



SUSTAINABLE FOOD CENTER

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Annual Report for July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

A LETTER FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

The old adage about March — in like a lion, out like a lamb — bears no resemblance whatsoever to this last fiscal year. In fact, the opposite is true: FY 2019-20 came in like a lion and went out like a dragon! But thanks to your generous funding and unwavering support, Sustainable Food Center is working harder than ever in service of our mission to cultivate a just and regenerative food system so people and the environment can thrive.

In July 2019, we started executing on key portions of the strategic plan designed to support SFC's new vision, [Regenerate Our Land, Reform Our Food](#). We focused on winding down some projects, rehoming other projects with aligned partner organizations, and laying the foundation for new initiatives — all while continuing our impactful service provision.

It was a very busy and productive fiscal year for SFC. And then, at the start of our fourth quarter, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. The unprecedented changes caused by the pandemic required significant adaptations to most of our programming. We had to make changes to the way we provide free seeds, compost and transplants to community members. We had to move our cooking and nutrition education classes online, as well as our supply chain support for farmers. But through everything, our [farmers' markets](#) remain open and vibrant as a critical source of food for families in Central Texas. The markets are the year-round nexus between local food producers and customers from across our community. The heart of SFC's work for 45 years has been making sure everyone has access to fresh, affordable, locally grown food.

Despite these challenges, we at SFC are immensely proud of what we accomplished this year. As the pandemic brings [the importance of the local food system](#) into sharp focus for so many, we are re-energized by our work investing in local food and its essential role in all of our lives: nourishing our community.



Ronda Rutledge,
Executive Director

Nancy Liu Spencer,
Board Chair



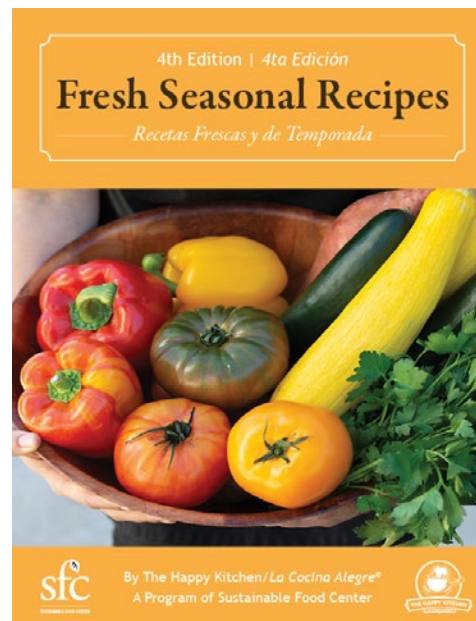
EDUCATION

Our Education team supports the long-term health of Central Texans by offering free cooking and nutrition classes, and free gardening education and resources to our local community. This year we had planned a slight reduction in the number of classes in order to make time for new projects related to SFC's new vision. The numbers dropped again when we had to cancel in-person programming this spring due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the classes that we did offer, we saw high average attendance: 23 per class for The Happy Kitchen and 18 per class for Intro to Food Gardening.

When the pandemic hit, we launched a Quarantine Cooking video series to provide tips and recipes and created a digital edition of the recently released cookbook update. We also began providing free seeds to Spread the Harvest participants by mail. We spent much of the spring planning for a re-launch this fall that will include virtual cooking and gardening classes and a drive-thru Resource Giveaway Day for Spread the Harvest members.

667

***cooking and gardening
class participants,
combined***

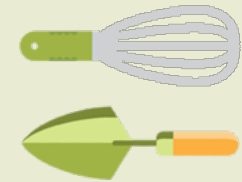


4th

***edition of
“Fresh, Seasonal Recipes”
The Happy Kitchen
cookbook released***

20,796

***meal equivalents grown
with resources provided
by Spread the Harvest***



3,390

***seed packets mailed
from Spread the Harvest***

“I want to thank you for mailing seeds after the Resource Giveaway was cancelled. I started many flats of seeds at home that were sent to me with the plan to give seedlings away to my students’ families since many of them are starting gardens at home during the stay-at-home orders. Thank you! I’m so grateful for SFC and what it has been able to provide for the community.”

- Spread the Harvest school gardener



FARM VIABILITY

This was truly a building year for our fledgling Farm Viability program, in which we created the foundation for a program centered in supporting farmers and ranchers in Central Texas. We developed two Sustainability Impact Statements (SIS) for specialty crops and animal husbandry, which were piloted and then fully implemented on 12 farms.

Data collected from these statements will assist us in providing individually tailored resources to our producers, such as on-farm technical assistance, educational and grant opportunities, and business management tools. The most all-encompassing of these resources has been the development of our “resource network database” that aggregates information for our producers.

The COVID-19 pandemic expedited some of these efforts, with emphasis on helping farmers navigate supply chain strain, understanding federal relief programs and new food safety guidelines.



12

*farm sustainability
assessments completed*



22

*producers accessed
business trainings
and information
for wholesale sales*



19

farm visits completed

SFC FARMERS' MARKETS

SFC Farmers' Markets have been neighborhood meeting places for almost 20 years, continually bringing customers in direct contact with locally grown food and the farmers who grow it. Going into this year our focus was on expanding our market base and growing our impact on the farming community.

