



2014 World PEAS Food Hub Annual Report



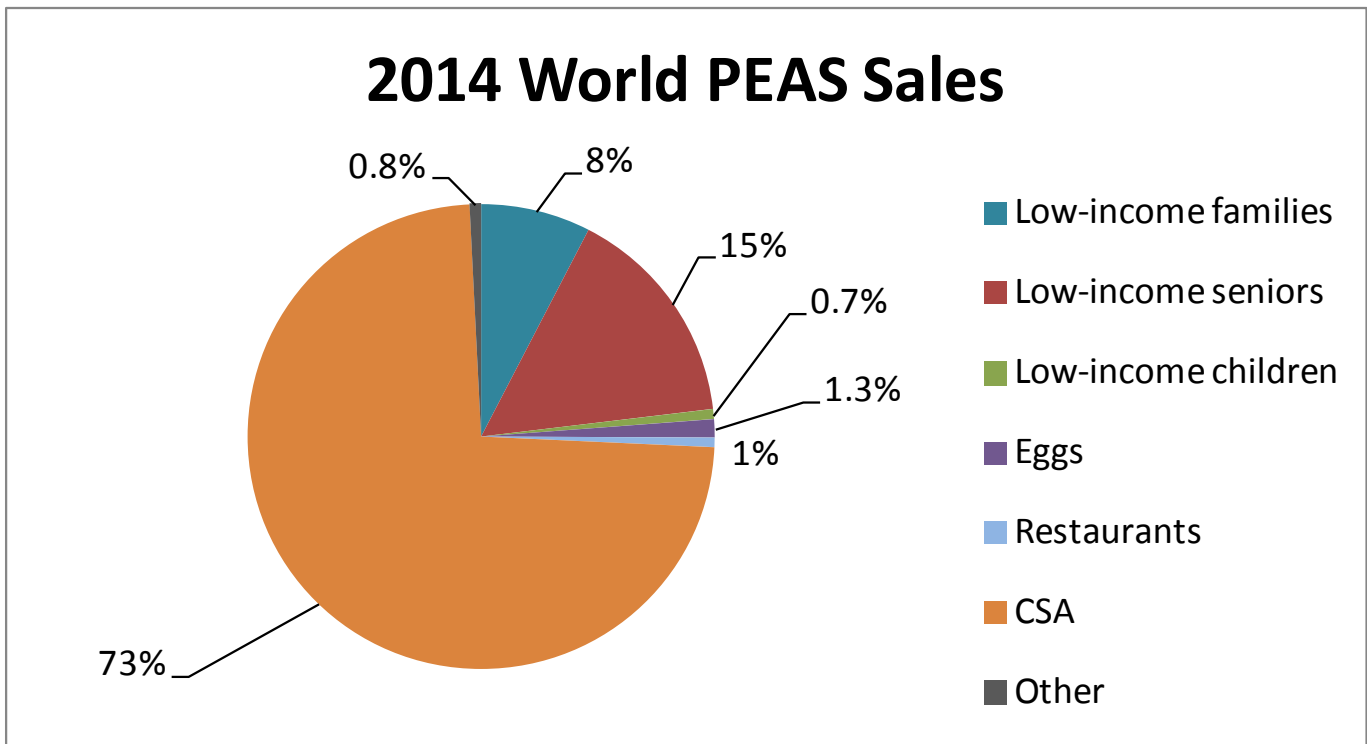
World PEAS is a program of the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project
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Overview

World PEAS Food Hub, established in 2005, serves as a flexible, living wage market for limited-resource and beginning farmers who have graduated from the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project's Farm Business Planning Course. Since many farmers in our program face several barriers to accessing high value, direct to consumer markets (limited English language skills, limited production capability, lack of time/transportation, etc.), World PEAS aggregates produce from over 30 farmers every year, establishing crop production schedules in the winter and offering guaranteed marketing outlets through our CSA and sales to institutions, non-profits, and other outlets.

