



Jen Iacoboni

This year is shaping up to be a big one for Jen Iacoboni and her homegrown business, Heart in Soil. Her husband's new job is moving the couple and their two kids to Farmington Hills, Michigan, this month.

Iacoboni is no stranger to change, though. She left her hometown of Walla Walla, Washington, in 2005, moved to Boise with her husband, and transferred to Boise State University to study marketing and visual arts.

"I had changed my major a few times and always was kind of interested in the marketing aspect of businesses, so I thought that would be a really interesting way to go," she said.

During her junior year, Iacoboni found Alpha Kappa Psi. She said she joined to find a like-minded group of individuals who could encourage each other to be prepared for the workplace.

Upon graduation, Iacoboni worked within real estate and the City of Boise's arts department, but she was really passionate about local food and community supported agriculture (CSA). That interest prompted her to enroll in a holistic nutrition class, sign up to receive a CSA share, and build relationships with farmers and guests at the farmer's market.

"I started having conversations with my friends here in town about the obstacles of why they weren't shopping as locally as they wanted," she said.

Those conversations combined with Iacoboni's passion for local food and her relationships with various farmers resulted in the development of her business, Heart in Soil.

"I created Heart in Soil in hopes to bridge that gap between people not being able to fit some of those things into their schedule and really being able to have people experience local food," she said.

Heart in Soil opened on Nov. 1, 2017, with a mission to bring locally sourced, seasonal food to the community. Iacoboni partners with farms in a 300-mile radius of Boise to



curate her CSA shares, or the mixture of products that customers receive. She labels her company as a boutique-style CSA, meaning that customers can register for a weekly, monthly, or seasonal share cultivated from multiple farms, but customers cannot choose which produce they receive. Once Iacoboni reviews the inventory sheet from each farm, she will curate a mixture of items that will then be picked up by the client or delivered for a fee.

“I want to make sure each person experiences a handful of farms each time, at least three farms each time, and then a variety of produce each time as well so they’re not just inundated with maybe all greens, but in with the greens, they’re also getting the root vegetables that are available so that there’s a nice mix,” she said.

In 2018, she partnered with 23 farms and served an average of 20 customers per week.

The family’s move to Michigan presents a few new challenges. Iacoboni is working to find a replacement to continue her business in Boise while researching farms in Michigan to begin new relationships that will grow the company.

“I’m hoping that (the move) will allow Heart in Soil to really start expanding (its) reach and be able to help be a part in the overall local food, seasonal food movement,” she said.

Iacoboni has a few other goals she’d like to achieve as well, including expanding her educational materials, creating a resource hub online for visitors to find CSA shares in their state, and publishing more videos about produce and food preparation.

For more information, visit heartinsoil.com.