



Service Is Just What You Do

Gary Hirshberg, Stonyfield Farm
New Hampshire

☀ Call to Action

Find the local farmer's market nearest to your home--it's fresh food, locally produced, and 100 percent good for the environment. Or find a CSA (community supported agriculture) to support: they'll deliver fresh organic food right to your home.

☀ Values

- Determination
- Persistence
- Community
- Entrepreneurism
- Environmentalism

☀ Lessons Learned

It is up to all of us to give back to the world.

If you want to succeed in your endeavors, be determined. Don't give up when things get hard!

Inspire, and be inspired: Follow the example of those who came before you, and make sure you are a good example for those who will come after you.

As a child Gary Hirshberg had learned from his mother about the importance of serving others; a lesson that was reinforced through his family's friendship with the family of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

So when he had turned a tiny farm with just a couple of cows into Stonyfield Farm, the leading producer of organic yogurt worldwide, Gary and his business partner made sure that they would give back. They decided that 10 percent of their profits would be spent on initiatives to help fight the effects of climate change. Through the years they have taken many measures to minimize the carbon footprint of their company, and to support environmental causes. They have also built up a network of organic farmers by teaching them about sustainable agricultural practices. "Determination is the most important and underappreciated characteristic needed to be an entrepreneur," Gary says. "Nothing takes the place of hard work and passion."

☀ Language Arts

Businesses can be the engine that propels our economy.

Working in groups of 3-5 people, create a business plan for an environmentally friendly and sustainable business in the food industry of your choice. Your business plan must consist of an Executive Summary describing your objectives, products and services, and target markets); your products and services (product summary, including pricing); and an external analysis describing relevant economic indicators, market research, and current trends.

Based on the business plan you and your team have created, write a [three-minute pitch](#)¹ aimed at a theoretical investor, to seek funding for your business.

Write a research paper about the impact the food industry has on the environment. Choose one type of food for example,

fresh produce, ice cream) or any other food product. Then write a research essay about the impact the practices associated with this industry have on the environment, and how they can be improved.

STEM Activities

Research the process of how conventionally produced vs. organic yogurt is made, and the source of its ingredients. Identify the parts of the process—or the ingredients—that contribute to climate change, environmental destruction, or health problems.

Using the claim, evidence, and reasoning model, in this [lesson plan from National Agriculture in the Classroom](#)², students compare and contrast organic vs. conventionally produced foods to discover the differences and similarities of each style of farm production.

Have students explore some of their favorite fruits and vegetables using the interactive [Pesticide Residue Calculator](#).³ Following the prompts on the website, students can read about pesticide residues found on produce, and click on various fruits and vegetables to discover how many servings of that particular fruit or vegetable must be consumed in one day to experience a negative reaction to the pesticides.

Assign student groups to create a multimedia presentation (stop-motion video, video, Prezi, etc.) about a specific crop. Students should show the growth of the plant from start to finish, and highlight the differences between conventional and organic production of their crop.

Sustainability Innovations

Review the [Stonyfield Farms](#)⁴ page. What foods do they get from organic sources, and why do they partner with specific farms for blueberries, pomegranates, and other fruits?

In addition to organic and traditional farming approaches, many farmers are discovering innovations to improve year-round crop production, reduce emissions, and maintain freshness. What is [Vertical Farming](#)⁵? This agricultural technique allows the use of urban farming practices to create sustainable foods and conserve space.

Review the on-farm research and regenerative agriculture techniques of [Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture and the Environment](#)⁶. How has their partnership with Stonyfield and other companies improved the process of training farmers and preserving the environment?

Sustainability Career Pathways

Sustainable Business Manager. Check out these sustainability-focused MBA programs--like [Presidio's Sustainable MBA program](#)⁷ and [others](#)⁸. Opportunities for sustainability-trained business leaders are growing as businesses put sustainability first, and incorporate as [B \(Benefit\) Corporations](#)⁹.

Green Marketer. Stonyfield has developed innovative ways to promote their business--from charitable giving to their [Adopt-a-Cow program](#)¹⁰. Green marketing finds ways to cultivate brand loyalty for more cost-intensive sustainable brands. [Learn more here](#)¹¹.

Sustainable Rancher. Innovative ranchers are working to make raising cows a more sustainable endeavor -- consuming fewer resources and producing fewer greenhouse gases. Innovators like [Joel Salatin](#)¹², companies like [Niman Ranch](#)¹³, and NGOs like [WWF](#)¹⁴

are all working to make ranching sustainable. Interested? [Here are 7 ways to become a sustainable rancher¹⁵](#).

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- 1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWRtG_PDRik
 - 2 <https://agclassroom.org/matrix/lesson/667/>
 - 3 <https://www.safeandfruitsandveggies.com/pesticide-residue-calculator/>
 - 4 <https://www.stonyfield.com/organic/environment/sustainability>
 - 5 <https://babylonmicrofarms.com/the-future-of-environmental-sustainability-in-agriculture/>
 - 6 <https://www.wolfesneck.org/>
 - 7 <https://www.presidio.edu/academics/mba-in-sustainability/>
 - 8 <https://www.bestcollegereviews.org/top/masters-degrees-sustainability/>
 - 9 <https://benefitcorp.net/>
 - 10 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuNSeucUMOM>
 - 11 <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/green-marketing-2948347>
 - 12 <https://www.polyfacefarms.com/>
 - 13 <https://www.nimanranch.com/raised-with-care/sustainable-agriculture/>
 - 14 <https://www.worldwildlife.org/projects/sustainable-ranching-initiative>
 - 15 <https://www.beefmagazine.com/pasture-range/so-you-want-be-sustainable-rancher-7-steps-make-it-happen>



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