

Howard County Food Hub Project

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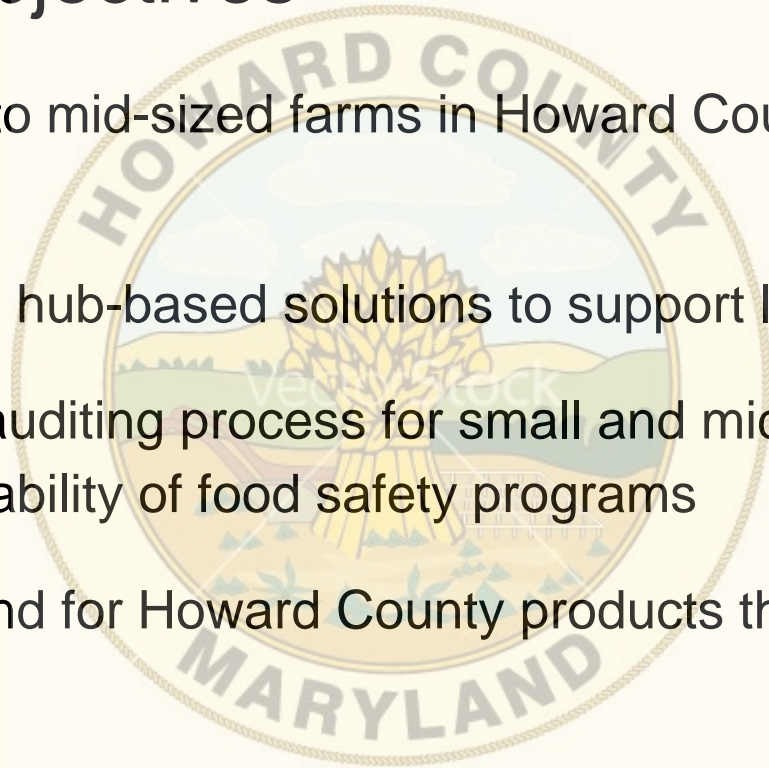
AREC 489N

Mission

Our mission is to improve market opportunities and efficiency for small and mid-sized producers by implementing quality assurance programs and providing marketing and branding opportunities for local producers.

Goals and Objectives

- Connect small to mid-sized farms in Howard County with retailers and restaurants
- Implement food hub-based solutions to support local agriculture
- Centralize the auditing process for small and mid-sized farmers to increase affordability of food safety programs
- Increase demand for Howard County products through marketing initiatives
- Establish new platforms through which consumers can purchase local products



