



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **Florida businesses chosen as Design Clients for 2014 Local Food Enterprise (LiFE) Summit**

**MIAMI – February 10, 2014 – [Earth Learning](#)**, a Miami based non-profit organization, announced today the four local businesses that have been chosen as Design Clients for the **[2014 Local Food Enterprise \(LiFE\) Summit](#)**, from May 31- June 2 in Miami, Fla.

Each of the enterprises will have the focused attention of the some of the nation’s foremost thought-leaders and practitioners in the fields of finance, sustainable business, Permaculture design, and local food enterprise, which together with Summit participants will propose sustainable business strategies. Not only will these businesses have a better chance at succeeding, but also they will be empowered to join the growing movement to build a local food economy.

“There is a palatable air of excitement amongst the Local Food Entrepreneurs that are part of this year’s Summit,” says Mario M. Yanez, Director of Earth Learning. “If our community is able to break its dependence on imported foods, I am hopeful for the possibility to simultaneously reduce our ecological footprint, promote more viable small local farms that will feed us, and permanently reinvigorate a struggling economy by providing more jobs and greater opportunity.”

This Summit and Earth Learning’s work take a cutting edge approach to purposefully bringing about a local and sustainable food economy in South Florida so that we can become resilient and self-sufficient as a community. The chosen enterprises are:

Earth & Sea Farm is an sustainable permaculture farm located in the Florida Keys managed by two wise elder farmers who have been providing naturally harvested sea sponge, sea salt, vegetable produce and value added products to a local and national niche market for many years. Earth & Sea is looking to expand the scope of their business by expanding the salt and vegetable farm and also by introducing more Florida residents to the concepts of sustainable farming and permaculture through a co-op like trade system.

Local Roots, is an existing local food distribution company that focuses on prompt & courteous service of unique farm fresh Florida ingredients. They currently deliver their bounty of products across the I-4 corridor. Through the Summit's design process they intend to expand to operate as a full-fledged food hub distributing local produce statewide.

Help Yourself is a neighborhood hub of sustainable, healthy living that started out as an organic food café in Key West five years ago, which expanded and opened an accessible organic produce market and developed a distribution component out of necessity. Help Yourself is looking at the possibilities of adding additional market locations in urban centers throughout Southern Florida. They are asking their design team for input on how best to model their expansion into one or two additional urban markets.

Help Yourself owner, Charlie Wilson, runs a successful business in Key West and attended last year’s Summit. Charlie says, “We are seeking the help and input of thought leaders in areas of financing, marketing, Permaculture and business planning. It is perfect timing for us as we really are on the brink of being ready to open another location. It will be extremely exciting to see what the outcomes are.”

### **About the 2014 LiFE Summit**

The LiFE Summit provides a unique space for designers, investors and entrepreneurs to develop their role in a vibrant, regenerative local economy. This “is the only gathering of its kind, applying the power of Permaculture Design to finance and social enterprise.” (Financial Permaculture Institute).

Participants are expected to come from around North America to engage in design teams and learn along side some our country’s foremost thought leaders and practitioners. Registration for the week long training workshop is open to the public, and there are various registration options. To learn more or to register, visit <http://financialpermaculture.com>.

### **About Earth Learning**

Earth Learning is a non-profit community organization whose mission is to be a catalyst in the transition toward a life-sustaining culture in the Greater Everglades Bioregion by: Creating access to ecological movements as they unfold locally; weaving connection toward collective wisdom and a shared vision; Building capacity via ecological learning experiences and; growing roots by inspiring and modeling local, eco-social ventures, visit <http://earth-learning.org>.

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**For More Information:** <http://financialpermaculture.com>

**Press contact:** Mario Yanez at (305) 323-8858 / [Mario@earth-learning.org](mailto:Mario@earth-learning.org); Staff is available for interviews in English and Spanish. Media is encouraged to promote the event in advance to the public and is welcome to attend any event. Please contact us prior to attending to ensure priority access.