

Potential partners in an organic tomato soup value chain: **An example**

There are three primary types of partners in a value chain, and they each play different roles.

Demand partners

Buyers The school district or hospital that buys organic tomato soup in quantity, in large-batch no-frills cans, at a low price point; the high-end food market chain or farmers market customers that buy the organic soup in small containers with local-brand labeling at a higher price

Transactional partners

Suppliers Seed catalog providers, water or irrigation services, organic fertilizer firms, equipment shops that supply tomato growers

Producers Growers of tomatoes, onions and garlic that will be used to make the soup

Processors Soup-making firm that turns the vegetables into fresh soup—and packages it

Aggregators Firms that collect and bundle the output from many producers and/or processors to facilitate marketing and sale of soup products to buyers

Distributors The transportation company that delivers the soup to the buyers

Support partners

Technical assistance University extension service that transition tomato growers to meet organic crop certification; small business development group that helps the farmers and soup-making firm with business plans and marketing

Financing Bank, credit union, or community development financial institution (CDFI) that provides loans or start-up capital to tomato growers or processing firms; community foundation that subsidizes organic certification fees for low-income farmers, or makes a grant to cover the cost of the value chain coordinator

Policy and regulation Coalition of farmers, processors and buyers that lobby a state agency to lower the cost of organic certification

Market development Healthy Kids non-profit that offers local food taste-tests at schools and food markets, building demand for foods produced by local farmers