

# Just Roots 2020 Report







# 2020 OVERVIEW



**Just Roots** works to connect all people to the local food economy, overcoming barriers to food access with care and support. Steeped in the belief that all people, regardless of economic circumstance, have a basic human right to nutritious food, we work to disrupt systems of oppression that perpetuate diet-related poor health outcomes which disproportionately impact black, indigenous and people of color. **We work to make long term change by addressing root causes of hunger while delivering programming proven to decrease food insecurity, improve health and foster community connections.**

2020 was incredibly challenging for everyone. Our local food system rose to the challenge, filling the vital need to keep people fed despite the world being deeply isolated, divided and disrupted. Just Roots pivoted in a number of key ways, introducing doorstep delivery of our CSA Farm Share program and offering subsidies for any household identifying financial hardship or lack of healthy food access due to the pandemic. We also shifted our community meals program to a prepared and distributed meal and cooking kit program, and worked to maintain the safety of staff and community members on the farm, in the community garden, at farmers markets and in the community. While we shifted in-person cooking workshops to Zoom, and required masks and physical distancing while on-farm, we remained committed to creatively bringing people together around food in virtual spaces or within their homes, and encouraged community members to use the farm as a safe outdoor space during the pandemic.

Over the past few years, the strategy of connecting people to healthy food through their healthcare provider, referred to as “Food Is Medicine”, has been a key focus of Just Roots’ food justice strategy. Participation in an Innovation Accelerator program provided Just Roots with the opportunity to further develop a business model called PEAS (Promote, Enroll, Administer and Support). PEAS outlines the core components of the Just Roots clinically proven CSA model and packages them into a program that connects the CSA to food insecure patients through a direct referral from their healthcare provider. In 2020, Boston Children’s Hospital Accountable Care Organization invited Just Roots to partner on a pilot of this model. The pilot reached 150 families in Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties in its first year, which marked a pivotal moment for Just Roots as we saw the strategy we laid out at work: leverage the CSA model’s impact on health, food security and cost of patient care to motivate robust investment by the healthcare sector into programs that support patients’ diets, and ultimately overall health.

In a year of unimaginable challenges, Just Roots managed to connect the CSA with 386 families, impacting 1,205 individuals, served 2,653 prepared meals, provided 68 community garden plots and maintained year-round operations. We learned a lot about what gaps exist within our organization, namely infrastructure and capacity. 2021 will bring a key focus on building the capacity to invest in infrastructure on the farm and add capacity on staff to ensure safety, efficiency and quality of year-round food access programming. As the organization grows to reach target populations further away from the farm, we will also be challenged to forge the balance of remaining rooted at home while developing our model for replication and broader impact across Massachusetts.

So many thanks go out to the Just Roots staff team, Board of Directors, volunteers, participants, partners, funders and donors who make this work and impact possible.

With hope and gratitude,

*Jessica O'Neill*

Jessica O'Neill, Executive Director







# CSA 2020



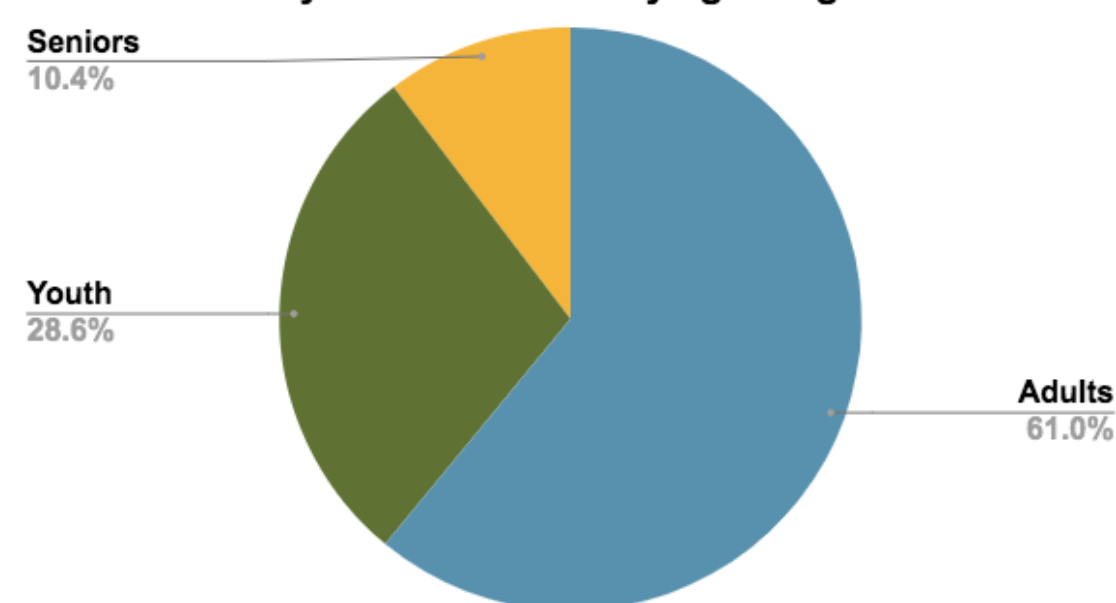
In 2020, Just Roots distributed 386 CSA shares to 1,205 individuals in Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden Counties.