The 2014 season marks unprecedented sales through low-income food access markets, due to a concerted effort by World PEAS staff to address ongoing food justice issues in our region. Significant wintertime efforts to cultivate new community partnerships increased sales to food access customers by approximately 224% between 2013-2014, while CSA sales remained nominally the same. While the increasingly competitive market among CSA programs left CSA sales figures flat, increased sales through food access outlets in 2014 provided new ways for limited-resource farmers to link to limited-resource eaters. Despite increased sales, the World PEAS Food Hub again ran a deficit in 2014, due in part to a rent increase for our warehouse space, increased costs for vehicle maintenance/repair of our two refrigerated box trucks, and increased travel expenses to new distribution sites. The 2014 deficit was offset through grants received to support our low-income food access work. Between 2013 and 2014, we dropped 5 distribution sites but added 12 new with a total of 36 drop-off sites. World PEAS now delivers as far north as Haverhill and Peabody and as far as south as Jamaica Plain.

The various market areas that World PEAS Food Hub distributes to are shown on the graph below. In 2014, our Community Supported Agriculture program constituted about 73% of total sales. Sales to low-income families at our SNAP CSA locations and to our Bridgewell community partner accounted for 8% of total sales. Sales to low-income seniors, including sales to Lahey clinics in Burlington and Peabody, Elder Services of Merrimack Valley, Kit Clark Senior Services, Somerville/Cambridge Elders, and Springwell Senior group, accounted for 15% of total sales. Egg sales and sales



to low-income children, restaurants, and “Other” constituted 1% in sales respectively. Revenues from our 2014 “Coffee Share” pilot were negligible. Overall, the World PEAS Food Hub grossed \$327,550 in revenue, a 27% increase in revenues from 2013. \$79,388, or 25%, of total revenues were sold through low-income markets. Farmer income from World PEAS activities totaled \$218,388, with \$157,322, or 72%, going directly to World PEAS beginning, immigrant and refugee farmers. Established local farms producing fruit, sweet corn, and other large-acreage crops not grown by program farmers earned the remaining 28% of farmer income.

Given the Food Hub’s significant growth between 2013 and 2014, World PEAS will emphasize stabilizing sales and streamlining operations in 2015 to ensure sustainable and responsible growth moving forward. The World PEAS Food Hub successfully diversified markets in 2014, serving new restaurant and food access customers while operating our CSA program. Looking ahead, special attention is needed to balance the varying needs of our diverse sales outlets, with an emphasis on providing high quality produce and tailored, customer-specific communications to build a positive track record in new market outlets

Farmer Earnings

The 2014 season represented yet another landmark year for farmer earnings through the World PEAS Food Hub, with 26 New Entry program farmers earning 72% of total World PEAS farmer income. New Entry program farmers sold a total of \$157,322 worth of produce to the World PEAS Food Hub, a 25% increase from 2013 sales levels. This jump is in part a result of the 27% increase in total Food Hub revenues from 2013 to 2014. 11 independent farms, filling gaps in World PEAS farmers’ production generally at wholesale prices, earned a combined income of \$61,066.

Individual World PEAS farmers also experienced increased sales, with average earnings for our program farmers at \$6,050 in 2014. This represents an increase of 39% since 2013. Some farmers experienced increased sales to the Food Hub by bidding for and growing higher value items like baby salad greens, heirloom tomatoes and sweet potatoes in bulk. Others successfully marketed surplus harvests to World PEAS, sometimes exceeding their initial crop bids by thousands of dollars.

