$192,000 in the pockets of local farmers

$384,000 invested in the local economy

fresh, healthy food for low-income families

**2015 BY THE NUMBERS**

3.9 ➔ ➔ ➔ 5.1 increase of daily servings of fruits and vegetables for Fruit & Vegetable Prescription Program Participants

40 families assisted with their SNAP/Food Stamp Applications

1 program launched to bring more customers to the Athens Farmers Market

237,037 pounds of local food bought by low-income families*

34 Partner Markets across the state
MISSION
Wholesome Wave Georgia strengthens local food communities by empowering networks of farmers to facilitate access to and awareness of healthy food choices.

VISION
Wholesome Wave Georgia strives to increase access to fresh, healthy, locally grown food for all Georgians.

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Dear friends of Wholesome Wave Georgia,
2015 was a year of growth for Wholesome Wave Georgia and took us one step closer to realizing our vision of fresh, healthy, Georgia grown food for all.

Growth was the essence of our programs in 2015, as we expanded current programs and launched new initiatives. We diversified our Double Value Coupon Program (DVCP) to include half price Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscriptions, began doubling the value of WIC vouchers (in addition to EBT SNAP), and piloted the Southeast’s first Fruit and Vegetable Prescription® Program (FVRx®).

Growth informed our attitude and approach in 2015. Through a research study conducted with Emory University, we identified transportation and lack of awareness as the two greatest barriers to participation in DVCP. In response, we created the Fresh Food Bus program to transport customers to farmers markets. We also built alliances with state agencies, community organizations and research institutions, with the goal of building awareness for potential program users.

At the heart of this growth are the stories of families we empowered to live healthier lives and of farmers earning more dollars.

In Gwinnett County, program users told Lilburn Farmers Market staff that they could not afford fresh, local food when the market season ended. Staff took their concerns seriously and convened vendors to come up with a solution. During the off-season, farmers now offer a CSA that program users can purchase for $12 each week through our DVCP.

In downtown East Point, Bobby Wilson operates a 5 acre urban farm. Bobby explained, “I’ve been bringing my produce to WIC clinics for mothers to redeem with their WIC Farmers Market vouchers for years”. Bobby asked if he could double WIC vouchers through the DVCP. We obtained approval and encouraged him to try it out. Bobby provided over $6K in WIC incentives in 2015; a total impact of $12K in healthy food for mothers and $12K in income for Bobby’s farm.

In Harrisburg, Augusta, Ladonna, a mother of three, participated in our inaugural FVRx program. Ladonna observed, “Harrisburg is a food swamp. People buy at fast food restaurants. It’s cheap and it’s quick.” As part of the FVRx program, Ladonna participated in monthly cooking classes and learned crock pot cooking. It’s also cheap and quick, but now she utilizes fresh, healthy ingredients. She learned how to make everything from curried sweet potato stew to homemade chicken noodle soup. Instead of asking mom what drive-thru they are going to, Ladonna’s kids now ask her what’s in the crockpot.

In Gwinnett County and in Bobby and LaDonna’s stories, we see how our programs at Wholesome Wave Georgia build stronger, more resilient communities. As we close 2015, I want to thank all of you - Our growth and accomplishments at Wholesome Wave Georgia would simply not be possible without your support and commitment.

Sincerely,

Sara Berney
Executive Director
Dear Wholesome Wave Georgia supporters,

We are pleased to share this 2015 Year End Report with all of you who helped make this last year so successful.

Since we founded Wholesome Wave Georgia in 2009, we have steadily increased the amount of healthy affordable food available to low income residents of our state. We have also expanded our partnerships with farmers markets and farmers, from three in 2009 to 34 in 2015. We are contributing to healthier food choices for Georgia’s families, providing more support for local farmers and increasing the amount of dollars invested in local economies.

In 2015, we grew the size of our staff and board of directors to build internal capacity and achieve our strategic goals. Sara Berney, our Executive Director, brought us visibility on the national stage, introducing the work of Wholesome Wave Georgia to organizations across the state and nation. Rachael, Kane, our Community Outreach Coordinator, worked tirelessly with farmers market partners to develop best practices, improve marketing strategies and develop community partnerships. Caitlin Still, our Development and Events Coordinator, executed our most successful Southern Chefs Potluck yet, and launched our first ever Annual Campaign. The dedication and commitment of all staff have and will continue to move the organization forward in exciting ways.

