



# Just Roots Annual Report 2024

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a farm. In the foreground, there is a field of green leafy plants, possibly cabbages or kale, growing in rows. In the middle ground, there are two large, white, arched greenhouses. Behind the greenhouses is a dense line of green trees. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. A vertical dashed white line runs down the center of the page.

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**Just Roots is on a mission to create equitable access to healthy local food in Western Massachusetts, and work toward just, vibrant, and sustainable farm and food systems everywhere.**

# Letter from our Co-Executive Directors

## Thrive. Revise. Survive.

Dear Friend and Supporter,

To farm is to be in constant collaboration with the cycles of the natural world. It means knowing when the moon is full and bright, when plants seem to stretch taller under its luminous reflection of the sun, and trusting that in the darkness of the new moon that follows, the stars will shine just a little brighter. Farming is about rhythm and repetition, always with the hope of doing things a little better each time: growing more, growing wiser, growing stronger. It's about getting more nimble when challenges arise. In many ways, farming is like being at both practice and the big game every single day. This rhythm allows us to build deeper relationships with the land, and with the people we grow food for and with, year after year.

Farming teaches us to survive, revise, and thrive in light, in darkness, and all the spaces in between.

**Looking back on 2024, Just Roots thrived as a community farm, as an organization committed to strengthening independent and resilient food systems locally and statewide, as a leader in the national Food Is Medicine movement, and as a team deeply invested in building regional systems of mutual support.**

We began the year in partnership with the City of Greenfield, the owner of the land we farm, by dismantling a dilapidated section of the old barn. The demolition took mere hours in the hands of an experienced team, but it marked a significant turning point. As we stood in awe, we wondered together, what will grow in place of what once stood? That moment became a catalyst for transformation. With support from state, city, and foundation funding, we began the restoration of the barn that remains. By year's end, we were well on our way to preserving a beloved landmark that will serve our farm and community for many years to come.

But our growth wasn't just structural. In 2024, we deepened our impact, serving more than 525 families through our local CSA program, and another 450 families across the state. Through collaboration with over 25 local farms and food producers, our reach extended well beyond Franklin County, delivering fresh, nourishing food to tables across Massachusetts. Just Roots has emerged as a model for how small, community-rooted organizations can create meaningful, systemic change, especially in the Food Is Medicine space.

Being part of an organization guided by the seasons gives us the gift of renewal every year, the chance to begin again, to plant more scallions (or fewer), to continue with what we know or try something new. And with each cycle, we carry the lessons from the last, aiming always to care more deeply, serve more thoughtfully, and grow more justly.

With gratitude and hope,  
Meryl Latronica & Joshua Faller  
Co-Executive Directors



# farm

**2024 saw big infrastructure developments for the Greenfield Community Farm as well as a bountiful growing season.**

- We **distributed 300,000 pounds** of fresh, local produce out of our farm, more than half of which we grew here in our fields
- We **served over 500 CSA members** this summer through our Franklin County CSA and Farm to Family program
- We **worked with over 25 local farms**, purchasing more than **\$250,000 of produce and proteins** to share with our members
- Our box shares were packed with help from **6 weekly volunteers** who **completed over 250 hours** packing and sorting CSAs for local delivery.
- We **donated over \$45,000 of produce** to our local community partners
- We **participated joyfully at the Greenfield Farmers Market** each and every week
- We **provided garden plots for 65 community gardeners**

## Barn Update

**After months of planning and guidance from an expert team of architects, builders, and local and state officials, we moved forward with major barn demolition and renovation projects in 2024.**

The south portion of our barn was ultimately deemed unfit for our original renovation plans after having been unusable for many years and an extraordinarily wet season that led to its rapid deterioration. This structure therefore needed to be removed before further barn construction could take place. The south barn was safely demolished in the first week of April and gave way for major updates to the main barn--the heart of our farm operations.

Since the demolition, the building team has patched walls, stabilized the foundation, and undergone the massive project of replacing all of the flooring of our historic 19th century two story lofted barn.

As the barn renovations continue into 2025, we look forward to the next stage of projects--including a fully updated electrical system!







