

NEW ENTRY FOOD HUB

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



The New Entry Food Hub aims to build long term economic self-reliance and food security among farmers in eastern Massachusetts and their communities, and to expand access to healthy and culturally connected foods in under served areas through production of locally grown foods.

FOOD HUB PROGRAM MANAGER'S STATEMENT

Without question, 2020 was a challenging year. The Covid-19 pandemic brought with it dramatically increased food insecurity, challenges to our traditional food distribution systems, staffing shortages, and the necessity for additional safety measures for staff and farmers alike.

The New Entry Food Hub was in a perfect position to react quickly in the face of these pressures to our food systems. We were able to use our role as the connection point between local farms and food access groups to expand distribution of fresh, local produce to food pantries, schools, and senior centers at a time when their resources were stretched thin. We've all seen the photos of long lines of cars waiting for food distribution. Witnessing this unprecedented need first hand was sobering and something that I will not soon forget. At the same time I am inspired by the way that our farmers, partners, donors, and volunteers came together to address this need with generosity and compassion.

This year brought some interesting challenges and benefits to the local food system. While restaurants and some Farmers Markets closed, customers showed an increased interest in local purchasing in the face of grocery supply chain disruptions. Many farmers reported wait lists for their Community Supported Agriculture programs, great success at the Farmers Markets which were operating, and the opportunity to experiment with online direct to consumer sales and home delivery. The New Entry Food Hub also saw this increase in interest towards local purchasing with nearly a 50% increase in CSA membership. We hope this interest will continue with the launch of our new online sales platform in 2021 which was piloted in 2020.

Looking back I again would like to express my deepest gratitude to the tireless volunteers, dedicated staff and farmers, generous donors, and customers without whom we wouldn't have been able to rise to the challenge of 2020. It has been my sincere pleasure to work along side you.

Thank you,

GINGER TURNER

Food Hub Program Manager

The New Entry Food Hub (NEFH) was founded in 2005 as a program of New Entry Sustainable Farming Project. Its function is to provide beginning farmers, prioritizing farmers who are on the New Entry incubator, with market-readiness training and multi-farmer aggregation and distribution services that support beginning farmers in Eastern Massachusetts to access new markets.

The Food Hub was developed to connect beginning farmers who often face barriers to accessing diversified markets (such as limited English skills, limited production capacity, limited access to farmland, and lack of transportation) with local consumers interested in purchasing fresh locally grown fruits and vegetables.

The Food Hub provides market-based technical assistance and training to beginning farmers by offering crop planning, guidance on market opportunities, feedback and training around crop quality, and by teaching best practices for selling produce to other markets. These skills will not only support producers in selling to the Food Hub, but will help them prepare for establishing and maintaining other markets.

FARMER SUPPORT

2020 BY THE NUMBERS

50 HOURS

of individual technical assistance provided to New Entry graduate farmers by New Entry Food Hub staff



Food Hub staff provided more than 50 hours of individual technical assistance to farmers participating in the Food Hub. This included advice and support on crop planning, seed ordering, food safety requirements, marketing, grant and loan applications, COVID-relief programs, and risk management.

We were able to purchase \$132,608.50 in produce from 24 local farms.

24 LOCAL FARMS

Sold produce through New Entry Food Hub

This includes:

- 9 Incubator farmers
- 11 BIPOC farmers
- 20 operate farms >5 acres of land



\$25,654 in purchases were made from 9 of the 11 New Entry Incubator farmers. These are first, second, and third year farmers who are growing on 1/4 - 1/2 acre of land at Moraine Farm in Beverly, MA.

\$73,026 in purchases were made from 9 graduates of the New Entry incubator program who are now farming their own purchased or leased land. All of these farms are operating on less than 5 acres of land and five are operating on 1 acre of land.

\$132,608.50

Total produce purchased by New Entry Food Hub

\$12,000 increase over 2019



\$33,927 in purchases were made to 6 established local farms and orchards. Two of these farms are women owned. These purchases consist of perennial fruit crops and other products not able to be sourced from New Entry graduate farmers.

SENIOR SHARES & FOOD ACCESS DISTRIBUTION

Mission:

To increase access for low-income individuals to affordable, healthy local food options while increasing income earned by small, local farmers through market expansion to low-income communities.