Current Conditions

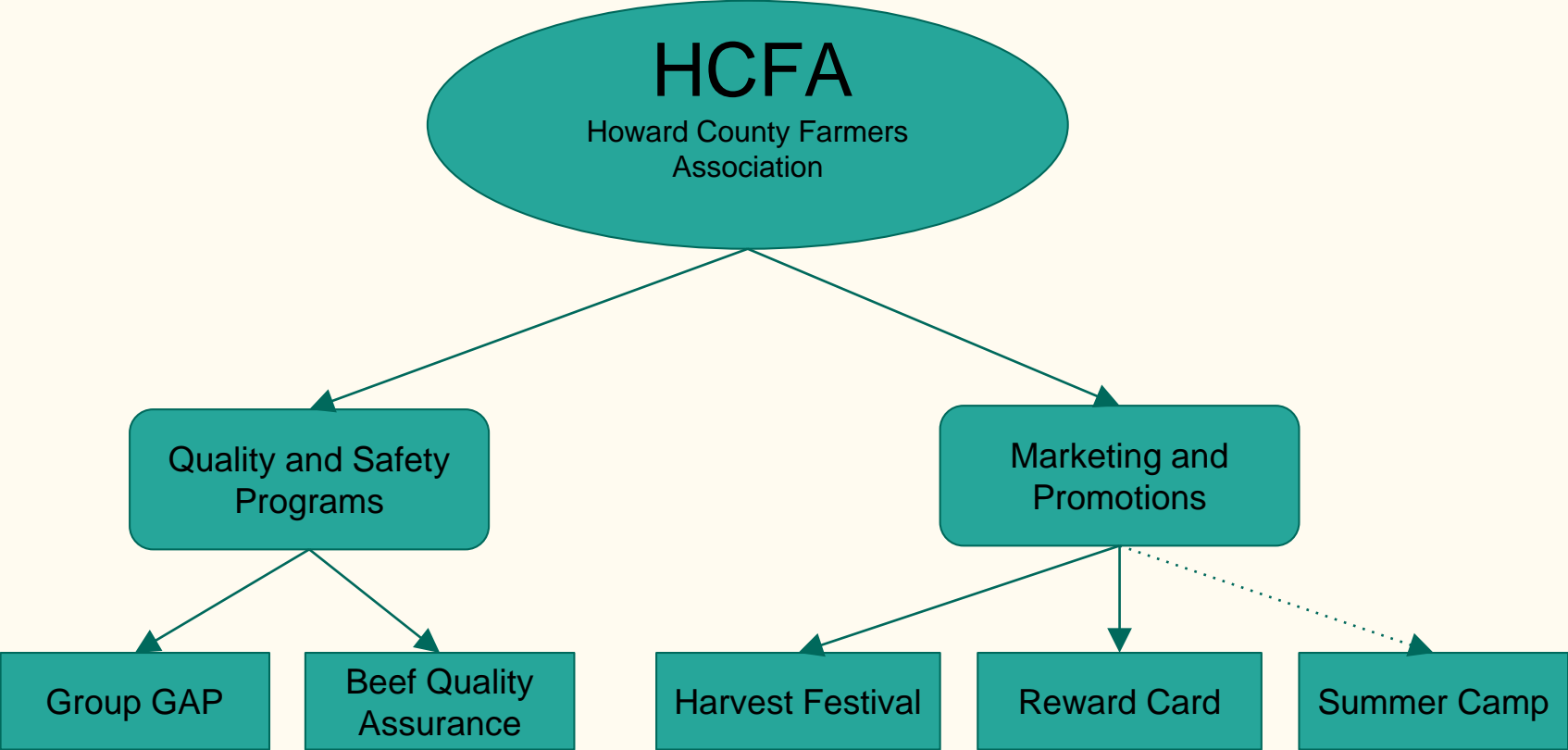
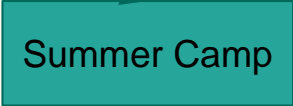
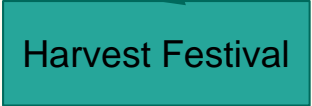
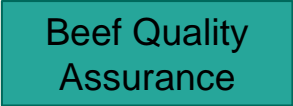
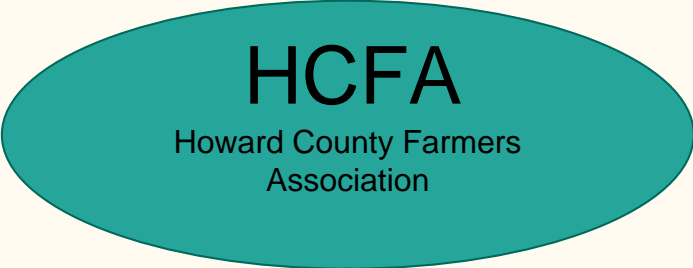
Out of the 293 farms in the County, only 17 are producing fruits and vegetables

A survey was designed and implemented to gauge consumer demand for local products

Howard County consumers would engage in county events, Farmer's Markets, and CSAs to buy locally

Positive responses were received from our local interest survey

Local consumers find buying locally inaccessible and too expensive



Organizational Structure

- Howard County Farmers Association
 - 501-c-5
 - Works toward Local Harvest certified cattle production, GroupGAP certification, auction participation, and branding
- Membership
 - Four tiered pay structure
- Board
 - Made up of 5-7 qualified stakeholders (CPA, Attorney, Farmers, etc) to provide guidance and support
 - Association Manager reports to Board