## FRANKLIN COUNTY CSA

### Number served:

- 236 families
- 649 individuals

### Franklin County CSA #'s served by age range



### In our Franklin County CSA:

- 77%** respondents reported increasing fruit & vegetable consumption by at least ½ cup per day since joining a CSA
- 77%** also reported trying a new vegetable they hadn't eaten before
- 67%** reported trying out new recipes
- 45%** reported improved attitude in their households toward eating vegetables
- 55%** reported increased willingness in their households to eat new foods
- 39%** reported feeling more connected to community
- 41%** reported improvement in physical well-being
- 41%** reported improvement in mental well-being
- 83%** reported harvesting from the Pick-Your-Own garden, with 77% of those members reporting regular visits to the garden

## BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL ACO CSA

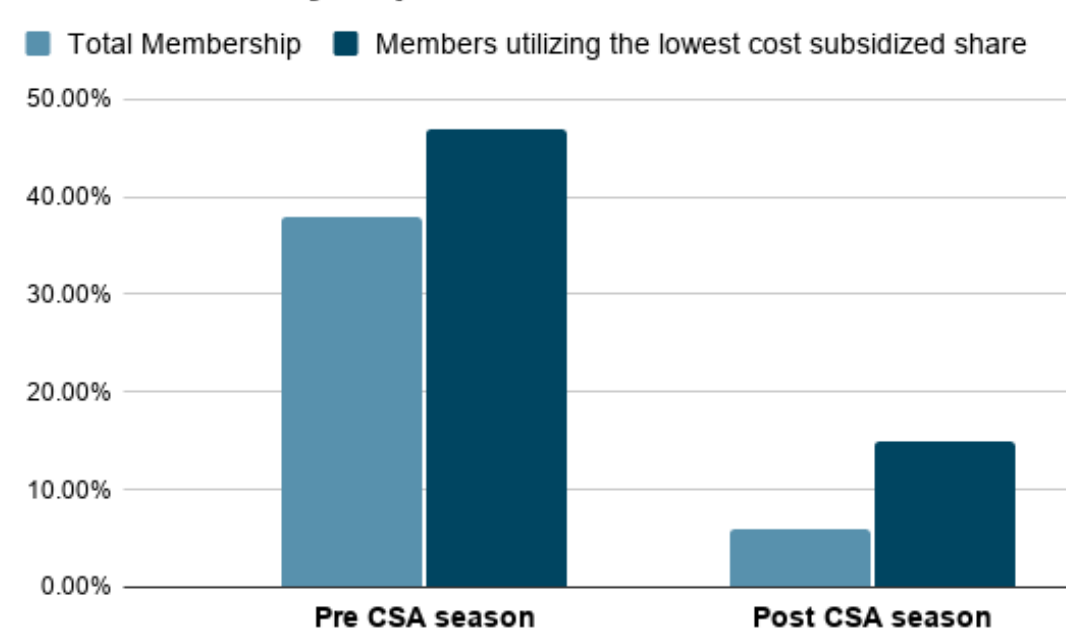
### Number served:

- 150 families
- 556 individuals
  - 241 adults
  - 315 youth
  - 2 seniors
- 59% Hispanic, 31% White, 5% Black, 4% Other, 1% American Indian