COVID changed everything. We decided to continue running markets as long as we could ensure safety. We communicated with the City of Austin, City of Sunset Valley, and Travis County Judges office about the essential nature of our business as a food access site for those who face systemic barriers to healthy food. We rapidly rolled out new market protocols, procured additional PPE and sanitization supplies, and ramped up training for our market staff. We focused on our vendors needs, advertising online and preorder sales to customers, and connecting our farmers with new sales outlets in the wake left by shuttered restaurants.

100,000

customers

98%

*retention rate for
farmers and ranchers*



\$2 mil

*earned by local farmers,
ranchers, and artisans
combined at
SFC Farmers' Markets*

5%

*growth in sales over the
previous year*

NEIGHBORHOOD POPUP GROCERY PROJECT

In March, COVID-19 swept in and quickly devastated the local food supply chain for local farms and restaurants. Almost overnight, Austin had a food access crisis.

In partnership with Foodshed Investors and the City of Austin, SFC responded to the crisis with a pop up style grocery pilot project. The Neighborhood Pop Up Grocery Project engaged local restaurants to serve as points of fresh and affordable food access, allowing families to travel less distance than to full service grocery stores and reduce exposure to others in those high-traffic outlets, while bringing additional sales outlets to local restaurants and farms.

With funding from the City of Austin, SFC was able to divert food going to waste and offer low-cost local food to community members, all while helping to protect our neighborhood restaurants.

\$20,266

revenue generated for restaurant partners

\$20,988

worth of local food purchased from local producers



2,600

customers served

30

restaurant partners



"I feel like this program helps small family farms and small businesses so much... The odds seem to be stacked against us to get back to regular operations, your program is really helping us right now. I can't tell you how grateful we are to be a part [of it]."

— Sonya Cote, Hillside Farmacy



DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS

Our Food Access program increases access to farm-fresh, local fruits, and vegetables for individuals and families who use nutrition assistance benefits, like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

In October 2019, we rebranded SFC Double Dollars to Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB) to align with other programs across the state and nationally. We incentivize SNAP and WIC shoppers to use their benefits at participating farmers' markets and mobile markets by offering a one-to-one match for these benefits.

We were also awarded the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program federal grant, in partnership with Urban Harvest. The grant allows us to expand our SNAP incentive work to other parts of Texas. We established the DUFB Texas Steering Committee, and host regular meetings for partners operating DUFB or those poised to do so. We also offer technical assistance.

*SFC Double Dollars
became*

Double Up Food Bucks

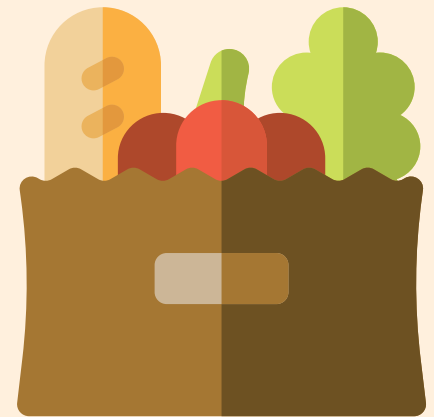
in October 2019



**DOUBLE UP
FOOD BUCKS™
AUSTIN**

\$165,471

*worth of local, healthy
produce was sold due to
Double Up Food Bucks*



3,026

*Double Up Food Bucks
customers across all
Austin sites*

FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

In addition to incentivizing SNAP and WIC purchasing at farmers' markets, we also incentivize WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) purchases from March through October every year.

For added safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, we created an online ordering platform and offered families the option to order a pre-packed box of produce.

Redemption was lower than in previous years, likely because WIC recipients are among the most vulnerable populations and the WIC clinics have been closed and unable to conduct outreach as a result of the pandemic. However, we had a positive response from those who participated and were able to distribute over 600 voucher booklets before the end of SFC's fiscal year.

600 *FMNP voucher booklets distributed to WIC customers*

Promotional Social Media image for WIC Produce Box pre-orders

HAVE WIC?



You can pre-order fruits & veggies for pickup at SFC Farmers' Markets!



1 Order your produce box online



2 Pick up at SFC Farmers' Markets



3 Get more with Double Up Food Bucks

FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

512-910-5860 | sustainablefoodcenter.org/wic-produce-boxes

FRESH FOR LESS

Through the City of Austin's Fresh for Less initiative, SFC partners with Farmshare Austin to increase access to produce and shelf-stable goods in Austin's Eastern Crescent. SFC conducts community outreach and nutrition education to increase awareness of the mobile markets Farmshare operates. At the height of the program, there were 14 participating markets throughout the Eastern Crescent. Markets were located at schools, gyms, health centers and other sites that serve low-income communities.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit and the mobile markets switched to a home delivery model, we pivoted by strengthening our community outreach efforts through social media, advertising, and establishing a bilingual help desk to support customers in placing online orders. Bilingual SFC promotoras (community health workers) answer the help desk line. We also showcase recipes from SFC's Happy Kitchen on our social media platforms.