Quality Assurance Programs

GroupGAP & Beef Quality Assurance

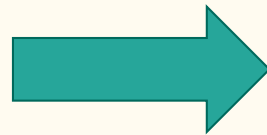
From GAP to Group GAP

**Food Safety
Risk**

Market Access



**\$1,400 Cost
17/293 Farms
110 Acres**



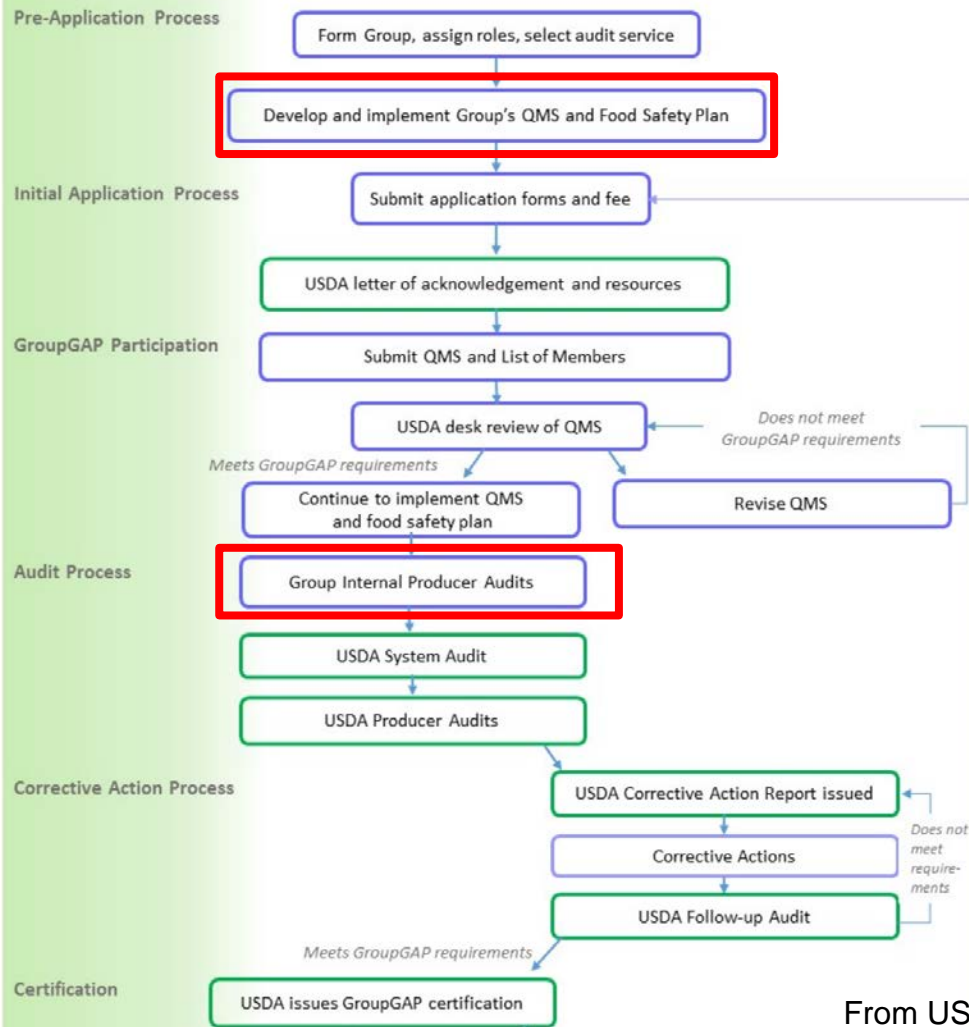
**Small-Mid Size
Branding
Cost Sharing**



Group GAP Process

Quality Management System

Internal Audit System



Beef Quality Assurance

Meyer Natural Foods Humane Handling Standards

- Local Harvest
- Wegmans current demand for local beef

Beef Producers:

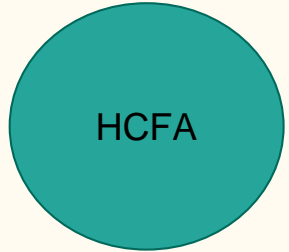
- Low financial risk; whole cow disposal, paid for delivery weight
- Premiums based on beef quality
- Dutch auction platform to help determine consumer demand