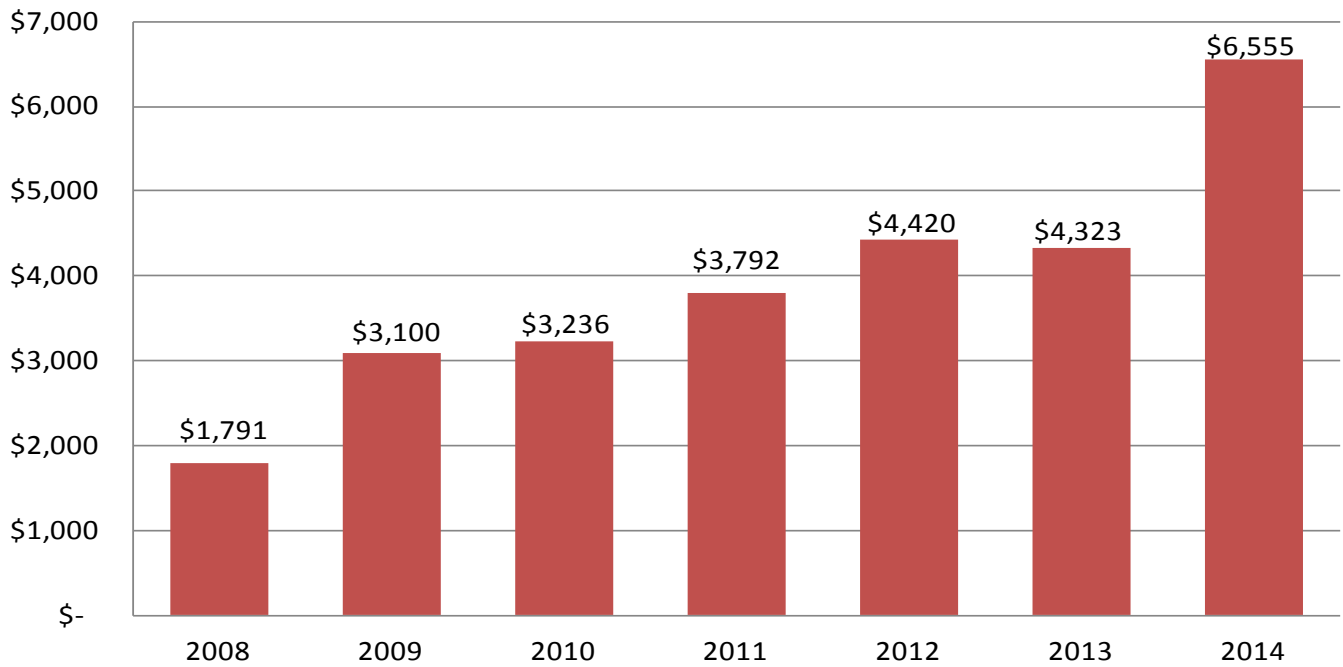


While the earnings through World PEAS are insufficient to constitute a farmer’s only source

