



HEART & SOIL
COLLECTIVE, INC

2024

Annual Report

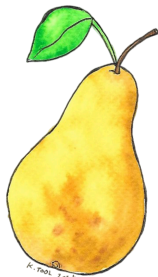


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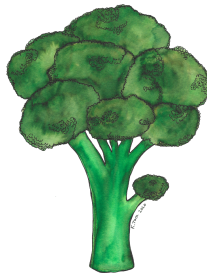
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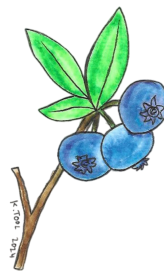
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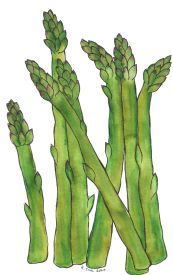
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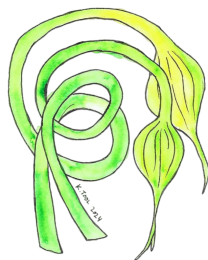
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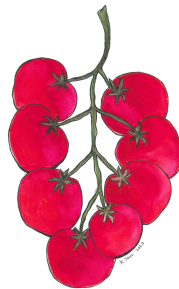
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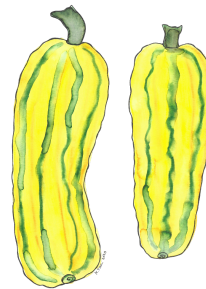
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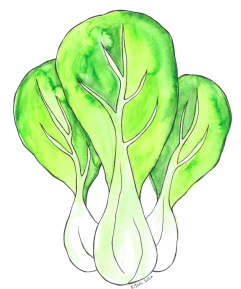
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Who We Are:

A Letter from our Directors



To Our Amazing Community,

We are honored to share Heart & Soil Collective's 2024 Annual Report outlining our mission, programming, values, goals and taking a closer look at our organization's growth since founding five years ago.

Heart & Soil Collective is a Berkshire County nonprofit that feeds people, supports small farms and connects the community through agriculture.

Since 2020 our Community Produce and Soup Programs have expanded to serve seniors and families across the Berkshires reaching 115 homes/ 210 individuals with free, fresh produce and soup in 2024. Produce is purchased directly from Berkshire County farms and delivered fresh and used to make hearty soups we deliver at no cost to participants. Along with local food programming, we build community gardens, hold farm tours and hands-on workshops to help connect the community to the land where their food is grown.

Our mission is to connect people to the land where their food grows, making fresh local food and hands-on agricultural experiences accessible to all.



We deliver free, fresh local food to seniors and families



We buy produce at full price directly from local farms



We provide farm tours, workshops & community events

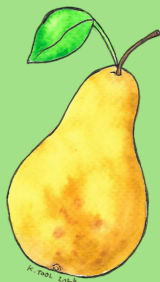
Our three interconnected programs multiply our impact in the Berkshires.

We envision a world in which everyone is healthy in mind, body, and spirit and feels connected to each other and the land where their food grows. Access to healthy food is a human right, and we all share collective responsibility to nourish our community. In Berkshire County nearly 14% of the population are single seniors, living alone. We're making an impact in reaching these homes- in 2024 60% of our free, fresh produce deliveries went directly to single seniors.

We couldn't do this essential work to feed people, pay farmers and connect the community to agriculture without you- our Partner Farmers, collaborating organizations, volunteers, supporters, sponsors, and donors. Building strong communities helps us make sure everyone is fed, connecting to the land helps us connect to each other. Thank you all for being part of our nonprofit family!

Kristen & Chris

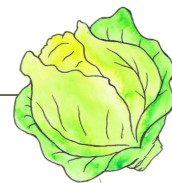
Managing Directors, Heart & Soil Collective



5-Year Timeline

Born from an idea and a leap of faith in early 2020, Heart & Soil Collective celebrated our 5-Year Anniversary in 2024. Please see a timeline of milestones from our organization's birth to now:

2020: The Seed Idea is Planted



March 2020: COVID19

Kristen and Chris, owners of Olsen Farm in Lanesborough planted extra seeds in preparation of the farmers market season. COVID19 hit-farmers markets were closed, leaving nowhere to sell produce and creating an uncertain financial future for the small farm.

