



ANNUAL REPORT

2019...WHAT A YEAR!

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TOGETHER, WE HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE!

Wow team, what a year! As detailed in this little report, in the past twelve months, The Good Food Collective (ie. the collective efforts of all of you) has made a measurable and very real difference in our local food system. From harvesting over 80,000 lbs of excess fruit for redistribution to food banks and pantries, to joining forces to sit down and plan ways that food equity efforts can shift power structures in our communities, to setting up shared cooler space for food security programs in Montezuma County, it has been a year of teamwork and impact.



As we look ahead to this next year working to strengthen the local food system here in this magical corner of Colorado, I hope that you are as excited as I am. By May, our Food Security & Health Equity coalition will have created an Implementation Strategy that increases fresh, healthy food access region-wide; come summer, our Mobile Farm Workforce will be off to the races providing critical labor to our agricultural community, and by next Fall, we hope to double our ability to collect and redistribute excess produce....and who's to say what other incredible projects and opportunities we will tackle!?!

Thank you all for your support in the form of time, effort, ideas, positive reinforcement, money, and resources. To celebrate, I invite you all to grab a cup of tea (flavored with local honey, of course), sit back and read this little snapshot of our past year together. It is sure to make you smile.

*With Gratitude,
Rebecca Dean, & Halle*



PROGRAMS



Ready for distribution! Our Potatoes for the People have reached 26 different food assistance agencies across Montezuma County

Eliminating Barriers via our Community Produce Share

A project done in collaboration with Manna and the Garden Project of Southwest Colorado, the Produce Share connects 29 income-limited households with a weekly bag of fresh, local produce by reducing typical barriers -- cost, transportation, and cultural fit. Bags were distributed at locations clients were already visiting, such as the Senior Center and Early Childhood Centers. A mobile market was also set up to allow other senior citizens access to fresh foods at a subsidized rate. The Share supported 7 local farmers and sent out over 3,315.25 lbs of local produce - We can't wait to deliver even more in 2020!

"This program came around at just the right time. It helped me out... now I'm using [veggies] to make new dishes and I'm enjoying it! Which is a surprise to me!"

-Produce Share Member

Building Bridges through Regional Food System & Health Equity Planning

The GFC secured a Colorado Health Foundation grant and is working in partnership with agencies, organizations and individuals across Montezuma & La Plata Counties to determine how best we can utilize and strengthen our food system to increase availability and access to local healthy foods, as well as to increase participation in food assistance programs like SNAP. In addition to building out a region-wide implementation strategy, we are excited to use this process to build bridges between our counties and let affected communities drive solutions.

41 Organizations interested in coalition membership





Marissa Hunt shows off the chard bounty!

Fruit Gleaning to save bears, reduce waste, and feed our community!

353 of you showed up for our weekly Fruit Glean Happy Hours and scheduled Group Gleans! Together, we rescued 10,096 lbs of fruit in 2019! Instead of being wasted or attracting bears to town, that fruit went to food banks and pantries around the region. Additionally, FruitGlean.org was given a new look and home on the GFC website.



Reduce
Food Waste



Save
Bears



Feed
Community

Mobile Farm Workforce creates living wage jobs

Our Mobile Farm Workforce project completed its second year in 2019. Our mighty team of 4 were able to help 6 agricultural businesses pull in 29,000 lbs of harvest. In addition to providing critical labor to our area farmers, the MFW also created new jobs that paid a Living Wage and provided skills training and meaningful employment to this hardworking group of community members.

We're now working in Montezuma County!

This year's growth included opening a GFC office in the Cortez Sharehouse, lead by our Food Security Champion Americorps, Leah Smith. Through this, we have been able to easily distribute food, kickstart gleaning, and connect with partnering organizations across Montezuma County. Our Food Security Champion was able to map out a core food-focused network of local organizations as well as establish new partnerships and develop distribution plans across the county. Her work reach over 600 individuals, exposing the GFC and its efforts to 66 unique non-profit organizations in the area.

Additionally efforts in MoCo included securing one community-shared walk-in cooler so that food banks and pantries can use the cold storage to provide their clients with fresh, healthy foods!

