ad·ap·ta·tion /ˌadapˈtəSH(ə)n/ adjustment to environmental conditions: such as modification of an organism or its parts that makes it more fit for existence under the conditions of its environment: a heritable physical or behavioral trait that serves a specific function and improves an organism’s fitness or survival.
If you could choose a word to describe our year, it would definitely be adaptation. 2020 has been a year of adapting to a changing world. Adaptation and innovation have been fundamental to our work in every facet of our organization.

Each new challenge brought learning, growth and new methods of inspiring children. Our mission remains rock solid, but our means for delivering it has never been more dynamic and comprehensive.

This year has vividly shown the vulnerabilities in our community and beyond. It has been a time when the needs of the community are highest, demanding meaningful work. Apple Seeds jumped in to serve quickly and collaboratively.

Thank you so much for this partnership! To be able to offer such nutrient rich food items to families, during a time they need it the most, is a huge blessing. You also allowed families the opportunity to try items they had not experienced before. You and your team are greatly appreciated!”

Joy Shirley, Fayetteville Public Schools Outback Pantry, Fayetteville October 2020

The vulnerability of our youth has been made all the more evident this year as obesity and food insecurity may contribute to compromised immune function. There has never been a more important time to build nutritional knowledge, increase access to fresh produce and create life-long habits for health.

Our Mission:
To inspire healthy living through garden-based education.

We Believe That All Children Can:
1. Have access to fresh fruits and vegetables
2. Build their love of fresh, real food
3. Be empowered with skills and knowledge for better food choices
4. Feel a sense of belonging when sitting down at the Apple Seeds table
Doubling our planting and harvest yields on the farm

Partnering with schools and other food distribution outlets for youth

Providing kid-tested recipes with our weekly food donations to inspire usage

Creating short cooking videos to inspire kids to cook with the produce at home

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**In 2020 Apple Seeds grew**

**6,790 pounds of fresh, nutritious fruits & vegetables** & **4,550 family portions.**

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**The Farm**

The Teaching Farm is located on 2 acres of land at Gulley Park leased from the City of Fayetteville through 2035. It encompasses our teaching gardens, orchard and teaching kitchen. Here we grow the nutritious produce that is the foundation for all of our education programs. It’s a place where students explore, plant, harvest and prepare familiar and new foods.

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We discovered the Apple Seeds booth at the Bentonville Library today and I was so surprised. Kale, cucumbers and turnips were given to us. My oldest son Lucas loved the cookbook printout and was eager to make dinner tonight. He has always enjoyed cooking!”

**KATIE HARRIS, SON LUCAS, 1ST GRADE BENTONVILLE**
Our Impact

IN PERSON LEARNING

ADAPT TO VIRTUAL LEARNING

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS GET GREAT RESULTS

Apple Seeds implemented education programs in person during the first quarter of 2020, then adapted to virtual learning methods. The impact was surprisingly high for our virtual programs.

Trained 24 NEW FACILITATORS for Growing My Plate nutritional education program

Teachers from 10 STATES participated in Apple Seeds Virtual Farm Field Trips

Apple Seeds content aired on AR PBS TWICE

Distributed almost 5 TONS of fresh produce to students and their families (9,714 POUNDS)

Reach 9,395 STUDENTS with our educational programs, 1,757 of these were in person prior to March school shut-down

4,796 STUDENTS participated in virtual field trips to Apple Seeds

Created 31 new educational videos that received 14,595 views

59% of students reported making the recipe

61% of students reported using a nutrition label after the lesson

78% of students reported they were willing to eat kale

71% of students reported an increase in vegetable consumption (Growing My Plate)
Educational Outreach

In-person educational programs ran from January through the beginning of March. Rapid adaptation of educational content to video and virtual outreach began in April and was continuously created through the remainder of the year. We partnered with Arkansas PBS which allowed Apple Seeds methods to go state-wide.

The summer months left us primed for the start of the fall semester with a polished educational program that could be delivered virtually in a classroom or in a student’s home. We were even able to deliver take-and-make bagged produce with cooking tools to many of these students so they could easily do the cooking component of the class.

Cooking in the Schools

A 45-minute high energy program with elementary and middle school students incorporating grade standards. Students learn critical principals of nutrition and make and sample their very own snack using veggies from the Apple Seeds teaching farm. Each child goes home with the recipe and ingredients to recreate this treat at home so the whole family can be part of this new adventure in good-for-you food.

Adapted to virtual programming in April 2020 and launched via Arkansas PBS Alternative Methods of Instruction in May 2020. This program has been re-established with video, teachers guide, student workbook/worksheets and an assessment quiz for turn-key support to any and all educators in fall 2020.

