

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



**LYNCHBURG
GROWS**

farming for the greater good

THE VIEW FROM HERE

Our mission is to work with our community to provide access to healthy food and afford purposeful jobs to individuals with disabilities.


Throughout each year, we conscientiously observe and assess the value of our programs. For us, value is an equation that weighs food and food education against the resources we allocate. At the end of the day, we expect our programs to serve our community in a rigorously compassionate and fiscally responsible manner.

With 2018 data in hand and these goals in mind, we are making some exciting changes in 2019. We have simultaneously closed the Veggie Van and increased our investment in the new FreshRx prescription program. While the Veggie Van has served our community well over the years, the raw impact, sales, and outcomes pale in comparison to what FreshRx offers our community in both food access and food education. FreshRx is funded by the Centra Foundation and taught in collaboration with the Virginia Cooperative Extension and local physicians. It is an innovative effort capable of achieving the deeply meaningful goals our mission sets out to accomplish.

In 2019, our goals are to be even more productive on our land and in our programs. We will be adaptable, and we will lean into our strengths. Currently, construction is underway on the packing shed. This construction project will make the packing shed more accessible for our employees, and more efficient in energy consumption. We are thrilled by how these changes promise to increase our productivity in 2019, and we hope you are, too.



Shelley L. Blades
Executive Director



We are making
some exciting changes
in 2019!



Our People

2018 Board of Directors

L. Kimball Payne, III, President
Lynchburg City Manager (retired)

Alexandru Barker, Liberty University

Kevin Camm, Virginia Cooperative
Extension

Stephanie Fees, Scratch Pasta Co.

Robb Foster, Jamerson Lewis Construc-
tion Co.

Linda Jones,
Dominion Seven Architects (retired)

Dr. Scott Lowman, Institute for
Advanced Research & Learning

Sam Meeks, Sedalia Consulting

Stuart Overbey, So Far Media

Carl Schilling, Genworth Corp.

Rick Sorenson, Woods Rogers Attyns

Kay Van Allen, Humanitarian Gardener

Martha Wade, BWXT (retired)

Farmers

Gary Dillard

Karen Harris

Keith Kervin

Latrell Langhorne

Chris Matheson

Chris Price

Joseph Schriffer

Markey Witcher

2018 Staff

Shelley L. Blades
Executive Director &
Farm Manager

Jennifer Porter
CSA Manager &
Assistant Farm Mgr

Kelly Mortemousque
Office Manager



FRESH OFF THE FARM

How We Grow

Throughout 2018, our focus has been on taking steps that move us closer to becoming a self-sustaining organization. We continued working hard to grow as much food as we can and expanded our sales through the Farm Store in the winter and delivered to more restaurants than ever. The farm produced 20,400 pounds of food, which translates to about 51,000 servings that fed our community.

51,000
Servings Harvested



The food we grow mainly goes to the members of our Veggie Box community supported agriculture program, including CSA Scholarship recipients, and to participants in our FreshRx Veggie Prescription program.

By increasing our marketing and outreach for Farm Store and restaurant sales, we increased revenue by 20% over sales in 2017. We also reclaimed some growing space by taking down the old aquaponics system, giving us 500 sq ft, which yielded about 920 servings of lettuce during the fall growing season.

Thanks to the generosity of our community and our the cool "zine" that served as our annual appeal letter, end-of-year donations were up 30% this year over last.

Volunteers

Volunteers give their time and energy to the farm, and the farm gives them back a unique and sometimes life-changing experience. Growing all this food takes a lot of work and there is no way we could get it all done without the help of our volunteers.

Many groups brought their enthusiasm and muscle to the farm this year, including students from Southern New Hampshire University, Missouri S&T, and William & Mary, who spent their spring and winter break weeks with us. Groups from Liberty University came several times, including during their annual week called "The Big Help" in the spring.



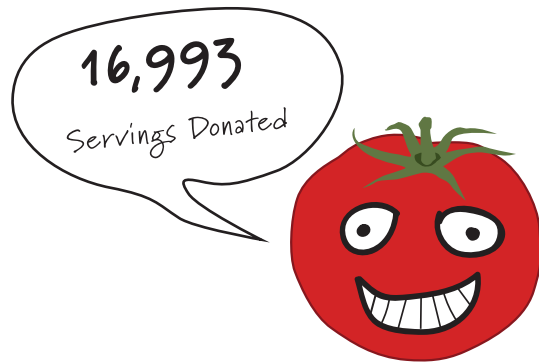
Also critical to the farm's success are the people who make volunteering at the farm part of their regular schedule. We call them our "Super Volunteers." It's a huge help to have folks who know the daily routines of the farm. It saves us a lot of time and, as they spend more time with us and get to know all our employees, they become beloved members of our farm family. Their investment of time enriches their lives, too. They learn more about farming and about working with people with disabilities, all while giving back to our community.





