OrganicLea

- Workers coop - set up in 2001. 23 members
- NE London
- former council plant nursery
- Turnover £750K
Aims/ Activities

• **We Grow**: Organic Market Garden & Plant Nursery
• **We Sell**: Box Scheme, Market Stalls, Resturants
• **We Support Others to Do the Same**:  
  - Volunteering Programme  
  - Learning and skills  
  - Outreach Gardening  
• **We Work for Wider Change**
OrganicLea’s Farm Start

• Since 2014
• Why?
  - Extend “progression pathway” for our participants
  - Increase supply of produce
  - Replication/ Self-seeding
  - Changing the Food System
How It Works

- Training
- Incubation
- Support
- Partnership
Training

• Volunteering Programme
• Horticulture Courses: City & Guilds Level 1 & 2
• Work Placements
• Traineeships
  – including Farm Start Traineeship
• Apprenticeship
Incubation & Support: What we offer

• Access to Land
• Grower Mentoring
• Marketing Access & Support
• Some Capital
• Fundraising & Enterprise Support
• Management of Farm Start Programme
Incubation > Support > Partnership: Our Sites

- Farm Start Trainee Plots at our site
- Micro-Plot on Private Garden
- Derelict Allotment Plots
- Former Plant Nursery in Haringey
- Pasteur Gardens – 3 Hectare Urban Site
- Rural Holdings
Incubation > Support > Partnership: Marketing Models

- Preferential Access to our Box Scheme & Stalls
- Access to our Restaurant Waiting List
- Chef Supported Agriculture
- Loans For Veg
- Independent Marketing
Challenges

• Access to Land & Capital
• Resources – For Farm Starters and Programme
• Tension between flexibility & structure
• Ensuring Progression/ Succession
• Generating Sustainable Livelihoods from “Real Farming”
Successes/ Triumphs

• Livelihoods, skills & enterprises
• Tonnes more local agroecological produce
• Sustained interest from all areas
• National Farm Start Network