

Emerald Farms



Jose Felix Cisneros

García was born in Tateposco-Copula, in the state of Jalisco, Mexico. He grew up with his grandfather who was a dedicated farmer his entire life. It was from his grandfather where Jose Felix gained his knowledge and developed his skills for working the land. “I remember the first thing grandpa taught me was to yoke with ox, and I even have a scar from mismanaging those animals!” Back in that time he remembers they never used any chemicals, and the crops they cultivated were traditional beans, fava beans, garbanzo beans, corn, and all kinds of melons.



His grandfather passed away when Jose Felix was around thirteen years old; at that time he already had solidified his farming knowledge to start by his own, so that was he did. Jose Felix has six brothers and sisters and he remarks that from the whole family he is the one that likes farming the most. When he came to California, eleven years ago, he began working with a company, managing the irrigation system; he worked there long hours every day for around nine years. He heard from his brother about the Farmer Education Program at ALBA and thanks to strong encouragement from one of his daughters Teresa, he enrolled in the program and graduated in 2010 (Teresa also took the course!).

“Even my family was tired of seeing me working for others, therefore they are really supporting me now that I got 1.5 acres to start my own farm business in ALBA’s fields.” Last year Jose Felix sold his first harvest to ALBA Organics and he enumerates with great enthusiasm his first products: kale, chard,



cilantro, and beets. This coming year with some savings and a plan to rent another acre, he is planning to try strawberries, something he is looking forward to.

“Esmeralda Farm” is the name his daughter Teresa and his wife Maria Guadalupe would like to name the farm business, and they are planning to expand their sales to farmers markets as well: “We are doing this together as a family; the plan is that two of my daughters do sales and marketing, while my wife, one of my sons and a son-in-law and I will keep working on the farm.”