Food Donations

Donating fresh, local produce to feed the hungry and homeless in our city has always been an important part of what we do. We continued the tradition in 2018, plus expanded donations to include Parkview Community Mission.



We also created weekly pop-up farmer's markets at the Community Access Network's new clinic on Fifth Street. All the food was free for patients to take home with them and any money donated there went to the Community Access Network, to help them do their important work.

Through the Veggie Box scholarship program begun in 2017, we provided CSA shares to FreshRx participants who needed help getting enough fresh vegetables to continue the lifestyle changes they had begun during their class sessions.

Last but not least, a special shout-out goes, as always, to the volunteers from St. John's Episcopal Church, who raise produce year-round at Lynchburg Grows in Greenhouse #8, which they have dedicated solely to growing food for donation to the people in our community who need it the most.



YEAR IN REVIEW

Purposeful Jobs

As we've expanded our growing capacity and production, we've sought to grow the skills and responsibilities of our employees with disabilities, too. We're moving away from giving them directions one-task-at-a-time to putting them in charge of entire processes. Joe and Keith are in charge of caring for the chickens, for example, while Chris Matheson is in charge of washing the produce, with all the steps that process entails.



The result is that our employees are becoming more effective and efficient, while they also feel an increased sense of purpose and accomplishment in their work.

Since Lynchburg Grows' first harvest, we've been keeping track of production by entering harvest weights in a notebook. A goal for this coming year is to move that process into the 21st century by entering those weights on an iPad, instead. (If you have one you would like to donate, please let us know!) It's a chance for our employees to learn some new digital skills that we hope will help them in all sort of ways in life beyond the farm.

FreshRx

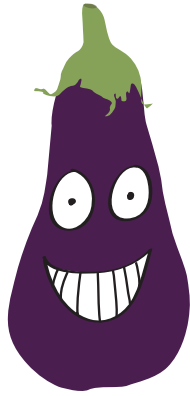
Our veggie prescription program, FreshRx, celebrated its first full year in 2018, serving 30 families in two locations. Centra and Community Access Network doctors identify patients whose health would benefit from dietary changes and refer them to the program. Participants learn from Virginia Cooperative Extension nutrition educators how to shop for, prepare, and store fresh produce. They also get to try new vegetables and create an informal support network through their classes. After each class session, they take home a bag of produce equivalent to the shares that our Veggie Box members get from the farm each week.



"I had to lose 30 lbs before I had knee replacement. I lost more than that... FreshRx taught me how to eat! It's a wonderful program. Everyone would benefit from attending a class. Cooking vegetables is easy this way."

*- Joyce
Fresh Rx participant*





115
Families Served

The Veggie Box

The Veggie Box is our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. Families sign up in early spring for a membership that gets them a share of fresh, seasonal fruit, vegetables, and artisanal local foods all the way into the next winter.

Members can also donate to our Veggie

Box scholarship fund, which lets FreshRx participants keep getting veggies even after their class session ends.

In 2018, we also began a work-share program that allowed two people to get shares by coming to the farm and helping out on CSA pick-up days. See the thank you letter below from Kristi, one of our work-trade helpers, that says it all:



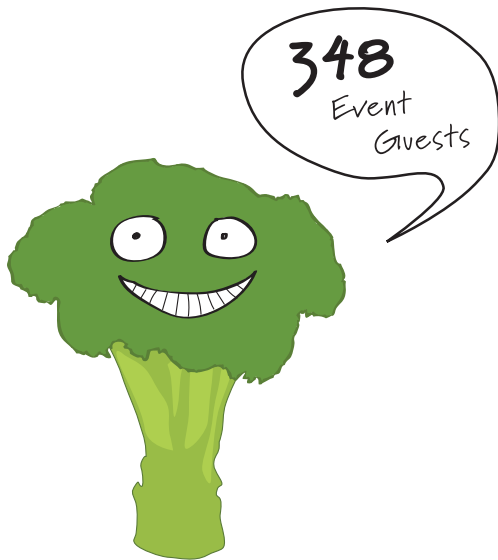
I'm a single mom and I care for a household of physically disabled family members. I don't get out much and even though it was brief, the work/trade helped us out so much! On top of the low income, it's just hard to afford healthy foods, much less farm-fresh stuff! This experience has not only allowed me to get out and see fresh faces, I've been able to provide my daughter and my (very picky!) family with fresh produce in quantities that would have been difficult to afford otherwise.

Thank You!



