



REAP FOOD GROUP

2021 Impact Report

IN OUR WORDS

FROM THE DIRECTOR

“The bittersweet is...an authentic and elevating response to the problem of being alive in a deeply flawed yet stubbornly beautiful world.” -Susan Cain

When I read this quote for the first time, it so perfectly described the uncomfortable, conflicting truths you hold in your heart when engaging in change-making work: the heavy knowledge of how much is wrong and needs fixing, and the hope from working alongside so many who care, and cultivate a vision for a better world. REAP's work falls firmly in this bittersweet middle: we see and feel how hard it is to access fresh, sustainably grown food, how little support there is for farmers to grow food and still steward land and water. Yet this impact report shows a year full of hope and, yes, beauty even in the midst of the flaws: REAP's growing collaboration with communities to shape Dane County's food system to reflect the diversity of its residents, food justice programming for youth that goes beyond just access to good food, and deeper commitment to help build the structures needed to grow markets for good food farmers with a focus on those anchor institutions that serve all our residents. Even in the midst of pandemic upheaval, we came together to celebrate in community and food and remind ourselves that this work nourished, in equal parts, our earth, our bodies and our souls. While I am moving on from this role, I know this organization holds these goals in its very DNA and am fully committed to support what lies ahead in the coming years. I hope you will join me too. - *Helen Sarakinos*

2021 STAFF

Helen Sarakinos, Executive Director
Susan Coffin, Administrative Director
Meghan Salzwedel, Development Director
Allison Pfaff Harris, Farm to School Director
Anna Landmark, Farm to Business Director
Yolibeth Rangel FitzGibbon, Community Partnerships Coordinator
Noah Bloedorn, Farm Fresh Atlas Manager
Samantha Kincaid, Communications Manager

2021 BOARD

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We love a good vegetable metaphor, but 2021 reminded us that REAP Food Group is more akin to a long lived perennial: we grow our roots deep so that our shoots might thrive through drought or deluge. Last year we shared the impact of the Farms to Families program in partnership with Roots4Change Co-op, which posted its end date in April, 2021. The collaborative effort officially wrapped up that month, but in reality the seed had just germinated. Responding to an immediate need to address financial and health disparities affecting Latinx and Indigenous families, and simultaneously to support local producers whose livelihoods were disrupted by COVID, Farms to Families centered around assembling free "resilience boxes" containing local, nutritious food for families in need. It also revealed a pathway forward for our organization: Build trust with the network REAP has carefully built over 25 years to help support community-led food sovereignty initiatives in Dane Co. and southern Wisconsin that strengthen all communities, farmers, and food entrepreneurs, even in an altered landscape. We invite you to explore our efforts toward that end in the following pages.

The most recent Annual Report can be found on our website, www.reapfoodgroup.org.

Our Mission:
To transform communities, economies, and lives through the power of good food.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

FARMS TO FAMILIES...

reached 240 families with resilience boxes, employed 10 people, engaged 18 local food businesses, sourced from 35 local farmers, purchased and distributed 29,673 lbs of fresh vegetables. It was powered by \$166,572 in grants & foundations and \$62,303 from donations.

Read the comprehensive Farms to Families Final report:



Farms to Families showed us that there is a time to lead, and a time to instead leverage our resources to meaningfully support community partners who are the true experts in their own food solutions. Intersecting with almost every arm of REAP's mission, Community Partnership Coordinator Yolibeth Rangel FitzGibbon's efforts demonstrated our intention to be a strong food equity ally.

VERANO EN FAMILIA

As the distribution of free resilience boxes to Latinx and Indigenous families phased out, Roots4Change Co-op in partnership with REAP transitioned to a summer of outdoor wellness events for the broader Latinx community. Activities centered the importance of local food and healthy lifestyle, while respecting and honoring families' cultural backgrounds.

YOUTH FOR FOOD JUSTICE

With partner Centro Hispano, we launched a curriculum for the center's after-school *Juventud* students to immerse themselves in Latino American foodways, learn employable skills, and hear the stories of culturally-relevant chefs and food entrepreneurs.

