Our story begins with oats grown by Doubting Thomas Farms in Moorhead, Minnesota. Doubting Thomas is a sixth generation regenerative family farm, certified organic, and deeply committed to its community. Noreen Thomas (far left) farms alongside the families in her community and advocates for a healthier food system for all. As a research chemist with a degree in food and nutrition, Noreen is deeply interested in crop nutrient density as well as plant seeds and the stories they carry.

Why does this matter?

At Basil’s Harvest, we believe a more healthful, equitable and resilient food system connects the health of people, farms and soil. Our work connects farmers, institutions, health systems and businesses to collaboratively build innovative and regenerative supply chains. For example, we’ve connected partners across the food supply chain to conceptualize and implement the Regenerative Agriculture In The Heartland (RAH) initiative.

The RAH Project serves as a real example of a farm-to-hospital model implemented in the upper Midwest region of the United States. This initiative illustrates the valuable role of hospitals in regenerative food systems: by purchasing regional food, hospitals are supporting farmers, promoting diversity on farmland and in the ecosystem, bolstering the local economy while alleviating conventional supply chain struggles, and connecting patients, staff, and visitors to the origins of their food.

This project focuses on institution-level procurement of food-grade milled oats from regional farmers practicing regenerative agriculture. This allowed us to examine the grain procurement process, from farm to bowl, when a patient orders a bowl of warm oatmeal at the hospital. This process is leveraged by three main actors:

1. THE FARM
2. THE MILL
3. THE HOSPITAL

To find out more about Basil’s Harvest and the RAH initiative, visit us on social media @basilsharvest or email Kelly Bloedorn, Project Manager, kelly@basilsharvest.org or Erin Meyer, Founder, e.meyer@basilsharvest.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

The oats travel about 100 miles to OSF-Saint Francis Medical Center (SFMC) in Peoria, Illinois. These are prepared into oatmeal, granola, and other foods for staff, visitors, and patients. With approximately 6,000 employees and over 650 hospital beds, OSF-SFMC serves over 75 pounds of oats per week.

Sustainability you can truly taste!