

# SHALOM FARMS



ANNUAL REPORT 2015





# SHALOM FARMS WORKS WITH COMMUNITIES TO ENSURE ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD, AND THE SUPPORT TO LEAD HEALTHY LIVES



We focus on healthy food production, healthy food distribution, and healthy food education and resources. By doing so, we create change in the following ways:

## ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Compiling this report, I was in awe of the enormous work our team quietly accomplishes on such a tight budget. Pick a week in 2015, and you'll find hundreds of visitors learning and working on the farm. You'll see produce distributed to over 20 partners, 6 corners stores getting healthy produce and support, 4 farm stands open (including 2 run by youth), and as many as 20 families at a time participating in our Prescription Produce Plan.

But, this work is really a team sport. We succeed by supporting others in doing what they do best. Thank goodness for that - ensuring everyone in Richmond has the healthy food and support to live a healthy life is no small task. We hope you see the following pages as a celebration of the successes of our teammates: the shared success of mothers living in poverty working to feed their kids healthier food, the shared success of partners like VCU innovating to make sure no student goes hungry, the shared success of teens farming in the morning and running a farm stand in the afternoon because they believe their neighbors deserve affordable, healthy food.

**Dominic Barrett**  
Executive Director



### MEET IMMEDIATE NEEDS

Shalom Farms meets immediate needs in a way that prioritizes justice and human dignity.

At our farm, we grow over 125,000 pounds of produce each year, and partner with over 30 local organizations to help meet the needs of communities in Richmond without access to healthy food.



### OVERCOME EXISTING BARRIERS

Shalom Farms provides opportunities and strategies to overcome existing barriers to finding and consuming healthy produce.

Our programs prepare participants with food skills education, cooking demos, and strategies for sourcing healthy food year round, including grocery store tours.



### DEVELOP A JUST FOOD SYSTEM

Shalom Farms helps develop a more just food system by supporting and developing informed and empowered eaters.

At the farm and in the city, we engage over 5,000 individuals in hands-on experiences, learning about sustainable agriculture and healthy eating.

# ON THE FARM

Our 6-acre farm is an agricultural learning lab for visitors and volunteers of all backgrounds. The farm is designed to provide fresh produce for food-insecure communities, while raising awareness about the importance of sustainable agriculture. Each day, staff share about the importance of caring for our bodies, our communities and our earth through all our farming practices.

## The 5 most popular vegetables

Tomatoes	34,290 lbs
Collard Greens	13,944 lbs
Cabbage	13,701 lbs
Sweet Potatoes	11,452 lbs
Potatoes	7,640 lbs

# VISITORS

Educational visitors come to the farm for introductory hands-on experiences in a variety of topics, ranging from environmental science to sustainable agriculture. Each visitor leaves the farm with a greater understanding of local food systems and sustainable farming.



In 2015, every third grade student from nine Richmond Public Schools came to the farm through a partnership with [Blue Sky Fund](#).



**1,557**

educational visitors came to the farm to accomplish learning objectives related to sustainable agriculture

**124,688**

The farm grew 124,688 pounds of fresh, organic produce in 2015

**2,972**

volunteers worked at the farm. Shalom Farms welcomed a total of 4,529 volunteers and visitors in 2015

# VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are essential to the mission of Shalom Farms. In 2015, the farm engaged almost 3,000 individuals through volunteer opportunities. Volunteers assist in virtually every aspect of life on the farm, from preparing the ground, to planting and harvesting a variety of different crops. Through one-time, recurring or long-term volunteer commitments, volunteers committed 8,468 hours of service at the farm from March to November. Volunteers come as individuals, families, businesses, churches, civic groups, schools, and more.



Over 1,100 people came to volunteer with a church group, including 48 groups from United Methodist Churches

**Shalom Farms is a unique place. I recommend it to anyone who wants to give back, learn and work with committed people. The produce grown and its role in solving hunger in our community is clear. The passion of the people behind that effort is what makes it all work.**

DANNY BOTTOMS, VOLUNTEER

## Youth Run Farm Stands



**250**

customers at the two community farm stands.