HARVEST FARM DINNER

In place of traditional restaurant-driven events, REAP co-hosted a Harvest Farm Dinner at Yowela?-taliH^, the farm of Oneida tribal member and technical specialist for the Intertribal Agriculture Council, Dan Cornelius. Proceeds from the event were shared with Feeding WI's Tribal Elder Food Box Program, and several Wisconsin Indigenous tribal members joined to prepare dishes and speak.

LATINX/INDIGENOUS COMMITTEE

In October, Yolibeth convened seven community members representing farmers, consumers, entrepreneurs, and educators to form a Food Advisory Committee. The goal: discuss what is needed to create a food system responsive to the needs of the Latinx/Indigenous community. Members shared their top priorities, from improved networking with fellow food businesses, to accessing financial opportunities. The committee continues to refine goals and share with REAP how we can support them. This is the first of several groups we anticipate convening in the coming two years.

HARVEST FARM DINNER AT YOWELA?-TALIH^

100 guests enjoyed 5 courses from 6 chefs for \$100 per ticket. Half of the \$10,000 in proceeds went towards Feeding WI's Tribal Elder Food Box Program.

FARM TO SCHOOL

In Fall of 2021, REAP spent \$15,823 on over 8,000 lbs of local fruits and vegetables for snacks served to students at participating MMSD schools. 4,772 students received snacks across 13 elementary schools over the course of 12 weeks during the Fall semester. 9 farms supplied 10 different fruit and vegetables. MMSD spent a total of \$24,525 on local produce including peppers, bok choy, beets, and more.

“I think [Snack] is amazing, brilliant really, in helping students develop a taste for healthy food. I love what you all are doing.” - Teacher from Leopold Elementary

Farm to School Director, Allison Pfaff Harris, used creativity to get good food and seeds of inspiration in front of students. REAP also deepened our mission to broaden our Farm to School reach by joining the School Nutrition Association (SNA).

SNACK PROGRAM

Through a USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Grant via Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD), REAP sourced fresh vegetables from Southern Wisconsin farmers to share a weekly snack of rotating fresh, local produce with students.

HOLIDAY SALE

After a pause in 2020, the 2021 holiday sale saw 12 MMSD schools participate. REAP purchased 6,029 artisan food products from 19 local producers for a total of \$24,152.32 invested in local farms and food businesses.

HARVEST OF THE MONTH

In partnership with MMSD, we planned a series of Virtual Farm Tours and Harvest of the Month vegetable-focused videos to share through 2022, exposing students to the rich food landscape of Wisconsin. Link below to watch:

Vitruvian Farms Tour



Wonka's Harvest Tour



FARM TO BUSINESS

Beyond resilience boxes, REAP tapped into our expanding network of local producers to get high quality vegetables into schools, and lay the groundwork to increase and simplify procurement from good food producers.

FARM SOURCING MILESTONE

Through our liaison efforts between MMSD and local growers, the district has increased its purchase of Wisconsin-grown food from under \$20K to more than \$150K from 2015 to 2021.

FARM FRESH ATLAS

We enhanced Atlas membership perks beyond print and online listings to include:

- **Sourcing** from farmers and food businesses for REAP programming including Farms to Families, Holiday Sale, and Snack.
- **Showcasing** organizations and chefs via the Harvest Farm Dinner and Youth For Food Justice classes.
- **Investing** in the expertise of food system leaders through networking and the Latinx/Indigenous Food Advisory Committee.

WHOLESALE READY

REAP earned a USDA grant to pilot a wholesale version of the Farm Fresh Atlas and wholesale readiness training and resource program to increase local food purchasing by high volume buyers, including schools, hospitals, and distributors. Anna Landmark, Farm to Business Director, and Noah Bloedorn, Farm Fresh Atlas Manager, will launch the pilot program in the summer of 2022.