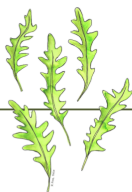
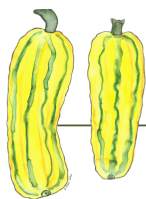
Free Produce Program

Community members donated funds to Olsen Farm to deliver fresh produce weekly to 8 seniors in Lanesborough. Extra produce from home gardens was donated for a no-contact table providing nutrition, decreasing food waste, building community and offering safe social interaction during isolation: The Free Produce Program was born.

EforAll Business Accelerator

Kristen participated in EforAll Berkshire County's intensive Business Accelerator Program, and was connected with local professionals, mentors, and fellow entrepreneurs to learn the steps needed to start a nonprofit business. She was awarded grant funds to build a website and incorporate a nonprofit organization: introducing Heart & Soil Collective!

2021: Heart & Soil Collective



Building a Board

Through the EforAll Business Accelerator Kristen wrote Bylaws and began the process of building a 7 member Board of Directors to govern the newly formed Heart & Soil Collective. In March of 2021, the 7 member Board was formed.

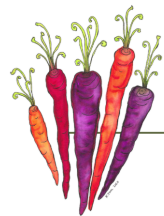
Program Expansion

Free Produce Program deliveries expanded to 12 homes a week in Lanesborough, funded through crowd sourcing while Heart & Soil Collective awaited tax exempt status. Observing a stigma around the word 'free' implying poverty or neediness the name was changed to Community Produce Program.

Making It Official

Heart & Soil Collective filed Articles of Organization with the Secretary of State to become a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, in October the organization received Federal tax exemption status.

2022: Program Expansion



Partner Farms

With program expansion came the need for more produce- in 2022 Heart & Soil Collective began partnering with two small farms to purchase \$3000 in produce for 20 weekly deliveries.



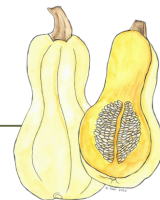
Awarded Grants

Heart & Soil Collective was awarded grants, allowing provision of 20 weekly produce shares to seniors, building a Community Garden and hosting Drumming Workshops at 18 Degrees Family Resource Center.



Community Connections

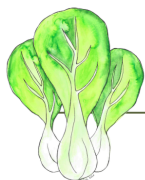
Lanesborough Ambulance Crew volunteered to help with weekly deliveries, building trusting relationships with seniors, giving First Responders opportunities to get to know seniors in non-emergency situations and providing well checks for our participants when needed.



Winter Soup Program

The Winter Soup Program was launched when a Partner Farm had a field of butternut squash bitten by deer, and unable to be sold at farmers markets. Making soup proved to be a wonderful volunteer opportunity, using aftermarket produce decreased food waste and the soup was a big hit with program participants!

2023: Rapid Growth



Program Expansion

Grant funding from Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation allowed expansion of free, fresh produce and soup deliveries to 20 homes in Adams as well as serving 10 families receiving care through Pediatric Palliative Care/ Hospice of the Berkshires.



'Sponsor' A Senior

A 'Sponsor' A Senior donor drive reaching local businesses was launched, with seven business donors joining in 2023. Businesses who donated were featured on Heart & Soil's website and invited to join a donor thank-you Soup Party.



USDA Funding

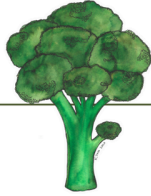
Heart & Soil Collective was connected with funding from the USDA's Local Food Promotion Program through a partnership with Berkshire Agricultural Ventures. Grant funds supported program expansion over two years from 20 to 60 homes in 2023, and from 60 to 115 homes in 2024.



Staff & Board Growth

In order to support continued and rapid growth Heart & Soil Collective hired the organization's first staff, including two Summer Interns, and expanded the Board of Directors from 7 to 9 members.

2024: Looking To The Future



Farm Tours

Heart & Soil hosted a series of Farm Tours to highlight the work of our Partner Farms and connect community members with the land where their food is being grown. Tours will expand each year as more Partner Farms join the collective.

Produce Guide

Our Local Produce Guide book, featuring 72 original illustrations, nutritional information, easy recipes, tips and fun facts was printed and distributed to help program participants better know how to eat the free, fresh produce we delivered each week.