Farm Lab

Connecting students with where their food comes from, this program includes: planting a seed, harvesting vegetables, and preparing a fresh snack. Students learn valuable nutrition concepts and how great fresh, healthy food can taste. Educational standards are woven into an interactive investigation of the gardens for 2nd and 4th graders.

Adapted to video and virtual programming in summer 2020 providing educators fall teaching material. This program is now being used by teachers all across the state and from as far away as California.

“It was great. Our Healthy Hornets club researched the items and reported out to the group the health benefits of the items. We shared the little cucumber melon things with all the kids and it was so much fun— they loved, loved, loved them.”

BRITTANY BERRY, HELEN TYSON MIDDLE SCHOOL
Farm to Table
This cooking class builds enthusiasm around fruits and vegetables, empowering students with new skills and igniting their desire for healthy food. Students typically get to experience the whole farm to table adventure on the Apple Seeds teaching farm in this 2 hour cooking class.

The launch of the Apple Seeds’ YouTube channel marks the adaptation of this program to virtual outreach. The short videos written, filmed, edited and produced by our team connect kids with the farm to table adventure in mini episodes and inspires them to cook at home.

Growing My Plate
In partnership with Arkansas Hunger Relief and Arkansas Children's Research Institute (ACRI) and adapted from Cooking Matters for a garden-based cooking class.

This six-week cooking class builds a solid foundation in cooking and nutrition. Students harvest produce from the gardens and prepare a nutritious garden-based recipe each week. Led by the Apple Seeds' team on the Teaching Farm in Fayetteville where we train facilitators who then go lead the program across the state.

During fall 2020 this program was adapted to video and virtual outreach. A virtual 6 week program packed with engaging videos connects students to the Apple Seeds Teaching Farm and Teaching Kitchen. We spent the fall developing content & videography, creating a training platform, and piloting the virtual implementation of this program. We plan to make this available in the spring of 2021.

Garden Workshops
Taught by community experts and Apple Seeds' staff, these workshops offer practical instruction that can be implemented at home and serve as a community connection point. And there is no cost to participate!

Leveraging activity on the farm and the expertise of our resident Farm Manager, Apple Seeds launched educational gardening videos beginning in April. With the upsurge and interest in gardening, this provided viewers with practical and useful instruction on everything from sowing seeds to companion plantings and irrigation.

“NOAH RUTHERFORD 4TH GRADE, WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY, FAYETTEVILLE

“We enjoyed and appreciated Apple Seeds bringing the fresh produce here for our clients. The food was such a blessing for people that don’t have vehicles nor the finances to be able to access fresh food. The people I saw getting the produce were so appreciative of it.”

MARY JAMES, DIRECTOR OF THE SPRINGDALE HOUSING AUTHORITY

“Ah, received eggplant. He made up his own recipe and called it eggplant Parmesan bites. The whole family loved them. He loves all food and likes trying new things, however, he’s not a big fan of cheese. He debated for a while but finally decided he wanted to add Parmesan cheese to it. When it was done and he tried it and was amazed he liked it with Parmesan cheese in it!”

NOAH RUTHERFORD 4TH GRADE, WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY, FAYETTEVILLE

Supported by: THE CLOROX COMPANY

Supported by:

United Way
Kohl's Cares.

Growing My Plate
We want to take a moment to sincerely thank those who provided support through donations, grants and in-kind contributions this year. With your contributions we will meet the future with optimism and gratitude!

**With Gratitude**

**Community & Educational Partners**
This year has been like no other. It’s proven time and again, it takes teamwork and great partners to face an uncertain future. The following have been part of the journey to educate and support children in 2020.

- **Community**
  - ALPIS School of Innovation, Fayetteville
  - Ames Orchard
  - Arkansas Children’s Hospital Research Institute
  - Arkansas Children’s Foundation
  - Arkansas PBS
  - Arkansas Children’s Northwest Hospital
  - Bentonville Public Library
  - Big Brothers Big Sisters of NWA
  - BITE NWA
  - Believer’s Homeschool
  - Camp War Eagle SCAR
  - CripScapes Magazine
  - City of Fayetteville
  - Edible Culture
  - Fayetteville Public Library
  - Farmington Public Library
  - Foodcorps
  - Hoffmann Productions
  - NWA Foodbank & Mobile Pantry
  - NWA Progressive Homesteaders
  - Outback Bowling, Fayetteville
  - Public Schools
  - OZONE, Fayetteville
  - OZONE, Springdale
  - Ozark All Seasons Farm
  - SOAR Parson Hills, Springdale
  - Springdale Housing Authority
  - St. Vincent De Paul Food Bank
  - University of Arkansas
  - Department of Health
  - University of Arkansas Sustainability Club
  - University of Arkansas Voluntary Action Center
  - Washington County Master Gardeners
  - Washington County Teen

