



# FRESHFARM

nourishing our food future



## 2020 IMPACT REPORT



# FRESHFARM COVID RESPONSE

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Despite the unimaginable challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, FRESHFARM has been a national leader in responding to the crisis:

By taking a systemic approach to increasing food equity across our region, FRESHFARM is nourishing minds, bodies, and communities. Our unique array of innovative programs work in conjunction with one another to deliver on the promise of a well-fed, well-nourished, and well-educated community.

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Our work is made possible because of you. This impact report contains just a small sampling of what you have helped us achieve. With your continued support, the best is yet to come.

## FARMERS MARKETS

Markets stayed open as an essential service throughout the pandemic. Our customers kept shopping and our farmers and producers kept selling. FRESHFARM created and implemented solutions for safe, socially distant shopping: developing dynamic safety protocols, obtaining special permits for weekly operations, innovating with reserved time slots for shopping, communicating policy changes with customers, and supporting farmers with systems for pre-orders. Despite drastic changes to our daily lives, our markets continue to nourish our communities.

## POP UP FOOD HUB

When the pandemic hit, we responded to a huge surge in need for fresh food from organizations serving low-income communities through partnerships and home delivery. With new infrastructure and strategy, we are positioned for tremendous growth in 2021 to address long-standing food access challenges exacerbated by COVID-19.

## FOODPRINTS

Throughout the pandemic, FoodPrints has rolled out innovative virtual food and garden education. We delivered virtual classes for our partner schools, developed and shared activities families can do at home, and piloted a successful immersive program paired with home delivery for at-risk students. In 2021, we will use the lessons from 2020 about equity and resilience to deepen our mission to provide meaningful food and garden education across the District.



# FRESHFARM 2020 IMPACT

## FARMERS MARKETS

>> We operate nearly **30 farmers markets and farm stands** in geographically diverse neighborhoods across DC, Northern Virginia, and Maryland.

>> Nearly **250 farmers and producers** have collectively earned over **\$12 million at our markets** from January through October 2020, \$8.2 million of which was earned by farmers alone.

>> Shoppers spent more than **\$236,000 in federal nutrition benefits + FRESHFARM-provided match** at markets from January through October 2020.

## POP UP FOOD HUB

>> We generated over **\$460,000 in additional revenue** for **22 local farms** from January through October 2020.

>> Our produce purchases have filled **24,500 Market Shares** for our most vulnerable seniors, children, and families across DC and Northern Virginia.

>> We provided more than **282,000 servings of fresh, local produce** to **1,051 households with children**.

>> We sold nearly **\$200,000 in affordable, wholesale produce** to community partners this year, reaching at least **7,000 individuals** through these partnerships.

## FOODPRINTS

>> FoodPrints reaches **5,700 students in 15 DC public elementary schools** across the city.

>> **75% of students served** are economically disadvantaged. We work in diverse schools across DC with a focus on equity and reaching communities with less access to fresh food.

>> During the pandemic, we are delivering food education in new ways through **virtual classes, instructional videos, and family cooking sessions** for our partner schools and families across the region.

>> In our **immersive learning program**, virtual learning is paired with delivery of fresh produce, other ingredients, books, and supplies to students' homes. We delivered **210 bags of food to students** this summer.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

As we head into 2021, **your support is more critical than ever** to help small farmers grow their businesses, feed hungry neighbors, and connect DC students to transformative learning opportunities.

>> Make a donation at [freshfarm.org/donate](https://freshfarm.org/donate)



# **FRESHFARM** **FARMERS MARKETS**

***Farmers markets provide vital economic opportunities and help nourish our communities with fresh, local food.***

FRESHFARM is the third-largest farmers market organization in the country with a network of nearly 250 vendors. Our nearly 30 markets across diverse neighborhoods in DC, Maryland, and Northern Virginia are inclusive community spaces to enjoy local food, improve health, and support local farmers and food producers. Through nutrition assistance matching programs, we empower low-income residents to buy more local produce while providing additional revenue for local farmers and food producers.

## **Market Growth in Diverse Neighborhoods**

The Columbia Heights market demonstrates our growth in diverse neighborhoods of the DC region. Since it opened a decade ago, the Saturday market has grown into a robust three-season market with competitive vendor



applications, plus a Wednesday summer season market that launched in 2015. This year, we opened the Saturday market in February, two months earlier than usual. In those two extra months of operations, our vendors grossed \$86,000, almost matching the \$90,000 grossed in August at the peak of the season. Largely thanks to the new winter season, April 2020 sales nearly doubled over 2019. At the Wednesday market, more than half of sales are made to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity using nutrition benefits and incentives.

## **Community-Based Farm Stands Make Fresh Food Affordable**

The FRESHFARM Cesar Chavez and Kenilworth Rec Center farm stands, located in areas of DC with limited food purchasing options, have become even more critical this year in light of the pandemic. These farm stands leverage FRESHFARM's network of farmers and producers to bring produce to neighborhoods where fully-fledged farmers markets are not typically established. The farm stands are managed by local community members: residents who live in the neighborhood, promote the farm stands, manage inventory, and oversee food access incentive programs at the market. There is a strong demand for fresh fruits and vegetables in the neighborhoods the farm stands serve, and these farm stands make fresh food affordable. "Our community can be described as a food desert, and using the bus to get to a grocery store is not convenient," said FRESHFARM Farm Stand Supervisor Aminat Adebule. "It's a blessing to have a farm stand with fresh, locally grown produce at an affordable price in the neighborhood."