"This was my favorite job in Durango. I love doing physical, productive work. It was beautiful weather, we [helped] farmers, and got to see so many parts of the county gathering food. It was everything that is important to me"

-Annika, MFW Employee

Farms to Food Banks plays matchmaker between producers and food banks

The state of Colorado released grant money for food banks and pantries to purchase Colorado Proud produce, protein, and dairy in 2019. GFC played a major role in maximizing the amount of funding moving into our region by recruiting 32 local producers to become Colorado Proud certified, as well as encouraging 18 food support entities in La Plata, Montezuma, Dolores, and Archuleta Counties to apply for the funding. 9 area food assistance programs were awarded \$47,000. Once awarded funds, the GFC provided additional support through education, coaching, technical support, and purchasing materials (such as contract templates) to ensure that those dollars supported our local growers and had maximum benefit to food bank users.



32 local growers became Colorado Proud certified

9 food banks and pantries awarded money in SW Colorado



Potatoes to the People puts farmland to work for year round food security

The Potatoes to the People project was spearheaded by GFC in partnership with Outlier Farm and Fenceline Cider to put underutilized farmland to work, create additional income opportunities to local farmers, and provide year-round local food to area food banks. These efforts, coupled with the support of our volunteers, produced 4,500 lbs of local, organically produced potatoes that continue to make their way to food banks in Montezuma County.



Over \$62,000 in additional farm direct purchases



TELLING OUR FOOD SYSTEM'S STORY

Have you checked out our Instagram Feed or Facebook account? In addition to our monthly newsletter, these are a few ways that you can keep up to date on what the Good Food Collective is up to, as well as, upcoming local food events, our partners organizations' happenings, policy issues, and great reads! Our local food system has a **rich and compelling story** and we want to share it!

A new **Media & Communications plan** is being fine-tuned to provide you all with the information you want in the format you want it. If you have ideas on things you'd like to see included, please let us know!



@goodfoodcollectiveco



Greens on the Go

Check out this great story written by our very own, Halle Leganza, and published in our newsletter's bi-weekly food system series



OUR TEAM



Leah Smith



Rachel Landis



Halle Leganza

Director - Rachel Landis

Rachel's belief in the power of food systems to act as a near 'cure all' for many of our social and environmental challenges started in 2001 on a homestead in upstate New York. On the shores of Lake Masseweepee, food was a source of purpose, community, joy, identity, and stewardship. Now off the homestead, she has sought out opportunities that weave together community-building, sustainability, and food systems. The Good Food Collective is a near-perfect union of all three. Rachel hopes to find ways for the GFC to address root causes of inequity and poverty, as well as, mitigate climate change and build local resilience.

Montezuma County Food Security Champion - Leah Smith

Leah joined TeamUp AmeriCorps as the Montezuma County-based Food Security Champion in September of 2019. She recently moved to Colorado after graduating from UNC-Chapel Hill, where her studies focused on environmental sustainability, education and nutrition. She is excited to continue to learn about sustainable food systems and share her passion for connecting communities through healthy food and cooking classes. Leah's goal is to build strong programs in Montezuma County that will have a lasting impact and make community members more resilient than ever.

Communications, Engagement, and Food Security Coordinator- Halle Leganza

Halle joined the GFC as a Community Resource Center Americorps VISTA in August of 2019. Having studied American Sign Language Interpreting, she has always held a passion for linguistic access. Her interest spiked in food justice when she began learning about the impact of broken food systems. Halle's goals are to build capacity for the GFC through program expansion, development, communications, and volunteer management. She believes access to healthy food is a right no one should be deprived of.

Expanded Capacity through Americorps

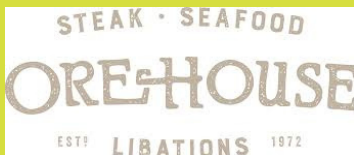
AmeriCorps was a critical player to expanding the reach of the GFC during the 2019 year. Through three different Americorps programs, two full-time volunteers were added to the organization. Nine additional NCCC members were hosted by the GFC for five weeks. Their efforts included fruit gleaning, Apple Days support, emergency harvests for farmers, and in the collection of over 14,000 lbs of produce!

OUR AMAZING PARTNERS!

Founding Partners & Steering Committee Members



Our Funding Partners



And ALL of our program partners, idea generators, and you!!!!

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