Building a healthy future with nutrition and food as a solid foundation

ANNUAL REPORT 2021
Gaining momentum in a new world.

A world that continues to change and challenge us all. One that continues to highlight the importance of health and healthy habits. Nutrition is the foundation and Apple Seeds is leading our youth in establishing that foundation.

Food donations

Each season we plan, plant, nurture and grow fresh, nutrient-rich produce.

This seasonal goodness is harvested each week, washed and paired with kid-pleasing recipes, then delivered to area partners who help get it to children and their families, who need it most.

“Apple Seeds has been an amazing and important partner for many years and we are beyond thankful! Specifically, during this time, the weekly veggie drop has been incredible. Our students ask every Thursday what they are going to get to bring home to their families. It has been such a blessing and fun way to bring Apple Seeds into the SOAR Program every week.”

FRANKYE KOONTZ, SOAR, PARSON HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

In 2021 Apple Seeds supported Arkansas youth by:

- Safely re-initiating in-person programming
- Increasing enrollment in virtual Teaching Farm field-trips
- Supporting programming with teaching guides and student workbooks
- Expanding reach of programming beyond NWA
- Donating farm-fresh produce paired with kid-appealing recipes

“Food insecurity refers to households unable to provide adequate food for one or more household members due to lack of resources. Children are particularly susceptible to the negative impacts of food insecurity because their brains and bodies are still developing. Among children, food insecurity is associated with anemia; asthma; depression and anxiety; cognitive and behavioral problems; and higher risk of being hospitalized.”

EXCERPT FROM FEEDING AMERICA - THE IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS ON FOOD INSECURITY BRIEF

Arkansas ranks 2nd in the nation for Food Insecurity

1 in 4 children in Arkansas face hunger

150,000 Additional Arkansans struggle with hunger due to the Covid-19 pandemic

At Apple Seeds we know that improving the health and wellbeing of children is more than just having access to fresh vegetables and fruits. Kids need to be inspired to try new foods and empowered with skills of how to prepare them.

Building a love of good foods comes from experiences that happen in a fun, positive and encouraging atmosphere.

“Plant a seed”

“Harvest fresh produce”

“Wash and weigh it”

“Build cooking skills and recipes”

“Sit down at the table and share a meal”

Our mission, to inspire healthy living through garden-based education continues to ring true

Food insecurity refers to households unable to provide adequate food for one or more household members due to lack of resources. Children are particularly susceptible to the negative impacts of food insecurity because their brains and bodies are still developing. Among children, food insecurity is associated with anemia; asthma; depression and anxiety; cognitive and behavioral problems; and higher risk of being hospitalized.”

EXCERPT FROM FEEDING AMERICA - THE IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS ON FOOD INSECURITY BRIEF
Reaching those we served

Reinitiating In-Person Programming
This year your team built new protocol for safely delivering each educational program.

Additionally, the team strengthened relationships with schools, educators and children’s organizations across Northwest Arkansas to once again execute programs in person at The Teaching Farm and in educator facilities. The return to in-person programming further ignites students’ interest in good food that is good for them through hands-on engaging lesson delivered by the Apple Seeds team. Apple Seeds is poised to adjust and adapt our approach no matter what the future brings.

Educational Programs:
• Cooking in the Schools
• Farm Lab/Farm Field Trips
• Farm to Table Cooking Classes
• Growing My Plate
• Apple Seeds Summer Camp

We had the opportunity to pilot this program inside of Family and Consumer Science classes to merge a garden-based approach to cooking with their curriculum. Expansion across the state is in the works!

“Because of the success of the program, the students and I are already planning what we want to grow in the greenhouse next semester and we will continue to build on the program’s foundation.”