Programming Today

We delivered 1675 bags of free, fresh produce to 115 homes, reaching 210 individuals across eleven Berkshire County towns, in partnership with twelve small farms. We cooked and delivered 265 gallons of soup made with ingredients purchased from small farms, paying our Partner Farmers over \$32K in 2024.

Looking Ahead...

Since 2020 our local food programming has expanded from reaching 8 to 115 homes a week. Our ten-year goal is to see Heart & Soil Collective's local food programming in every Berkshire County town, in partnership with farms and organizations in each community.

2024 Highlights



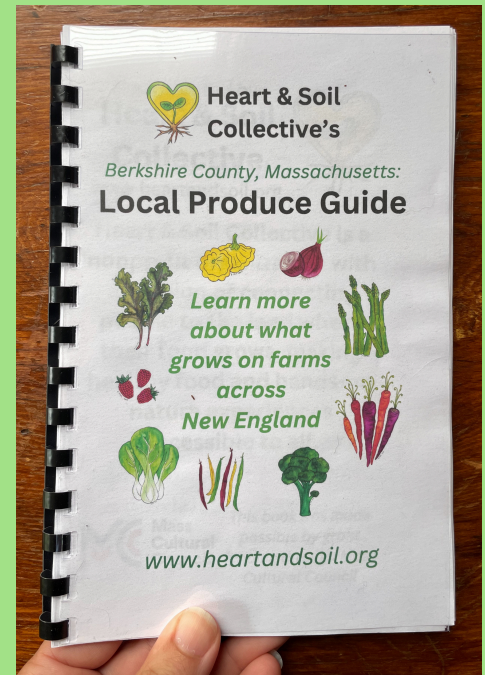
In 2024 Heart & Soil Collective had the second year in a row of tremendous growth- we're still catching our breath!

We held our first series of Farm Tours to highlight the work of our Partner Farms, expanded our Board of Directors from 7 to 9 members, printed and distributed a Local Produce Guide Book, were connected with Marketing, Business and Fundraising Consultants, our Managing Director was recognized through awards and we celebrated the 100th Birthday of one of our founding program participants.

2024 wrapped up a collaboration with Berkshire Agricultural Ventures (BAV) where we received funds through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) to expand our Community Produce and Soup programs. Please see the two-year grant overview in our 'Inside Look: USDA Grant' section below.

Local Produce Guide Book

With the help of our Summer Interns, we compiled nutritional information, simple recipes and fun facts about 72 fruits, vegetables and herbs grown in New England. Paired with original illustrations by our Managing Director, Kristen, we created a Local Produce Guide Book as a way to better help participants know how to cook and eat the free, fresh produce we deliver to them through Community Produce Program. 96% of program participants surveyed found the Local Produce Guide 'Extremely Helpful' sharing the following feedback: *"It helped us identify the garlic scapes. It's a very informative guide book,"* and *"I found it very helpful because a lot of veggies I had never had so had no clue how to cook them."*



Inaugural Farm Tour Series

We hosted our first series of Farm Tours, visiting three of our Partner Farms: Full Well Farm (pictured left), Holiday Brook Farm and Second Drop Farm. The community was invited to join on guided walking tours, see 'behind the scenes' how their local food is grown and try out hands-on activities at each farm including making seed paper and painting with beet paint. The series was supported by grant funding through the Mass Cultural Council and Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.



Centennial Celebration!

In 2024 we celebrated the 100th birthday of one of our first program participants who has been enjoying fresh produce and soup with us since 2020. We made a call to the greater community to send birthday cards with a goal of collecting 100 cards for 100 years. Second Drop Farm, one of our Partner Farms, arranged 100 flowers for a birthday bouquet. It was an honor to be included in this 100th birthday celebration!



Being Recognized in the Community

Our Managing Director, Kristen Tool, was selected for Berkshire Community College's '40 Under Forty' Award in 2024 and recognized through the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce's 'Women in Leadership' Awards for her work with Heart & Soil Collective and in the greater community.



