation is counter-seasonal to the field crops and allows the brothers to retain their 15-20 farm workers employed year-round, contributing to the local economy through out the year.



Supporting Local Produce Suppliers

Produce from a local farm is a great way for our customers to support local businesses and provide fresh menu items for their customers that get attention. Gordon Food Service offers several products from local suppliers that have met the following four non-negotiable requirements: safety, quality, availability, and price. We follow these requirements to protect our customers' well-being.

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Attributes / Quality Features

- Green peppers are rich in Vitamins A and C.
- The best peppers are medium green with a glossy sheen at maturity.
- The taste becomes sweeter as they turn from dark green to bright red.
- Select green peppers that are firm, smooth-skinned and fairly evenly shaped.
- Winter squash is rich in Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Potassium and Manganese.
- Winter Squash can be put in the microwave to soften the shell before putting in the oven to bake. Poke holes in the shell before placing in microwave.
- Select squash with little scaring or bruising on them.