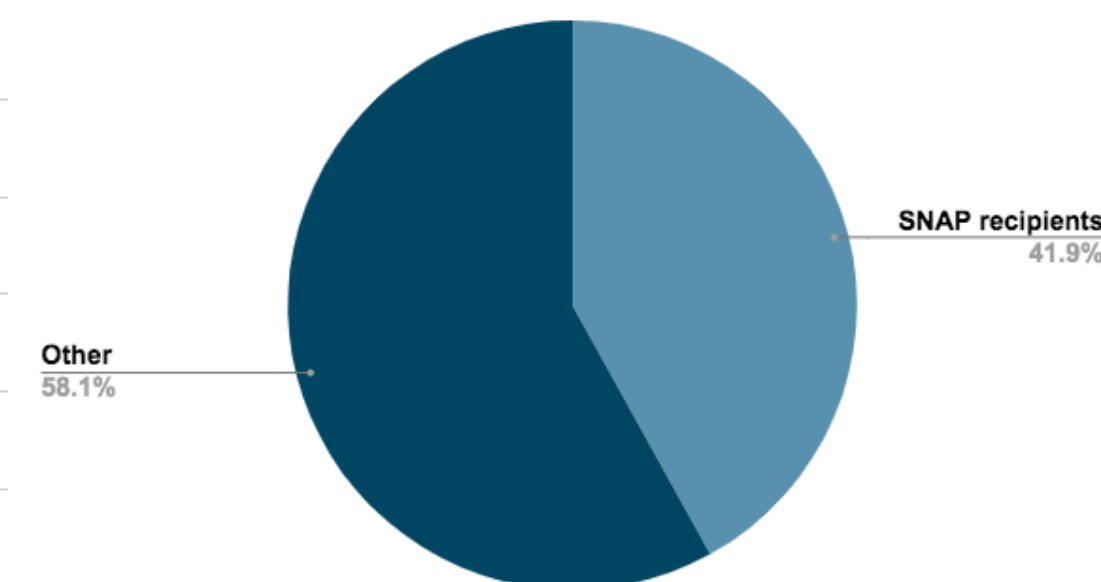
Members of this CSA partnership with Boston Children's Hospital Accountable Care Organization received doorstep delivery of produce, local proteins, cookware, and monthly Blue Apron-style kits with access to online cooking workshops with the Just Roots team

## FOOD INSECURITY IN CSA MEMBERS

### Food Insecurity Reported in CSA members



### SNAP & HIP utilization



One extremely notable positive piece of data is the dramatic decrease of food insecurity in members' households due to their participation in the CSA. In the overall CSA community, concerns about having enough food to eat dropped from 38% of survey respondents before the CSA began, to 6% during CSA participation. In respondents specifically utilizing our lowest cost Subsidized share, those numbers dropped from 47% to 15%, respectively.

## FRANKLIN COUNTY CSA DELIVERY

### Number of home deliveries members: 23 households

Survey data showed that delivery recipients who held concerns about having enough food before the CSA dropped from 50% of survey respondents before the CSA began, to 0% during CSA participation.

## TESTIMONIALS

*Is the program increasing your access to healthy food? Is your family eating more fruits and vegetables because of these deliveries?*

"Yes, completely. Vegetables are so expensive at the store. I had to choose between buying pampers or buying vegetables. This has made me and my kids and grandkids very healthy."

"Yes, definitely. It has helped my son have veggies at his fingertips. He is very picky but having a variety of veggies for him to try has been such a blessing! It has helped me too with my health problems. I was put on a strict diet and everything I receive is something I must eat to get better."

"My family and I really enjoyed coming to the farm each week. My granddaughter loved the chickens and pick your own. Everyone was so helpful and lovely. I cherish the farm and plan to return for many years."

"Yes, absolutely. My family is very picky. I wouldn't buy this produce at the store in fear that the family wouldn't eat it, but now that we have it, my family is eating it. This program has let me experiment with veggies I didn't think my family would eat."

"We are deeply grateful for the beautiful food, the warm welcome, the connection to the earth, and the positive connections to our community. You measurably improve many lives- including ours. We tell everyone we can how much we love Just Roots!"