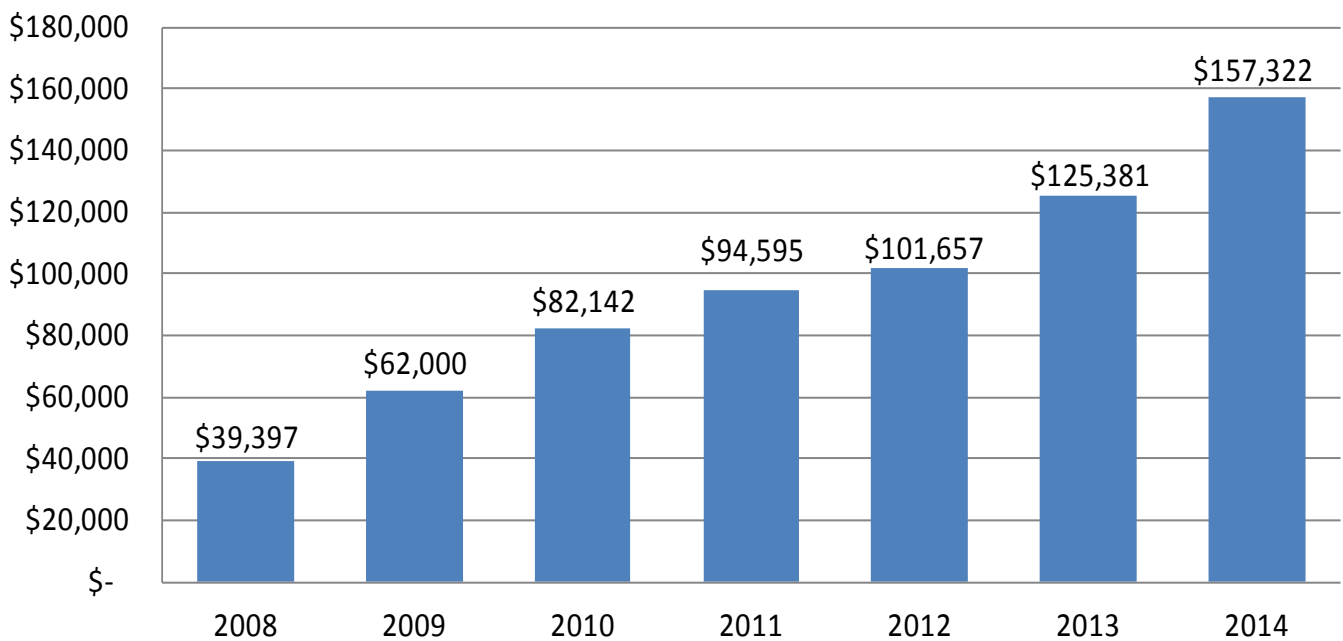


of income, for many of the World PEAS farmers, they are an essential component of household earnings. The majority of World PEAS farmers are among the 80% of American farmers who have an off-farm job. Cumulative earnings by farmers over the course of several years, shown on the graph below, are significant. It is important to note that this income does not reflect the monetary value or health benefits of produce to be consumed by the farmers and their families, nor the potential benefit gained when the produce can be used to barter for other goods or services.

Average Food Hub Sales by World PEAS Farmers



Combined World PEAS Farmer Income



Low-income Food Access Initiatives

Many low-income residents in the areas served by World PEAS are food insecure, meaning that they lack consistent access to food due to a lack of resources (money, geography, etc). Food insecure households are challenged to access affordable, locally-grown fresh fruits and vegetables that are a necessary component of a healthy diet. Beginning in 2008, World PEAS established a low-income food justice program to ensure equitable access to fresh fruits and vegetables through its “Share-a-Share” (SAS) Program. SAS has grown to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to over 2,000 individuals in Middlesex County and communities around the Boston area. The goals of the SAS program are to address the following needs: (i) lack of access by low-income individuals to affordable, healthy local food options, and (ii) the need for low-income farmers to earn income through expanded markets in these low-income communities.



As part of the World PEAS SAS program, World PEAS farmers, and staff partnered with several community partners to provide a total of \$79,388 of locally-grown produce to low-income individuals, children and seniors. In 2014, the World PEAS Food Hub was recognized as a Local Champion by Lowell General Hospital for its accomplishments in providing access to fresh, healthy, locally-produced food for low income individuals in Lowell.

In 2014, the World PEAS Food Hub expanded our low-income food access programs by 224%. This increase is in large part due to a new partnership with Lahey Hospital & Medical Center (LC). LC and World PEAS partnered to provide \$36,250 of senior-specific produce for a farmer’s market distribution at their Burlington and Peabody MA locations, offering fresh, healthy vegetables to approximately 710 seniors free of charge. A similar partnership was also established with Elder Services of Merrimack Valley, distributing \$5,010 of World PEAS produce to 40 participating seniors free of charge.



World PEAS continues to work with three other senior agencies (Kit Clark Senior Services, Dorchester, MA; Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services; and Springwell, Waltham, MA) to provide low-income seniors with fresh fruits and vegetables. World PEAS delivered 285 vegetable and fruit shares valued at \$25 to low-income, homebound seniors. These shares, in addition to \$2,000 of bulk produce orders for Kit Clark’s institutional kitchen, represent \$10,168 in sales for World PEAS farmers. Senior shares are funded through the USDA’s Senior Farmer’s Market Nutrition Programs (SFMNP), a program that provides low-income seniors with coupons that can be exchanged for eligible, locally-produced foods.

In 2014, we also continued to offer our SNAP CSA share at three new sites, including the Lowell Community Health Center, the Medford Housing Authority’s Center, and the East Boston YMCA. Our SNAP CSA initiative makes subsidized CSA shares of fruits and vegetables available to low-income families, including those

who qualify for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). For 16 weeks of the growing season, we distributed an average of 25 shares at our SNAP CSA locations for the subsidized price of \$10 (the actual value of the small CSA share is approximately \$25). Customers paid with cash or SNAP/EBT benefits. World PEAS subsidized \$3,970 of the \$12,850 total cost with funds from our Share-A-Share program. We plan to increase the number of SNAP CSA shares sold at the LCHC and Medford distribution sites in 2015, supporting increased outreach efforts by our community partner's staff at these locations. Given low sales in 2014, we will discontinue the program at the East Boston YMCA location.



