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## **Self-employment**

**Up & Running: A look into lessons learned from new entrepreneurs**

# **Healthy bottom line from healthy food**

Roger Pierce, Special to QMI Agency

They say you are what you eat. Maybe that's why a growing number of conscientious consumers are willing to pay for organic produce. "Most farmers struggle to get by, but my company is thriving economically," entrepreneur Daniel Hoffmann says.

Founder of The Cutting Veg ([www.thecuttingveg.com](http://www.thecuttingveg.com)), Hoffmann began farming in 2000 and launched his company in 2008.

The Cutting Veg is a community health promotion enterprise rooted in organic farming. It grows a variety of vegetables and herbs, which are sold at farmers' markets and through community-supported agriculture programs. The company also runs the "Global Garlic Project," which cultivates many varieties of garlic from around the world.

"Being able to do what I love — growing food and being outdoors while enriching the community — is what motivated me to launch my company," Hoffmann says.

The Cutting Veg also provides food coaching services, which include garden and composting project support, agri-business training, food-based workshops and part-time farming internships.

Hoffmann believes organic agriculture has the ability to enrich a community on many levels: personally, socially, environmentally and economically.

For example, the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model is a partnership in which individuals or families receive fresh, local, organically grown produce weekly, while supporting local farmers with sustainable growing practices.

"We have CSA's in three locations in the GTA, and this is a foundation of the business," Hoffmann says.

Similar to farming, Hoffmann believes business success depends on growing healthy relationships. "Whether it is a colleague, volunteer, intern, customer or employee, each relationship is important to your business and deserves quality attention," he says.

"Spend time cultivating these relationships and your small business will flourish."

— Small business expert Roger Pierce is co-founder of [BizLaunch.com](http://BizLaunch.com). His company advises new entrepreneurs in free seminars delivered across the country.