



# 2023 Impact Report





We are a nonprofit,  
educational farm with  
a mission to grow a  
healthy community by  
connecting all people to  
nutritious foods.



Dear Friends,



What an incredible year it has been! Between new projects and expanded programs, we have so many wonderful highlights to share with you - none of which would be possible without a strong community of dedicated partners, supporters, and volunteers.

One of the great privileges of doing this work is getting to witness people of all ages delighting in nourishing foods. From seniors carefully hand-selecting their perfect tomato from the mobile market truck to kids at the Boys and Girls Club asking with intrigue, "what do we get to taste today?", it is moments like these that remind us of why this work matters.

This year, we also welcomed new staff and board members to the Project GROWS Team. Building on the successes of previous leadership and galvanized by fresh perspective and a renewed sense of purpose, we undertook the process of revising our mission and vision as an organization and are as committed as ever to growing a healthy community with you!

As we look to the year ahead, we hope you will join us on the farm, in schools, and at our markets as we work together to build a more equitable food system where everyone has the knowledge and access to choose, grow, and enjoy foods that support a healthy life.

Sincerely,

**Clara Metzler**  
Executive Director

## Our Team



**Nichole Barrows**  
Director of  
Education



**Megan Marshall**  
Director of  
Food Access



**Price Crenshaw**  
Farm Manager



**Jason Fullerton**  
Waynesboro  
Education Farm  
Manager



**Jeremy Starn**  
Marketing &  
Communications Specialist



**Autumn Cummings**  
Market Manager

Thanks to our seasonal and outgoing staff in 2023

Annie Sachs  
Rosie Clark  
Fiona McGhee  
Libby Kreps  
Lisa Patterson-Allen

Eva Soler  
Donovan Glasgow  
Youth Leaders  
Georgia Meyer  
Kelsey Klotz

## Board Of Directors



**Susan M. Pereles** – Board President

**David Geiman** – Treasurer

**Laura Jean Brand** – Secretary

**Sophie Cantell Lambert**

**Diana Black**

**Chris Aycock**

**Suzanne Griffin**

**Shaun Mooney**

**Susan Buchan**

**Kay Manchester**



Distinguished Service - Our sincere thank you to Deborah Bundy-Carpenter, James Goalder, and Ann Snyder for their many years of tireless service!

## A Farm for You

This was an incredibly bountiful season for the farm with doubled production from the previous year. As always, the food we grow reaches people's plates in various ways.

This year, we focused on supplying produce for our mobile market program and continued working with public school cafeterias. Our third year of providing produce for Martha's Meals on Wheels of Staunton was also a success, as was our continued partnership with the Central United Methodist Food Pantry. Our weekly farm stand, which allows customers to buy groceries directly from our farm, will enter its third season this May.

The Spring Plant Sale and Open House and our first Fall Trunk or Treat event welcomed families to learn, play, and eat at our farm. We also planted a food forest with trees supplied by Silver Run Forest Farm and extended our tool storage thanks to a few dedicated volunteers. We'll continue to focus on building deeper community outreach through programs like on-farm volunteering, internships, and other events, and we invite you to come get your hands in the dirt with us this summer!



**200,000**  
Servings grown



**10%**  
of the food we grew  
was donated



**\$7,200**  
Produce sold to  
schools



**34**  
Businesses supported  
through markets

## Food for All

Providing access to fresh and affordable food is at the core of what we do. Our mobile market program made a spectacular splash with the newly wrapped GROW Mobile. The truck, adorned with an original painting by local artist Sarah Jones, inspired people to learn more about eating fresh local foods. Visiting 5 weekly markets and several more rotational sites each month, the GROW Mobile had over 1,800 transactions enabling over 66,000 servings of fresh local food to reach the plates of hundreds of families in our community.

The Waynesboro Farmers Market also supports local food system development by providing a space for 24 vendors to sell their products. Market sales increased by 34% this year, resulting in \$165,000 of investment in local food. With more vendors than ever before, this farmers market even earned the title of Best Farmers Market in the Valley by The News Virginian.

As a Virginia Fresh Match partner outlet, we double the value of SNAP-EBT (food stamps) benefits spent at all our markets. Thanks to the advocacy of our Community Ambassadors, we facilitated more than \$31,000 worth of nutrition incentive sales in 2023 and have plans to continue this momentum in the year ahead.



**72%**  
of seniors reported they  
ate healthier because of  
the mobile market



**118**  
Mobile market  
site visits



**6,790**  
Pounds of food sold at  
mobile markets



**\$165,000**  
Invested in our  
local food system

*"This is the best way to spend my SNAP dollars."  
- Mobile Market Customer*



# Education for Everyone

In 2023, we were excited to witness several of our long-standing education programs deepen and mature. We celebrated 12 years of shared programming with the Boys and Girls Club of Waynesboro, Staunton, and Augusta County, and hosted our fourth year of summer camps in partnership with the Blue Ridge Children's Museum. In addition to doubling our number of camp weeks this year, we also ran two simultaneous programs at different sites: the Project GROWS Farm and the Waynesboro Education Farm!

The Youth Leaders in Agriculture program also grew into its fifth year of offering first-time job experiences to high school students. This program has evolved into a comprehensive mentorship for young leaders interested in gardening and nutrition. Students emerge with increased job readiness skills, a deeper knowledge of our food systems and the actions they can take to improve it. The YLA program hopes to build a local, generational pipeline of knowledgeable, committed, and creative changemakers in the field of sustainable agriculture.