World PEAS established a partnership in 2012 with Bridgewell, a highly respected, nonprofit human services organization providing direct support to individuals living with disabilities, homelessness, and other life challenges. Their Pathfinder drop-in center in Lowell offers a safe place for homeless individuals to have a hot meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner), take a shower, wash laundry, and take refuge from the streets. The center supports on average 30 to 40 individuals per day and serves over 36,000 meals annually. World PEAS delivered the equivalent of 21 small shares weekly to Bridgewell's Pathfinder shelter, as well as \$2,000 worth of fresh fruits over 18 weeks during the 2014 growing season. Compared to the 12 shares delivered in 2013, the

volume of Pathfinder deliveries increased significantly and in certain circumstances, outstripped the kitchen staff's capacity to process and use all the delivered produce. In 2015, we plan to purchase the same value of produce for Pathfinder (\$12,000), but will develop a crop schedule in collaboration with Pathfinder administrators and kitchen staff. The crop schedule will respect the capacity of Pathfinder's kitchen infrastructure (storage space, refrigeration) and labor power to store, process, and effectively incorporate World PEAS produce into Pathfinder meals.



World PEAS established a partnership in 2010 with Community Teamwork's Child and Family Services Program (CFS). World PEAS and CFS partnered to provide World PEAS produce to CFS clients in their school-age and daycare feeding programs. In 2014, World PEAS and the CFS Food Services manager worked collaboratively to incorporate fresh produce like summer squash, tomatoes, and fruit into daily nutritional meals for 270-300 low-income CFS school age and day care youth. World PEAS sold \$2,325 worth of produce to CFS in 2014.

Another partner in our food access initiatives is the Lowell Women, Infant, and Children's (WIC) agency, which World PEAS has partnered with since 2010. WIC provides federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age

five who are at nutritional risk. World PEAS donated 114 small shares and 9 large shares from CSA customers who were unable to collect their shares. This amounted to \$2,913 worth of produce donated on behalf of our shareholders to clients receiving WIC services.

In response to our increasing food access sales, World PEAS will need to develop higher quality educational materials and communications for our food access work. After receiving the CSA newsletter with their produce orders, many of our food access partners would prefer information tailored to the new customer demographics. World PEAS staff and interns will be working this winter to develop senior-specific newsletter content including crop information, nutrition and farmer profiles that cater to the interests of senior demographics. Proven by our existing CSA newsletter practices, high quality communications is critical to retaining our newfound partners and adding value to their customer experience. As we diversify markets, special attention should be given to the additional staff time and expertise needed to successfully negotiate sales relationships with non-CSA markets.

In all, the “Share-a-Share” program allows World PEAS to serve a larger, more diverse group of eaters. Generous donations from many of our shareholders and other community members show their commitment to food justice and increased access to healthy foods in all communities. World PEAS is committed to finding creative strategies that pay fair prices to our farmers for their produce while providing affordable food for limited resource individuals. We rely on the generous support of our shareholders and other generous donors to New Entry to help us serve our farmers, and to make the produce accessible to all consumers, regardless of socioeconomic status.

Community Supported Agriculture

Given the long history of operations, and the fact that the CSA program provides the most support for our farmers in terms of crop planning, the World PEAS CSA still constitutes the largest market for the Food Hub—approximately 73% of total sales. The regular CSA season ran for 20 weeks from June to October, with our Fall Share program running for 8 weeks through September and October. In all, we sold 50 Large Shares, 346 Small Shares and 52 Fall shares in 2014 at 27 different locations in the greater Boston and Lowell areas.

All shares included a blend of local fruit and vegetables each week, as well as herbs offered every couple of weeks during the season. This season, 78% of shareholders indicated in the year end survey that they received produce of good or excellent quality, and 78% of shareholders indicated that the share size they purchased suited their household’s needs in terms of quantity. This is slightly lower than in previous years, with feedback from both World PEAS staff and shareholders indicating a need for consistently higher quality produce from World PEAS farmers with particular attention to harvest readiness, post-harvest handling, washing/packing/cooling, and grading. New Entry has applied for grant funds to develop a Crop Quality and Food Safety farmer training curriculum which will help train New Entry farmers when selecting and packing produce for World PEAS orders.