Annual Events

Our two big events were huge successes in 2018. The Salad Days, our spring event, brought many families to the farm to enjoy music by Becca Mancari, a silent art auction, and a giant salad bar brimming with farm-grown ingredients and toppings made by local chefs.



In the fall, at our Greenhouse Dinner event, we treated guests to a cocktail hour with local beer and whisky tastings, then a fabulous four-course feast by chef Jason Arbusto.

We love opening the farm up to the community for these events and we love watching everyone have so much fun being there!



The Packing Shed Renovation

How It Was:



The Packing Shed houses all processing operations, retail space, and offices for the farm. Besides a few minor upgrades, it was basically the same as when the Schenkels used it for their flower farm operation.

How It Is:



Thanks to the support of The AI Stroobants Foundation, the Easley Foundation, Wells Fargo, M-FUGE, and Wiley-Wilson architects, renovation is underway! It began in Fall 2018 and should be done April 2019.

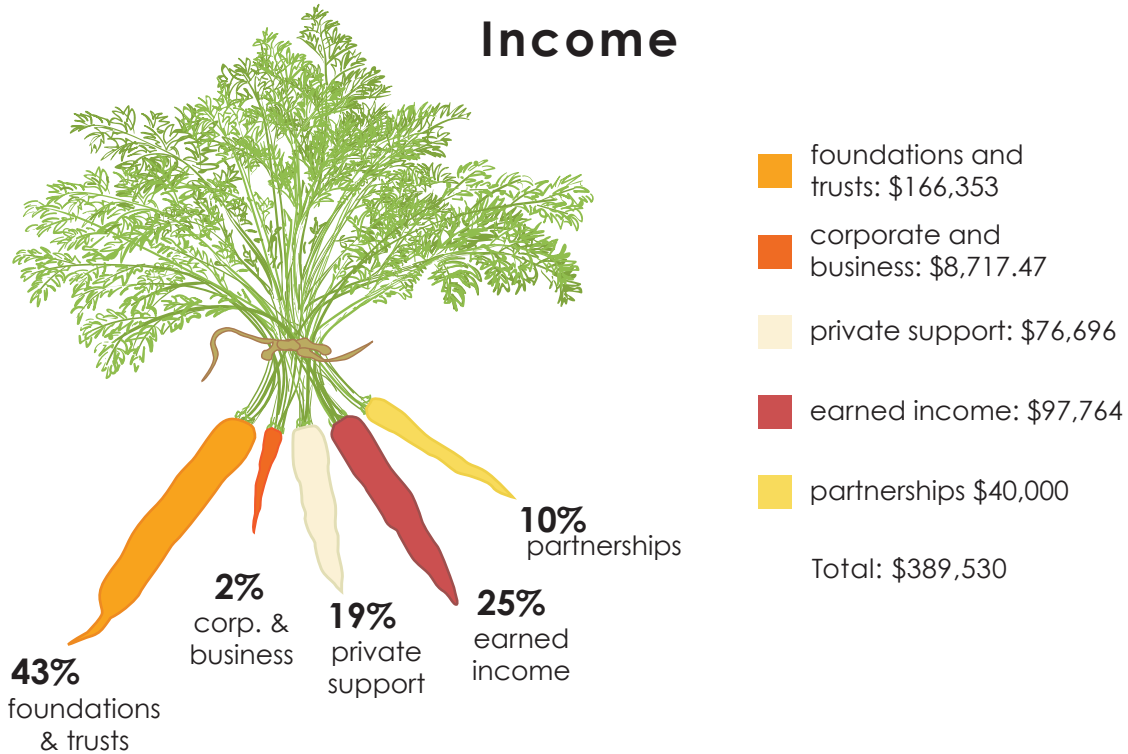
How It Will Be:



