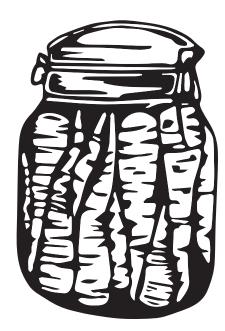


## ANNUAL REPORT 2019







Artwork by Grace Wintermyer

## NOTE FROM The director

## From 2009 to 2019, 10 years in review...

2020 is upon us. Grow Appalachia is entering its eleventh year of programming and partnerships with families and communities of central Appalachia. And every time I realize this I am surprised and very pleased. After months of planning with regional partners and discussion with John Paul DeJoria, co-creator of Grow Appalachia, we began issuing grants and technical assistance to nonprofit partners in eastern Kentucky in January 2010.

As a cooperative extension service agent in southern West Virginia for thirteen years, my recognition of the prevalence of nutrition related health disorders paired with the presence of thousands of small garden plots gone fallow always represented a terrible frustration and a great opportunity. That initial phone call from John Paul in 2009 highlighted that opportunity and Grow Appalachia is the result. Ten years on, we have worked with over 6000 families who have grown over four million pounds of nutritious, chemical free fruits and vegetables. Our partnerships in the Appalachian counties of six states in the region have resulted in a dozen farmers' markets, we have built eight shared-use commercial kitchens in three states and our participating families have sold hundreds of thousands of dollars of excess produce with our encouragement and support. The Grow Appalachia social enterprise team has built and installed over 130 high tunnels and distributed hundreds of thousands of pounds of organic fertilizer in communities where these soil ammendments, and other sustainable farming tools and supplies, were otherwise unavailable. The technical assistance crew has developed over 100 conservation action plans and small-farm production plans for new and beginning farmers across central and eastern Kentucky. And Berea Kids Eat, our summer and after-school feeding program, has served over 94,000 meals and 200 days of nutrition education programming to Kentucky school children in Madison and surrounding counties.

Yes, the numbers are important and we share our impactfueled statistics with everyone. We are proud of this work, much of which is genuinely unique in our region. It is our belief that scale and longevity tell the tale in this work. Studying the history of coal-impacted counties of the region, it is apparent that too much social change and community development work over the past few decades has been top-down decision making involving out-of-region players, and of short durations and little impact. That is not who Grow Appalachia is. We all live in the region and have roots here, our own families and farms and histories here. We are not going anywhere. Our institutional partners are all in and of the region, most having decades of service in their home communities.

The food history of the region tells a tale that shifts from one of great independence and interdependence of communities, small farms and families to a present day in which 90% of the average diet is shipped from 100 miles away or more. No greater vehicle for equitable community development, diversification of local economies and the creation of widespread personal agency exists that has the potential of Appalachian families growing much more of their own food. Folks who grow their own food develop an appreciation for the efforts of producers (small and large) who can grow food that home gardens cannot produce. Gardeners become market growers and truck farmers. Young people start to see that growing food can be part of the way to be able to stay in their home communities. People become healthier, intergenerational cooperation and mentoring increases. Folks from different parts of the political and social spectrum share tools and exchange growing tips and recipes. Children get fed.

A substantial expansion in the production, consumption and marketing of local foods in central Appalachia will not solve all the problems or cure all the ills. No single answer can address the enormous challenges facing Appalachia today, but this work can be a keystone in the evolution of a safer, kinder and healthier region. And we intend to be a part of it, just as we have from our beginning over a decade ago.

We invite you to work with us and join us in this noble experiment. It's a big tent.

Javid Cooks



## 4,000,000

Pounds of harvest





#### **6,000** Grow

Appalachia Families

## 92,000

Meals served to Berea Youth





Regional Regional High Tunnels Installed

# SINCE 2009...

Grow Appalachia, a Strategic Initiative of Berea College, began as a partnership in 2009 between Berea College and JP's Peace, Love & Happiness Foundation to address food insecurity in Appalachia.

For more than 10 years, Grow Appalachia has been partnering with organizations, communities, and families in Central Appalachia to create healthy, resilient, and economically viable food systems where healthy food is accessible to all.