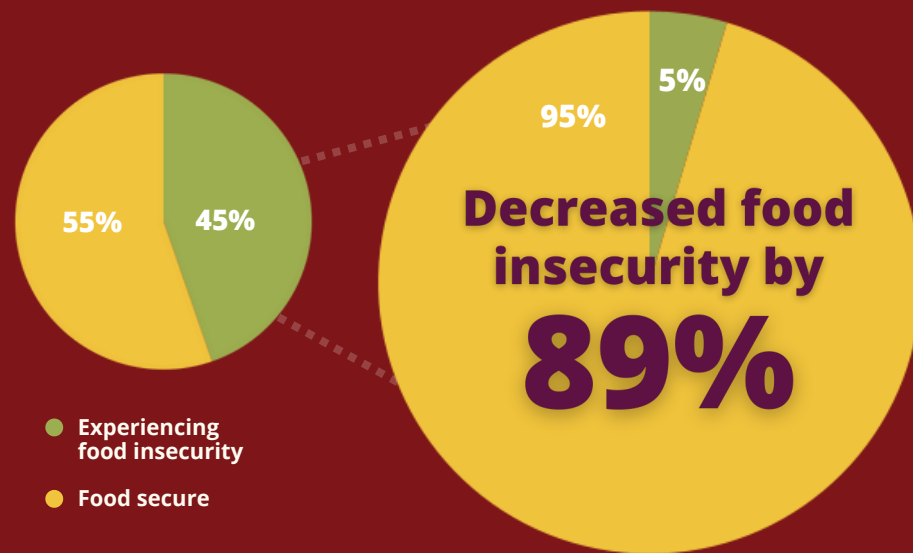
# CSA

In 2024, our local farm shares served over 525 individual households through our Winter, Summer, and Three Season CSA programs.

From January-May we provided 100 free CSA shares each month to low-income community members new to the CSA model as a part of the final months of our two-year Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement (LFPA) grant award.

Our sliding scale CSA: \$53,000 in subsidies

Number of low-income participants experiencing food insecurity before and during the 2024 Summer CSA season



**90%**

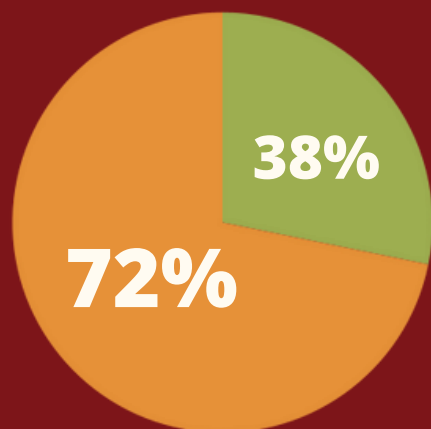
Consumed more fruits & vegetables

**78%**

Felt more confident cooking with vegetables

**60%**

Reported feeling physically better overall



Reported households noticing an improvement in attitude towards vegetables.

- False
- True





# CSA



*"This CSA and farm is amazing. I am so grateful for it. I am able to follow a medical diet in a way that I never could afford to before. I am very grateful. And I think the world is a better place because Just Roots exists. Thank you for all the hard work and community that you have developed and worked so hard to create."*

*"The high cost of groceries has influenced my diet to be so very much CSA produce. This may be why there's been an improvement in my cholesterol levels this year. I eat more vegetables, legumes, fish, eggs, mushrooms, tempeh, and tofu, while eating less meat and processed foods."*

*"Everyone in the household lost weight and my husband is turning down diabetic shots to less dosage. My blood pressure is normal now and so much more. We loved the info and trying the recipes."*

*"This is such a great service you provide for the community! The access to local produce is one the things I love most about living here."*

*"My biggest gift from you is being able to use my HIP/SNAP benefits to participate in an otherwise unaffordable-to-me CSA. THANK YOU JUST ROOTS."*





# food is medicine

## 2024 Farm to Family Survey Results

while participating in the program:

In 2024, Just Roots' Farm to Family produce prescription program provided CSA shares year-round to low-income, food insecure MassHealth patients across the state.

This program was offered in collaboration with the **Boston Children's Hospital, Mass General Brigham, and Atrius Accountable Care Organizations**. While Just Roots supplied and distributed farm shares to patient households in the Pioneer Valley, our partners at World Farmers continued to grow, aggregate and deliver CSAs throughout Eastern Massachusetts.



**450 MassHealth patients** served across 9 counties: Franklin, Hampshire, Hampden, Middlesex, Essex, Plymouth, Worcester, Norfolk, and Bristol



**27 year-round home deliveries** of fresh, local, sustainably-grown produce and proteins



**High-quality cookware** provided to every participating household



**7• Annual Report**



**12 monthly online cooking classes** accompanied by home delivery of recipe ingredients



**Over \$1 million to MA farms** to purchase and distribute local produce and protein



**77%**

Consumed more fruits & vegetables

**77%**

Tried a new vegetable

**69%**

Felt more confident cooking with vegetables

**92%**

Felt less stressed about providing enough food for their family

# food is medicine

*"This program has been instrumental in ensuring my family has access to fresh fruits and vegetables. With the rising costs of everything, especially food, Just Roots has provided us with the assurance of enjoying high-quality produce that we would otherwise struggle to afford. We are deeply grateful to Just Roots for their support."*