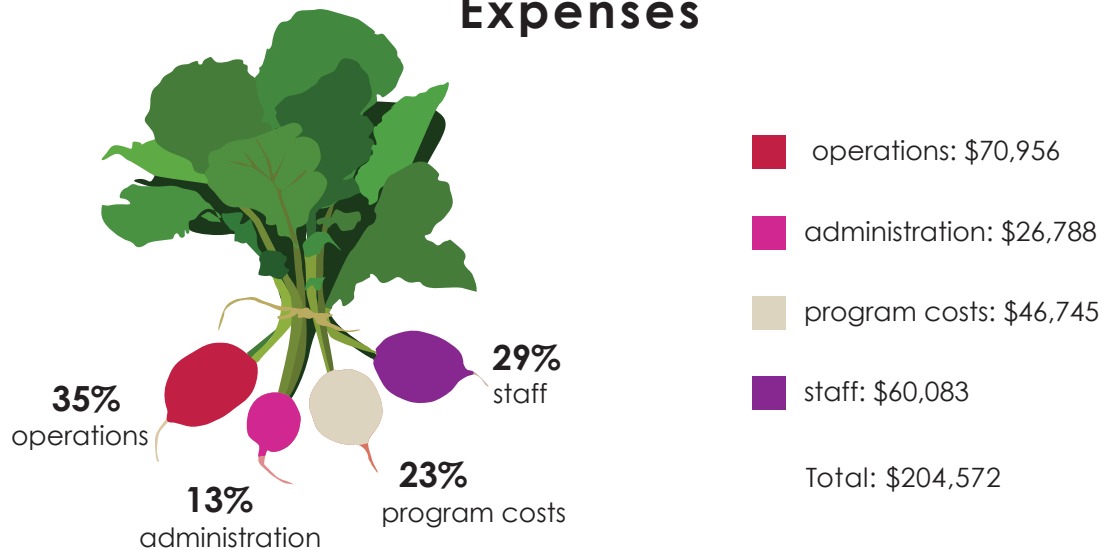
The \$275,000 renovation will include new roof, heating, cooling and electrical system; ADA compliant bathrooms and entrances; insulated exterior panels and improved interior workspaces and offices.

FINANCIAL INFO

Income



Expenses





OUR SUPPORTERS

We recognize and thank these individuals, businesses, and foundations that helped us fulfill our mission in 2018.

\$40,000 - \$75,000

The Easley Foundation
The Al Stroobants Foundation

\$10,000 - \$20,000

Centra Foundation
Greater Lynchburg Community Foundation

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Rodger & Ann Fauber
Genworth Financial
St. John's Episcopal Church

\$2,500 - \$4,999

McKinnon and Harris Inc.
Carl Schilling
Kay & Kent Van Allen

\$1,000 - \$2,499


Beale's Brewery
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services DFG
Anna Chytla
Ford Mays Wealth Management
Peter Hulick
Imperial Charitable Trust
Isabella's Italian Trattoria
Kroger
John & Cindy Matheson

(\$1,000 - \$2,499, cont.)

Bobby & Becky O'Brian
Robert & Cary Roberts
Joan & Ted Swanson
Roger Vaden
Woods Rogers Attorneys at Law

\$500 - \$999

Aetna
Dave & Margie Anderson
Automated Conveyor Systems
Bob & Terry Brennan
Jim & Lynn Daly
Dermatology Consultants
Happily Ever After Event Rentals
Lynchburg Parks and Rec
M-FUGE
Meriwether Godsey
Moore & Giles
Kelly & Pierre Mortemousque
Red Wiggler Community Farm
Rivermont Pizza
The Scout Guide
Select Bank
Shrader Stone
Ray & Mollie Snead
Brian Sumutka
Traditional Midwifery of Lynchburg
Virginia Distillery
Kenneth & Jane White



To see all the ways you can help us grow, please visit:

www.lynchburggrows.org

\$300 - \$499


Edward & Ulla Booth
William & Jane Davis
Facebook
Grey's
Bill & Mary Jane Hobbs
Sam & Jean Meeks
New Life Lawn & Landscaping
Samantha Parsons
Jim & Toni Piggott
PTC Wellness Centers
Riverside Runners
Richard & Pamela Ruble
Kenneth Rush
Seasons to Taste
Windblown Apothecary

We are also very grateful to the **168 people** who each gave between \$1 and \$299. Those donations added up to a total of **\$14,905.98** for the year!

Plus, the generous donations of time and food from local restaurants, chefs, and businesses are what made our Salad Days and Greenhouse Dinner events possible (and delicious).
We thank you all!

Restaurants & Chefs

Jason Arbusto
Aylor's Farm & Garden
Blue Marlin Seafood
Crisp
Daughters & Sons Pizza
Dish
Elizabeth's Early Learning Center
Farm Basket
Fifth and Federal
Fox Hill Farm
Fresh Market
Good Karma Tea Co.
Grey's
Indian Summer Farm
Isabella's Italian Trattoria
Live Pure
Lorraine Bakery
Magnolia Foods
Montana Plains
Restoration Acres
Rivermont Pizza
Rivermont Specialty Baking
Scratch Pasta
Soulshine Farm
Urbavore
Walnut Winds Farm
Water Dog
Waterstone
Westminster Canterbury



Thanks for a great 2018!
We hope to see you on
the farm soon at one of our:

2019 Events

Salad Days

Thursday, May 23, 2019

6 to 9pm

A Greenhouse Dinner

Saturday, Sept 28, 2019

6 to 9pm

Find out more at:
lynchburggrows.org