

# Rewarding Outcomes

2019 Annual Report



**THE GOOD ACRE**  
FOOD + COMMUNITY

“  
The day is coming  
when a single  
original  
carrot  
will give birth  
to a  
revolution”

– Paul Cezanne

”



Likewise, at The Good Acre, we believe fresh produce can produce great results—and even start a revolution.

*That's why for nearly five years, we've been dedicated to bringing together farmers, food makers, and communities to support sustainable food systems and achieve ground-breaking outcomes.*

Our evolution continues, with 2019 being a year of reflection and focusing our work on the areas of the food system we are best equipped to transform. The multifaceted programming we've built up over the last five years serves us in taking a holistic approach to solving critical gaps in the regional food system. That means not just supporting farmers' access to markets, but also supporting farmers' ability to grow for wholesale, and supporting wholesale buyers' ability to sustain and build on their use of local produce. This in turn makes healthy, locally grown food available to more eaters than before, and on the story goes. In short, our efforts make a positive impact on farmers, wholesale buyers, and consumers.

While our local food system has many moving parts and complexities, farmers still remain at the heart of our mission. Each year we learn more about how we can make the most impact in our local food community to support a well-rounded system that meets the needs of farmers, schools, food makers, and our community members alike. We are fortunate to be able to continue building on our work with the support of our dedicated staff, volunteers, donors, and board members. Their support is what allows us to continue making a positive impact and gets us closer to reaching the desired outcomes you'll see in the pages that follow.

Thank you,  
Rhys Williams, Executive Director



We connect and strengthen farmers, food makers, and communities through good food.

#### THEORY OF CHANGE

A Theory of Change is meant to help a team articulate the connection between its organization's mission and its programs using the language of outcomes.

By sharing our desired outcomes in the following pages, we describe the “why” of what we do. When we took a step back to identify the outcome that encompasses our work across all programs, we arrived at this conclusion:

*All farms and food makers have the resources to be sustainable and successful in a changing climate.*



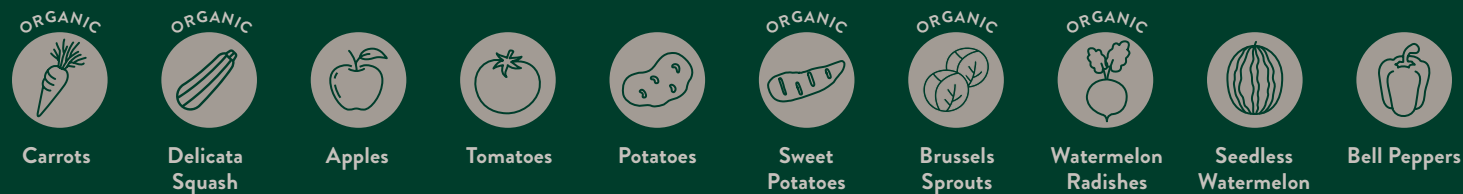
# Ap-peel-ing Programs



## Farm to School Support

The Good Acre supports K-12 Farm to School (F2S) programs primarily through our local produce wholesale and our culinary training programs, which focus on capacity building. Schools are then able to use the equipment and staff resources to turn local produce into tasty menu items in their cafeterias. Students and parents of school-age children are all interested in seeing more local foods on the school lunch line, and we are in a unique position to help schools in the Twin Cities meet that need.

## TOP 10 K-12 PRODUCE



## FARM TO SCHOOL CHALLENGES

### Pricing

Schools are very price sensitive when it comes to adding fresh local produce to their menus. We try to negotiate the best prices for our buyers while meeting our mission of ensuring that farmers receive fair and timely payment.

### Staffing

Scratch cooking requires a skilled workforce, but many school kitchens are short staffed which limits a school district's ability to process and serve local foods.

### Construction

School kitchen construction has slowed F2S efforts in several districts, but this investment in the ability to do scratch cooking will dramatically increase schools' capacity to make local produce purchases in the future.

### Climate

Unpredictable growing conditions are at odds with F2S procurement plans. Climate change has brought new diseases, extreme rain events, and delayed harvests that resulted in losses of fall crops that schools had planned to buy.

“TGA has been an invaluable partner as we build our Farm to School program from the ground up. By acting as the conduit to local farmers, their wonderful staff has helped us plot out our menus, create recipes, and train our staff. They have made getting local food on lunch trays a reality.”