We were thrilled to welcome enthusiastic new board members in 2015, bringing the total to 15. The Board of Directors brings expertise in new fields and guided staff in important areas to help advance the organization. Their engagement, intellect, and depth of knowledge made this a truly powerful team.

Most of all I would like to thank you, supporters of Wholesome Wave Georgia, for caring about our mission and contributing your time, energy and resources to help us insure that all Georgians have access to healthy, nutritious food. We are excited to share with you the success of our 2015 programs and look forward to working with you in 2016.

Sincerely,

Sarah Yates Sutherland
President
HOW IT WORKS

1. Bring your Georgia EBT Card to the information booth at a WWG Farmers Market.
2. Market staff will swipe your card for the amount you choose and double that amount in market tokens (up to $50).
3. Spend your tokens on fresh food at the market!

www.wholesomewavegeorgia.org • info@wholesomewavegeorgia.org

DOUBLE VALUE COUPON PROGRAM

Wholesome Wave Georgia’s network of Double Value Coupon Program (DVCP) partner markets and farms grew by 35% in 2015, and included partnerships with: markets that accept WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition vouchers; mobile markets; farms offering half price CSAs; and markets in new geographies like Valdosta, Milledgeville and Gwinnett. Our partner markets doubled over $192,000 federal nutrition assistance dollars, translating into $384,000 worth of fresh food for Georgia families and $384,000 in income for Georgia farmers. In 2016, our network of partner markets will grow from 31 to 45 partners and allow us to reach families and farmers in new parts of the state like Albany, Jesup and West Georgia.

In Spring 2015, WWG partnered with Emory University graduate students to evaluate the impact of the program and identify best practices for addressing the barriers to participating in the program. The findings led to the creation of an Outreach Committee and guided their development of an Outreach Plan, which will help WWG reach our core audience and grow the number of families who utilize the DVCP.

Through these studies, we identified transportation as the number one barrier to participation in the DVCP. To combat this barrier, we designed the Fresh Food Bus (FFB) pilot program to transport potential customers to markets. In August 2015, WWG launched the first FFB in partnership with the Athens Farmers Market (AFM) with the goal of connecting UGA students and low-income residents to the market on a direct and easy route at no cost to riders. Of the 17 FFB riders surveyed, 69% reported increased consumption of fruits and vegetables and 75% said they would not be able to access the market without the FFB. We also partnered with University of Georgia MBA students to build off of the AFM pilot and design a sustainable and scalable transportation model to launch at more partner markets in 2016.

We identified lack of awareness of the Double Value Coupon Program as the number two barrier to program participation, and partnerships as a best practice to educate community members about the program. WWG’s 2015 partnerships included: summer meal feeding sites located near partner markets; WIC and Senior farmers markets run by the Department of Public Health; medical communities (i.e., VA Hospital); and educators, school nutrition directors and students through the Department of Education, and Georgia Legal Aid.

In 2016, we are already working to establish additional strategic partnerships that include, Georgia Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Families First, and Goodwill Industries.
The City of East Point forged a partnership with the Atlanta Regional Commission to bring more Seniors to the farmers market. The Atlanta Regional Commission’s Georgia Farmers Market Nutrition Program provides $20 vouchers to seniors to purchase fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables. Every third Tuesday, a city employee visits a local senior center to enroll eligible seniors in the program. On Wednesday, City employees pick up Seniors from the senior center and bring them to the market.

At the market, Seniors receive vouchers to spend on fresh fruits and vegetables. These vouchers can be doubled through Wholesome Wave Georgia, giving Seniors $40 to spend on fruits and vegetables, and putting $40 into the pockets of local farmers.

“Our partnership with Wholesome Wave Georgia has benefited the economically disadvantaged in our community immensely,” says Market Manager Sissie Lang. “The doubled benefits allow individuals, who would not ordinarily be able to provide their families with healthier food choices, the opportunity to do so.”