*"The farm share has been great to have because we don't always have enough at times."*

*"The program has been extremely helpful. Me and my son are beyond grateful for all the appliances and food we have been provided. Love you guys for the heart you have for helping us low income families."*

*"My daughter loved to open the box when it arrived. She loves the fresh veggies."*

*"My child loved the fruits and vegetables. He always said, 'Mom I like broccoli!'"*

*"Farm to family program has drastically changed my family. There were weeks where I wasn't sure what was going to be for dinner because we were tight on EBT with the increased cost in groceries. With the delivery from farm to family we were able to always make it work! My kids have also enjoyed so many fruit and vegetables I typically can't buy! We are so thankful to have been a part of this."*





# events

**Fostering collaborative engaging educational experiences rooted in local food and farming is a core part of our mission.**

In 2024, we designed and facilitated over two dozen workshops and events, many organized in collaboration with community partner organizations. These workshops and events—held at our farm, in the Franklin County community, and online—focused on a variety of topics including:

- **Monthly online cooking classes**
- **Weekly cooking demonstrations**
- **Nutrition and culinary-skill building workshops**
- **Plant-based medicine and self-care workshops**
- **Land-based art, gardening, and conservation workshops**
- **Spring Seedling Sale**
- **PreK-college field trips**

**1,600**  
**community**  
**members**  
**attended over**  
**50**  
**free workshops**  
**& events**





# farm to school

In 2024, we began a partnership with the Greenfield Public School district and the Food Services Department to provide monthly local food taste tests and lead on-farm field trips for all Greenfield elementary students.

This two-year Farm to School pilot program is made possible by a MA FRESH grant from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

The Just Roots farm also continued to serve as a weekly meal site for the Greenfield Summer Eats food truck program during the 2024 Summer vacation.



**687**

Greenfield elementary students served through 7 monthly taste tests



**193**

local elementary and high school students hosted on the farm during 6 field trips



**1,366**

meals served to 683 children through the GPS Summer Eats food truck at Just Roots





# Special Thanks to Our Partners & Funders

- Atrius Health
- Amelia Peabody Charitable Fund
- Baystate Health
- Boston Children's Hospital
- The Brick House Community Resource Center
- Bueno Y Sano
- City of Greenfield
- Clif Bar Family Foundation
- Community Action Pioneer Valley
- Community Health Center of Franklin County
- CopyCat Print Shop
- Eversource
- The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
- Franklin Community Co-op
- Franklin County Community Development Corporation
- Franklin County YMCA
- The Fullen Smith Foundation
- Greenfield Cooperative Bank
- Greenfield Public School, Food Service Department
- Greenfield Savings Bank
- Greening Greenfield
- Health New England
- It Takes A Village
- LifePath
- Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
- Massachusetts Farm Resilience Fund
- Massachusetts General Brigham
- Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture
- Mesa Verde, LLC
- Montague Catholic Social Ministries
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Rimol Greenhouse Systems, LLC
- Stone Soup Cafe
- Stop & Shop
- UNFI Foundation
- United Way of the Franklin & Hampshire Region
- USDA
- Walgreens
- Whole Foods
- World Farmers





## Our Staff

- **Meryl LaTronica**, *Co-Executive Director*
- **Joshua Faller**, *Co-Executive Director*
- **Emily Chiara**, *Program Manager*
- **Irene Blasco**, *Community Care Manager*
- **Brooke Bullock**, *Community Engagement Coordinator*
- **Kyle Zegel**, *Community Support Coordinator*
- **Annie Levine**, *Head of Office Operations*
- **Fran Kleinsteinber**, *Farm Manager*
- **Avi Flynn**, *CSA and Volunteer Coordinator*
- **Anthony Soliz**, *Assistant Grower*
- **Erev Egan**, *Assistant Grower*
- **Ella Duncan**, *Assistant Grower*
- **Tori Tenney**, *Assistant Grower*
- **Erin Moran**, *Delivery Driver*
- *Delivery Driver*

## Our Board

- **Donna Dusell**, *President*
- **Bob Sunderland**, *Treasurer*
- **Kirsten Levitt**
- **Patricia Crosby**
- **Pete Westover**
- **Kyle Bostrom**





# DONATE

**SUPPORT OUR WORK IN 2025!**

*Your gift makes a huge difference in the  
everyday lives of local families.*

**Give today at [justroots.org/give](https://justroots.org/give)**

