

## MISSION

### Mission-driven Solutions

Provide **equitable access** to affordable & nutritious foods to support healthy food choices <sup>2,3,4,5</sup>

#### Equitable Access

#### Programs & Activities

- Manage nutrition incentives programs at farmers markets <sup>2,4</sup>
- Operate a mobile market <sup>3</sup>
- Share & distribute food we grow to communities in need <sup>3,4</sup>
- Partner with community ambassadors <sup>2</sup>
- Support other farmers markets in implementing nutrition incentives <sup>4</sup>

#### Resources

Expert Staff   Invested Board of Directors   Financial & Impact Reports/Assessments   Collaborative & Diverse Funders/Donors   Network of Community Partners   Enthusiastic Volunteers  
Reputation   Values   Office Space   Storage Supplies   Our Farm Accessible L& Vehicles (mobile market & farm truck)   Marketing Website & Social Media Presence

#### Productivity

- # sales with nutrition incentives
- # of VFM outlets supported in our region
- # lbs of food sold & donated to low access communities
- # mobile market sites, visits & transactions
- # food servings distributed
- # & hours of service of community ambassadors

#### Immediate Impact

- ✓ People report consuming more fresh local food, including fruits & vegetables <sup>3,4,5</sup>
- ✓ People have increased access & affordability of fresh, local food including fruits & vegetables <sup>3,4,5</sup>

#### Longer-term Change

- ❖ Increase access to healthy, safe & affordable food for individuals & families of all socioeconomic levels to support long term health <sup>2,3,4,5</sup>
- ❖ Eliminate geographically based food & health disparities <sup>3,4</sup>
- ❖ Lower chronic disease through healthy dietary patterns <sup>4</sup>
- ❖ Increase overall sense of wellbeing <sup>8</sup>

#### Systems-level Change

## VISION

## Grow a healthy community by connecting all people to nutritious foods.

To meet this mission, we will implement...

Provide **food education** to increase knowledge, skill & confidence in growing, cooking & eating healthy foods <sup>1,2,5</sup>

#### Food Education

To implement these solutions, we will provide...

- Provide hands-on farm, garden & food-based education through field trips, cooking classes, school garden lessons & youth employment <sup>1,5</sup>
- Conduct food tastings on the farm, in schools & at our markets <sup>1</sup>

To provide these programs & activities, we will need...

- # educational activities & events
- # people receiving food education including children, youth, adults & seniors
- # hours of instruction delivered & received by program participants
- # youth employed in farm leadership program

Our success & value will be measured by ...

- ✓ Children can identify fruits & vegetables & are more willing to try them <sup>1,5</sup>
- ✓ Children have more access to fresh, local fruits & vegetables <sup>4,5</sup>
- ✓ Children, youth & adults know how to grow & prepare fresh fruits/vegetables <sup>1,5</sup>

In the future, research suggests the people we worked with to be able to ...

- ❖ Improved home food environments & healthier eating habits <sup>1,3,4</sup>
- ❖ Childhood & adult obesity rates lower over time <sup>4</sup>
- ❖ Children develop healthy eating habits that continue into adulthood <sup>1,4,5</sup>
- ❖ Increased fruit & vegetable consumption & awareness <sup>1,3,5</sup>
- ❖ People are empowered to grow food & cook healthy meals at home <sup>5</sup>

Ultimately & collectively with other efforts, this will contribute to improving...

Increased food security <sup>3,4</sup>   Improved community health outcomes <sup>1,4,5</sup>   Increased community wellbeing <sup>8</sup>

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

Support our farming community to grow & sustain a thriving **local food system** <sup>3,7,8</sup>

#### Local Food System Development

- Facilitate farmers markets so local farmers can sell food
- Create pathways for local food procurement for local producers <sup>3</sup>
- Buy & sell local food
- Connect farmers to resources, networking, training, business development & sales <sup>7,8</sup>

- # farmers markets
- # \$ food we sold & purchased locally (e.g., markets, schools, wholesale, CSA, Farm St&, etc.)
- # lbs & variety of food grown (PG & WEF)
- # \$ vendor sales through our markets
- # transactions & customer counts total number of farmers supported through our programming

- ✓ Local producers have a reliable network for collaboration & resource sharing <sup>7,8</sup>
- ✓ Increased availability of direct-to-consumer markets <sup>3</sup>
- ✓ increased dem& for local food by market traffic & sales <sup>3</sup>

- ❖ Local food is more visible & accessible in the community <sup>2,3</sup>
- ❖ The local food economy is healthy, vibrant & growing
- ❖ more farmers can establish &/or maintain business <sup>7</sup>

**Collaborate & share resources** to strengthen our community's collective ability to improve health <sup>2,7,8</sup>

#### Collaboration & Resource Sharing

- Provide consultation services on garden-based education, food access & farming
- Conduct community outreach through tabling events & presentations <sup>2</sup>
- Collaboration with local, regional, state & federal partners on programs <sup>8</sup>

- # & description of organizations consultation is provided to
- # consulting hours
- # outreach activities/events (e.g., tabling events, speaking events)

- ✓ Partners have resources to develop & maintain similar programs food access programs <sup>8</sup>
- ✓ People have access to food-related community health programs <sup>2,4</sup>

- ❖ Increased community resilience <sup>8</sup>
- ❖ Collaboration leads to more & improved food-related programming & advocacy <sup>2,7</sup>
- ❖ Project GROWS is identified in our community as an essential, valuable & inclusive resource for connecting people to the source of their food, the land & each other

### The Local Need

Just over 1 in 5 people (**21.7%**) living in our region have low food access, which is higher than the Virginia average & higher yet in Augusta County (29.3%). While the rate of food insecurity in our region (**20.8%**) is lower than the national percentage (34.1%), this statistic is growing in our region & women, young adults, communities of color & especially lower-income residents are more likely to report being food insecure. In fact, nearly 1 in 5 people in our region (22.7%) have **difficulty accessing affordable fresh produce** which is also higher than our state average & highest among these same groups. These disparities are contributing to negative health outcomes in our community. Youth & adult obesity rates in our community are higher than the national average with just over 1 in 5 **youth (21.9%)** & 2 in 5 **adults (40.9%) living with obesity**. Additionally, the number of adults with diabetes (14.9%) in our community is higher than the national average.<sup>6</sup>

### Bibliography

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