Further, comments from the year end survey described this year's shares as smaller than other CSAs, and smaller in comparison to past years with World PEAS. This feedback in part may be a reaction to lighter shares [especially fruit] early in the season due to a colder spring. We plan



to include more specialty items and/or fruit, pending availability, to ensure high-value shares next spring when harvests are lower than expected. The new Coordinator also experienced difficulty sourcing substitutions from established farms when World PEAS farmers had short harvests, leaving some shares smaller than expected. We plan to establish more consistent purchasing relationships with established farms to fill gaps and provide for expanding markets.

Many shareholders also indicate that World PEAS is comparatively expensive to other CSAs, and does not provide enough vegetables in lieu of the higher price. 26.5% of shareholders not returning next year cited cost as a motivating factor in our year end survey. We are conducting a crop pricing research project to determine if World PEAS retail prices are fair and competitive for crops sold to the CSA. We also plan to develop transparent marketing materials and infographics to illustrate where shareholder dollars are spent, and how World PEAS is distinct from other CSA models. Given our mission to provide a living wage market to our farmers, these materials will clearly communicate the price difference between World PEAS and other standard CSA models by connecting the additional cost to economic justice for limited-resource farmers.

This year, the CSA featured over 75 different crops, including Asian and African crops such as sweet potato greens, amaranth, lemongrass, and long beans. These crops showcase the diversity of farmers serving the Food Hub and differentiate our brand from other CSAs. In our year end survey, 41% of shareholders not returning next year cited unfamiliar produce as a motivating factor despite efforts to provide crop information and recipes for ethnic crops in our newsletter, website and social media platforms. It is likely that more ethnic crops were included in this year's shares, as the new coordinator relied heavily on more experienced immigrant farmers when other items were unavailable. In 2015, the coordinator will be better prepared to fill gaps with produce from established farms while distributing more balanced volumes of ethnic/unfamiliar produce to shareholders. We will also include more visuals for all unfamiliar or ethnic vegetable varieties distributed, and provide additional links to informational pages on our website to help shareholders better identify crops included in their shares.



Shareholder feedback also indicates a desire for more fruit and specialty items across the board, with less interest in receiving as many cooking greens both foreign and familiar. We plan to source more specialty items [honey, jam, mushrooms] in early summer to avoid overwhelming shareholders with greens. We will market these changes with the hopes of retaining old shareholders and attracting new in 2015, emphasizing that fruit and specialty items set World PEAS apart from



other conventional CSA models. Given our expansion through food access sales, we do not expect these changes to negatively impact farmer income.

World PEAS also offered coffee and egg shares to diversify our share offerings. We sold approximately 45 half dozen eggs each week to World PEAS shareholders with consistently enthusiastic and positive feedback. Through a partnership with Singing Rooster Coffee Roasters, World PEAS also gave our shareholders the opportunity to purchase fair trade coffee that supports limited-resource coffee farmers in Haiti. Unfortunately, coffee sales were lower than expected and did not cover a fraction of the costs for coffee samples included in shares at the beginning of the season. As such, we do not plan to continue offering coffee shares next season.

Building on outreach efforts prior to 2013, World PEAS increased CSA registration by partnering with workplaces to offer a unique service and wellness benefit to staff, while increasing the convenience factor in CSA participation [as staff can collect their shares in their office building]. In 2014, World PEAS added CSA delivery to MITRE in Bedford, American Science & Engineering in Billerica, Fenway Health in Boston, and Brighton Landing in Brighton. 47.9% of survey respondents indicated that they learned about World PEAS through their workplace, suggesting that workplaces continue to be a significant access point for increasing CSA membership. World PEAS also established a new distribution point at Harvard Kennedy School in Cambridge, with hopes to build a strong shareholder base among Harvard students and staff who value our program's mission and fall share option.

Farm to Institution

In addition to the market outlets mentioned above, World PEAS also sold \$4,712 in total institutional sales. This number reflects sales to Tufts Dining and the successful addition of a new restaurant account. World PEAS sold \$2,589 of produce to Tufts Dining for the Tufts Farmer's Market. World PEAS also sold \$2,123 of restaurant quality produce to Artistry on the Green, a Lexington restaurant located along the World PEAS delivery route. Although the coordinator experienced difficulty with coordinating restaurant orders and the associated responsibilities [compiling an availability list, restaurant communications, organizing farmer orders and deliveries, and controlling for crop quality], we hope to maintain this account next year with hopes to secure an additional restaurant account for 2015.



