



# community development partnership

*Creating opportunities for people to live, work, and thrive on the Lower Cape*

## Allard Farm Grows with Help from the Community Development Partnership

**"We probably could have gotten to where we are without assistance from the CDP, but we definitely wouldn't have gotten here this fast."**

*-John Allard, Co-owner, Allard Farm*

The Lower and Outer Cape has many hidden gems -- including seasonal businesses off-the-beaten-path offering charming atmospheres and great products at affordable prices. Tucked off 6A in Brewster is Allard Farm, a family-owned garden center and farmstand and a CDP client since 2019.



When we spoke with owners John Allard and Marjorie McGinnis in the summer of 2019, they had just received two loans from the CDP. The first, a smaller short-term loan, provided the business with preseason cash flow. The second loan helped them purchase an additional greenhouse, constructed in the off-season and an essential part of today's farm operation. The business has significantly grown since then, even during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many businesses struggled. The farm's layout left ample space for customers to distance themselves and make purchases using a contactless payment system.

The garden center opened for summer 2023 during the first week of May. John shared that it is already shaping up to be their best season yet, with sales up 40% compared to last year. John and Marjorie continue to be amazed by their customer base's loyalty, noting that some of his customers travel across the Cape to visit the farm. "People tell me they come here from Barnstable," said John. "There are so many other garden centers on that part of the Cape that we're surprised but happy that people drive all the way to Brewster." Most of the growth has been through word of mouth, but Marjorie has also been working on increasing the farm's social media presence. Day after day, they notice new faces shopping at the farm. And their small parking area has been packed with cars. "The biggest challenge this year was deciding where to draw the parking lines," joked John.

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One of Allard Farm's goals is to provide high-quality, locally grown products at affordable prices. The farm offers nursery stock, herbs, annuals and vegetables, and thousands of perennials in the spring, including native plants. In late June and through the fall, their business shifts from a garden center to a farm stand, selling fresh tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, and greens grown at the farm and corn, apples, and pears from small farms in Western Massachusetts. "We want to offer variety from our region and keep our prices affordable for local customers, as they make up most of our shoppers," Marjorie said.

As part of their CDP loan agreement, they meet quarterly with Pam Andersen, Director of the CDP's Business and Credit Programs, to discuss business performance and receive technical assistance. Pam counsels John and Marjorie, helping them advance their strategic business goals. In the long term, they plan to install heaters in some of their greenhouses, allowing them to begin growing fresh local produce earlier in the spring. "We probably could have gotten to where we are without assistance from the CDP, but we definitely wouldn't have gotten here this fast," said John.

Allard Farm offers the Cape's bountiful homegrown goodness and is well worth the detour off 6A.

### **Allard Farm**

82 Eldridge Rd, Brewster, 508-896-8306, <http://facebook.com/allardfarm>

*Open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.*

*Orleans Farmers' Market mid-May through mid-November*

If you, or someone you know, owns or is exploring starting a business, visit [capecdp.org/local-business](http://capecdp.org/local-business) to learn how the CDP can help!