The 2021 Farm Fresh Atlas featured 87 farms, 13 organizations, and 68 businesses. 25,000 print copies were distributed throughout Southern WI.

DONORS & VOLUNTEERS

“I support REAP because of their commitment to building and strengthening connections between local food sources and the people and businesses in our community. I believe REAP’s work is vital to creating a sustainable future for our children and our city.” - Dana Hellgren, monthly supporter

We are deeply grateful for you, our donor, sponsors, and 72 volunteers, and your commitment to our mission to make good food, grown well, accessible to all. With your support in 2021, REAP was able to: partner with Roots4Change Co-op to deliver over 6,000 resilience boxes to Latinx and Indigenous families hard-hit by the pandemic, get fresh food to MMSD students every week, actively grow our networking and technical assistance to both farmers and institutional buyers, and celebrate the harvest bounty, our community, and Afro-Indigenous foodways at the Harvest Dinner at Yowela?talih^. Listed below are donors who gifted \$250 and over. *Meghan Salzwedel, Development Director.*

Corporate & Foundations

- Alliant Energy Foundation
- American Family Insurance Dreams Foundation
- Blooming Prairie Foundation
- Brooks Point Foundation
- C&W Services
- City of Madison
- Community Shares of Wisconsin
- Compeer Financial
- Cummings Christensen Family Foundation
- Dane County Nonprofit Assistance Fund
- David S. Bourne Foundation
- Evjue Foundation
- Healthy Dane Funders: Group Health Cooperative, SSM Health, UnityPoint Health-Meriter, and UW Health
- Heartland Credit Union
- Hoyos Consulting
- Kessenich’s Foodservice Design, Equipment & Supplies
- Lauer Realty Group
- Madison Community Foundation

- MGE Foundation
- Madison Metropolitan School District
- Madison Rotary Foundation
- Neely Denholm Family Fund
- NeuGen
- No Kid Hungry
- Park Bank
- Perkins Coie Foundation
- Pledgeling Foundation
- PRL Keystone Foundation
- Rotary Club of Madison South
- Salzwedel Family Fund
- Silver Lining Foundation
- Sitka Salmon Shares
- Spencer Real Estate Group
- Steve Stricker American Family Insurance Foundation
- Sub-Zero Wolf Foundation
- TASC (Total Administrative Services Corporation)
- TDS Custom Construction
- The Lea Agency, LLC
- Topitzes Family Passthrough Fund
- Trader Gus, Inc.
- Tribe 9 Foods
- University of Minnesota - SARE
- University of Wisconsin Foundation
- USDA
- Wegner CPAs
- Willy Street Co-op
- Wisconsin Meadows
- WI-DATCP
- Zendesk