With your help, we can continue addressing food insecurity at the family level through these initiatives.

#### GARDENING TO INCREASE REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR FARMERS

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE THROUGH HIGH TUNNEL INFRASTUCTURE AND EDUCATION

BEREA KIDS EAT: FEEDING AND PROVIDING NUTRITION EDUCATION TO BEREA YOUTH

COMMERCIAL KITCHEN INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT

URBAN FOOD PRODUCTION & Agricultural skill Building in Louisville





## STRATEGIC PLANNING

For the past six months we have been in the thick of strategic planning at the Grow Appalachia headquarters. While still very much in the beginning phases, we have had some exciting progress to date, including updating mission and vision statements.

We've been gathering data about food insecurity, population projections and demographic information that will help inform our plan. We are currently working on our value statements and are setting goals for the full strategic plan that will help guide us over the next three years as an organization.

From these goals, we will be looking at gathering input from participants and partners to help us consider the ways we partner and work with community organizations, how we continue growing as an organization, and how we seek to impact food insecurity throughout central Appalachia. GROW APPALACHIA partners with organizations, communities and families in Appalachia, building upon agricultural and food traditions to create healthy, resilient and e conomically viable food systems.

Our vision is a vibrant regional food system where healthy food is accessible to all.



Without our partners and Grow Appalachia families, the work wouldn't be possible, so gathering feedback will be critical to our three-year strategy and plan.

We've been incredibly fortunate to partner with Nina Gregg of Communication Resources out of Maryville, TN, who has helped guide our work throughout this process. Her thoughtfulness and approach to planning has been an incredible asset to keep staff grounded and help us set intentions for the process. Stay tuned to our e-newsletter to keep up with how our plan continues to unfold!





extension

WORKING DIRECTORY

FARMERS

## MISSION

Grow Appalachia partners with families, communities and organizations in Appalachia to create healthy, resilient, and economically viable food systems.

### VISION

Our vision is a vibrant regional food system where healthy food is accessible to all.

## NEW GROW APPALACHIA PROGRAM ASSOCIATE



Elora Overbey will be providing administrative support to all Grow Appalachia initiatives and assisting with communications and development.

Elora grew up in New Mexico and studied photojournalism and advertising at University of Oregon before becoming a Fellow in the Farm & Food Fellowship Program at Allegheny Mountain Institute in Highland County, VA.

She is passionate about visual storytelling, increasing access to fresh and nutritious food in her community, exploring new cooking techniques, growing her own food, and is excited to join the Grow Appalachia team!

## BEREA COLLEGE DIVISION OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



Grow Appalachia has been working closely with the Strategic Initiatives division of Berea College while undergoing our strategic planning process as we move forward in our work. The Strategic Initiatives division is responsible for overseeing and stewarding relationships with external funding partners that support on-campus programming and capital improvements as well

as educational and community development programming in the Appalachian region. Grow Appalachia, the Brushy Fork Institute, and Partners for Education comprise the externally-facing programs of the division that provide meaningful and effective outreach to the Appalachian region.

Rachel Roberts-Lake, Laura Bost, Teri Thompson, Erica Woods, Kelley Farley

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVE PROGRAMS



Grow Appalachia partners with families, communities, and organizations in Appalachia to create healthy, resilient, and economically viable food systems.



Partnering with Appalachian communities through to grow regional leadership in order to create visions and plans to guide local development efforts



Rural Promise Neighborhood, GEAR UP, and i3 programs to work toward the goal that "All Appalachian students will succeed at school".

## 2019 NEW GRANTS

### NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOSIATION JUNIOR FARMERS MARKET



a new partnership with the National Recreation and Parks Association! Thanks to this new partnership, the Youth Farmers Market had a very successful first season. Berea youth were invited to have tables at the Farmers Market where they sold veggies, crafts, original artwork, and even face painting for the community. In partnership and with funding from NRPA, BKE was able to build The Veggie Wagon for the Youth Farmers Market. The Veggie Wagon is based off an original design by Eliot Coleman, that he generously shared with BKE, that allows for quick storage, transportation, and portable infrastructure.