# Feastival 2020



**IN 2020, JUST ROOTS DISTRIBUTED 2,653 MEALS AT 15 FEASTIVALS, IN RESPONSE TO INCREASED FOOD INSECURITY AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.**



## JANUARY - MARCH 2020

saw monthly Feastivals featuring vegetable-forward menus built by and cooked with residents at Elm Terrace, Oak Courts and Leyden Woods housing developments. Each Feastival offered opportunities for building and sharing kitchen skills on a deeper level (full-day housing resident cooks) or joining for a short cooking workshop before the meal. An average of 30 people attended each Feastival.

### Key Feastival features:

- Recipes and meal creation
- Healthy menu planning, shopping tips and HIP/SNAP enrollment/support
- Healthcare screenings (dental, behavioral health and more) and healthcare resources from toothbrushes to healthcare referrals from the Community Health Center of Franklin County
- Youth-focused activities like food-based art and simple salad-making
- Opportunities to sign up for or connect with potential employers, teachers at the local schools, the housing development staff members, local farmers and neighbors

Key partners included the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, the Community Health Center of Franklin County, Leyden Woods and Greenfield Housing Authority.

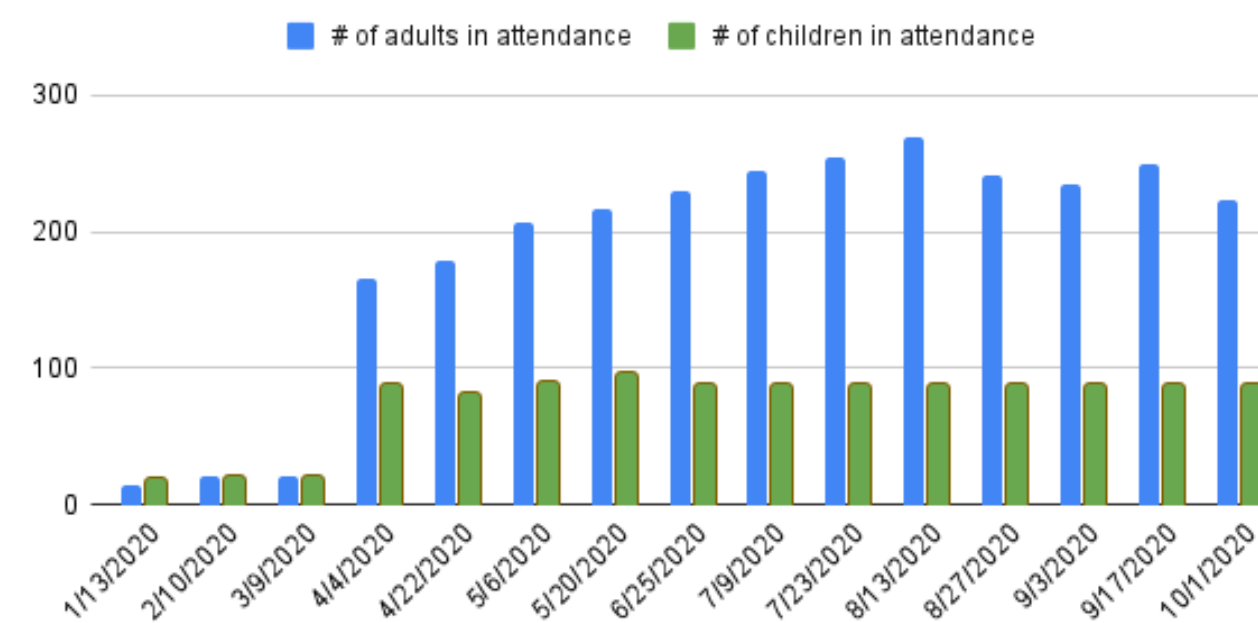
**Over 90% of survey respondents** reported inspiration and intention to both **"cook at least one additional vegetable-forward meal this week"** and **do something else good for their health** (eg: get to sleep earlier, exercise, smoke fewer cigarettes, schedule a doctors appointment, make dinner with a friend) after attending a Feastival.

## RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY NEED

With the onset of the global pandemic we needed to adopt new methods to keep staff and participants safe while also stepping up to provide more resources while so much more of our community suffered from food insecurity.



### Feastival Attendance and Heightened Food Insecurity



In cooperation with our long term partners at Stone Soup, we developed 'Feastival on the Go', providing low/no contact healthy home-cooked meals and resource kits, delivering door-to-door for the mobility-impaired and immuno-compromised, and working to meet the increased need. By the month of April our average attendance had multiplied by 5.

