



GROW IT GREEN MORRISTOWN

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



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Grow It Green Morristown, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE & EDUCATION

As 2025 comes to a close, we thank our community for their continued support. This report contains valuable information and data that will inform your understanding of the extent of Grow it Green's work, but the depth of our organization's impact on our community cannot be captured in numbers alone.

Since starting the Early St Community Garden in 2009, our community has grown to include the Urban Farm, in-school education programming, and the Winter Market. We feel this community as we hear of students tasting fresh-picked asparagus for the first time and talk about it for years to come. We experience this community as we get to know the team of staff, interns and volunteers that help grow and support your CSA share. When we bundle up to brave the cold on Sunday mornings to visit the vendors at the Winter Market, we feel this community even when we can't feel our toes.

This is what it's all about. I encourage you to read this report with this feeling of community in mind, and I look forward to connecting with you at the farm in the years to come. Thank you for being here and showing up; we will continue to be here for you, too.

SHAUN ANANKO

Director of Agriculture & Education

OUR MISSION

TO BUILD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE BY COMBINING FOUNDATIONAL ECO-FRIENDLY FARMING PRACTICES WITH INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS THAT EMPOWER EVERYONE IN OUR COMMUNITY TO LEARN AND GROW TOGETHER



2025 IMPACT

- **6,000 STUDENT EXPERIENCES**
- **300 VOLUNTEERS PROVIDED OVER 1,200 HOURS OF WORK**
- **12 PAID HIGH SCHOOL INTERNS (SUMMER/FALL), 3 SEASONAL FARM EMPLOYEES**
- **31,000 LBS OF PRODUCE GROWN, WITH 7,500 LBS DONATED TO LOCAL PARTNERS HELPING THOSE IN NEED**
- **INNOVATION TO INCREASE SUSTAINABILITY, RESILIENCY & EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES**
- **PARTNERED WITH MORRISTOWN HIGH SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE STUDENTS (INCLUDING ALL ESL STUDENTS) AT THE COMMUNITY GARDEN TO ENHANCE THE PLANT BIOLOGY UNIT**
- **FARMRX PROGRAM, PARTNERED WITH ATLANTIC HEALTH, TO BENEFIT 18 FAMILIES WITH NUTRITIONAL NEEDS**



INCREASING FRESH FOOD ACCESS

LOCALLY-GROWN, NUTRIENT-DENSE PRODUCE



- GREW 31,000 LBS OF FRESH PRODUCE AND DONATED 7,500 LBS TO THOSE IN NEED
- FREE CSA MEMBERSHIPS FOR 18 FAMILIES THROUGH FARMRX, A "FOOD-AS-MEDICINE" PROGRAM WITH ATLANTIC HEALTH
- SUPPLIED 30 FAMILIES WITH FRESH VEGGIES WITH OUR PARTNERSHIP AT NEWARK SCIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY

We are advancing community health through sustainable agriculture and localized solutions for a more equitable food system. Our FarmRx program leads this effort by providing fresh, seasonal produce and on-farm experiences to families with nutrition-related health conditions. By expanding food access, we are directly addressing the systemic inequities that drive childhood health disparities.

"Excellent service and great fresh products. It helps my family bring home healthy food at a time when things are very expensive." - *FarmRx participant*

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

FRESH FOOD PROGRAMS



NEWARK
SCIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY INC.
Creating Self-Sustaining Communities



nourish.NJ
feed lives . fuel futures

Table of HOPE

ZUFALL
HEALTH



Atlantic Health System

- 7,500 LBS. OF PRODUCE DONATED
- SNAP DOUBLE FOOD BUCKS
- SNAP-PURCHASED CSA
- LOW-COST PRODUCE PROGRAMS TO NEWARK SAS FARM-TO-TABLE SHARES



PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS

STUDENTS OF ALL AGES



- **WE CONNECTED WITH OVER 4,000 STUDENTS PRE-K TO COLLEGE - IN THE CLASSROOM, AT THE URBAN FARM, AND AT THE EARLY STREET COMMUNITY GARDEN (ESCG)**
- **VISITS FROM 20 SCHOOLS FROM MORRIS, UNION AND HUDSON COUNTIES**
- **FULL-TIME EDUCATION & MARDEN MANAGER, KIM HAUPT, PLANNED AND DELIVERED LESSONS WITH ~500 STUDENTS PER MONTH**
- **180+ MORRISTOWN HIGH SCHOOL STEM STUDENTS GREW, HARVESTED AND REPORTED ON FOOD GROWTH AT ESCG**
- **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS ENGAGED AT ESCG, PROVIDING NEW EXPERIENCES TO PRACTICE LANGUAGE SKILLS**

"I liked eating all of those delicious and fresh vegetables, learning about how different vegetables are good for you."

- MSD 2nd grader

PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS

CSA MEMBERS - COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE



- **OUR URBAN FARM THRIVED, WITH A GREAT, DEDICATED GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF GROWING FRESH LOCAL VEGETABLES, HERBS AND FLOWERS!**
- **21 WEEKS OF PRODUCE FOR OUR CSA MEMBERS AND THE FARM STAND**
- **130 CSA MEMBERS**

"A wonderful selection and quality of produce! I love supporting the goals of sustainable food practices and providing education to growing minds!"

"Everyone at the farm was extremely welcoming. The veggies were delicious. One of the best parts of our week was picking flowers after collecting our produce. WHAT A TOUCH!!!

Thank you!"