Berea Kids Eat is excited to announce a new partnership with the National Recreation and Parks Association! Thanks to this new partnership, the Youth Farmers Market had a very successful first season. Berea youth were invited to have tables at the Farmers Market where they sold



### USDA BEGINNING FARMER & RANCHERS BEGINNING FARMER SERIES

Over the next 8 months our 120 enrolled farmers will attend monthly sessions on production and business planning, crop management, protected agriculture, harvesting, marketing, and resource development, ending with an awards ceremony in August. For our 2020 Beginning Farmer Series we will be working with four cohorts of farmers grouped by the following regions: Berea, Clay County, Hindman, and Wolfe County.

Our Beginning Farmer Series is made possible by a 3 year Beginning Farmer & Rancher Grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We are excited to be working in partnership with KY Center for Ag & Rural Development, Organic Association of Kentucky, Community Farm Alliance, Kentucky Highlands Investment Corp, and the Appalachian Resource Conservation and Development Council to collaborate on offering classroom sessions, paid internship opportunities with experienced farmers for eight weeks during the growing season, field days, and farmer-to-farmer gatherings in eastern KY and production planning support for beginning farmers in east TN over the next 3 years!



A great turnout for our first Beginning Farmer Series session for our Berea location.

## **2019 INITIATIVE UPDATES**

#### GARDEN GRANTS



We were able to partner with 22 Garden Grant Partner in 2019 in five states. Through our partnerships we were able to help producers grow and harvest over 395,603 pounds of produce. Our partners hosted 217 workshops with over 2,800 attendees gaining hands-on knowledge in organic gardening methods, nutritious cooking, and food preservation methods. We were also able to finish construction on eight certified commercial kitchens, in three different states, for local producers to use for community gathering events, creating value-added products, establishing catering businesses, and hosting workshops.

#### **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Our Technical Assistance team has been hard at work in 2019 visiting farmers, creating conservation plans to support producers transitioning to organic growing methods, planning for our upcoming Beginning Farmer Series, drafting high tunnel conservation and production plans. In partnership with the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund, our team has created 79 custom growing plans, developed a video series on organic weed control, drafted 228 soil sample recommendations, conducted 82 farm visits, and worked with farmers in over 27 Eastern Kentucky counties since the EKY-DIGS program began in 2018.



#### SOCIAL ENTERPRISE



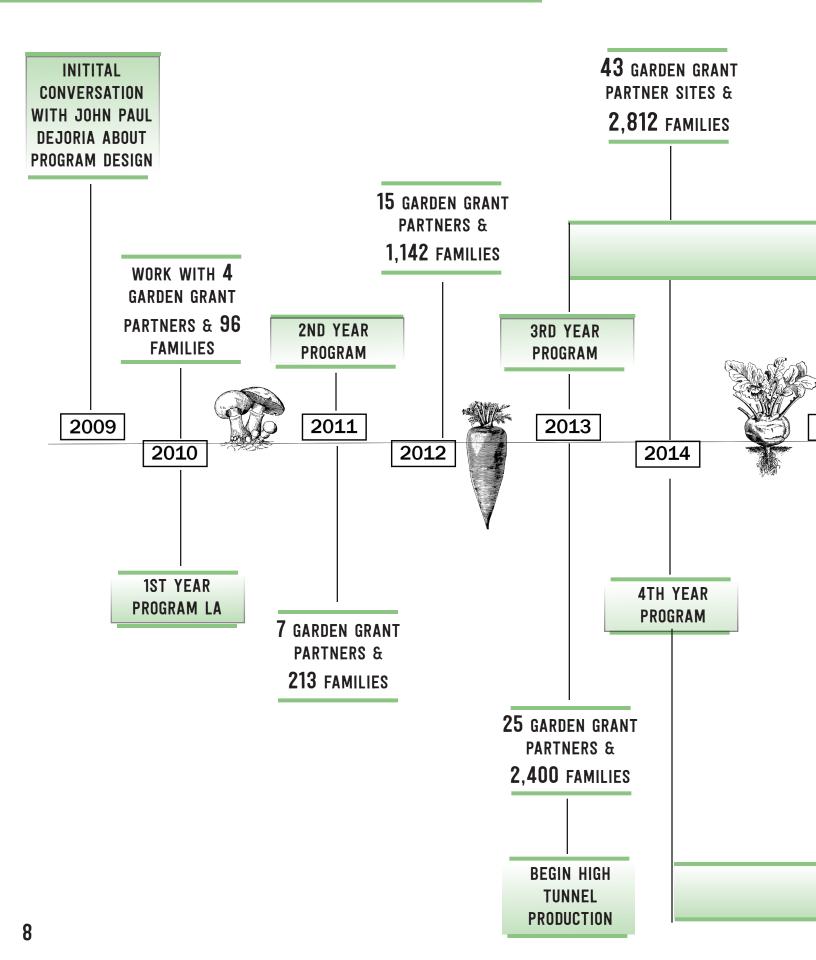
In 2019 our Social Enterprise team was able to work with local farmers to install 9 high tunnels and sell 44,000 pounds of Mountain Pride organic fertilizer and 4,000 pounds of feather meal. New offerings also include: three different high tunnel designs, including the new modular moveable high tunnel, drip irrigation and water catchment supplies with installation services, our organic 'Mountain Pride' chicken litter fertilizer and feather meal fertilizer, woven ground cover, insect netting, shade cloth, and low tunnel kits for regional farmers. In 2020 the Social Enterprise team will continue to share resources, expand their operation, and prototype a mobile "chicken tractor" for farmers to purchase.