**100%**

of participants said the program positively impacted their view on healthy food

**3,000**

pounds of produce were sold through the weekly farm stand in 2015

Youth Run Farm Stands provide opportunities for youth to develop healthy habits, practice critical life skills, and become changemakers in their community through positive experiences with fresh produce. Youth meet weekly to explore a curriculum focused on nutrition and food system, volunteer at Shalom Farms, and facilitate a weekly farm stand in their community.

In 2015, Shalom Farms partnered with [Church Hill Activities and Tutoring \(CHAT\)](#) and the [Neighborhood Resource Center](#) to engage youth in activities using fresh produce to increase personal familiarity with fruits and vegetables, and increase community access to healthy foods. In the winter of 2015, staff conducted an intensive program evaluation and analysis to improve the program design, and deepen the educational curriculum we utilize with future groups of youth. The evaluation found that youth, in addition to increasing familiarity with fresh produce, developed increased confidence in life skills such as public speaking, communicating with customers, and working as a team.

## Prescription Produce Plan



**90%**

of participants report learning new techniques or tips for healthy eating

**81%**

of participants report feeling healthier after participating in the program

**10,265**

servings were distributed to individuals and families through the program

The Prescription Produce Plan works to improve health and prevent or address chronic disease. The program provides Shalom Farms produce alongside health support to empower community members in increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables. Participants meet with staff weekly to talk about new ways to eat more fresh produce, monitor weight and blood pressure, and receive a weekly “prescription” of produce for their entire family and helpful resources at no cost. In 2015, there were four sites of the Prescription Produce Plan. Two of the sites were located in public housing communities, in the East End and the Southside of Richmond. The other two sites partnered with weekly [Bon Secours Care-A-Van](#) sites at two churches in the Southside of Richmond. Over 50 people participated in the program, receiving the opportunity to learn and practice new ways of addressing chronic disease through dietary changes. Participants utilized about 3,000 pounds of our fresh, locally grown produce. At each site, participants and other community members also benefited from free recipes and staff expertise to develop skills around new ways to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables.

## Healthy Corner Store Initiative



6

local corner stores enrolled in the program in 2015.

5,579

servings were distributed through corner store sales in August-December 2015

## Healthy Food Partnership Distribution



88,817

pounds of produce were donated to community organizations, including food banks, meal programs, etc.

20+

Shalom Farms helped support over 20 community organizations by providing produce as a healthy option for their services

The Healthy Corner Store Initiative, a partnership with the Richmond City Health District, increases access to fresh produce through corner stores, gas stations, and convenience stores in neighborhoods with limited access to fruits and vegetables. By supplying these retail outlets with fresh and affordable produce, families are able to access healthy food in convenient ways.

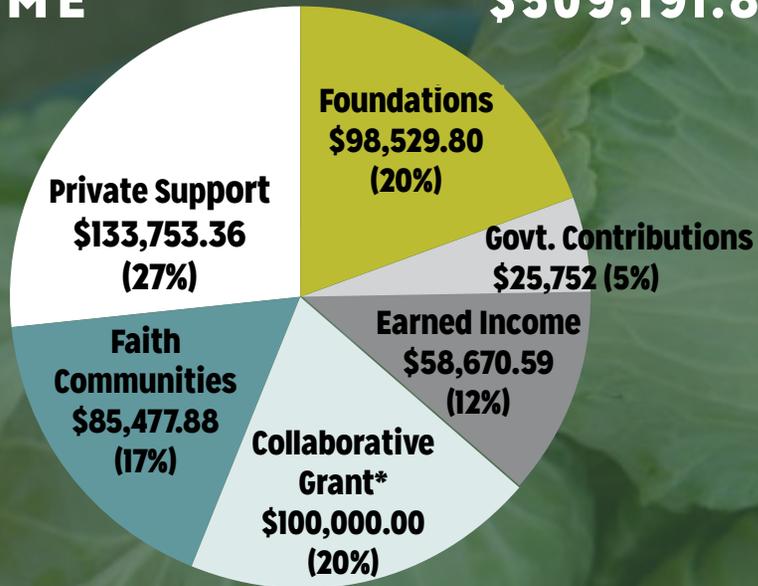
At the request of Richmond City Health District, Shalom Farms began partnering in August of 2015 to coordinate store outreach, biweekly delivery, and technical assistance for storeowners to increase the amount of produce sold through corner stores in the City of Richmond. We sell our produce and distribute other healthy items we are unable to grow, particularly fruit. Each participating store receives a refrigerator dedicated for selling healthy options. Shalom Farms hosts nutrition outreach events at each store to increase the consumption of fresh produce as a healthy alternative to the offerings commonly found in corner stores. In 2015, the program onboarded six corner stores across the city. These stores are part of a larger expansion, in the goal of 30 stores by the end of 2017.