LEAH WELCH, TWO RIVERS HIGH SCHOOL

Virtual Farm Field Trip Programs
Virtual delivery of Apple Seeds programs continues to meet with success and has been adopted by educators in 26 states as well as 3 countries around the world.
EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAMS:
- Cooking in the Schools
- Farm Lab / Farm Field Trips
- Growing My Plate
- Summer Camp
- Virtual Farm Field Trips
- Cooking Demonstration Videos

EDUCATION

1. 15,382 students reached
   2,316 in person
   13,066 virtual

2. 1,033 teachers downloaded the virtual field trip program materials

ADOPTION OF HEALTHY BEHAVIORS:

- 47% of students reported making Apple Seeds recipes on their own after participating in a program
- 71% of the students reported they were willing to eat vegetables (parsley, zucchini, kale, and spinach)
- 64% of students retained the nutrition education concepts

FOOD DONATION

2. DONATIONS OF FARM FRESH PRODUCE:
   9,052 produce bundles were shared with food insecure youth or their families
   THAT’S 8,779 POUNDS of fresh, nutrient-rich food

3. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

   8,759 adults have taken part in workshops, events, venue/facility use, or garden education videos.

We’ve seen and heard firsthand just how big an impact this is having on NWA children and their families. Access to nutrient-rich food continues to be a constant struggle for many families. Apple Seeds is responding to this need by sharing our weekly farm harvests and partnering with other farms to bundle up produce and kid-pleasing recipes. We are making it fun and easy to adopt these foods into the everyday diets of children and their families. Produce is shared with school food pantries, youth organizations, and with students who are participating in programming.
**2021 Summary of Financials**

**2021 annual budget of $464k**

**INCOME**
- 18% Grants
- 36% Program and other services
- 34% Community donations
- 12% Fundraising/events

**EXPENSES**
- 80% Supporting services
- 11% Fundraising/events
- 9% Programs

---

**Venue Opportunities**

In 2021 Apple Seeds began offering private dinners and venue rental as a way to support the educational outreach of the Teaching Farm. This is the perfect location for a meeting, party or private gathering! We continue to offer Kitchen Table Dinners, An Evening at the Farm and other unique culinary events as fundraisers for our educational programs.

---

**Your Team**

Apple Seeds is comprised of a small, agile staff supercharged by AmeriCorps VISTA team members who help make the outreach achieved possible. This group handles all aspects of our operation: farming, programming, education, outreach, fundraising, events and administration.

Mary Thompson - Executive Director, Cale Nicholson – Farm Manager, Tanya Collins – Marketing Director, Carol Weaver – Events Manager, Ryan Patterson – Program Director, Becky Miller – Senior Program Manager, Lizzie Park - Program Manager, AmeriCorps VISTA Carolina Cantú – Growing My Plate Program Coordinator, Haley Deatheridge - AmeriCorps VISTA Farm to Table Program Coordinator, Elaina Taeger, AmeriCorps VISTA Farm Lab Program Coordinator, Julia Hall, AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer & Program Coordinator, Shanleigh Powell, AmeriCorps VISTA Cooking in the Schools Program Coordinator. Not pictured Sarah Zalucha, Ellen Carroll

---

**Volunteers**

Volunteers contributed more than 1,800 hours of time and service at Apple Seeds in 2021. Without them the teaching farm would not be possible. Thank you so much for lending your heart and your hands!

---

**Board of Directors**

Mac Campbell
Christena Devlin
Sevin Gallo
Jessica Grey
Beth Hall
Sarah Johnson
Chris Nelson
Michele Senlikci
Tracy Simpson
Amy Sorrell
Don Walsh
Logan Webster
David Weidenaar
Grant Wilson
With Gratitude
Please join us in recognizing those in our community and beyond who support building health with our children through their financial and in-kind contributions.

Leaders ($15,000 and above)

Providers ($1000-$4,999)

Community Partners

Builders ($5,000 - $14,999)

Educational Partners

Ambassadors ($250 to $999)

Friends ($1 to $249)

With Gratitude
Please join us in recognizing those in our community and beyond who support building health with our children through their financial and in-kind contributions.

Leaders ($15,000 and above)

Providers ($1000-$4,999)

Community Partners

Builders ($5,000 - $14,999)

Educational Partners

Ambassadors ($250 to $999)

Friends ($1 to $249)
“Working with at-risk teens has become a life-changing experience. At first, I wasn’t sure I would be able to connect. I questioned how to reach them and gain their trust. Food had power over all of that. Through Growing My Plate, I not only connected, I’ve seen progress in their grades, attitudes, behavior and motivation to attend class. Apple Seeds has helped make that happen. I am grateful to have support in our collective purpose to teach children about nutrition and how fresh foods get to their plate.”

KIM JONES, TEEN ACTION SUPPORT CENTER