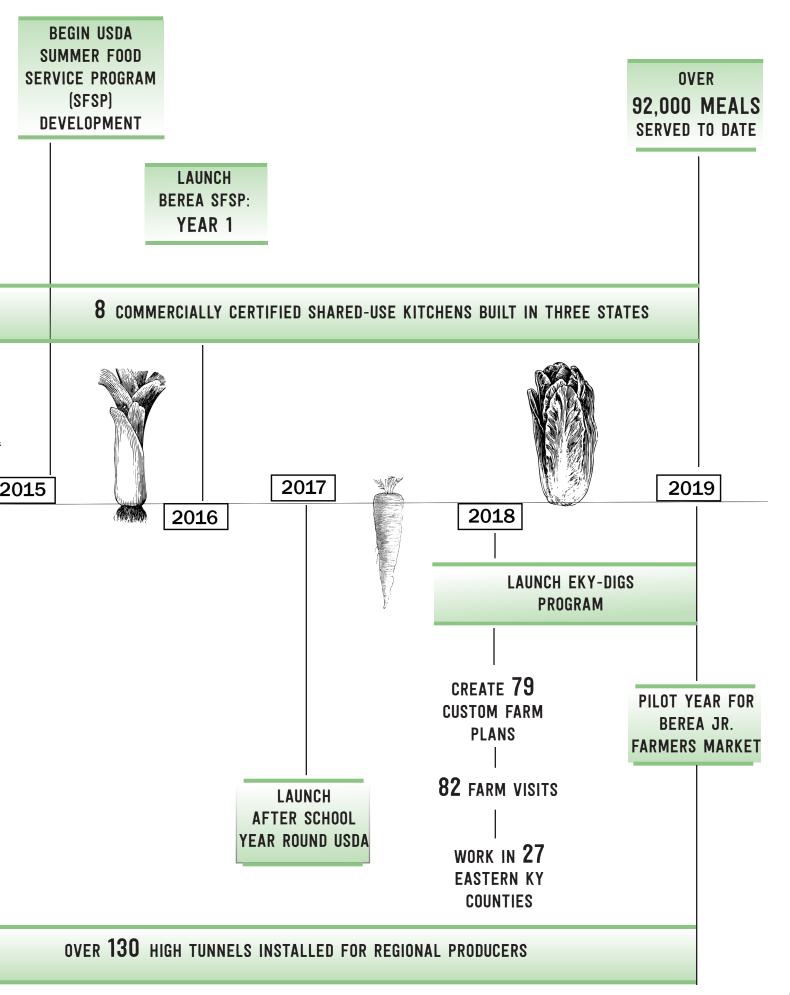
### BEREA KIDS EAT

Berea Kids Eat was able to pilot a successful Youth Farmers Market season with the partnership of NRPA, install a mural with the Center for Ecological Diversity, distribute over 3,200 pounds of produce and recipe cards with a Friday backpack program, distribute over 16,000 summer meals, and over 9,000 after school meals for youth in Berea. In 2020 BKE is hoping to begin planning for a mobiles meals bus that can bring meals to neighborhoods without access to parks. BKE will also be constructing a outdoor education center at Glades Community Garden, a community gathering site for summer meals and educational programming. If you would like to get involved, volunteers for youth garden workdays and cooking education classes are welcomed during the summer months.



## **10 YEARS IN REVIEW**





John Paul and Elose DeJoria, Constance Dykhuizen, and Grow Appalachia staff pose with Glades Community Garden Staff in Berea, KY.









Right: Eloise Dejoria embraces a Garden Frant Partner anat Berea College.

### JOHN PAUL AND ELOISE Dejoria visit grow Appalachia

In September we were honored to host John Paul and Eloise DeJoria, along with JP's Peace, Love & Happiness Foundation Director, Constance Dykhuizen for a visit to Berea. This was John Paul and Eloise's first visit to Berea and to Berea College, so we were excited to share more about the great initiatives across campus and the city.

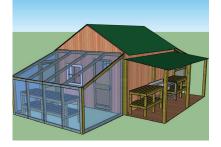
Our first visit was to the Berea Urban Farm to learn more about their Harvesting Hope Program and share the collaborations between Grow Appalachia and the Berea Urban Farm. Earlier this season, our Social Enterprise team, Kayla Preston and Terra Cash, led a workshop on building a high tunnel and high tunnel construction basics with women from the Harvesting Hope Program. The Harvesting Hope Program has worked with more than 26 women through job-related skills training and we are honored to support their work through high tunnel and water catchment system installations, workshops and hands-on training.

