



2024 Annual Report

On behalf of our vibrant Common Roots community, thank you so much for supporting our mission! Your willingness to help bolster food education and equity makes a significant difference toward a healthier community at large.

Our Common Roots’ team reflects on the wisdom of Wendel Barry, who wrote, “People are fed by the food industry, which pays no attention to health, and are treated by the health industry, which pays no attention to food.” We know that sadly, this is true, and we commit to going deeper. We know that nourishing food comes from healthy soils. We educate our community through the South Burlington classrooms, kitchens, and food shelves and at our Farmstand. We grow certified organic food on multiple acres where no chemicals are permitted. And with our agricultural practices on two urban farms, we are cultivating clean, nourishing food.

Our food equity commitment this year expanded from 3,123 visits to the South Burlington Food Shelf in 2023 to 3,788 visits in 2024. We also grew seven heritage crops for the Abenaki Food Shelf in Shelburne and brought triple-washed organic food to Feeding Champlain most every week throughout the growing season. In 2024, we more than doubled our annual support to the VT Food Bank and Intervale Food Hub by providing \$8,840 worth of additional food to help those affected by the repeated flooding. Common Roots is committed to building *farm resiliency*, one for another.

2024 Food Shelf Report

2024 Goals	Accomplishments	What We Learned
<p>Goal #1 Increase the crop plan for our three food shelf outlets from 8,000 lbs. (1/3 of our 24,000-lb. goal)</p>	<p>Even with the challenging weather, we exceeded 8,000 lbs. for our food shelf commitments. -With the repeated flooding, we simply planted more food and at least doubled our food equity goals, increasing our commitment to food justice.</p>	<p>The weather was challenging for a second year, with many VT farms flooding. -We are making a commitment going forward to build into our farm plan and budget the flexibility to grow more food considering any challenges related to weather or climate change.</p>
<p>Goal #2 Cultivate organic veggie and herb plant starts and teach food shelf participants in May and June</p>	<p>For a third year, our farm team cultivated 1,200 veggie plant starts. The folks were delighted to have both our plants and</p>	<p>It may be valuable to incentivize food shelf participants to take photos of their gardens and give bonus dollars to our Farmstand as an incentive</p>

	access to all the organic compost they needed.	to grow food. We have this in our 2025 plan.
Goal #3 Provide food education at our Farmstand at the South Burlington Food Shelf three times each week, May 1 – September 30	Our educator taught the same lesson three days every week and offered instruction on how to make > 20 recipes.	The funds we have been receiving are making a difference. What we know from our 17 years of growing increasing amounts of food and teaching is that most people who use Food Shelves are eager to learn more and appreciate our demos and recipes.
Goal #4 Build incentives to bring food shelf participants to our farms and receive explicit instruction in our 40 raised beds	Our attendance was low due to heavy rain. Our farm team met with our staff, and we decided to spend this time harvesting to support the VT Food Bank and Intervale Food Hub.	Our team has decided to shift the time we spent on this component of food equity to plan a goal to support farm resiliency considering climate challenges moving forward.
Goal #5 Expand our Abenaki Gateway Educational Gardens to cultivate heritage crops for the Abenaki Food Shelf in Shelburne at our .5-acre site and save heritage seeds for the Abenaki Land Link Project	Our crop yield was close to what we expected to harvest. Thankfully, all but one of the seven crops produced well. -Half of the harvested crops went to the Abenaki Food Shelf in Shelburne and half went to seed harvesting for the Abenaki Seed Bank at NOFA, VT.	Our team will circle back with the Abenaki chief to adjust our plans once again for 2025. -We learned that our second Abenaki Festival, despite low attendance (43), was vital to our progress in relationship building.

2024 Food Education Programming Report

In 2024, we celebrated 17 years of food education service to our community!

Farm to School – We are in 73 classrooms (preschool through grade 5) each academic month (growth from 160,000 to >170,000 lessons).

Farm to Go – Middle school student-chef courses continue to provide nourishing, balanced meals for families to enjoy at home, with the recipes, made by their child (growth from >15,000 meals to >15,775 meals).

Field Trips on our Farm – We enjoyed increased interest in our Growing Gardens & Farm Field Trips > 300 students in 2024, up from 220 in 2023

Interns – We hosted college students from UVM, ST, Michael’s College and Champlain as well as local high school students (>60 in 2024).

Thank you for standing up for food education and food equity!

Our work to support three food shelves helps us realize that our perception of reality is often limited. It is only when we immerse ourselves in the lives of those in need that we truly understand their struggles, which can be vastly different from what we initially perceive or expect. It is eye-opening to witness the resilience and strength of families and households who

struggle with food security. Many of them assist with the chores of operating the Food Shelves. We appreciate your support wholeheartedly!



Common Roots' Certified Organic Farm at South Village



Food equity program at the SB Food Shelf – 17th year of production



Food education programs in classrooms and on our farm

We appreciate your generosity with supporting our mission!

Ben & Jerry's Foundation

Charleigh Charitable Trust

City Market

City of South Burlington

Commando

Community Bank NA Foundation

Community National Bank

Costco Foundation

Dealer.com/ Cox Automotive

Forrest and Frances Lattner Foundation

Gallagher Flynn

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Rosanne Greco

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John and Marilyn Larkin Charitable Trust

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Northfield Savings Bank

Patterson Propane

Ruth & Harvey Gelfenbein Charitable Foundation

South Village Stewardship Fund

Sylvamo

The Windham Foundation

Vermont Community Foundation

Waterwheel Foundation

To all our donors, in-kind givers, and volunteers,

Thank You for making a difference in 2024!