Senior Shares distributed

Billerica Council on Aging- 1,280 bags valued at \$21,440
Arlington Council on Aging- 764 bags valued at \$12,748
Burlington Council on Aging- 800 bags valued at \$13,400
Winchester Housing Authority- 800 bags valued at \$13,400

Possible thanks to generous funding from

 Beth Israel Lahey Health

Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services- 85 bags valued at \$2,125
CHA-PACE - 25 bags valued at \$625
Cambridge Housing Authority- 363 bags valued at \$9,075

Possible thanks to generous funding from

 Somerville Cambridge
Elder Services

Beverly Council on Aging- 300 bags valued at \$4,500

Possible thanks to generous funding from

 MAV Foundation

Springwell Elder Services- 29 bags valued at \$725

 springwell

Food Access Shares distributed

2,000 5-lb bags to Building Audacity's Food Access program

360 5-lb bags to The Food Project

150 5-lb bags to Native Americans Lifeline

More than 500 lbs to local food pantries including Beverly Bootstraps, Open Door Food Pantry, and Haven From Hunger

 NATIVE LIFELINES
Urban Indian Health Services
American

The New Entry Food Hub provided 4,428 individually packed bags of fresh, local produce for distribution to food insecure seniors this summer in partnership with the Councils on Aging in Burlington, Arlington, Billerica, Winchester, and Beverly, Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services, Springwell, and Building Audacity. The program expanded this year to include additional deliveries to Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services, and new partnerships with Beverly Council on Aging, Building Audacity, The Food Project, Urban Farming Institute of Boston, and Native American Lifelines.

All of the produce in these senior shares was sourced from the local farmers who participate in the New Entry Food Hub. We are enormously proud of the success and growth of this program which directly benefits beginning and limited resource small farmers while nourishing our seniors.

In prior years, the Senior Shares were collected Farmers Market style by the seniors. For 2020, bags of produce were assembled at the New Entry Food Hub and delivered to the local partner group. Staff and volunteers then delivered the packed bags to the recipient's homes.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

Mission:

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) connects producers and consumers in a unique, mutually beneficial relationship that supports local communities and the environment.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

New Entry Food Hub runs an aggregated CSA program of fruits and vegetables sourced from small producers to create a diversified weekly produce box. The produce changes weekly and is representative of the New England growing season and our farmers' diverse cultures. Over a 20-week period, members enjoy the opportunity to receive a box of fresh, locally grown produce delivered to a convenient location where they live or work.

- 131 full 20-week Traditional Box shares
- 58 10-week Summer Traditional Box shares
- 35 10-week Fall Traditional Box shares
- 7 SNAP-HIP shares
- 128 customers for the NEW CSA Your Way Program
- 44 Farmers' Choice Winter Holiday Boxes sold
- 25 COVID-Relief and Solidarity Boxes sold
- \$150,000 in CSA revenue

CSA, Your Way



Traditional CSA*



In 2020, New Entry Food Hub launched three new CSA products in response to customer feedback: CSA Your Way, Farmers' Choice Winter Holiday Box, and COVID-Relief and Solidarity Boxes.

CSA Your Way allows a fully customizable experience. Members pre-purchase credits which are added to a Local Food Marketplace account for them. Each week during the 20-week CSA season, CSA Your Way members are able to view real time farmer availability and select exactly which items they would like to receive from the farm of their choice. This option proved to be very popular with almost an equal number of individuals signing up for the CSA Your Way as the full season traditional farm share. This option was also popular with the New Entry incubator farmers who were able to offer smaller quantities of a greater variety of produce for sale through the Food Hub.



COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE



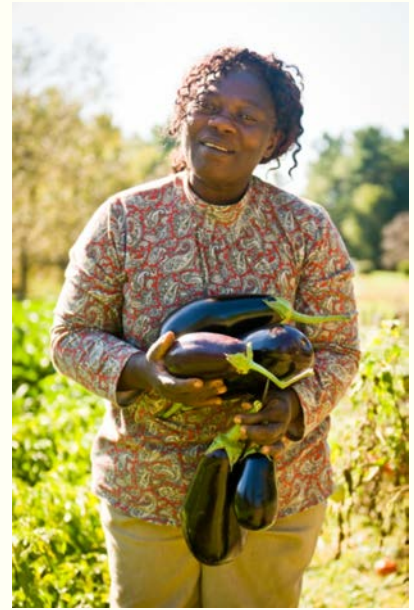
The COVID Relief and Solidarity boxes served our community partner, Building Audacity. Through their guidance and leadership, we were able to assist in their efforts to offer 200 households fresh, local produce. Individuals from all over the country purchased the COVID Relief and Solidarity boxes to help subsidize the cost of produce. We are grateful for the support of our donors and humbled to work in community with Building Audacity.