The next day, we all met at the Glades Community Garden, as the sun was coming up over the high tunnel where we met to learn more about the role of community gardens and how they have contributed to increasing food security and youth entrepreneurship in Berea. Eloise and John Paul helped release a few monarch butterflies with some of the youth who have been gardening and raising pollinators at the garden. At the end of our visit, they made a generous donation to the community garden to build an Outdoor Education Center! The Center will provide space for raising monarchs, teaching pollinator programming and a greenhouse to grow plants for the community garden. We are so excited collaborate with community to partners on pollinator programming and habitats and can't wait to see this space up and running in Summer 2020.

We gathered on campus with our Grow Appalachia partner site coordinators and families, to share a meal together and celebrate the work of Grow Appalachia from the past ten years. We were thrilled to each have a moment to thank John Paul, Eloise and JP's Peace, Love & Happiness Foundation for their continued support of our program. Over the past ten years they have contributed more than \$X million

"The most fulfilling aspect I have found of this partnership is the fact it is expanding more rapidly than you or would have ever thought, and it's influencing more people while physically and mentally changing people's lives" - John Paul Dejoria





Designs for the Glades Community Garden John Paul DeJoria Outdoor Education Center, to be finished in Summer 2020

to support family and community gardening, farmer development and hunger relief throughout six states of central Appalachia.

By the end of their visit to Berea, John Paul and Eloise had committed grant funds for continued support of Grow Appalachia, an Outdoor Education Center at the Glades Community Garden, as well as pollinator programming for Berea College and Grow Appalachia. We are so grateful for their generosity and support these past ten years and cannot wait for what the future holds for Grow Appalachia in the next ten!



MARTINA LEFORCE RECEIVES SECOND ANNUAL RURAL SPIRIT AWARD

We are overjoyed to share that Martina Leforce, Grow Appalachia's Berea Kids Eat Coordinator, was selected to receive the 2019 Rural Spirit Community Service Award! She was one of three individuals nationally recognized by Osborn Barr Paramore across Rural America for making a difference in their communities. This award seeks to recognize an individual who goes above and beyond to donate time and support to selflessly grow their community through exceptional service.