Howard County Cattle Producers



Offtake Contract

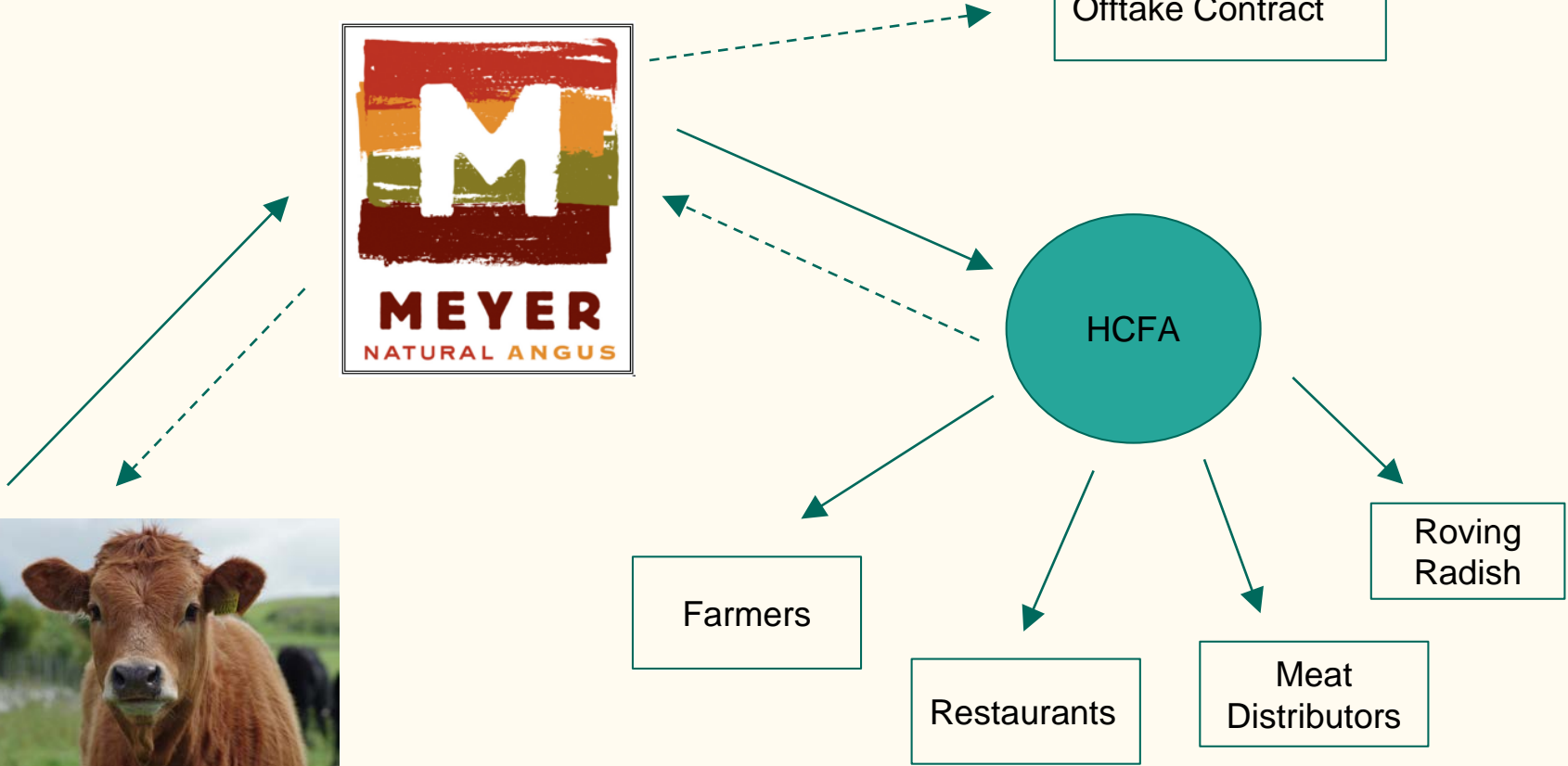


Farmers

Restaurants

Meat Distributors

Roving Radish



Financials

Start-up Expense Budget	
Items	Cost
QMS and Food Safety Plan Development	\$10,000
USDA Group GAP Application	\$736
Non-profit Filing Fees	\$1,020
Contingency (5%)	\$588
Total	\$12,344

Financials

Ongoing Expense Budget	
Items	Cost
Association Manager Salary	\$54,801
USDA Audit	\$5,785
Other Expenses	\$19,440
Beef Auction Expenses	\$204,390
Total	\$284,416

Financials

Revenue

Membership Fees	\$11,500
GroupGAP Fees	\$17,939
Beef Auction	\$234,000
Grants	\$50,000
Total	\$313,439