—ANGIE RICHEY, NUTRITION SERVICES SUPERVISOR, ROSEVILLE AREA SCHOOLS

## Farm to School Bill Advocacy

### POLICIES POSITIVELY IMPACT OUR LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM

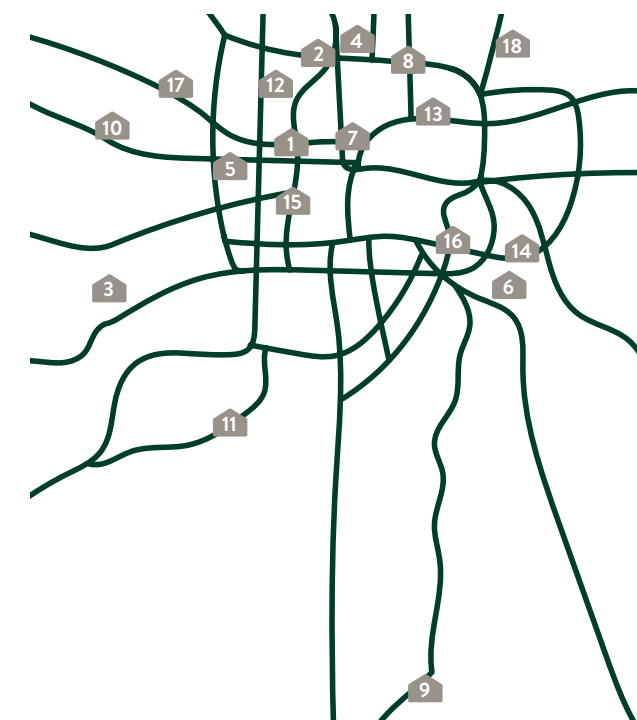
In March of 2019, Farm to School legislation began working its way through various Ag committee hearings in both the MN House and Senate.

We, along with a coalition of Farm to School supporters, came together to support a bipartisan Farm to School bill which was based off of successful models in other states like New York, Michigan, and Oregon, that aimed to make funding available for schools to get reimbursed for local food purchases.

Ultimately, no new funding was allocated as we'd hoped, but language was added to the AGRI grants program from the MN Department of Agriculture to allow, at the commissioner's discretion, AGRI grant funds to be used for reimbursing schools for purchases from local farmers and value-added producers. The bill also created a new position at the Department of Agriculture with the aim to facilitate farm to school sales. This legislation was a great forward step for Minnesota's school children and farmers, and it lays a foundation that we hope to build on in the future.



## 2019 SCHOOL DISTRICT CUSTOMERS



1. Breck
2. Brooklyn Center
3. Eastern Carver
4. Fridley
5. Hopkins
6. Inver Grove Heights
7. Minneapolis
8. Moundsview
9. Northfield
10. Orono
11. Prior Lake
12. Robbinsdale
13. Roseville
14. South St Paul
15. St Louis Park
16. West St Paul - Mendota Heights - Eagan
17. Wayzata
18. White Bear Lake

## Culinary Training

### HELPING SCHOOLS UTILIZE LOCAL PRODUCE

Our Culinary Training program exists to help schools incorporate more local foods into their food service programs, no matter where they're starting. We can provide the produce and the talented staff to offer the custom training our school partners need in order to reach their goals.



# Cultivating Partnerships

## Wholesale

### INCREASING EFFICIENCY AND SUPPLY

In 2019 we started working with Bon Appetit, a management company that offers full food-service management to corporations, universities, museums, and specialty venues across the country. With values that include support for sustainable sourcing, and through our relationship with Minnesota based Bon Appetit sites, we've been able to supply local food to higher ed institutions including: St. Olaf College, Macalester College, University of Northwestern, as well as corporate campuses like Best Buy, Target, and Medtronic.

We continue to chip away at the challenges of bringing more local foods to Twin Cities higher-ed institutions and healthcare systems through our partnership with the Central Corridor Anchor institutions, funded in part by a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant. Cracking the code to be able to serve something as simple as diced local onions requires diligence and patience, and we continue to draw on both as we work our way into providing local options within the Sodexo and US Foods vendor platforms.



## New in 2019

### LOCAL FOOD MARKETPLACE

We moved inventory management and order processing to an online portal where customers can log in to place their orders. The new system allowed for easier everyday purchasing of local foods. Online inventory and purchase orders were a positive addition to our wholesale program, increasing efficiency and our capacity to manage more business.