- CSA Members

PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS

FARM STAND ADVISOR



- 3RD YEAR WITH A BILINGUAL FARM STAND ADVISOR TO WELCOME SPANISH-SPEAKING FAMILIES TO THE FARM STAND AND COMMUNITY EVENTS
- EMANUEL HELPED FAMILIES WITH PRODUCE CHOICES, RECIPES AND STORAGE GUIDELINES
- THIS PROGRAM REPRESENTS A POWERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE MORE COMMUNITY MEMBERS
- FUNDED BY A GRANT FROM



"Being the Farm Stand Advisor has opened up a new way of how I discuss and interact with everyday vegetables. It becomes an entire experience for our CSA members and retail customers, because it goes beyond "shopping for vegetables." They get to see where it's grown, the interns and volunteers who help cultivate it, and most importantly, the sharing of culinary and gardening ideas with like-minded people every week. Interacting with the CSA members has inspired me to try new recipes, and vice versa. This position has also allowed me to help educate Spanish speaking customers on vegetables they might not have consumed on a weekly basis, which is a crucial part of GIGM's mission to help food insecurity across multiple different communities." - Emanuel Vasquez

PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS

PAID HIGH SCHOOL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



- **EXPANDED PROGRAM WITH 12 HIGH SCHOOL INTERNS (UP FROM 8 IN YEARS PRIOR)**
- **10 HOURS EACH WEEK LEARNING THE INS AND OUTS OF SUSTAINABLE FARMING PRACTICES**
- **GUIDING VOLUNTEER GROUPS IN PLANTING AND HARVESTING**

We expanded our intern program, providing 12 high school students with the opportunity to learn about sustainable farming and the value of growing local, seasonal, food to nourish our community. We witnessed them completing projects, gaining a sense of accomplishment and building relationships. They developed an appreciation for the hard work and satisfaction that comes from growing food.

We also supported student groups from Drew University's Community Based Learning through a semester-long project focused on food justice and food insecurity nonprofits.

"Just interacting with animals, people, planting, and being in dirt and soil is something I love to do here" - *High School Intern*

PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS

EARLY STREET COMMUNITY GARDEN



- 83 Garden Plots planted by individuals, families and groups
- 10% subsidized plots
- Morristown High School STEM students and English Language Learners participated in a grant-funded earth sciences program where they learned to grow and harvest fresh produce.
- Installed a new pollinator meadow and irrigation system, made possible by a Garden Club of America 3-year grant
- Corporate volunteer groups helped with garden maintenance
- Annual Winter Solstice free community celebration held on December 21st

PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS

VOLUNTEERS



Volunteers are at the core of Grow It Green's success. They provide essential help in all aspects of the farm, and at all skill and ability levels.

90 individuals donated their time to the Urban Farm, for a total of over 800 hours. Students earning service hours, parents with children, groups of friends, and individuals - people of all ages and backgrounds working together.

We welcomed volunteer groups from over 15 organizations, from local companies to multi-national corporations, as team-building events and Corporate "Days of Service."

PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



- Participated in community health days, Pride celebration, and Festival on the Green, fostering an appreciation for sustainability and locally grown produce
- Children potted up 150 plants at the Lafayette Learning Center preschool family day
- Held free Community Movie Night outside at The Urban Farm, coordinated with The Education Association of Morris (TEAM)
- Participated in Deloitte "Bring your Kid to Work Day" teaching 130 children about pollination, seed anatomy, and sustainability
- Welcomed local community groups including scouts, Jack & Jill, Thrive Morris Gives, Project U.S.E, and many others
- Participated in Drew University student farmers market

COMMUNITY EVENTS

ALFRESCO AT THE FARM



Nearly 400 community members joined us on a beautiful September day to celebrate our annual Alfresco at the Farm free family event. Participants enjoyed five education stations, building on a long-standing tradition of combining learning and fun at the farm! We were proud to again honor our Farm Volunteer of the Year and our Teacher of the Year for their incredible commitment and contributions.

It was especially exciting to welcome many first-time visitors to the farm, offering them a closer look at what we do and why it matters.

We are inspired, energized, and deeply thankful for this community!

COMMUNITY EVENTS

GROW IT GREEN'S WINTER FARMERS MARKET



BUILDING A STRONGER, MORE CONNECTED COMMUNITY, CENTERED AROUND GREAT FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

- Over 900 weekly patrons in 2024-2025 season
- Nearly 50 vendors offering a variety of high quality products from local farms, artisans, and food purveyors
- Accessible location at Convent Train Station, with free parking

“Winter is the hardest season for small farms. But with your support, we stay open, we stay connected, and we stay hopeful. Thanks for all your support.”

– Apple Ridge Farm

The Winter Market draws customers from throughout Morris County and beyond, offering market sponsors in-person exposure to an average of 900 weekly attendees and over 3,200 people receiving weekly emailed newsletters

COMMUNITY OF LEARNING

SUSTAINABILITY UPDATES



- **WITH A GRANT FROM COMMUNITY FOOD BANK OF NEW JERSEY WE UPDATED OUR TUNNEL WALLS TO INCREASE AIRFLOW TO REDUCE INSECT AND DISEASE DAMAGE ON OUR TOMATO CROPS**
- **EAGLE SCOUT MIKE COMPLETED HIS PROJECT CREATING A PAVILION TO STORE AND PROTECT OUR HARVEST BINS.**
- **EAGLE SCOUT NATALIA COMPLETED HER PROJECT TO UPGRADE OUR WASH STATION AND BUILT A FLOOR FOR THE PAVILION**
- **WE CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON INCREASING OUR SOIL PROFILE AND GROWING AN EVEN HEALTHIER, MORE ROBUST HARVEST THAT SAVES ENERGY - BOTH HUMAN AND MACHINE**
- **PURCHASED NEW LOW CAT TUNNELS THAT MAKE USING INSECT NETTING AND ROW COVER MORE EFFICIENT.**