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Foodshed.io expands local producer links to buyers

By

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[Foodshed.io](#), a mobile marketing app and logistics platform, continues to grow in linking local produce growers with buyers. The company performed well in 2020 despite the COVID-19 pandemic, and in 2021 the operation is thriving to an even greater degree.

Last year the young company enjoyed having St. Louis-based Schnuck Markets Inc. as its primary retail client. Daniel Beckmann, CEO of the firm, credits Mike Tipton, vice president of Schnucks, for being highly cooperative and a central factor in boosting the firm's early success.

“Schnucks took a chance in doing this” with Foodshed.io, he said. “They care about their community and region, and they serve it with pride.”

Beckmann said the Foodshed.io app simplifies the process for retail, foodservice and institutional produce buyers to acquire local produce through one-stop shopping. Foodshed.io can deliver to distribution centers or directly to individual stores. The app handles payments to growers, which typically are not large-volume suppliers — so aggregating their offerings into one site boosts sales for all.

As consumers increasingly moved toward home-deliveries directly from farmers in the COVID-19 year, Foodshed.io was a tool for Schnucks to compete through its locally grown produce.

In addition to Schnucks, Foodshed.io is working with wholesalers in the St. Louis area to connect with local growers — within 250 miles of the receiver. In 2021, 90 growers are to be aligned with Foodshed.io. The company is expanding its buyer base, as well as number of suppliers.

Beckmann added that said these growers are very pleased that Foodshed.io opens customer communications to establish volume estimates prior to the planting season. And, he said, this service provides a good avenue for their businesses to grow.

For the time being Foodshed.io mostly ships its produce under a Foodshed.io label because of the involvement of multiple suppliers, though that procedure may evolve in the future. Foodshed.io provides retailers with videos featuring different local growers, for the customers to use on websites or in stores.

Beckmann said Schnucks has stores in Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin. The company expects to add other major retailers in the near future.

Foodshed.io profits from its service in a variety of ways, including charging retailers a platform fee. Growers are not charged for any services that Foodshed.io provides.

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