Photo Credit: Autumn Phoenix Photography



Programming Overview



Heart & Soil Collective purchases directly from local farms to provide the freshest, most local food to program participants. For Community Produce Program fresh produce is purchased from our Partner Farms, bagged carefully in insulated green bags and delivered directly to homes at no cost to participants. For Community Soup Program we purchase vegetables and ingredients, like ground beef

and chicken, from our Partner Farms to make big batches of hearty soup we deliver at no cost during the winter months. Our local food programming is focused on reaching seniors, families with children receiving care through Pediatric Palliative Care Hospice of the Berkshires and members of the transgender community.

Along with local food programming we help build community gardens, hold farm tours and hands-on workshops- creating more spaces where people can experience agriculture, learn to grow their own food and connect with the land.

Food access is a challenge that continues to rise across Berkshire County and beyond. Small farms face financial constraints and rising expenses for transportation, packaging and labor and community members are looking for more ways to experience agriculture locally. Our programming is designed to help meet these needs in the communities we serve- so everyone can feel connected to the land, have access to fresh, local food and feel nourished in mind, body and soul.

Please see an overview of our 2024 programming below.



Local Food Programming

In 2024 we expanded Community Produce and Soup Program deliveries to 115 homes reaching 210 individuals across eleven Berkshire County towns. Our local food programming was possible through partnership with twelve small farms. We delivered 1,675 bags of free, fresh produce and 265 gallons of soup, paying our Partner Farms over \$32,000.00 for produce and ingredients.

"I feel literally healthier-- mentally and physically this week just from your beautiful gifts."

-G.N.

Community Produce Program Participant

"This is a needed program. I do not drive & sometimes it is difficult to get to the store. My door delivery is so good & I can depend on it. Thank you."

-Maryellen

Community Soup Program Participant



Community Gardens

We continued work to enhance the community garden at 18 Degrees Family Resource Center in Pittsfield by planting vegetables, herbs and fruit in raised beds and added perennial pollinator flowers both to the garden area and to create a beautiful habitat around their sign. We hosted our first Volunteer Work Day to prepare and plant the garden- and it was a blast!

“[The] Community Garden’s mission is to inspire its community members and visitors to look deeper at the natural world around them. It aims to show that each small act of care to our local ecosystem done by many, creates great change.”

-Jessica, Board Member and Native Plant Gardener



Workshops & Farm Tours

In 2024 we held our first series of Farm Tours to highlight the work of our Partner Farms, connect the community with the land where their food is grown and provide hands-on agricultural experiences. At Holiday Brook Farm we met friendly farm animals and made seed paper, at Second Drop Farm we toured their you-pick flower and berry fields and tried out making flower prints and at Full Well Farm we learned about their no-till practices and painted with beet paint (pictured left). The series was funded by Mass Cultural Council and Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.

“I’m so grateful for the support and the opportunity to get local produce into the hands of those who need it most!”

-Alyssa, Partner Farmer at Field of Love Farm

Community Connections



‘Collective’ is in our name, and each year our tree of community connections continues to grow new branches and deeper roots- reaching into additional communities to spread our mission and strengthen local food access across Berkshire County.

Heart & Soil Collective partners with schools, local groups and other nonprofits for our local food programming and to provide hands-on agricultural experiences. Working with established organizations allows us to reach the community through relationships they already know and trust. These partnerships enhance each organization’s programming, mission and strengthen the community as a whole.

Learn about our 2024 community connections and how each supports our programming below.



Partnerships with 12 Berkshire County Area Small Farms

To provide the freshest and most locally grown produce we partner with small farms and purchase directly from them. In 2024 we partnered with 12 farms to purchase seedlings, fresh produce and after-market produce for soup making, paying farmers over \$32K.

Our 2024 Partner Farms: Full Well Farm, Holiday Brook Farm, Bittersweet Farm, Rock and Root Farm, Mountain Girl Farm, Shaker Creek Farm, CAVU Farm, Bigfoot Farm, Second Drop Farm, Field of Love Farm and Windy Ridge Organic Farm

Cooking Connection: NAMEL Soups

In 2024 we were connected with NAMEL Soups, a group of amazing Haitian women who have helped us cook big batches of soup for our Community Soup Program, sharing their culinary expertise, culture, humor and joy in the kitchen!