To maintain the intent of cooking education, connection and building habits of health, this iteration of Feastival included not just a healthy meal, but also "DIY" kits that featured Blue Apron-like cooking kits with fresh ingredients, nature based activities for pods to do together during quarantine, and health and COVID safety resources from other agencies.



## TESTIMONIALS

"Thank you so very much for this most generous gift of this incredible meal. The people distributing couldn't have been kinder. The recipes and info are much appreciated. Well done Just Roots and Stone Soup!"

"We just received our meals... i want to thank you. Very much appreciated as my daughter's n I are front line workers n don't go out much unless it's to work... god bless..."



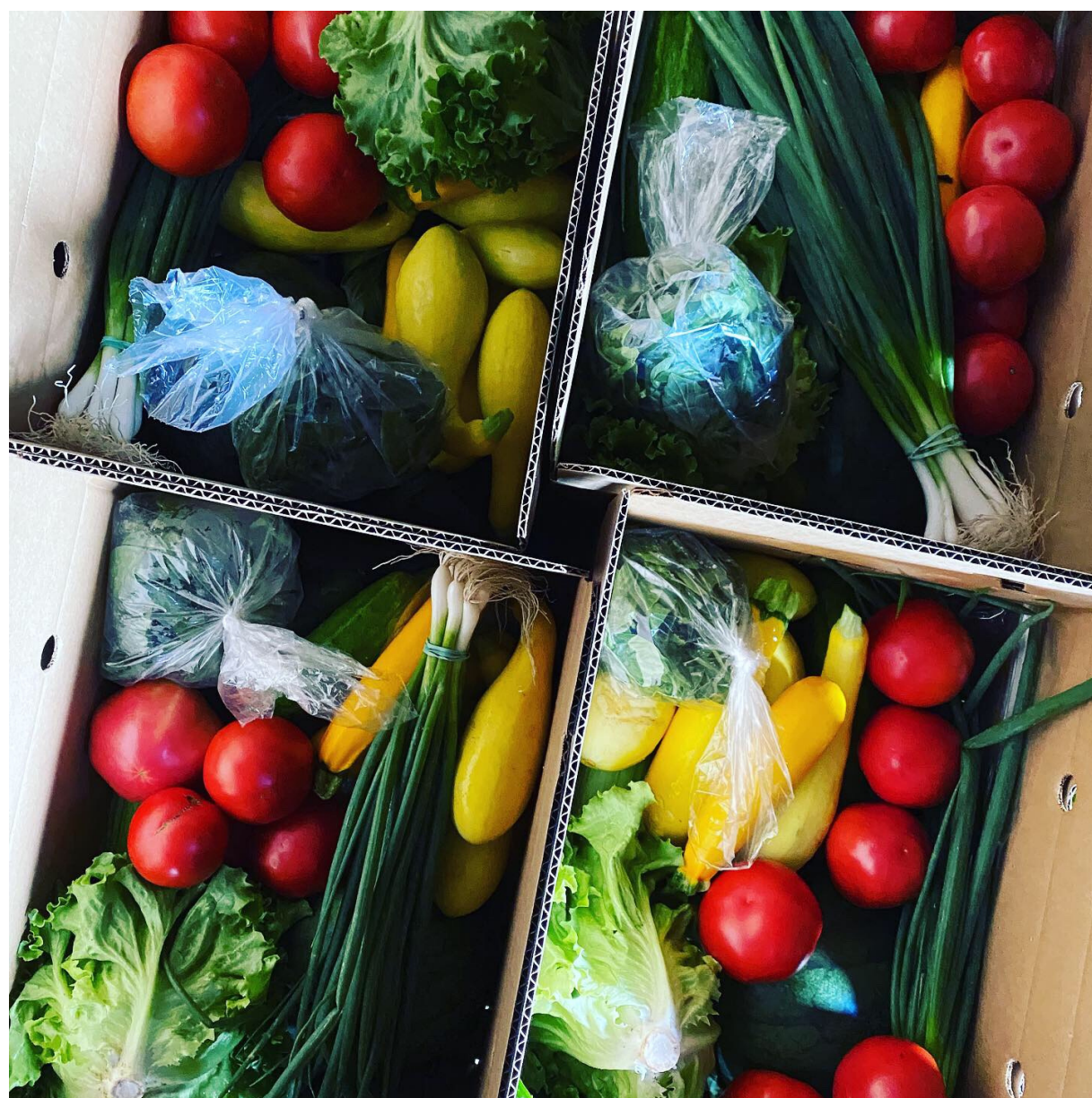


# Food as Medicine 2020

**IN 2020, JUST ROOTS DEDICATED ENERGY TO THE EXPANSION OF THE "FOOD IS MEDICINE" FIELD, AND BUILT OUT ITS INITIAL CSA REFERRAL PILOT TO A PROGRAM REACHING 150 FOOD INSECURE FAMILIES ACROSS WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS.**

## "FOOD IS MEDICINE" CSA MODEL

Following the 2019 publication of our research on the health outcomes and cost savings associated with the CSA model, Just Roots began to seek ways to sustainably integrate the CSA into public health solutions in collaboration with healthcare institutions. This year, as a part of the Massachusetts 1115 waiver's Flexible Services Program, Just Roots built and launched a partnership with Boston Children's Hospital that delivered farm fresh CSA shares directly to 150 households. Patients who self-identified as food-insecure through a screening with a Community Health Worker were provided a prescription, or referral, to the Just Roots CSA. The program, known as Just Roots Farm to Family, also provided cookware, live Zoom cooking classes, and Blue Apron-style cooking kits to families to support their success in building skills and habits of health.



## BUILDING A MODEL FOR STATEWIDE IMPACT ON FARM HEALTH AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

The Just Roots Director Team, a longtime Just Roots Farm Manager, and a Board Advisor participated in an "Innovation Accelerator" program to **develop a Food is Medicine CSA model with the potential to connect CSA farms across the state with food insecure patients through a healthcare referral.** This model is set to be piloted in 2021.