**\$166,899**  
2019 Wholesale Sales



## Grower Support

### FARMERS CAN ADAPT TO A CHANGING CLIMATE

Farming is challenging, and knowing you can call, text, or visit with someone who's walked in the same boots makes a difference. Our regular visits with farmers that sell to our wholesale and farm share programs gives us a first-hand account of how we can support them and help them thrive, maintaining a connection to the soil on which we all depend for our food.

Farmers will remember 2019 as one of the wettest years on record in Minnesota, but also as a year in which farmers continued to bring resilience and creativity to their operations during difficult weather conditions. It's easy to become pessimistic amid a difficult growing season, but it's only an eternal optimist that puts a seed into the ground and hopes for the best.

“

**In 2019, I put 4,738 miles on my 2013 Honda Fit visiting farms, answering questions that range as wide as a July sky. In one day I might answer a question about carrot varieties, insect identification, a good source of available phosphorus, irrigation management, tomato pruning, packing for wholesale, employee management, and tax deductions. Most of all, I try to listen to farmers and offer them an opportunity to bounce ideas off of someone else who understands where they're coming from.**”

—DAVID VAN ECKHOUT, GROWER SUPPORT SPECIALIST

## Hoop House

### MAXIMIZING PRODUCTION

We've been helping train farmers how to maximize their production in protected structures using the hoop houses at our location since our opening in 2016. But it's 2019 that will be marked as a great year for tomato production, where we grew over 5,000 pounds of tomatoes in about 1,500 square feet. Sharing these techniques and their potential with farmers is one way we are helping to support our growers with the technical assistance they need to be both successful and sustainable.



# Growing Potential



## Farm Share

### CONSUMERS UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF LOCAL FOOD

We had our biggest farm share membership yet in 2019, with 495 full season members. Our farm share is more than just a weekly box of produce. Each item in the box is source identified, we share farm news in every weekly newsletter, and we include storage tips and tons of recipe suggestions so that cooking and preserving the season's harvest is achievable for every member.

New in 2019 was our decision to streamline our program by offering one box size only, eliminating the option to choose between a full and half size share. The new size share is like an optimized half share, meaning you'll have all you need to make a full recipe. For example, a full pound of green beans or new potatoes instead of a split quantity.

## Partnership Spotlight

### PROVISION COMMUNITY RESTAURANT

Provision Community Restaurant is dedicated to eliminating hunger and food waste in Minneapolis by providing daily dinners for all, regardless of their ability to pay. This unique "pay what you can" restaurant has a menu that changes daily based on food donations. We are one of many organizations that donates excess produce, including unclaimed or donated farm shares, so that the culinary team at Provision can turn the food into delicious nourishing meals.



## Investor Share

### INAUGURAL SEASON BROUGHT 6 MEMBERS

At the beginning of 2019, we looked for innovative ways to bring in more revenue through our Farm Share program. The team came up with our Investor Share option, which asked interested members to pay \$1,000, half of which would be an unrestricted donation to TGA, and with their purchase they received some extra, harder-to-find local produce items (like mushrooms and berries), and the opportunity to connect with The Good Acre's programs on a deeper level.

A highlight of the Investor Share program was our first-ever farm tour. We visited Seeds Farm in Northfield and received a guided tour from Owner, Becca Carlson and our Grower Support Specialist, David VanEeckout. Being at Seeds Farm and hearing from Becca about how she is supported by The Good Acre really drove home for our members why their participation in our Farm Share matters.



495 FULL SEASON MEMBERS

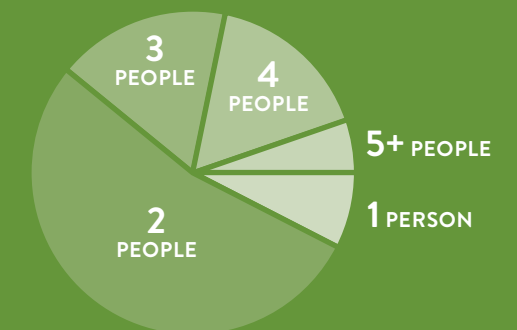


71 STUDENT MEMBERS



63 LATE SEASON MEMBERS

### HOW MANY PEOPLE DOES YOUR BOX FEED?



2019 FARM SHARE REVENUE  
**\$243,292**

TOTAL SPENT WITH FARMERS  
**\$183,877**

### 2019 ADD-ON'S

- BREAD
- EGGS
- HONEY
- MAKER-MEDLEY
- MUSHROOMS

\$26,412 ADD-ON SALES  
SUPPORTING LOCAL  
FOOD MAKERS

“

We had a tough growing season in Minnesota. I'm so thankful to our farm share members who allow us to provide guaranteed income for the farmers we work with, even in challenging growing conditions. ”