The Giving Garden

The Giving Garden is a 100% volunteer run collaborative who grow vegetables and raise chickens for eggs for families and individuals struggling with food insecurity in Berkshire County. All food grown is donated to local food banks and meal sites, we are grateful to partner with The Giving Garden for fresh produce deliveries and soup making.

Fellow Nonprofit: seeing rainbows

seeing rainbows is a trans-led nonprofit that works to cultivate holistic and liberating systems to build solidarity and care for the transgender community across the Berkshires. We began collaborating with seeing rainbows in 2024 to provide free, fresh produce directly to members of the trans community, supporting our mission to make fresh, local food accessible to all. *"We're so grateful Kristen reached out to us to initiate this partnership, and heartened to see spontaneous acts of radical kindness ready to spring up around us. Such acts of giving, of mutual aid, are the basis upon which we hope to grow a sustainable and supportive community over time,"* says seeing rainbows co-founder and executive director, maayan nuri héd.





Continued Connections

In 2024 we continued collaboration with 18 Degrees to maintain the community garden at their Pittsfield campus. Our deliveries to families receiving care through Pediatric Palliative Care Hospice of the Berkshires have expanded to reach an additional 5 families. We continued working with Berkshire Jail and House of Corrections Aquaponics Education Lab who donate lettuce for our free, fresh produce deliveries- their lettuce is a favorite of program participants!

Our municipal connections with Councils on Aging have grown in order to reach seniors in new and existing communities as we expand programming to additional Berkshire County towns.

We are grateful to have an ongoing partnership with Lanesborough Ambulance, who volunteer to help deliver produce and soup in Lanesborough.



Donor Spotlight

As a nonprofit organization, Heart & Soil Collective is funded by a mixture of public and private grants, donations, sponsorships, and in-kind contributions. Our work to feed the Berkshires and connect the community through agriculture would not be possible without the support of our amazing individual and business donors, highlighted below.

Foundation & Organization Donations

In 2024 we are grateful to have received funding through the following local foundations, organizations and businesses to support our work.

Berkshire Community College Foundation, 40 Under Forty Grant

Berkshire Hills and Dales Spinning Guild

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation: Eleanor Lord Fund

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation: SAMA Fund

MENTOR Charitable Fund c/o Choate Hall & Steward

Raymour & Flanigan Furniture Store

Recurring Donations

This year we launched a campaign seeking monthly donors- a little bit goes a long way toward covering day-to-day expenses and supporting our work. We currently have 8 monthly donors, whose support we are tremendously thankful for. Monthly donors are invited to join our team for private farm tours as our way of thanking them for their ongoing support.

Birthday Fundraisers

In 2024 Heart & Soil Collective was selected by six community members as beneficiary of their 'Birthday Fundraisers' on Facebook. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Danielle Munn

Eric Wheeler

Jessica Bourassa-Pitroff

Leanne Yinger

Katherine Westwood

Kristen Tool

'Sponsor A Share' Business Donors

Our annual 'Sponsor A Share' (formerly called 'Sponsor' A Senior) business appeal allows businesses to support our local food programming in their communities across the Berkshires. We want to send big thanks to our business sponsors for their contributions toward Community Produce and Soup Programs. Please see our 2024 business sponsors below:

**Adams
Community Bank**



Baker's Golf



Blue Q



**Charles Phykitt
Insurance Agency**



**Greylock Federal
Credit Union**



**Guido's Fresh
Marketplace**



Interprint



**John's Building
Supply**



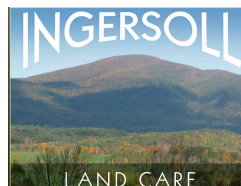
**Molari
Employment
Services**



**Monarch
Realty**



**New Leaf
Property
Management**



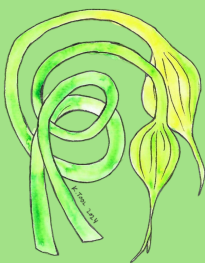
**Race
Mountain Tree
Services**



**Witch
Slapped, LLC**

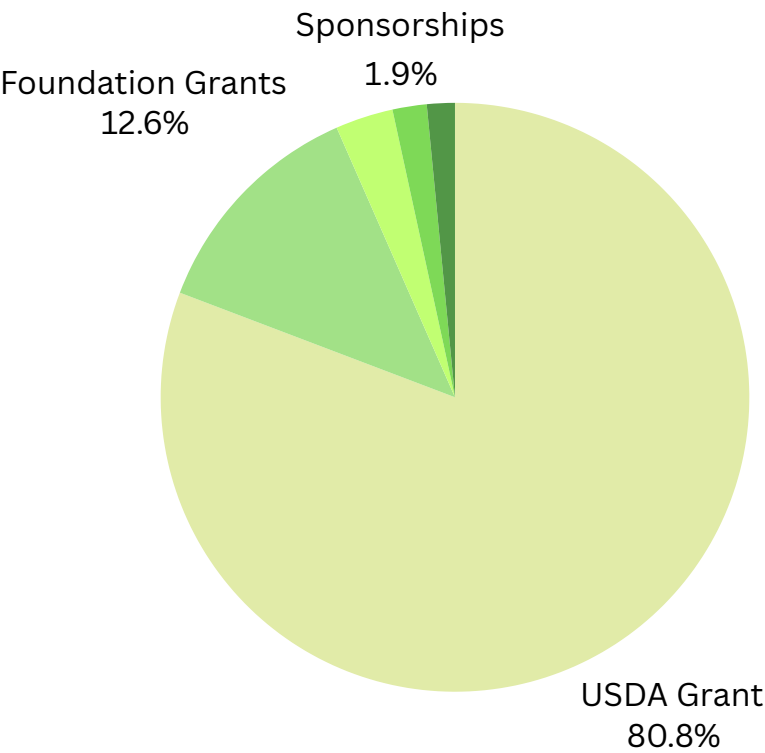


Our Financials



Heart & Soil Collective’s 2024 annual revenue was \$193,848K, a 262% increase from our 2023 annual revenue of \$74K. In the second and final year of funding through the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) grant funds made up a little over 80% of our annual revenue in 2024.

Please see our ‘Inside Look: USDA Grant’ section for more information about the LFPP funding and how the collaboration supported our programming.



USDA Local Food Promotion Program Grant:	\$156,590.00
Foundation & Private Grants:	\$24,492.00
Fundraisers:	\$6,155.00
Sponsorships:	\$3,640.00
Individual Donations:	\$2,971.00

Our total expenses for 2024 were \$185,106K with \$96,290 for payroll, \$50,350 for programming and \$38,466 for operating expenses.

Raymour & Flanigan Furniture Store in Pittsfield hosted our 'Farm-To-Bake Sale' where we raised \$410 selling goodies made with fruit and vegetables purchased from our Partner Farms. The store donated an additional \$500 toward Heart & Soil Collective's programming.



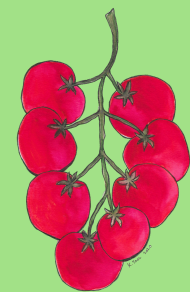
Farm-To-Table Dinner

Heart & Soil Collective held our first-ever Farm-To-Table Dinner at Dottie's Coffee Lounge in August, 2024 with the expert help of Chef Misty Morrison and owner/ Chef Jess Rufo.

Guests enjoyed a five course meal featuring grilled carrot tacos, carrot ginger soup and hors d'œuvres made with ingredients purchased from our Partner Farms. The dinner was a wonderful way to celebrate the food being grown in Berkshire County and share our ongoing work to feed people, support farms and connect the community through agriculture while raising funds toward our Community Produce and Soup Programs.



Inside Look: USDA Grant



In June of 2023 Heart & Soil Collective became beneficiary of funds through a two-year United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) grant in partnership with Berkshire Agricultural Ventures (BAV). The grant was designed to support initiatives getting food from farms to homes- our Community Produce and Soup Programs fit those terms perfectly.

Heart & Soil Collective was distributed \$219,136.00 in LFPP funds between June 2023 and December 2024 to support our local food programming. For our Community Produce Program produce is purchased directly from local farms and delivered fresh to local homes at no cost to participants. For our Community Soup Program, ingredients are purchased from local farms and used to make hearty soups we deliver directly to seniors and families at no cost. Grant funds allowed us to pay our Partner Farmers, hire staff, purchase supplies and equipment. Along with funds distributed to us for program support LFPP funds allowed Heart & Soil Collective to take part in multiple professional consultations for longterm program sustainability including beginning a Strategic Plan, building a Marketing Outreach Plan, Business and Fundraising consultation.



