

# THISTLE FARMS

A COMMUNITY OF SURVIVORS WHO BELIEVE LOVE HEALS

Thistle Farms is a community of women healing from prostitution, trafficking & addiction. It includes a two-year residential program, social enterprises that employ survivors, and an education and outreach program for the public. We believe love is the strongest force for change in the world.

## RESIDENTIAL

Begun in 1997 by the Rev. Becca Stevens under the name Magdalene, the residential program today serves up to 32 women in 5 homes, 6 additional women through our inmate program, and hundreds more with advocacy and referral services. Residents receive housing, medical care, therapy, education and job training for two years, at no cost to them. No staff member lives in the homes and instead the community is guided by 24 spiritual principles.



## SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

In 2001, Becca Stevens began a body care company to give jobs to survivors. What started with a powerful vision and a pot of melted candle wax has grown into one of the nation's premiere social enterprises. In the 2018 fiscal year, the social enterprises earned over \$3.3 million allowing survivors to earn additional income and achieve more financial independence..

## BODY & HOME

The women of Thistle Farms make natural products that are good for the earth and for the body. Employees become specialists in the areas of manufacturing, inventory, book keeping, sales and office administration.

Products are sold at the Shop at Thistle Farms, [ThistleFarms.org](http://ThistleFarms.org), and at 400 stores across the country.

## CAFE AT THISTLE FARMS

The Café at Thistle Farms is a restaurant and special event space located in Nashville. With a new produce driven, full service menu, the Café serves globally inspired, locally sourced breakfast, lunch, and Nashville's only daily tea service.

## GLOBAL MARKET

The Thistle Farms Global Market utilizes shared trade practices to increase the profit margin for women at 29 partner organizations in 20 countries. Global partners provide employment for 1,400 survivors of poverty, violence, addiction, and trafficking and offer women an opportunity for economic independence and a healing community.

# THISTLE FARMS FOUNDER

Becca Stevens is an author, speaker, priest, justice entrepreneur, founder and president of Thistle Farms. She has been featured in the New York Times, on ABC World News, NPR, and PBS. She has been named a CNN Hero, a White House Champion of Change, and received numerous honorary doctorates. Becca speaks about creating healing communities at conferences, retreats and places of worship across the country. She is the author of 10 books; her latest is entitled, "Love Heals."



## EDUCATION

Thistle Farms offers workshops and conferences to encourage communities to open housing-first programs and to share best practices for survivors. Through this program, it has developed a network of 50 sister organizations, which in turn serve hundreds of survivors throughout the country.

## THE THISTLE

Thistles grow on the streets and alleys where the women of Thistle Farms have walked. Considered weeds, thistles have a deep root that can shoot through concrete and survive drought. In spite of their prickly appearance, their soft purple center makes the thistle a mysterious and gorgeous flower.

## HISTORY

Becca Stevens opened first house for 5 women under the name Magdalene.	1997	2013	Thistle Stop Café opened. 1st national conference held. Program for inmates, Magdalene on the Inside, begins.
3rd house opened. Graduation held for 4 women.	1999	2014	\$1,000,000 surpassed in product sales. Global enterprise, with 12 partners, launched under the name Shared Trade.
Thistle Farms started as Magdalene's cottage industry. Products made in a chapel kitchen. 1st fundraiser held in Becca's home.	2001	2015	"A Path Appears" documentary aired on PBS. Official name changed to Thistle Farms Inc.
4th home built, 8 more residents housed. Thistle Farms located in small parish rectory.	2004	2016	Becca welcomes Hal Cato as 1st CEO. 12,000 sq. foot manufacturing facility leased. Custom line in all Whole Foods stores. Becca named CNN Hero.
Products rebranded for broader distribution. Graduate transition home opened.	2007	2017	Thistle Farms celebrates 20th Anniversary. New branding and products launched. Thistle Farms and Café are extensively renovated. Welcome Project social enterprise created for Syrian women refugees in Greece.
"Find Your Way Home," book launched in 10-city prison tour. Rwanda trip establishes Ikirezi relationship. Thistle Farms becomes Whole Foods vendor.	2008	2018	Author/speaker Brené Brown headlines fundraiser. "Love Heals" song, based on Thistle Farms, released by Becca's son, Levi Hummon.
Offices moved from 750 to 10,000 sq. foot facility. 25 women employed. 125 retailer partners.	2010		
Thistle Farms featured in NPR series. Becca named a White House Champion of Change.	2011		

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