## ACTIVELY BUILDING "FOOD IS MEDICINE" FIELD

Just Roots continued to play an active role in the Food is Medicine Massachusetts Coalition steering committee and task forces; delivered presentations; testified in favor of the Flexible Services Program; sat on panels; and consulted with other community farms to support and expand the concept and development of Food is Medicine programming.

## FOOD IS MEDICINE PYRAMID







# Support 2020



Such deep gratitude to all of our individual donors and funders for making all the work of Just Roots possible!





# Financials 2020 - 2019

Statement of Activity Comparison		
Profit and Loss Y to Y comparison		
	Jan - Dec 2020	Jan - Dec 2019 (PY)
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Contributed Support		
Total Contributed Support	\$ 174,752	\$ 163,713
<b>Total Contributed Support</b>	<b>\$ 177,294</b>	<b>\$ 163,713</b>
Grants		
Total Grants	\$ 153,302	\$ 185,673
PPP Income	\$ 25,590	\$ 0
Farm/Food Access	\$ 560	\$ 0
CSA & Wholesale	\$ 164,939	\$ 112,021
Farmers Market	\$ 17,988	\$ 21,481
Festival	\$ 0	\$ 840
<b>Total Farm/Food Access</b>	<b>\$ 183,487</b>	<b>\$ 134,342</b>
Contracts & Consulting		
Contracts		
F2F Contract BCH	\$ 285,053	\$ 0
<b>Total Contracts &amp; Consulting</b>	<b>\$ 285,053</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>
Event Fees & Rentals	\$ 3,987	\$ 5,347
<b>Total Community Garden</b>	<b>\$ 1,738</b>	<b>\$ 1,500</b>
Investments		
Total Investments	\$ 26	\$ 0
Total Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$ 24,700	\$ 0
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 855,176</b>	<b>\$ 490,574</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Total Payroll and Benefits	\$ 398,856	\$ 266,146
Expenses-Non Personnel		
Total Admin/Office Expense	\$ 86,804	\$ 82,965
Program Expenses		
Total Farm/Event Exp	\$ 194,860	\$ 77,530
Total Repairs and Maintenance	\$ 21,256	\$ 3,357
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 216,115</b>	<b>\$ 80,888</b>
<b>Total Expenses-Non Personnel</b>	<b>\$ 302,919</b>	<b>\$ 164,060</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 701,776</b>	<b>\$ 430,206</b>
<b>Net Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 153,401</b>	<b>\$ 60,368</b>



# Thank You



**JUST  
ROOTS**