**"We're greatly appreciative of the markets that FRESHFARM has open, that they've been able to keep open for farmers like us."**

**— Jorge Barajas,  
Barajas Produce**



# **FRESHFARM** **POP UP FOOD HUB**

## ***The Pop Up Food Hub increases food access and equity.***

The Pop Up Food Hub provides a pathway for underserved communities in DC, Maryland, and Northern Virginia to access fresh, local food. We aggregate large wholesale food orders from the farmers and producers in the FRESHFARM network, then receive and pack the food, and distribute the orders straight from the market to our partners.

The Pop Up Food Hub increases access to fresh food for individuals, families, and community partners — and brings new consumers into the fold of local food, generating new revenue for the FRESHFARM network of farmers and producers.

## **Expanding Economic Opportunity for Farmers and Meeting Needs of Our Communities**

This year, the Pop Up Food Hub sourced from 22 farmers in the FRESHFARM network, ranging from small one-acre farms like Dodo Farms, to mid-size farms like Pleitez Produce and 78 Acres, and large farms like Three Springs Fruit Farm and Toigo Orchards. Each week, FRESHFARM places an order with these farms to fulfill Market Shares and deliveries to community-based institutions like Kid Power and La Clínica del Pueblo. For partner farms, the Pop Up Food Hub is a win-win: by the time farmers reach the market, they've already sold a significant amount in bulk to FRESHFARM for distribution to the community. With the Pop Up Food Hub managing



partnerships and distribution to various communities, local farmers can enjoy a meaningful impact supporting vulnerable communities without any additional logistics, coordination, or costs.

## **New Partnerships in Northern Virginia**

The Pop Up Food Hub's tremendous growth this season has been especially significant in Northern Virginia, where creative new partnerships are helping us reach a broad and diverse footprint of neighborhoods and communities. One example is our partnership with the Moms Produce Program



at Virginia Hospital Center. Since May, the Pop Up Food Hub has partnered with Moms Produce, a farm-to-clinic initiative to deliver bags of fresh fruits and vegetables to uninsured expectant mothers. Since the partnership began, Moms Produce has delivered 1,135 bags of fresh produce to 500 clients. "I am a single mother, and I just spend all day worrying...and now we can have something fresh," said one mother in the program. "This is so important to help us all. But also to help my baby."

**"Our partnership with the FRESHFARM Pop Up Food Hub has increased the amount of fresh food we can provide to families during this time of high food insecurity."**

**— Al Goodman,  
Kid Power**





# FRESHFARM FOODPRINTS

*Food and garden education is for everyone — and is especially critical during the pandemic.*

FoodPrints integrates gardening, cooking, and nutrition education into the curriculum of DC Public Schools through a model of partnerships, standards-based curriculum, cafeteria connections, and food access. Our expert educators teach hands-on lessons that get students excited about growing, preparing, and enjoying fresh, local whole foods — and bring science, math and social studies to life — with the goal of improving health outcomes of children and families.

## Immersive Food Education for At-Risk Students

From June to August 2020, we delivered a successful 7-week summer virtual learning program to 30 students from partner schools in Wards 7 and 8. Kennedy Jones was one of our students; each week she received a bag of produce and supplies delivered to her doorstep. She was so excited to open the bags and see the different kinds of produce. “I would open the door and there would be so much food. I never saw a carrot with its top before... it was just so cool.” Kennedy would then log on each day to a morning meeting and book club, then a garden class twice a week and a cooking class twice a week. She recounted: “We got to draw and express ourselves and see new friends. Our teachers always made sure that we were okay. I was so happy... FoodPrints means everything to me.”



## Deepening Family Engagement with At-Home Learning

Margie Sollee, Lead Educator at Kimball Elementary, expressed her excitement at an unexpected, but extremely positive result of virtual FoodPrints instruction — parent engagement. “One of the best parts of online teaching is our access to parents,” said Ms. Sollee. At Kimball, only a small portion of parents can volunteer for school day FoodPrints classes, so with online instruction, many more families were able to join in for FoodPrints lessons. As Ms. Sollee described, “We had interactions with so many parents...[they] were seeing how much their kids loved FoodPrints and all the things that we were doing.” A Kimball school administrator reported that “everyone is talking about FoodPrints” in his check-in calls with families. Online classes have provided a unique way for FoodPrints educators to bring their lessons into the home and reach family members beyond their students, deepening the impact of programming.



**“Ms. Taylor has kept students and parents engaged with virtual learning. It literally brings me to tears when I see students jumping and cheering when they have successfully prepared a meal. This program means so much to our community.”**

**— Principal LeVar Jenkins,  
Burroughs Elementary**





FRESHFARM is a nonprofit that promotes sustainable agriculture and improves food access and equity in the Mid-Atlantic region. We operate producer-only farmers markets that provide vital economic opportunities to local farmers and food producers, pioneering food distribution programs that increase food access for low-income neighborhoods, and innovative food education that builds healthier communities.



**FRESHFARM**

[www.freshfarm.org](http://www.freshfarm.org)  
[hello@freshfarm.org](mailto:hello@freshfarm.org)  
f 📷 🐦 @freshfarmdc