



## A Theory of Change and strategic plan to help Iroquois Valley Farmland REIT to empower the next generation of organic farmers

### Case Study: Iroquois Valley Farmland REIT

Iroquois Valley Farmland REIT (real estate investment trust) is an organic farmland finance company that provides secure land access to the next generation of organic farmers through long-term, farm-friendly leases and mortgages. Founded in 2007 with one farm and one farmer, IQVF now manages more than \$100 million (USD) of assets supporting nearly 70 farmers. Iroquois Valley's portfolio of organic farmers and ranchers is making a positive impact on public health and the environment.



A certified B Corporation since 2012, the company is committed to a triple bottom line—social responsibility, environmental soundness, and economic viability.



The workshops were a real highlight. Junxion are excellent facilitators; their approach was flexible, divergence was managed, and the plan converged at the end. The way that the board and staff came together was the best part. The place we got to was amazing and clear. I feel really good about the final products.

**CHRISTOPHER ZUEHLSDORFF**  
CEO, IROQUOIS VALLEY FARMLAND REIT

## The Challenge

To deliver on its purpose to transform the face of agriculture, Iroquois Valley knew it needed to transform itself. Having grown from a bootstrapped start-up to owning \$100M of farmland, and with the founders stepping aside, it was time to plan for the next stage of growth.

IQVF recognized that it had to evolve into a more sophisticated organization that was adept at business model innovation and comfortable with new tools and practices. This required everyone in the organization to buy into the growth mindset and feel empowered to take the action needed, with commitment to agreed outcomes and the strategy to deliver them.

Iroquois Valley engaged Junxion to facilitate and advise the development of its Theory of Change and the new strategic plan and implementation framework.

When strategic planning is done well it is as much about the journey as the destination. The process and the facilitation are essential to generate buy-in and alignment. Our approach helps to focus and shape the next few years of the client's work, while also building and deepening connections across the team

## How We Helped

Junxion started by assessing 'the lay of the land,' interviewing senior executives, and reviewing documents, ideas, and past work. This informed our initial insights about the opportunities and challenges ahead. We then facilitated three workshops to surface the intelligence, capacity, and ideas needed to ensure a sound strategy and implementation plan.

The first workshop focused on the Theory of Change. By connecting organizational activities explicitly to intended impacts, a well-crafted Theory of Change gives shape to strategy and ensures ongoing attention to the community, sector, and system-level changes the organization seeks to make.

The second workshop cultivated ideas and explored the potential to deliver Iroquois Valley's mandate under its Theory of Change. In the final session we worked with the team to converge around the strategic priorities and key capabilities the corporation will need to deliver its mission and achieve its vision.

## Measuring Success

Iroquois Valley Farmland REIT has a high-level strategic plan that articulates its strategic direction, priorities for the next five years, and the key capabilities the firm will develop through that time. The plan embeds the principles of equity, sustainability, impact measurement and reporting, and agility.

During subsequent workshops, Junxion supported the board of directors and staff to develop focused operational plans for 2024, as they begin to implement the strategy, better equipping Iroquois Valley to transform the face of agriculture by making organic agriculture the norm—not the exception—in America.



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Ready to start making positive impact? Benefit from our many years of experience. No task is too big or too complex for our team. Let's start a conversation.