



2021 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT



**THE NASHVILLE
FOOD PROJECT**

A letter from our CEO

Bringing people together...

Dear friends,

When I joined The Nashville Food Project in July, I was immediately humbled by the warmth and hospitality of this community. Over these last several months I have been honored to be trusted with the leadership of this organization. In just ten years, The Nashville Food Project has grown and achieved so much, and its reputation across the city reflects precisely that.

My initial goal after stepping into this role was to meet as many people as possible within the Food Project family. In those meetings with staff, board members, volunteers, partners and supporters old and new, I was struck by how passionately everyone cares for this work. I've met with



volunteers who call our kitchens a second home, community members who say our gardens changed their lives and staff who dedicate so much of themselves to our mission, vision and values.

And it's no wonder. After all, the first words of our mission statement are "Bringing people together..." For an organization focused on food, I spend much of my time talking about and working with *people*, and I wouldn't have it any other way. As we look ahead I will continue to focus our efforts on ways that we can bring people of all backgrounds into this work.

In this Community Impact Report, I invite you to see what this Food Project family accomplished in 2021 *together*. I think that, like me, you will be proud to see the incredible things that happen when such a passionate community comes together to work for a better food system. Thank you for being a part of this work in big ways and small.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C.J. Sentell". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

C.J. Sentell
Chief Executive Officer

Meals Program

234,289

nutritious meals shared
with meal guests

53,935

pounds of food shared,
equivalent to 44,945
additional meals

200,349

pounds of donated and
recovered food, valued at
\$522,953

\$34,030

invested with local
producers and farmers

In 2021 we began to move our kitchen operations away from emergency response and back towards the vibrant community work we love. As partner programming returned to pre-pandemic levels, our meals team began to produce fewer individual meals and returned to the bulk-style meals we had long prepared and shared.

We slowly reintroduced volunteers into our kitchens and quickly found new groups of volunteers to enhance our capacity and build community. The faces - both of volunteers and staff - may have changed, but the mission stays the same. Now five days each week, volunteers join us to help process large donations from local grocers, farms and hospitality partners, giving our team fresh ingredients ready to easily use in our meals.

This helped us more effectively steward the bounty we received from our food donors, allowing us to spend more of our financial resources with local farms and producers, strengthening our local food economy.





Garden Programs

<p>9,395 pounds of produce grown in and shared from TNFP gardens</p>	<p>\$64,865 earned by 6 Growing Together families through produce sales</p>
<p>82 families participated in community garden programs across 3 sites</p>	<p>82% say the garden is an important source of nutrition for their family</p>
<p>91% feel like they belong to a community at the garden</p>	<p>86% say participation in the garden helps them manage stress</p>

In 2021, we engaged more people than ever before in our gardens, offering new and different ways to build community, connect to the land, and grow good food.

Program engagement was deep and wide! At the Community Farm at Mill Ridge, over 50 families managed an individual plot, and we engaged Full Circle Garden participants at 100 workdays. At McGruder Community Garden, several longtime participants celebrated 12 years of growing in the space. And at our Growing Together farm, farmers grew over 20,000 lbs of produce to feed our community while earning vital income.

Beyond our garden spaces, we cultivated new ways to engage in community conversations. The Stories of Land project has enriched the narratives we hold around ecology and history of a particular place. We also launched our first Community Advisory Council with 15 members in effort to build transparency and deepen relationships around the future development of the garden spaces.



Our Partners

After significant changes brought on by the pandemic, many of our 61 partners worked towards resuming more typical programs and operations in 2021. Throughout the year, we worked to adapt our service to meet their changing needs.

Thanks to a partnership with national nonprofit Rethink, as well as our local friends at Karla's Catering, we were able to add to our own capacity, sharing over 35,000 more than we could have on our own.

After piloting a produce sharing program in 2020, we continued the program in 2021. Through this program we work with four community partners - primarily supporting immigrant and refugee communities - to provide reliable access to fresh, culturally appropriate produce throughout the growing season. While there are many resources in our community for non-perishable foods, we have developed this program to meet a critical need for fresh food assistance. Through this program we shared over 6,000 pounds of produce in 2021. We continue to build out this program as another way to support partners who may benefit from food support beyond prepared meals.



TYPES OF PARTNERS WE SUPPORTED IN 2021:



100%

of partners say meals are an important source of nutrition for their clients

97%

of partners say meals contribute to positive health impacts for their clients

97%

of partners say meals create space for social interaction for their clients

100%

of partners say meals enhance the effectiveness of their programming

Thank you to our 2021 Donors!

Listed are supporters who gave \$1,000 and above.

Please visit thenashvillefoodproject.org/donors for a full list.

\$10,000+

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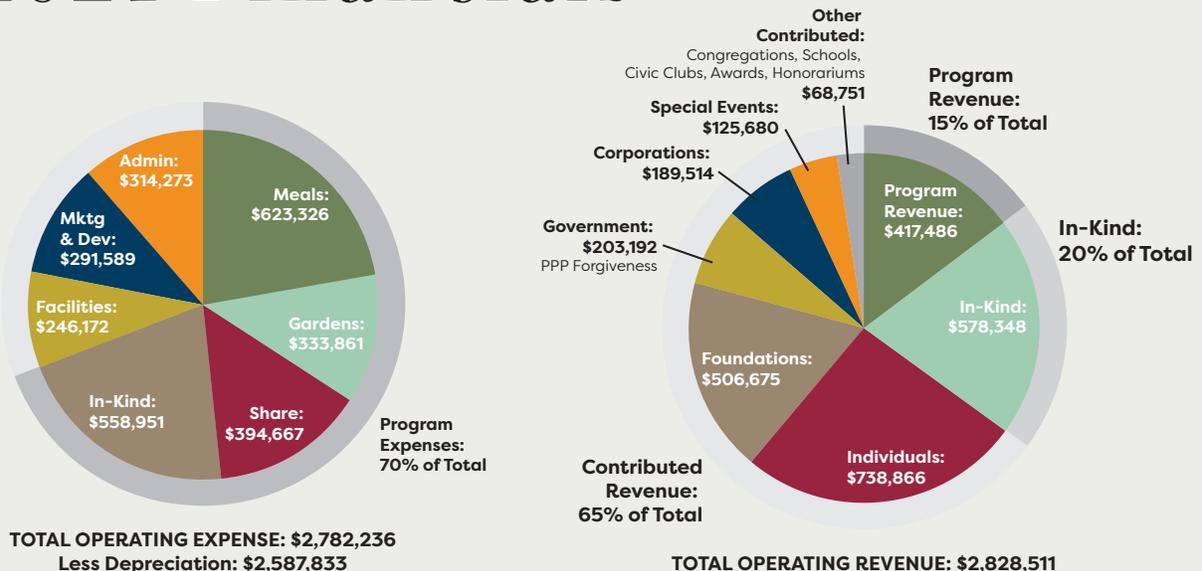
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