"Martina represents everything the Community Service Rural Spirit Award stands for, and I'm delighted to honor her dedication to her local community,"

OPB President Rhonda Ries



Rural-focused advertising agency Osborn Barr Paramore (OBP) honors Martina Leforce for her leadership in Rural America.

Five years ago, Leforce established the summer feeding program Berea Kids Eat located in Berea, Kentucky. It has since been her mission to grow the program so that food is made available to children throughout the Appalachia region. Through established partnerships, Berea Kids Eat now feeds 22 local sites. Leforce also helped organize community gardens and a junior farmers market program, growing the intergenerational bonds between volunteers, farmers and Berea's youth.





"It has been an immense joy working with various venders, craftsmen and artisans during the course of this project. I have had the opportunity to listen to many people tell stories from their childhood. Of eating fried apple pies, or handmade quilts they received as wedding gifts from grandmothers and aunts...One of the most delightful parts was watching a little girl working on a hand embroidery piece and saying she couldn't wait to show her Grandma what she had done because her Grandma also embroiders..."

- University of Tennessee Extension Agent





Rural-focused advertising agency Osborn Barr Paramore (OBP) honors Martina Leforce for her leadership in Rural America.



### INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Grow Appalachia had the opportunity to collaborate with a private funder in 2019 to create a pilot arts-based farmers market project that supported intergenerational foodways and traditional arts programming at four farmers markets across central Appalachia. We partnered with the Letcher County Farmers Market in Whitesburg, KY, the Williamson Farmers Market in Williamson, WV, the Scott County Farmers Market in Oneida, TN, and the Berea Farmers Market in Berea, KY.

These markets hosted activities, workshops and programs around traditional music, crafts, foodways, folklore and storytelling. A particular focus was geared towards increasing participation from young children and their families to build a strong, intergenerational community spirit.

All of the farmers market managers reported i ncreased attendance and community participation as a result of these pilot arts-based opportunities.



## 2019 GARDEN GRANT PARTNERS & IMPACT

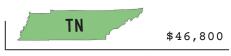




Cowan Community Center Henderson Settlement Laurel County African American Heritage Center Hindman Settlement School Martin County Extension Magoffin County Extension Pine Mountain Settlement School Owsley County Farm-to-School Red Bird Mission St. Vincent Mission



High Rocks Linwood Community Daycare Step-by-Step Big Ugly Step-by-Step Logan Williamson Health and Wellness Center



Scott Christian Care Center Build it Up East Tennessee Rural Resources



Appalachian Sustainable Development Boys Home of Virginia Wise County Extension



Over-the-Rhine People's Garden

## THANK YOU!

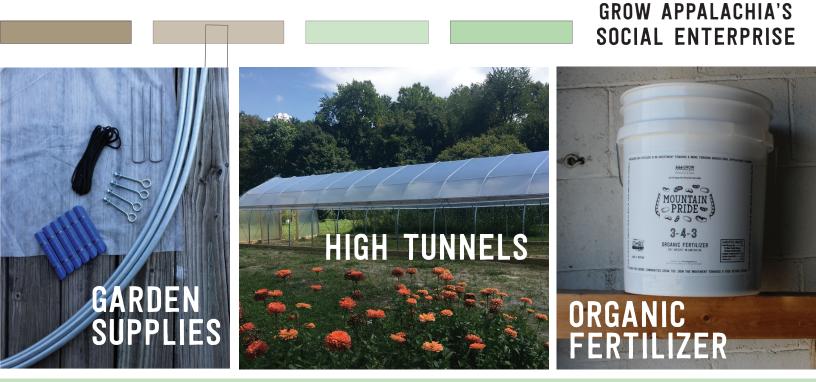
### NAME LOGO

## NAME LOGO

## NAME LOGO



### WITHOUT YOU, THIS WORK WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE.



OUR SOCIAL ENTEPRISE HAS ADDED SOME NEW PRODUCTS TO THE INVENTORY TO CONTINUE PROVIDING RESOURCES FOR GARDENERS AND FARMERS.

CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE! Contact Kayla Preston 859-302-1174 or prestonk@berea.edu