First

***bilingual Help Desk
phone line created for
food access customers***

500

***customers per month
reached by our new
bilingual Help Desk***

1,216

***members of the Spanish-
language Facebook group,
Come Fresco y Sano***



4,698

***individuals received
information about free and
low-cost programming from
SFC and partner projects***





FINANCIAL DATA

JULY 1, 2019 - JUNE 30, 2020

REVENUE

Foundation Grants	1,556,235	57.9%
Contributions	476,260	17.7%
Federal, State & Local Contracts	334,537	12.5%
Program Service Fees	250,675	9.3%
Rentals & Other Revenue	43,884	1.6%
Contributed Goods & Services	16,582	0.6%
Net Fundraising Events	7,606	0.3%

Total Revenue	2,685,779	100.0%
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EXPENSES

Program Services		
Farm Direct	774,836	29.4%
Food Access	652,441	24.8%
The Happy Kitchen/La Cocina Alegre®	403,124	15.3%
Grow Local	353,650	13.4%
Fundraising	220,400	8.6%
Management & General	227,475	8.4%

Total Expenses	2,631,926	100.0%
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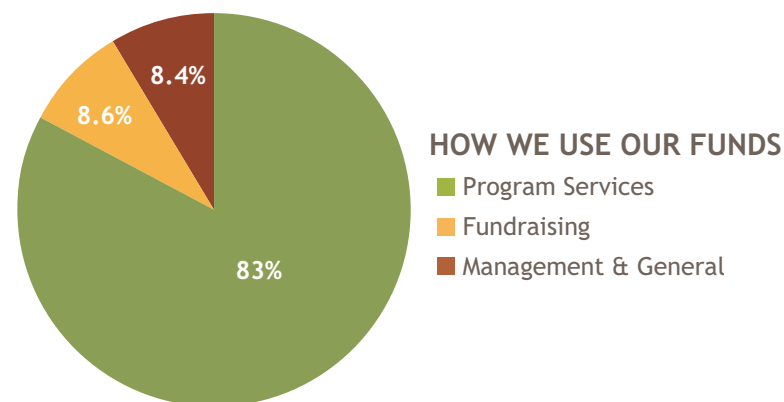
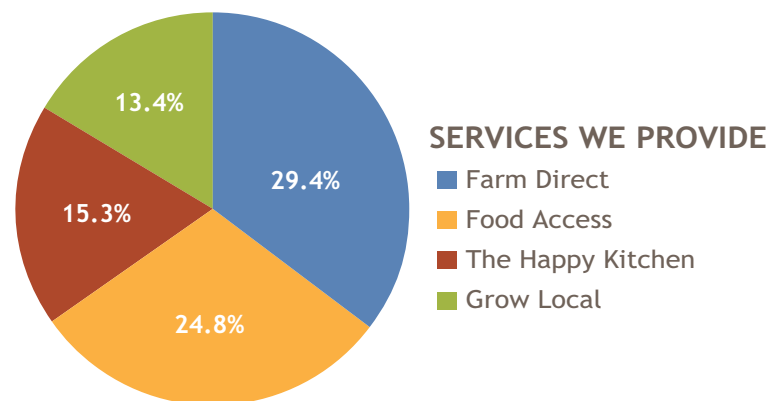
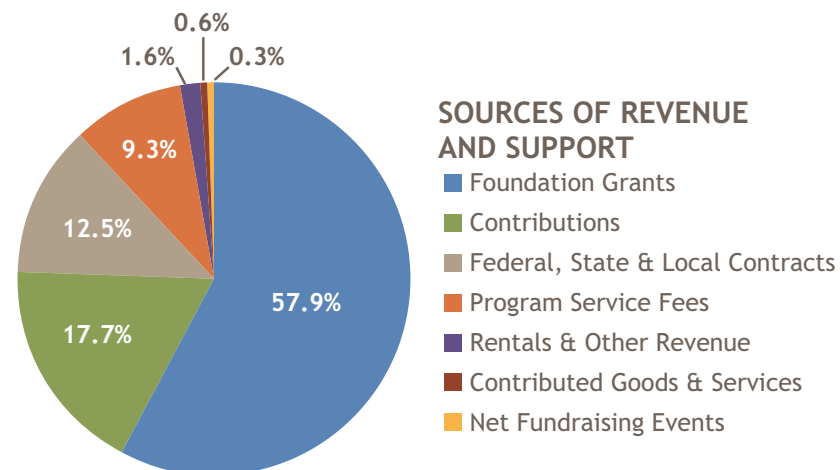
CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

Total Revenue	2,685,779
Total Expenses	2,631,926
Change in Net Assets from Operations	53,853
Net Assets, Beginning of Fiscal Year	4,366,877

Net Assets, End of Fiscal Year	4,420,730
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In fiscal year FY20, Sustainable Food Center charged 8.6% for fundraising and 8.4% for management and general.

The full financial statements, audited by Gindler, Chappel, Morrison & Co., P.C., are available upon request by contacting Debi Vanwey, SFC's Finance Director, at debi@sustainablefoodcenter.org.





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