—ANNA RICHARDSON



# Seeding Knowledge



## Kitchen

### FOOD MAKERS ARE EMPOWERED TO PURCHASE AND USE LOCAL FOOD

We operate three unique programs in our 850 square foot kitchen. We've got cooking classes, culinary training, and a shared-use kitchen program that was home to 23 different small food businesses over the course of the year. Just under 50% of those were new businesses. Our makers used 5673 hours in the shared kitchen and produced thousands of pounds, gallons, bottles, cans, and boxes of high quality locally made food products, many featuring locally sourced ingredients.

## Meet Rachel

Rachel Banken is the owner and crafter of Well-Rooted Teas. Rachel's loose-leaf herbal teas are crafted with plants from local organic farmers blended with foraged botanicals native to our region. Rachel's blends nourish the body and are grown and harvested in a manner which promotes the health of our environment. As a renter of our shared-use kitchen Rachel is tapped into our local farmer network for various herbs and specialty items like locally grown ginger. She also has access to our Combi oven which she uses to dehydrate her herbs and botanicals, as well as the space to mix, pack, and store her tea blends which retail at farmers markets and retail outlets across the Twin Cities metro area.



Rachel leading a "Discover" educational happy hour class in the TGA classroom.

“Not only do our kitchen programs support our organization and mission by generating revenue, they also connect us to the community at large by bringing people into our space to learn and connect through food.”

—CAMILLE MEFLEH, KITCHEN PROGRAMS MANAGER



117 CLASSES



1,396 PARTICIPANTS  
50% WERE FIRST TIME ATTENDEES

## REVENUE

\$78,275 CLASSES

\$10,370 CULINARY TRAINING

\$131,732 SHARED USE KITCHEN (TIME + STORAGE)

\$13,054 MISC/EVENT RENTAL

## Classes

### CONSUMERS UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF LOCAL FOOD AND ACT ON THEIR VALUES

In 2019 we continued to expand and improve our cooking class offerings. We focused on diversifying the class concepts and bringing both more depth and more variety to our class lineup. We updated our class format and made improvements to deliver a consistent high quality experience for our participants. We invested in our 30+ instructors, recruiting 12 new instructors with a focus on representing greater diversity across racial and ethnic backgrounds, gender, and age. With this being our fourth year of running cooking class programming, we are always finding new ways to improve class experience, increase the ease of planning and administration, and optimizing cost at the same time.

We debuted a new educational happy hour class format we called "Discover". These educational and demo based classes are sponsored by local food businesses who get a chance to share their story, knowledge, and products with our audience and educate them on the role their business plays in creating a stronger, more sustainable local food system. We had classes from Sitka Salmon Shares, Shepherd's Way Farmstead Cheese, You Betcha Kimchi, and Well Rooted Teas. December 2019 was also the debut of our first seasonal cocktails class taught by Mike Augustyniak that featured spirits courtesy of local producer Tattersall Distilling.



Mimi Selam brought her Ethiopian and Eritrean cuisine to new classes featuring recipes anyone could make at home including vegetarian (and staff!) favorites like the spicy red lentil dish Misir Wot.

“It was awesome- a lot less stodgy than classes I've attended elsewhere. I loved how we got back in the kitchen, rolled up our sleeves and got to cook like we would at home- it made it all seem more do-able!”

—MIKE DERUYTER, HIMALAYAN COOKING: MOMO CLASS PARTICIPANT

## Sisters of St. Francis pay what you can class scholarships

The Sisters of St. Francis ministry fund was established in 1987 from an anonymous donation of one million dollars with the request that it be used to serve those in need. We applied for, and were awarded, \$5000 for use toward a new pay what you can scholarship fund with the purpose of making our community based classes accessible to all who want to participate.

## Mississippi Market Sponsorship

With so many specialty items, locally made products, and an incredible bulk section, Mississippi Market is a choice place to shop for any of our classes. With their mission to empower diverse communities to be healthy, make choices that help sustain our planet, and create a more just local economy -- well, you could say we're like two peas in a pod. This partnership not only stocks our pantry, but makes it easier for class participants to shop for the things they need to recreate class recipes at home.