Staff, Intern, and Volunteer Experience

In 2014, World PEAS staff experienced significant turnover. The previous coordinator returned to graduate school and a new Food Hub & Food Access Coordinator was hired in June. The Food Hub & Food Access Coordinator is a year-round, full time position and is responsible for managing



day to day operations for farmers, volunteers, CSA shareholders, and other sales accounts. Our previous Assistant CSA Coordinator also left World PEAS, and a seasonal, full-time Produce Delivery Driver was hired in his place. The Produce Delivery Driver helped supervise volunteers and address infrastructural needs, and was responsible for pick-ups and deliveries. World PEAS temporarily hired a second driver during the height of the season in August and September. A previously skilled volunteer, the second driver provided critical

support in meeting the demands of new orders and delivery sites added mid-season. Strategic planning, accounts receivable, farmer payments, and management of the pilot SNAP CSA are coordinated by the Food Hub manager.

World PEAS was fortunate to host a high school intern through the Career Center of Lowell. The high school intern worked part-time at World PEAS for 8 weeks over the summer and was paid hourly by the Career Center. The intern helped with produce packing and deliveries, and played a critical role in providing additional support to the World PEAS staff team. We look forward to recruiting another high school intern from the Career Center next year, with the aim to provide meaningful youth development and summer employment opportunities to local youth.

We also plan to recruit an intern from UMass Lowell's Co-op Scholar program, as in previous years, who will focus on our food access



programming with a particular focus on our Lowell SNAP CSA distribution site. We expect the intern will increase our staffing capacity as the food hub expands, and we value the opportunity to provide professional development outlets for local UML students

Most importantly, the World PEAS Food Hub could not operate without the dedication and energy from our team of volunteer share packers. Fifteen individuals contributed to our weekly packing operations, contributing a total of 1,320 hours of service. Using the Independent Sector's value of volunteer service, estimated at \$22.14 per hour, our share packers contributed \$23,824 of in-kind service to World PEAS [the total value of their volunteer hours less the value of their complimentary CSA shares]. World PEAS farmers also contributed volunteer time to the management of a greenhouse for seedling propagation, and the coordination of a bulk order of supplies, compost, etc. through NOFA. World PEAS Food Hub also hosted volunteers from the Boston University First Year Student Student Outreach Project, who helped organize the pack site and assisted farmers at the Dracut incubator site with field tasks.

World PEAS Income Statement

Despite increased revenues, the World PEAS Food Hub experienced a deficit again in 2014. Expenses increased primarily due to a rent increase for our warehouse space, costs for vehicle maintenance/repair of two vehicles, and increased travel expenses to 36 total distribution sites.



Compared to 2013, our deficit decreased from -\$27,449 to -\$18,380. The significant difference is a result of increased earnings from our blended commission on total sales. The CSA membership fee from 396 full season shares increased only slightly since 2013. The Food Hub deficit is covered through food access grants that help pay for staff time and travel expenses associated with serving our food access partners.

In 2015, we aim to maintain current CSA sales while increasing food access sales through our SNAP CSA program and food access partnerships. Given the highly competitive and oversaturated CSA market, we see greater potential in low income sales for increasing total Food Hub revenues. Total expenses in 2015 are expected to increase, primarily due to higher personnel costs associated with our growing program. We plan to hire a skilled, full-time Assistant Food Hub Coordinator and a part-time Produce Delivery Driver to increase our capacity in serving our current markets. This additional staff is also essential to meeting the demands of a growing delivery schedule. We expect more personnel will improve operational efficiency in the warehouse, ensure on-time deliveries through the use of both trucks, and re-distribute the Coordinator's responsibilities during share packing and deliveries to improve customer and farmer communications. Efforts to stabilize and streamline our operations are critical to responsibly managing the Food Hub's significant growth, while retaining current customers and improving the quality of their experiences.

In regards to long term planning, the Food Hub will need to continue balancing the mission of our program with the financial realities of sourcing produce from our program farmers. World PEAS farmers receive 79% of the retail price of each crop sold, versus the prices paid to wholesale farmers, which are generally closer to 60-70% of the retail price. Comparatively lower prices paid to wholesale farmers help increase World PEAS retained earnings. In 2014, our program farmers experienced higher sales than ever before, with 72% of World PEAS produce purchased from our cohort of beginning, immigrant and refugee farmers. The increased percent of product sold on behalf of program farmers is an achievement for the mission of the Food Hub, but does have serious financial consequences for the overall retained earnings for the operation. In 2015, we aim to source only 70% from program farmers to minimize our deficit. This number may need to continue dropping over time if the Food Hub aims to decrease dependency on outside grants to cover the deficit.