Surplus Revenue

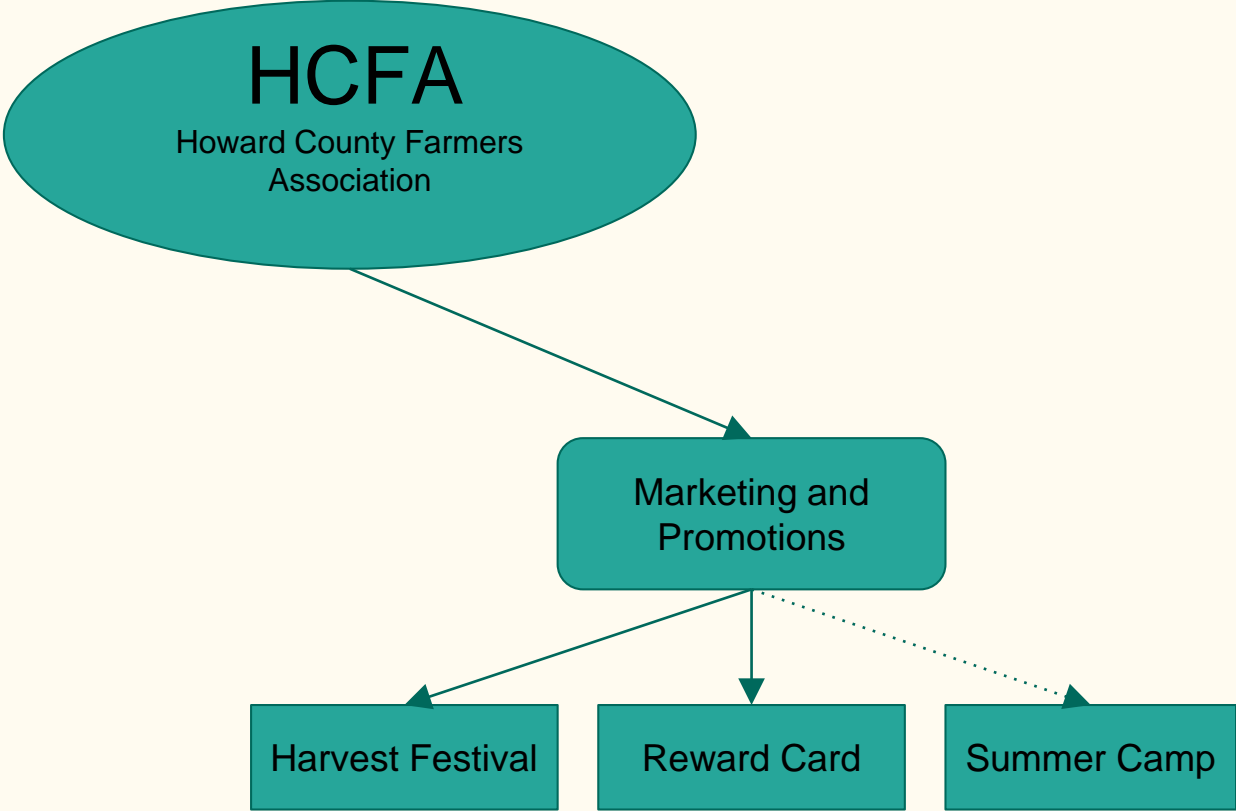
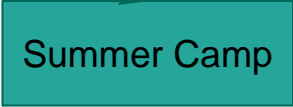
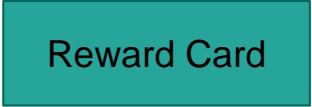
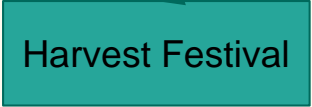
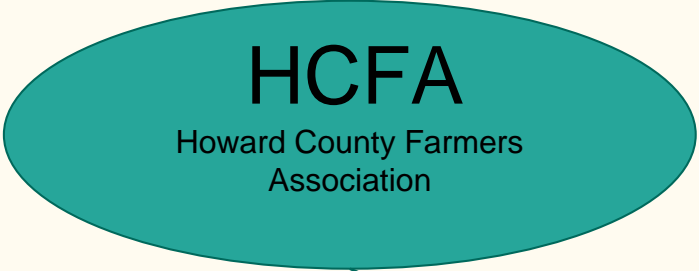
Revenue	\$313,439
Costs	\$296,833
SR	\$16,606

Projections

	Year 2	Year 3
Operating Expense	\$85,627	\$91,621
Beef Auction Expenses	\$757,560	\$1,136,340
Membership Revenue	\$13,450	\$15,750
Beef Auction Revenue	\$936,000	\$1,404,000
GroupGAP Fees	\$17,939	\$17,939
Surplus Revenue	\$124,202	\$209,728

Marketing and Promotions

Promoting local food consumption through experiential programming



Summer Camp

Campers will learn about local agriculture and get involved in the whole food experience by visiting a different Howard County farm each day and participating in hands on activities to learn about local food production.





