

Sweetgreen Debuts New “Faces of the Farm” Feature on Texas Farmer Who Built an Organic Farm Against the Odds

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Courtney Schuster Moore built Rio Fresh’s organic program from scratch, and she now supplies millions of pounds of produce nationwide

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Sweetgreen today premiered the latest installment of its “Faces of the Farm” original content series, spotlighting Schuster and Rio Fresh, the Texas-based, family-run farm where she built an organic program from the ground up.

After a career in aerospace, Schuster returned to her family’s farm and made a pivotal decision following a call from Sweetgreen during a kale shortage: to pursue organic farming in South Texas, one of the toughest regions in the U.S., where year-round pest pressure and no true winter reset mean organic growing often fails.

What followed was a process of learning in real time, adapting to extreme South Texas conditions, embracing emerging technology, and even transplanting at night under stadium lights to help crops survive. With a willingness to experiment, Moore built the foundation for a rapidly expanding organic program, supported by a long-term partnership with Sweetgreen that helped scale operations from approximately 50 acres to more than 850 today. Rio Fresh now grows 15 organic commodities, has supplied Sweetgreen with more than 5.7 million pounds of organic kale, and ships produce to 20 states and Canada.

In an industry and region where women remain underrepresented, Schuster's path stands out not just for representation, but for scale. As one of the few female farmers in South Texas and an even smaller minority among organic producers, she represents a new generation reshaping modern agriculture.

At the core of her approach is a belief in growing great things in hard places, whether that's crops in extreme conditions or raising her three children while building the farm. She describes both as a process of "reading needs and responding," approaching each with care, patience, and adaptability, and tending to the land with a kind of "mothering" instinct rooted in responsibility for what's growing.

"Eight years ago, this started as a leap of faith," said Courtney Schuster Moore, Organic Program Manager, Rio Fresh Farms. "It hasn't been easy, there are challenges every single day, but having partners like Sweetgreen believe in what we were building, and in the importance of regenerative and organic agriculture, made all the difference. It's the most meaningful and rewarding work I could be doing. Farming has become my calling, and I'm so grateful I get to follow in my father's footsteps."

Faces of the Farm is part of Sweetgreen's ongoing commitment to connecting guests more deeply to the people behind its ingredients. Through original storytelling, the series highlights the farmers and growers who make its menu possible, offering a closer look at the work, challenges, and care behind every ingredient.

"When we started Sweetgreen, our mission was to connect more people to real food and the farmers behind it," said Nicolas Jammet, Co-founder and Chief Concept Officer of Sweetgreen. "Courtney's story is a powerful example of what that connection can look like in practice - how partnership, persistence, and a shared belief in better ingredients can drive real change on the farm."

Built on decades of family farming in South Texas, Rio Fresh has grown into a large-scale operation rooted in quality and long-term stewardship, with its organic program now central to the farm's future.

Sweetgreen visited the farm to capture Schuster's story, sharing behind-the-scenes content across its digital platforms. To explore more of Schuster's story and go behind the scenes with Sweetgreen at Rio Fresh Farms, visit Sweetgreen's **YouTube** channel and follow @Sweetgreen on **Instagram**, **Facebook**, and **X** for more.

About Sweetgreen: Sweetgreen (NYSE: SG) is on a mission to build healthier communities by connecting people to real food. Since 2007, the brand has reimagined what fast food can be: fresh, flavorful, and built on real relationships with growers. Sweetgreen's supply chain spans the country while remaining rooted in partnerships with local farmers. Today, Sweetgreen serves seasonal, chef-crafted menus across more than 285 locations nationwide, creating spaces where food, people, and purpose come together.

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