The Georgia Farmers Market Nutrition Program has greatly increased attendance and support for the East Point Farmers Market. They look forward to growing the program to twice a month in 2016.
FRUIT & VEGETABLE PRESCRIPTION PROGRAM®

Wholesome Wave Georgia launched the first Fruit & Vegetable Prescription® Program (FVRx®) in the Southeast in 2015 in partnership with the Augusta Veggie Truck Farmers Market and Harrisburg Family Healthcare Clinic. With guidance from Wholesome Wave National, we brought community members from the medical, agriculture and public health sectors together to design, execute and evaluate a pilot program. In July, 13 women with diet-related illnesses enrolled in the program, with 54% of the women completing the six-month long pilot.

In 2015, we also explored expansion opportunities for the FVRx and developed relationships with strong potential partners. One of these partners is a group of physicians at Grady Hospital that focus on serving minority and economically underserved patients, and that operate a clinic for obese patients. In 2016, Grady Hospital will be Georgia’s second FVRx site, where the farmers market will be brought to the patients at the hospital. Both 2016 FVRx sites will serve between twenty and thirty participants.

HIGHLIGHTS

• Participants redeemed a total of $6,000 prescription dollars at the market for fresh fruits and vegetables.
• Participants decreased systolic/diastolic blood pressure from the prehypertensive/hypertensive range to the normal range.
• Participants increased their daily serving size of fruits and vegetables by 31%.

“I did not realize how little we were eating of fresh fruits and veggies. We always bypassed most of them because they were more expensive than the canned ones. But for the last weeks, we have had at least 4 servings a day with a variety of things we’ve gotten from the FVRx.”
“I was very depressed before all this started. I didn’t leave my house for six months. I didn’t go outside.”

This is how Angel described her life before she discovered the farmers market. Angel lives with her daughter and two young grandchildren in Harrisburg, a historic mill village just west of downtown Augusta, GA. Like many mill villages across the country, Harrisburg slipped into decline in the late 20th century. In that decline, businesses and houses were boarded up, overgrown weeds covered once well-kept lawns, and once bustling streets grew silent.

Fresh food was scarce; cheap, processed foods became the norm for families like Angel’s. “I just wish that McDonalds hadn’t been such a part of my life back then,” she says, “But it was McDonalds, that was it. Nothing else for supper, maybe pizza.”

The high cost and low accessibility of fresh food, compared to processed foods, left Angel with limited options to feed her family. A fresh summer tomato or ripe winter squash was out of reach. “I couldn’t afford to eat that way.”

There’s a catchphrase to describe Angel’s lifestyle: food insecurity.

Across the country, food insecurity is linked to poverty and the growing prevalence of obesity and heart disease. And the effects of food insecurity on Georgia’s families living below the poverty line are evident: 63% of adults and 37% of children are overweight or obese.

Angel has endured two heart attacks, a stroke, and struggled with high cholesterol. Her doctors did not think she would survive and doubted she had the will to change what made her so sick, but she was determined to turn her health around. It began with an overhaul of her diet and enrolling in Wholesome Wave Georgia’s Fruit & Vegetable Prescription ® Program (FVRx ®).

The FVRx is a program that connects Harrisburg families who have diet-related illnesses, healthcare providers with the Harrisburg Family Healthcare Clinic, and the Veggie Truck Farmers Market, in an innovative process to give access, support, and funding to increase fruit and vegetable consumption. By subsidizing the cost of fresh fruits and vegetables, Angel can now afford to shop at the farmers market and focus on her efforts to eat for health.

Once a month, Angel visits with Trace at the Harrisburg Family Healthcare Clinic. During the visit, Trace measures her blood pressure and weight, and they discuss healthy eating habits. “I came to Medical School to get an education in medicine,” says Trace. “This program opened me up to treating people with food. In the future, I’ll be able to educate my patients about the importance of healthy food for a healthy life.”

At the end of the visit, Angel receives a free prescription for fruits and vegetables for herself and her family to redeem at the farmers market.