- **Education**
  - Baggett Middle School, Springdale
  - Bernice Young Elementary School, Springdale
  - Bright Field Middle School, Bentonville
  - Butterfield Elementary, Fayetteville
  - Decatur School District SPARK Program
  - Don Tyson Elementary School, Springdale
  - Elkins Elementary School
  - Elmore Elementary, Springdale
  - Elmwood Middle School, Rogers
  - Farmview Elementary, Rogers
  - Folsom Elementary, Farmington
  - Frank Tillery Elementary, Rogers
  - Cervis Blanc Elementary, Springdale
  - Mayfield Elementary, Rogers
  - Holloway Middle School, Springdale
  - Holloway Hybrid Middle School, Springdale
  - Harlingen High School, Harlingen
  - Happy Hollow Elementary, Fayetteville
  - happy Elementary, Springdale
  - Helen Tyson Middle School, Springdale
  - Houston High School, Houston
  - Happy Hollow Elementary, Fayetteville
  - Happy Hollow Elementary, Springdale
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- **In-Kind Support**
  - **Music by Smokey & the Mirror**
  - **Flowers from Dripping Springs & Washington County Master Gardeners**
  - **Photography by Meredith Maeshburn**
  - **Design by Brittany Phillips**
  - **Fossil Cove Design**

**Event Sponsors**
Fundraising was made more challenging by COVID, but thanks to the time, talent and financial contributions of many we made a way.

- **The Kitchen Table**
  - (January & February)
  - **Chefs**
    - Chef Steven Brooks
    - Chef Haley O’Brien
    - Chef Brooks Cameron

- **Picnic from the Farm**
  - (June, July & August)
  - **Chefs**
    - Chef Haley O’Brien

- **Sponsors**
  - JRs Kombucha
  - Ozark Beer Co
  - Chobani

**An Evening From the Farm**
**Chefs**
- Jordan Wright of Wright’s Barbecue
- Chef Jeremy Gawthrop of Woodstone and Roots Festival
- Chef Brooks Cameron
- Chef Corey McCaun of Bordinos
- Chef Haley O’Brien

**Sponsors**
- Cooks Venture
- Generations Health & Wellness
- Ground Truth
- Signature Bank
- Woodstone

**With Gratitude**

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JEN FLANAGAN WITH VMLY&R

“I love the Apple Seeds mission, and their dedication to programs that educate and increase children’s access to healthy foods. I am grateful to even be a small part of supporting those efforts, harvesting sweet potatoes that will end up within the local community. The teaching farm provides lessons for students, as well as adults, and I look forward to continuing to support this organization.”

JEN FLANAGAN WITH VMLY&R
2020 Financial Summary

Income: $478,577

- Grants: 1%
- Community Support: 15%
- Fundraising Events: 31%
- Program Services: 53%

Expenses: $372,603

- Program Services: 74%
- Supporting Services: 11%
- Fundraising: 5%
- Pavilion Construction: 1%

Your Team

Apple Seeds is powered by a dedicated staff which is supercharged by AmeriCorps VISTA team members. This group runs the farm and teaching kitchen, designs and executes educational programs, provides garden education programs to the community and is changing the nutrition and health of future generations.

The focus this year was to reduce the budget for 2020 and plan strategically for uncertainties through 2022.

Mary Thompson – Executive Director, Cale Nicholson – Farm Manager, Brett Williams – Program Director, Tanya Collins – Marketing Director, Becky Miller – Program Manager, Ellen Carroll – Virtual Program Manager, AmeriCorps VISTA, Lizzie Park – Farm Lab Coordinator, AmeriCorps VISTA, Bailey Stewart – Farm Lab Coordinator AmeriCorps VISTA, Alex Kelch – Farm to Table Coordinator, AmeriCorps VISTA, Sarah Zalucha – Program & Volunteer Coordinator AmeriCorps VISTA Brett Williams (not pictured), Bailey Stewart (not pictured).

And we are very thankful for those who volunteer their time to extend our outreach.

Board of Directors

Logan Webster
Mac Campbell
Kelcie Atwell
Christena Devlin
Sarah Johnson

Ruth Bradley Weyland
Kyra Ramsey
Michele Senlikci
Grant Wilson
Chris Nelson
This year has been one of challenge and growth for us all.

Plants become stronger, frequently building up additional nutrients, during harsh conditions.

We like to think we have too.

The new skills and ingenuity developed during 2020 will result in even greater results in the years to come. Apple Seeds’ is positioned to drive positive change in the lives of our next generation through our methods and new tools.