Our Healthy Food Distribution Network connects partner organizations with locally grown produce as a healthier option to add to existing services for individuals and families with limited access to healthy food. We support organizations of varying size and scope. Our partners range from organizations as large as [FeedMore](#), the umbrella organization that manages the Central Virginia Food Bank, Meals on Wheels, and backpack programs for children, to smaller community resources like the food pantry at Ginter Park United Methodist Church.

In 2015, 42,134 pounds of produce were donated to FeedMore and 46,683 pounds were donated directly to community organizations including food pantries, soup kitchens, after school programs, and services for older adults. Of the participating community organizations, about 7 partners are community organizations with services designed for children and older adults, while over 12 partners are community organizations with emergency food distribution programs.

# INCOME

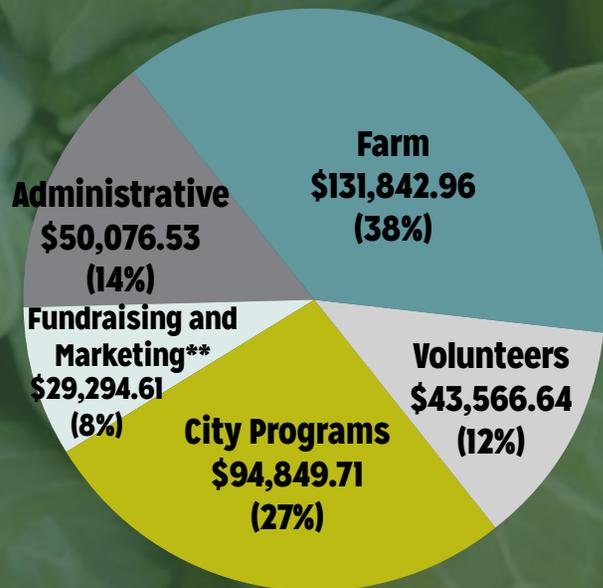
**\$509,191.86**



\*This amount reflects a collaborative grant received December 2015 from the Mary Morton Parsons Foundation for the Grown To Go Mobile Market project in 2016.

# EXPENSES

**\$349,630.43**



\*\*\$7,222 of this total was spent on organizational capacity building and strategic planning for fund development.

Shalom Farms has seen steady financial growth since 2010. Our annual budget has grown from \$94,000 in 2010 to a projected \$447,000 in 2016. 2015 was a particularly strong year thanks to increases in corporate and foundation giving. In 2015 Shalom Farms began putting special emphasis on developing our annual fund and increasing our individual donor base. We hope to see steady increases in individual giving in 2016. Our continued success has been made possible by the support of thousands of volunteers, donors, and partners. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of Shalom Farms in 2015! A special thanks to the following for providing major funding and support:

- The Mary Morton Parsons Foundation
- Richmond District Board of Missions
- Altria Companies Employee Community Fund
- Virginia Department of Health
- Capital One Services LLC
- The Community Foundation Serving Richmond and Central Virginia
- The Jenkins Foundation
- Bon Secours Richmond Health System
- Custis Westham Fund of the Community Foundation Serving Richmond and Central Virginia
- The Robins Foundation
- The Herndon Foundation
- Altria Group, Inc.
- Midas of Richmond

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# SHALOM FARMS

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