Our mission is to grow high quality, organic produce, and help others do the same. Many problems inherent in modern agricultural production disappear by farming organically on a smaller scale. Locally grown food uses less energy, but provides more employment. Soils are better cared for, and the farmers and surrounding environment are safer. There is reason to believe our nations health crisis is directly related to an unhealthy food production and distribution system, ie., Factory farms and fast food. Another advantage of small farms is their beauty. They provide places for recreation, education and inspiration. Communities form around local family farms, enjoying good food and the fellowship that follows the food. Time and again I've spoken for the small, organic farm and against urban development, probably because the small farm I was raise don is now a subdivision.

As so often happens, I've spoken so much that I've put my foot in my mouth. A group of concerned citizens has asked me for my help in starting a small, organic farm in an effort to grow local food in an area threatened by development. The area, called Bellis Bend, has about 150 residents on approximately 8000 acres of beautiful farmland. The proposed development would bring in thousands of people in new homes, shopping malls and high rise buildings. Bellis Bend is just across the Cumberland River from Nashville, in Northern-Davidson County.

Our past 15 years, this community has banded together and fought off a proposed landfill, a sewage treatment plant, road widening and other urban development projects. They want to do something positive to show good reasons why their place should remain rural. Having a small, organic farm for a model of alternative development is their dream.

Although located only 15 minutes from downtown Nashville, Bellis Bens feels like Macon County countryside. The farms are under-utilized with old barns and a few cows. Many of the people I met had land, tractors and a vision, but no clue how to farm.

It is all there: manure piles, good soil, big and small tractors, hay for mulch, and close proximity to a million hungry people. Nashville could get feed from Bellis Bend Farms, employing a large workforce to grow and process the produce. The organic food industry is booming, and the economy of local farms is booming.

I've been under pressure to grow more produce, but I like my size the way it is. So, I can't just up and leave my farm; it must continue as it is my commitment. We'll keep growing high quality, organic produce. And will keep helping others do the same.