# Putting Down Roots



## Facility

### CONNECTING PEOPLE TO FOOD

Our warehouse is the heart of our hub, it's where critical infrastructure and logistics meet to support small farmers and food makers alike. With ample cold and dry storage, the space and equipment to wash, sort, and pack food for wholesale markets fills a critical need for small farmers and food makers in our regional food system. Adjacent to our warehouse is our classroom, an equally important space where members of our community can gather to collaborate, innovate, and organize. This combination of infrastructure, logistics, and community are what make The Good Acre such a unique food hub.

## A visit from U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar

Congresswoman Ilhan Omar jumped right into conversation on her visit to The Good Acre on a sweltering August day. She wanted to know what hurdles the farmers we work with are facing and what opportunities exist for them as well. Overwhelmingly, the farmers in the room said access to buying rather than renting land was a huge obstacle. As for opportunities, access to new wholesale markets are ways farmers can diversify their income and reduce crop waste. Congresswoman Omar has proven to be an advocate for strong local food systems and farm to school efforts in her district. We hope the stories she heard during her visit will make an impact on legislation that she brings forth in Washington.

## Fueling our future

Thanks to generous funding from Cobank and Compeer, we were able to purchase a refrigerated sprinter van in October. While our 18-foot refrigerated box truck is perfect for many of our deliveries in the Twin Cities metro area, it is prohibitively expensive for delivering smaller orders or orders to more distant locations. Because of this limited capacity for deliveries, we have turned down customers that would love to participate in our wholesale program. The addition of this second, smaller delivery vehicle now allows us to more efficiently access rural schools, farms, healthcare facilities, and community foodservice accounts. Thanks again to Cobank and Compeer for providing funding for this vehicle, and for our Ops Manager, Zach, who flew one-way to California to pick up the van and drive it back to Minnesota. Look for our new carrot mobile on the road and in your delivery bay soon!

## 2019 Grant Spotlights



*Awarded \$320,000*

### SCALING-UP SUPPLY & DEMAND TO ACHIEVE FOOD HUB FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The USDA's Local Food Promotion Program Grant allows us to build on our work of increasing access to local foods and diversifying markets for underserved farmers while developing strategies to achieve a sustainable business model and create replicable models that other food hubs can utilize to bridge wholesale supply chain gaps.



*Awarded \$312,000 over two years*

### SCHOOL NUTRITION VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

With Farm to School programming and the incorporation of more scratch cooking, school food is getting healthier. School children are eating more fresh local food and learning about healthy food choices. However, scratch cooking requires a skilled workforce and, at the same time, a large portion of school kitchens are short staffed. Funds from the Cargill Foundation Childhood Nutrition Grant will allow us to create a culinary vocational training program that addresses both the skilled labor force shortage facing K-12 nutrition service departments, while also providing education and job placement for low-income individuals who struggle to find stable careers.

## Fundraising Spotlight



*\$10,000 raised*

### KITCHEN EQUIPMENT CAMPAIGN

It's critical that we keep our kitchen well equipped for the local food businesses that depend on our shared-use kitchen program. Better equipment helps increase the efficiency of production for small businesses and has the double benefit of ensuring that our culinary training participants receive training on the kind of equipment they will be working with in school kitchens across the Twin Cities. It was a lofty goal, but over 55 individual donors rose to the occasion to help us smash our \$10,000 goal on Minnesota's biggest day of giving!