Annual & Projected Profit & Loss

No. of Reg. Season Shares	304	426	412	411	396	400	405
						Projections	
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
	108 Sm. Shares, 196 Lg Shares, 132 Ext. Shares	302 Sm. Shares, 124 Lg. Shares, 137 Ext.	332 Small Shares, 80 LG. Shares, 94 Ext.	335 Sm. Shares, 76 Lg Shares, 56 Fall	346 Sm. Shares, 50 Lg Shares, 52 Fall	350 Sm. Shares, 50 Lg Shares, 65 Fall, 8 FAIR Share	355 Sm. Shares, 50 Lg Shares, 80 Fall, 9 FAIR Share
Weeks in regular season	18	18	18	20	20	20	20
Price Per Share	Lg = \$695, Sm = \$450, Ext. = \$120	Lg=\$705 Sm=\$465 Ext. =\$125	Lg= \$710 Sm=\$470 Ext. =\$130	Lg= \$795 Sm=\$525 Fall =\$225	Lg= \$805 Sm=\$540 Fall =\$235	Lg= \$815 Sm=\$545 Fall =\$240 FAIR =\$675	Lg= \$825 Sm=\$550 Fall =\$245 FAIR= \$685
Total Food Hub Earnings (commission & membership earnings)	75,257	91,615	71,019	75,000	102,869	\$109,028	\$113,240
Total Food Hub Personnel	53,256	59,591	70,491	66,942	70,285	77,035	78,961
Total Other*	9,261	17,350	19,724	22,290	25,039	25,665	26,307
Indirect Expense	5,977	7,416	8,152	8,446	11,671	12,074	12,375
Total Expenses	72,859	90,460	100,972	102,449	121,249	125,353	128,487
Retained Earnings	2,398	1,155	-29,953	-27,449	-18,380	-16,324	-15,247
Funding from Grants covering Marketing and Low-Income Initiatives	0	0	30,000	28,000	19,000	17,000	n/a
Net Gain/Loss	2,398	1,155	47	551	620	676	n/a
* Other includes vehicles, travel expenses, warehouse space, packing supplies, etc...							

Plans for 2015

In 2015, World PEAS Food Hub is looking to stabilize sales and streamline operations to ensure sustainable growth in future years. After significant expansion between 2013 and 2014, it is important for World PEAS to determine best operational practices and staffing structures to meet the needs of our expanded and more diverse customer base.

World PEAS will continue promoting its CSA program with a target goal of 400 shareholders in 2015. Given staff and shareholder concerns with inconsistent crop quality, we plan to provide significant training and technical assistance to our program farmers on crop quality improvements. Winter and summer workshops will be offered in 2015, providing farmers the hands-on assistance, education and training necessary to address these concerns. We also expect these trainings will prepare beginning farmers to sell their produce in other markets, giving them the tools to manage more successful farm enterprises.

World PEAS will also offer a new FAIR share option, giving shareholders the opportunity to donate extra funds each week to support our food access efforts. The FAIR share idea was introduced in a Strategic Planning Report prepared by graduate students at the Brandeis Heller School, and is substantiated by mid-season survey results where 49.1% respondents indicated an interest in paying \$3-\$5 more per week to subsidize healthy foods for low-income families. The FAIR share will build upon previous “Share-a-Share” initiatives, and will hopefully streamline the registration-donation process for shareholders, in order to increase food access subsidies in 2015.

The World PEAS Food Hub looks forward to addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with our recent expansion in 2014. We thank all of our CSA shareholders, community partners, institutional customers, share packers and farmers for a wonderful 2014 season. With your help and generosity, we look forward to a fun, engaging, and bountiful season in 2015. If you would like to make a tax-deductible, charitable contribution to New Entry for our World PEAS food justice/low-income food access work, please visit our webpage: <http://nesfp.nutrition.tufts.edu/about/support>

Thank you!

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