



## Mission Statement

West Georgia Slow Money (WGSM) Investment Club works to improve the overall viability of our local food system by providing low interest loans to local farmers and food businesses. We are creating a financing instrument that prioritizes soil health, agricultural heritage, and long term food system viability over short term financial gains. We will work to increase and promote cooperation between farmers, food businesses and consumers.

## Criteria for Making WGSM Loans

**A. Mission Related Criteria:** The goal of the WGSM Investment Club is to strengthen West Georgia's local food economy by making small loans to farms and food businesses to help them thrive. We will favor businesses that:

1. Promote the interconnection and growth of other West GA farms and food businesses (for example, by sourcing from local farms or by expanding markets through processing or distribution)
2. Enhance regenerative land use practices and build soil
3. Show clear commitment to increasing local food production, storage, distribution and consumption, and to the viability of the West GA local food system as a whole.
4. Increase efficiency or productivity of the food system through innovative and creative design.
5. Address larger social issues of hunger, paying livable wages (including to the proprietors), social justice, and public health.

**B. What We Fund:** We will generally make loans of \$5,000 or less, although we will consider other requests. We are most interested in making loans for equipment or special projects that will help a farm or food business operate more efficiently and/or support growth. We expect that the borrower will clearly show how the equipment or project will affect the borrower's business and whether the project will be successfully completed using the WGSM loan by itself or in conjunction with other funding. We will consider working capital loans, especially those that lower costs. We will generally not fund start-up businesses.

**C. Financial Strength of the Candidate:** We are looking for applicants with good business practices and sufficient cash flows to support the loan. Strong applicants will provide the following:

1. A business plan, narrative, or financial information including:
  - Sales and profits for the previous year and sales and profit projections for the current year, Evidence that the business has sufficient cash flow to pay back the loan, Evidence that the business is growing, has the potential to grow, or is on a path towards profitability, Info about the market and competition, Description of what makes the business special
2. Credit references
3. Trade references (suppliers or customers)
4. Financials, including tax returns for prior year, profit and loss statements for the prior year and projections for the current year.
5. Current and past debt history