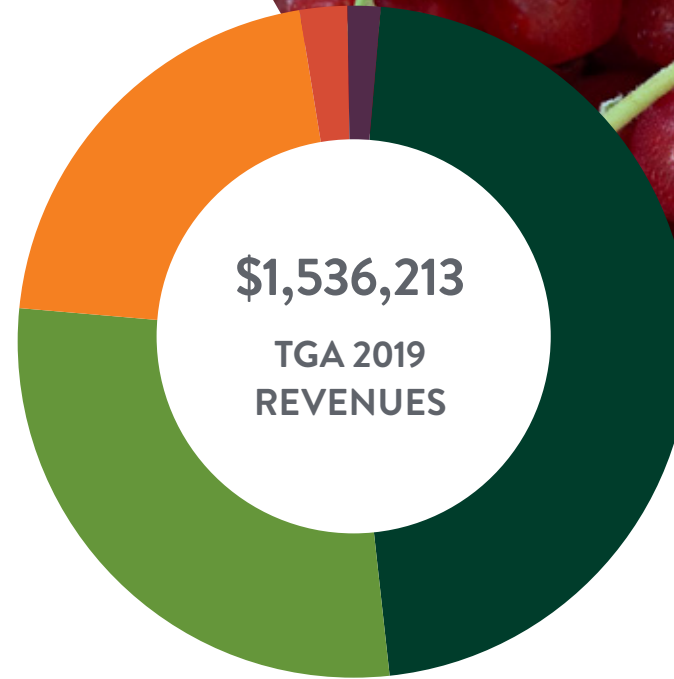
# Crunching the Numbers

## Finances

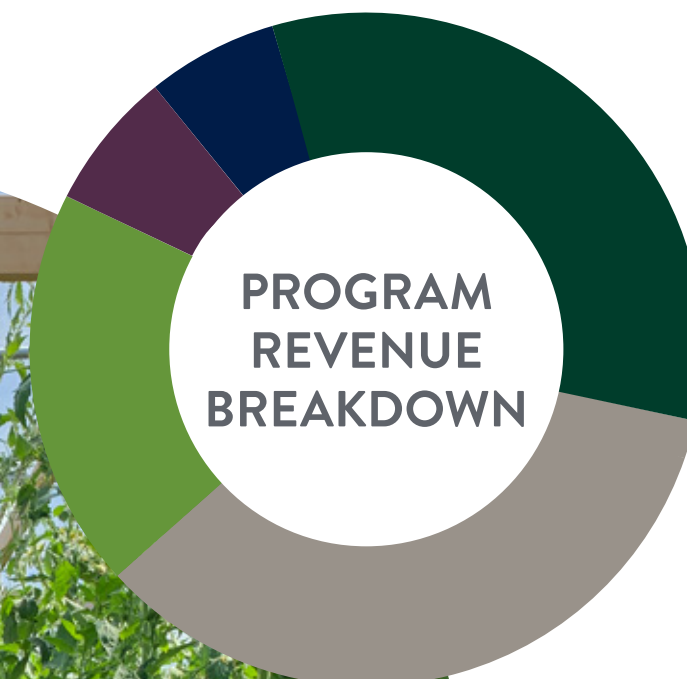
In 2019, we continued to grow and diversify our program revenue and funding streams to ensure that The Good Acre is financially stable for years to come. By investing in our programs, facility, and our personnel we are able to use our space and expertise to work on improving the areas of the food system we are best equipped to transform.



**\$802,702 Staffing**  
**\$439,069 Direct Program Costs**  
**\$329,623 Program Support**  
**\$9,593 Fundraising**



**\$717,188 Program Revenue**  
**\$400,000 Foundation Funding**  
**\$364,852 Grants**  
**\$35,653 Development**  
**\$18,518 Miscellaneous**



**Farm Share**  
**\$243,292 (34%)**

**Kitchen**  
**\$233,703 (33%)**

**Wholesale**  
**\$166,899 (23%)**

**Warehouse**  
**\$44,553 (6%)**

**Grower Support**  
**\$28,741 (4%)**





## 2019 STAFF

*Rhys Williams*  
Executive Director

*Anna Richardson*  
Programs Director

*Nikki Warner*  
Communications Director

*Andrew Bernhardt*  
Finance & Grants Manager

*David Van Eeckhout*  
Grower Support Specialist

*Steve Young-Burns*  
Wholesale Manager

*Karin Davey*  
Farm Share Manager

*Camille Meftteh*  
Kitchen Programs Manager

*Sadie Sayre*  
Kitchen Coordinator

*Lachelle Cunningham*  
Culinary Education Manager

*Zach Dowd*  
Operations Manager

*Shelley Diment*  
Administrative Coordinator

*Sarah Howseth*  
Fundraising Coordinator

## SEASONAL STAFF

*Luke Rohr*  
Delivery Driver

*Kajsa Beatty*  
Hoop House Manager

## 2019 BOARD MEMBERS

*Sara Pohlad*

*John Byom*

*Megan Morgan*

*Helene Murray*

*Jane Shey*

*Mark Seeley*

*Tina May*

*Yia Vang*



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FOOD + COMMUNITY

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