Budget

Total Cash Sales (\$315 per camper with 10% discount for siblings):	\$80,092
Cash Paid Out:	\$68,823

Total:	\$11,269

Harvest Festival

A 2-day harvest festival is hosted in late september weekend at four Group GAP farms. Visitors buy tickets to participant in activities. Through the harvest festival, participants will establish relationship with local farms by join the harvest festival and visit the farms. Farmers' sales can also increase during the festival.





Budget

Total Cash Sales (Tickets sales + Vendor rents):	\$54,800
Cash Paid Out:	\$7,782
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Total:	\$47,018

Reward card campaign

The aim of the reward card system is to directly promote consumers to visit farmer's markets more frequently and to eat at the participating restaurants, and indirectly promote restaurant to purchase more from local farms



Reward card campaign

Cards distribution

Collect stamps from vendors and restaurants

Participate requirements for restaurants

10 stamps = a free meal / a \$10 voucher



Pilot Budget

Cost of Printing 1000 Cards:

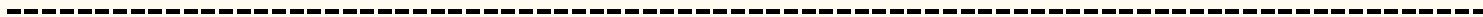
\$40

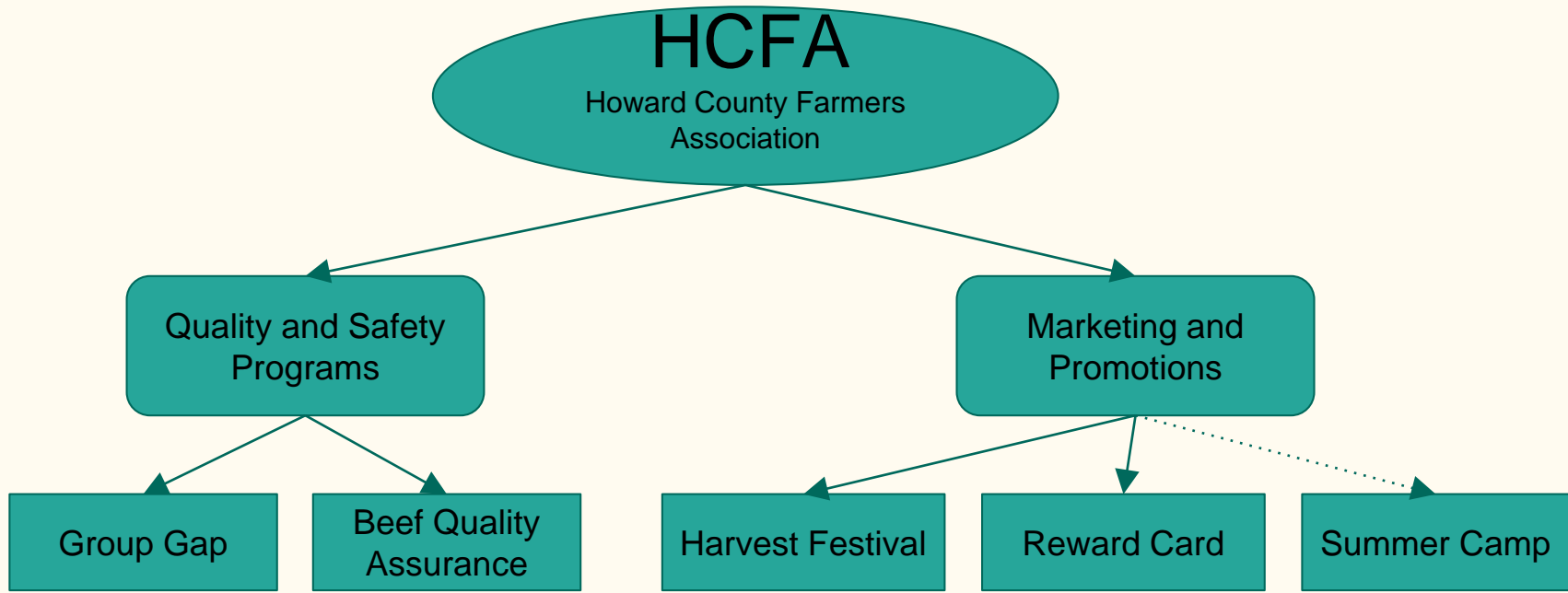
Cost of 20 Stamps:

\$400

Cost of Printing 500 Voucher:

\$100





What Comes Next...

- It is imperative that HCFA continue to expand and innovate in order to continue to encourage small and mid-sized farmers and producers to be successful