Angel leaves the clinic and walks down the block to the Veggie Truck Farmers Market, where she redeems her prescription for tokens to spend on fresh fruits and vegetables at the market. “I've made personal relationships with all of the farmers at the farmers market,” Angel says, removing her from the isolation she once endured.

And the farmers market has breathed new life into the Harrisburg community. Farmer and market vendor, Sam Adderson, believes that sales from FVRx shoppers have turned this year into his best season yet. “The folks traveling down Broad Street see all of the people at the market and what's going on.”

Each week, Angel eagerly returns to the market to shop and socialize with other FVRx participants and Harrisburg community members. The market is not just a place to buy good food; it’s a place to share and learn from others. From her conversations with the vendors and other shoppers, Angel says she’s learned a lot about food, “and the quality of it, and to appreciate it.”

Over the course of six months, Angel lost 27 pounds and brought her blood pressure down to a normal range, and “that has made me feel good about myself.” Her primary care physician is so impressed with her results that he is looking more closely at the diets of his other patients, and finding new converts to use food as medicine. In 2016, Angel will serve as a mentor to the next cohort of FVRx participants and looks forward to helping other women to again feel good about themselves.

Angel also has a new passion. Many days, you can find Angel singing in her garden where she grows vegetables to sell to local restaurants and caterers. “It’s been an amazing trip,” she says, “it’s opened up a lot of doors.”
WHOLESA ME
WAVE
GEORGIA
SUPPORTERS

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Rachael Abraham
Loretta Adderson
Lucy Aiken Johnson
Grace & Doug Aldridge
Allison Alexander
Nancy Amato
Ameripride Linen Services
Dawn Anderson
Chris Appleton
Irene Aronin
Katherine Barringer
Janice Barton
BB&T
Meg & Ben Reeves
Josh Berman
Sara Berman
Liz Berney
Nancy & Steve Berney
Steve Beshara
Jennifer Bingham
Susan Bixler
Kathleen Boddie
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Candler School of Theology
Sammy Carden
Shannon Carney
Casey Cornell & Ritchie McNally
Catalyst Arts Atlanta
Judith Cavill
Karen Clements
Lydia Connerty

Chris Cornwell
Mike Coughlan
Sarah Craft
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Susan & Robert Currey
Marc Daner
Linda Davis
Donata Defilippi
Margaret Denny
Hue Design
Charles Dove
Andy Dufek
Lynn Eden
James Fallon
Benjamin Feinstein
Logynn Ferrall
Betsy & Doug Foppe
Mary & Howard Freeland
Madeline Frey
Sarah Frierson
Mary Genevieve Holmes
Matthew Goodwin
George Goodwin
Michael Gottlieb
Gourmet Foods International
Marci Graber
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Lindsey Mann
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Jane Pierce
Lori Piltcher
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Elizabeth & John Porter
Wendy Price
Michelle Quinones
Katherine Reddy
Billy Reid
Barbara Reid
Resurgens Hospitality Group
Mary Reynolds
Laura Richards
Laurie Ritchie
Elizabeth Rounds
Mary & David Royse
Kara Rozell
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### LIABILITIES + EQUITY

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### INCOME

- **$10,000 – $50,000+**
  - Bond Intelligent Care
  - Georgia Division of Family & Children Services
  - Georgia Food Bank Association - Arby’s Childhood Hunger Grant
  - Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Georgia
  - Les Dames D’Escoffier - Atlanta Chapter
  - Bryan Lyman
  - Tom Reed
  - Barbara Scott
  - Sparrow
  - The Wilbur & Hilda Glenn Family Foundation
  - United States Department of Agriculture - FINI
  - Wholesome Wave

### EXPENSES

- **8% Individuals**
- **45% Grants**
- **17% Partner Market Contributions**
- **30% Special Events**
- **26% Administration**
- **74% Programs**
You can help improve the lives of low-income families and build healthier communities in Georgia! Your gift to Wholesome Wave Georgia makes fresh, local food more accessible to all Georgians, supports our local farmers, and strengthens our local economies.

Make your gift today by visiting www.wholesomewavegeorgia.org/support or mail your check to:
Wholesome Wave Georgia
P.O. Box 5794
Atlanta, GA 31107

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