Individual

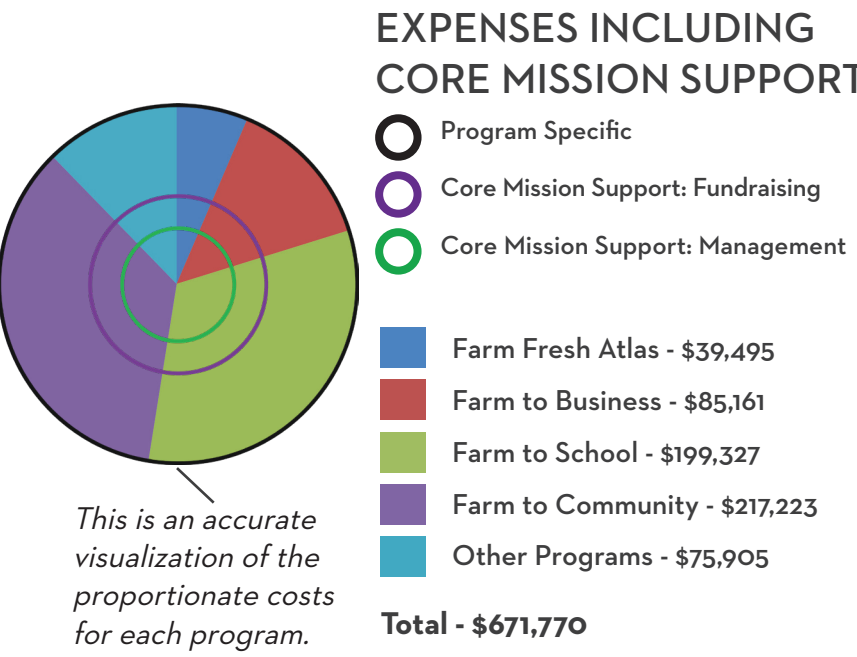
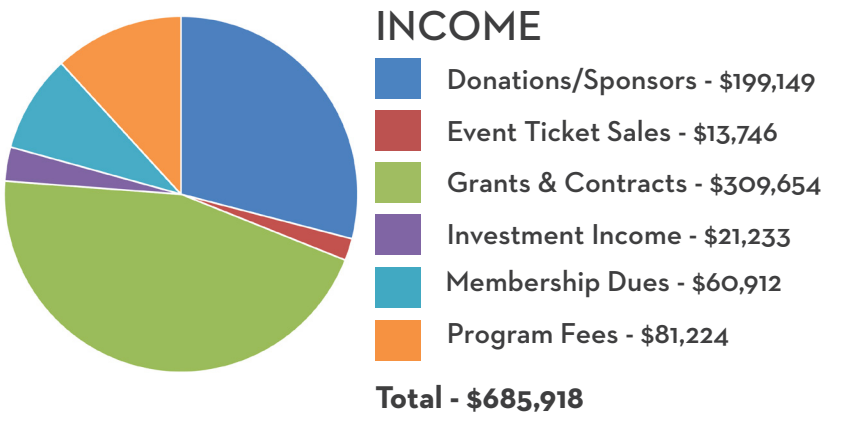
- Anonymous
- Terese Allen & Jim Block
- Mark Allen & Judy Fisher
- Julie Andersen
- Adam Barr & Meghan Roh
- Wendy & Marshall Beck
- Elizabeth Berg
- Sam Breidenbach & Jeannine Ramsey
- Stephen & Linda Brick
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- Steve Cantley & Sarah Thal Cantley
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- Bonnie Cosgrove & Bruce Nilles
- Phyllis Davis
- Jim Hartlieb
- Pamela Heaney
- Sarah DeKraay & Charlie Higley
- Susan Denholm
- Elizabeth Eberle
- Sarah Elliott
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- Kirsten & Rick Friedman
- Erica & Mark Gehrig
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Gof & Mary Thomson
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James & Susan Zerwick
Rosemary Zurlo-Cuva & Frank Cuva

Visit our website home page at www.reapfoodgroup.org to view sponsors of \$10,000 and over.



This is an accurate visualization of the proportionate costs for each program.

Borrowing a forward thinking model from Propelnonprofits.org, we want to share with you what it takes to fuel a non-profit: As opposed to a standard pie chart, where one might interpret the slices representing management and fundraising expenses as a distraction from the mission, this model shows the value of the activities and expenses that, in fact, power our mission from the back-of-house.

The real, complete costs of our programs include both direct Program Specific expenses like staff, meals, and educational supplies, and Core Mission Support through Fundraising and Management, the latter including finance, HR, and Board.

Consider the Farm Fresh Atlas: Its slice of the pie shows that along with Atlas staff, designers, and printing costs, we also need to include a portion of the organization-wide costs of labor in fundraising, accounting, and governing the organization, to actually execute Atlas. We couldn't run our individual programs without the core of the organization backing up all programs.

We hope this model illustrates that the true costs of providing our programming include all the resources we need to run a strong and stable organization. REAP has been strengthening the local food system for 25 years - it takes a strong inner core to keep doing this work year after year!

Did this get you excited about the great work we're doing? Consider making a gift to support our ongoing efforts to make good food, grown well, accessible to all, through drought and deluge.



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