The Farmers Choice Winter Holiday Boxes were another exciting product that we launched this season. Highlights in the Holiday Box included spice mixes from Curio Spice Co., local cheese from Dancing Goats, and organic popcorn grown on the incubator farm. The profits went directly into supporting the COVID Relief and Solidarity boxes.

Overall CSA Membership more than doubled from 162 members in 2019 to 359 members in 2020. We attribute this dramatic change due to increased interest in local foods as a result of traditional supply chain disruptions and higher member retention due to more member choice.

New Entry Food Hub trialed a small run of value added products for the CSA Your Way program in partnership with Root North Shore, a youth job training program based in Salem, MA. We produced tomato sauce, pesto, hot sauce, and trialed various pickled vegetables. Looking towards 2021, we plan to expand this partnership and develop more value-added products for distribution in the CSA program and Food Access shares.

New Entry also received a 3-year USDA Local Food Promotion Program grant to expand our value-added production through shelf-stable and frozen produce so that we can purchase surplus seasonal produce, store it, and then distribute locally grown products for an additional 10 weeks over the winter months to seniors and CSA customers.



USDA FARM-TO-FAMILIES FOOD BOX PROGRAM



Mission:

To increase access for low-income individuals to affordable, healthy local food options.



This year, we had several new initiatives that expanded our reach to provide fresh and local food throughout the community.

We were thrilled to partner with Boston Area Gleaners for the USDA Farm-to-Families Food Box program! Through this program, we packed and delivered 10,019 individual family mixed produce boxes over 24 weeks, totaling over 300,000 lbs of produce. These boxes were distributed to Salem Public Schools, Beverly Bootstraps, Haven from Hunger, Open Door Food Pantry, and the Lynn YMCA.



FARM-TO-SCHOOL

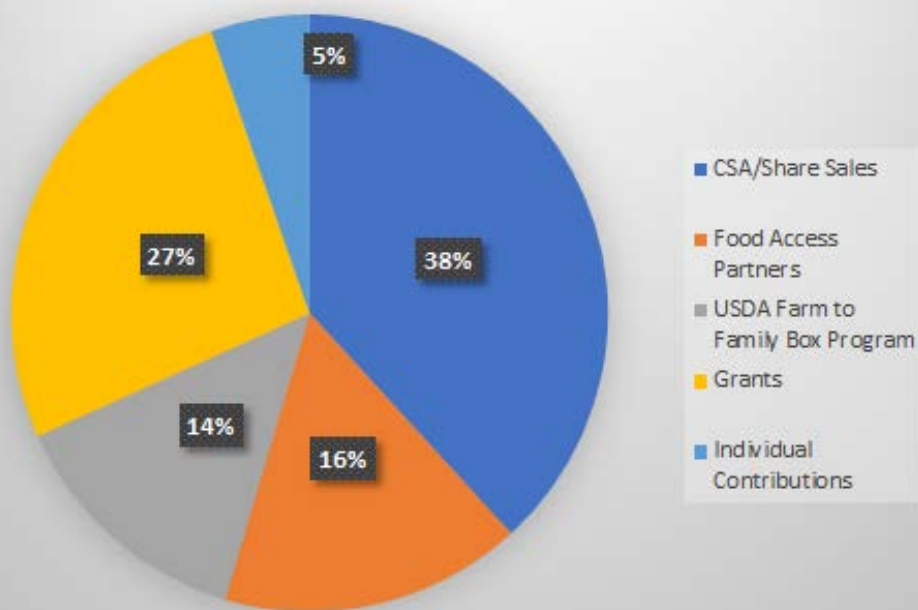
New Entry also launched new Farm-to-School partnerships with Salem Public Schools and Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical High School to improve local procurement and build farm connections in K-12 schools. We aim to get students out on the farms in 2021 to see where and how the food in their cafeterias is grown.