8

Youth hired over the summer



64%

increase of interactions with children since 2021



111

Programs hosted



3,900

Hours of learning and working with students

*"YLA helped me grow as a person in a different way than any other job. I was able to build amazing connections with my community while working outside every day."*

*-Logan Braun, YLA 2023*



In 2023, we began contracting with Waynesboro Public Schools to support the Waynesboro Education Farm at Berkeley Glenn Elementary through farm management and garden-based programming to amplify academic learning. We grew 6,300+ pounds of produce, facilitated two weeks of summer camp, and assisted with field trips and after school clubs. We are excited to help assure the success and longevity of this critically important farm-based education initiative of Waynesboro Public Schools.



# Volunteer Impact

In 2023, we hosted high school groups, university clubs, corporate social responsibility initiatives, and other civic organizations wanting to invest in our community. Individual volunteers played a huge role in our success this year, joining in on our weekly harvest groups and helping with construction projects around the farm. Volunteers also supported our markets and education programs, providing assistance with tastings, sales, and community engagement. Every little bit makes a difference, so thank you to all of our volunteers!



**1,143**

Volunteer Hours



**104**

Volunteers



**17,000**

Lbs. Grown



**WE ENVISION** a world with an equitable food system where everyone has the access and knowledge to choose, grow, and enjoy foods that support a healthy life.



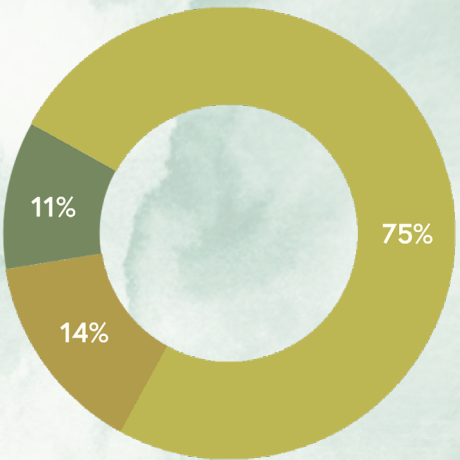
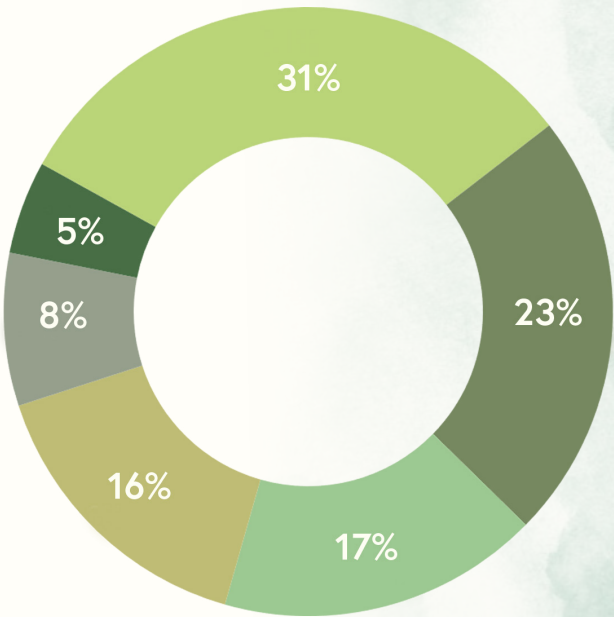


# Financials

Our means to connect all people to nutritious foods is made possible through the trust, investment, and partnership of many stakeholders and constituents. In 2023, hundreds of individual donors, businesses, foundations, granters, and more came together with a spirit of generosity in support of Project GROWS. We wish to extend a heartfelt thank you for sharing in our mission to grow a healthy community.

## Revenue

Government Foundations & Grants	\$168,409.30
Program Contracts	\$122,074.50
Private Foundations & Grants	\$91,391.80
Donations	\$83,398.82
Earned Income	\$43,422.19
Business Sponsorship	\$26,446.92
Total	\$535,143.53



## Expenses

Programs	\$390,382.86
Administration	\$75,520.83
Development	\$55,376.96
Total	\$521,280.65

*“I love PG. I am 75 years old and I cannot carry those grocery bags home. Having all this right here makes such a difference.”*

*- Mobile Market Customer*

### Spotlight: Planned Giving

Whether in the form of securities or qualified retirement distributions, your legacy gift helps us continue to find new ways to expand our impact far into the future. Please consider making Project GROWS part of your estate planning.



# Spotlight: Kids Bucks

Through our Kids Veggie Bucks Program, every child receives a \$5 coupon to use on fruits and vegetables on every visit to the mobile market as well as Waynesboro Farmers Market. In 2023, this program provided over \$2,000 worth of free vegetables to over 375 children and will continue into 2024. Kids Veggie Bucks is made possible through funding from the Molina Cares Foundation.

This year, we were very excited to bring our GROW Mobile to the Boys and Girls Club of Waynesboro, Staunton, and Augusta County, a longtime partner collaborating on field trips, cooking classes, and after school activities. Veggie Bucks made it possible for students to taste foods they might not have otherwise tried and take their enjoyment back to their families.

*"I tried the green beans and loved them so much I ended up taking them home and me and my mom made roasted green beans with salt and butter and it was SO GOOD!"*

*- Kids Bucks Customer*



Front Cover Photo: Tiger Solar



EIN 46-1070735

## Consider Giving Your Gift Today

Mailing Address: PO Box 781, Staunton, VA 24402  
Farm Address: 608 Berry Farm Rd., Staunton, VA 24401  
[www.projectgrows.org](http://www.projectgrows.org)