**\$52,831 paid to Partner
Farmers**



**2,635 bags of free, fresh
produce delivered**



**505 gallons of hearty
soup delivered**

Please see the impacts LFPP funds have had on our local food programming since June of 2023:

Program Expansion

Local Food Promotion Program funding allowed expansion of free produce and soup deliveries through our Community Produce and Soup Programs from 20 homes in 2022 to 115 homes in 2024.

Labor Expenses

The LFPP grant provided funds toward labor expenses, allowing us to hire our first staff, offer volunteer stipends and pay our Partner Farmers.

\$113,532 for staff salaries

\$52,831 paid to Partner Farmers

\$15,400 for volunteer stipends

\$10,038 paid to Summer Interns

\$21,586.00 toward Supplies, Materials & Marketing

- kitchen tools for soup making and vegetable prep: stock pots, knives, cutting boards, gloves and aprons
- soup cartons and sticker labels
- totes and storage containers
- branded materials including business cards, table banners, postcards, buttons and stickers
- website upgrade to incorporate work done through Marketing consultation

\$9,500 of Equipment Purchased

- food processor, vacuum sealer, hand blenders, large capacity coolers for more efficient food prep and storage
- flash cooling machine for more efficient soup making
- chest freezer for cold storage of prepared vegetables and soup
- iPad for staff use

Consultations

Strategic Planning with Paper Crane Associates

- 3-5 year Strategic Plan Outline

Business Development with Brian Zweig

- Customized Budget Template
- Long-term Budget Forecasting

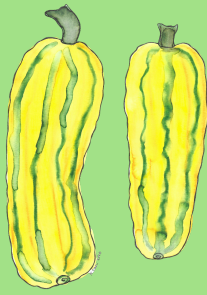
Marketing with Good Egg Marketing

- Marketing and Outreach Strategies
- Brand Blueprint
- Website Upgrade

Crowd Funding with Laura Christensen

- Crowdfunding Campaign Planning and Design
- Social Media Marketing





Goals For 2025

Food access is a challenge that won't be solved by any one organization alone, and won't be fixed overnight. Heart & Soil Collective is committed to continue playing our part in addressing local food access across Berkshire County by supporting small farms, getting fresh, locally grown food directly to homes, partnering with organizations who support others and creating educational opportunities to empower community members to be connected to the land.

In the coming year Heart & Soil Collective is focused on sustaining free produce and soup deliveries, and balancing the educational parts our mission through hosting farm tours, workshops and building community gardens.

Our long term goals are to continue expanding Community Produce and Soup Programs into additional Berkshire County towns, partnering with farms in each community and providing fresh, local food to homes across the Berkshires.

115

Home Deliveries

Sustaining Local Food Programming

Since founding five years ago our local food programming has rapidly expanded from delivery to 8 homes in 2020 to 115 homes in 2024. In 2025 we have a goal of sustaining Community Produce and Soup Program deliveries to 115 homes, and partnering with an additional 2 small farms to support our local food programming across the Berkshires.

Building Community Gardens

Community gardens are the perfect way to connect the community through agriculture, create more spaces where people can get their hands in the soil and have access to fresh, locally grown food. In 2025 we have plans in the works to build and maintain three school and community gardens in Adams, Lanesborough and Pittsfield.

3

Community Gardens

1

Capital Campaign

'Locally Grown To Local Homes' Campaign

Heart & Soil Collective has been fortunate to be funded through grants for the past two years. In 2025 we have a goal of raising funds for our Community Produce and Soup Programs through an online crowdfunding campaign- the first of its size our growing organization has held. Our 'Locally Grown To Local Homes' Campaign goes live on March 15th, 2025!



"Hooray for Wednesdays:

I warm my Tummy

With Heart & Soil

Their SOUPS are Yummy!"

-Community Soup Program Participant

Contact Us



To learn more about our impact and programming reach out at: heart.soilma@gmail.com

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Lanesborough MA 01237

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Website: www.heartandsoil.org



Heart & Soil
Collective, Inc

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news about local food
programming?***



**Join our Newsletter today:
www.heartandsoil.org/contact**