NEW ENTRY FOOD HUB FINANCIALS

Food Hub 2020 Revenue Breakdown

Total: \$467,004

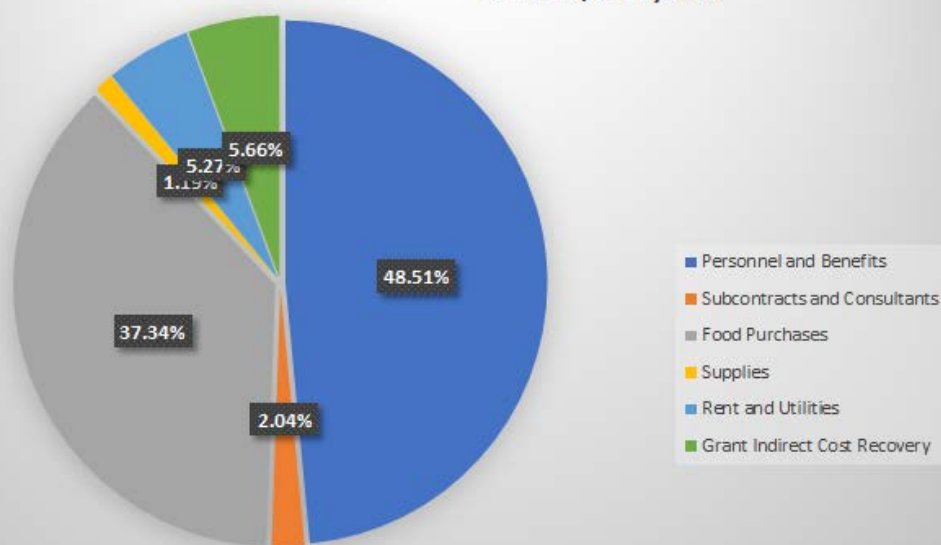


P&L Note:

The USDA Farm to Family box program in addition to the unprecedented interest in local purchasing led to a record year for the New Entry Food Hub. The added revenue this year will be put back into infrastructure improvements, replenishment of the gift account funds taken out in earlier seasons to cover operating losses, and will allow us to bring non-grant funded seasonal staff back to work earlier in 2021.

Food Hub 2020 Expenses Breakdown

Total: \$348,777



A YEAR OF GRATITUDE

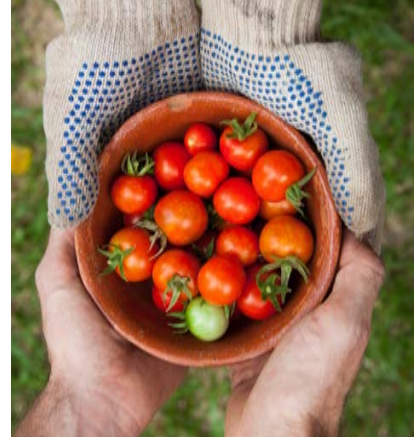
MANY THANKS TO:

- MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for \$163,000 Food Security Infrastructure Grant for a new cooler, van and box truck.
- USDA Local Food Promotion Program for a 3-year, \$500,000 Promotion Program grant to pilot value added products and extend food distribution to seniors for 10 weeks.
- Lahey Hospital / Beth Israel for your continued partnership in support of low-income seniors and local farmers.
- The MAV Foundation for supporting a new food access partnership.
- The Gaulin Family Foundation and a generous anonymous donor which enabled us to nimbly support more new food access partnerships and additional deliveries during COVID.
- All of our supporters, for exceeding our \$5,000 goal at our first-ever Crowdfunding Campaign to support COVID-relief, raising \$6,508.

The Food Hub team would like to extend our deepest and most heartfelt "Thank you" to the 40+ volunteers who generously braved the pandemic and donated more than 1,000 hours of their time to ensure that the New Entry Food Hub was able to feed so many families this year. We could not have made the impact that we did without your tireless help and support. We packed so many boxes and bags, broke down and reloaded hundreds of pallets of food, and helped thousands of people eat well.

Thank you!

Thank
you



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021 AND BEYOND

We have so much to be grateful for, and many new initiatives and mission-focused partnerships to nurture as we look forward to 2021:

- We are setting up time to engage in future strategic business planning for the next 3+ years - including process, budget, and evaluation metrics.
- We are developing additional faculty research collaborations, student engagement and course development with Tufts to integrate New Entry and Tufts' academic programs.
- With a new partnership with Root, a youth culinary training program in Salem, MA dedicated to preparing value-added products with New Entry grown produce, we look forward to collaborating on Roots' senior meals program this Winter.
- New Entry continues to center racial equity and make steps toward becoming an anti-racist/multi-cultural institution.
- We intend to expand our farm-to-school collaborations and partnerships to other schools and institutions.
- By developing a business model to serve the need AND financial support of new/beginning farmers with crop purchases, we are able to support local food security and farm economic viability.
- There are plans for a series of educational programs to support farmers to better connect with technology, and hope to partner with tech companies for on-site experimentation and research initiatives.

To support our work, we appreciate your time, talents, and treasure.

Connect with us [to volunteer](#) at New Entry and the Food Hub, or please consider making a contribution to our food access work. [Donate here](#).

Thank you for supporting local farmers, food access, and healthy, fresh local food for all!

