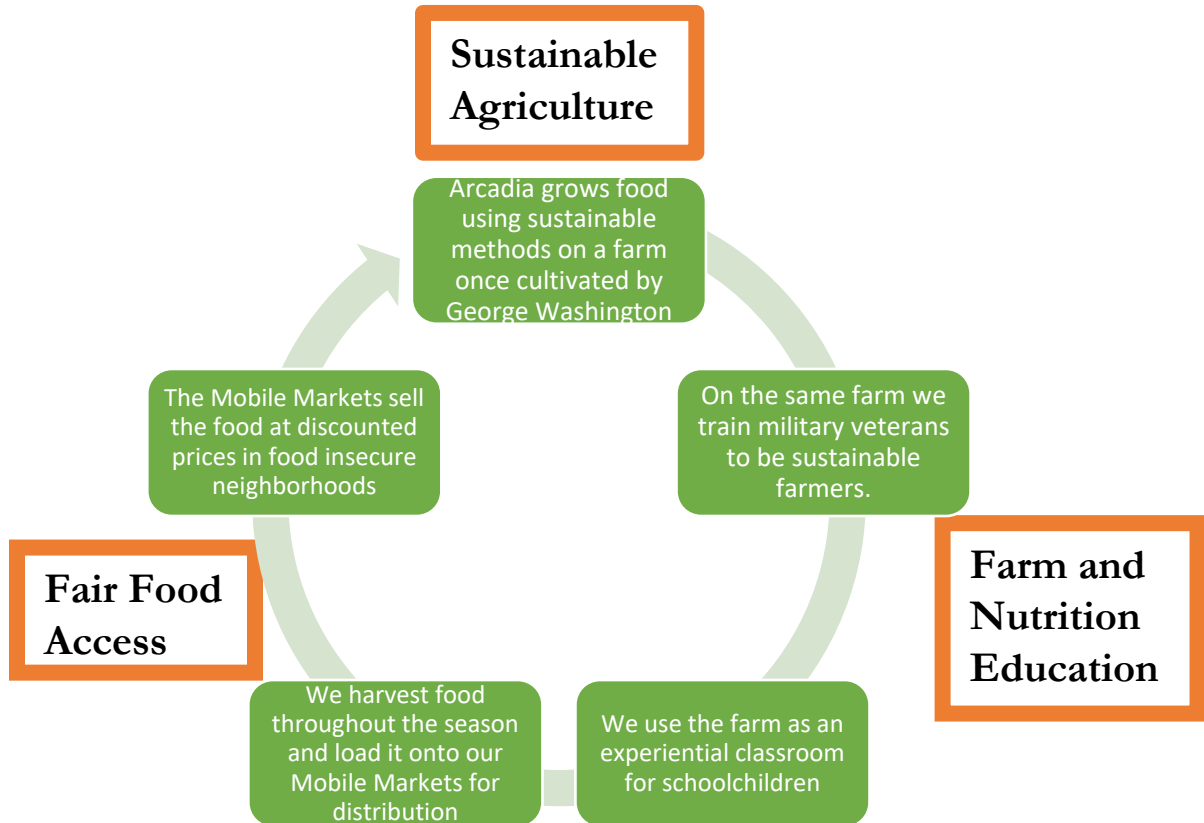


Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture

2020 Annual Report



A R C A D I A
CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD & AGRICULTURE

WWW.ARCADIAFOOD.ORG

ABOUT ARCADIA

The Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture's mission is to cultivate vibrant local food systems to prioritize health, equity, and sustainability, from the farm forward. We achieve this through a thoughtfully constructed network of programs that add to the supply of quality, fresh food; increase the number of farmers by training military veterans for new careers in agriculture; building demand for quality food through on-farm and in-school experiential education programs; and finally, dismantling the primary barriers to access through our Mobile Markets, which offer fresh, affordable food in neighborhoods passed over by traditional retailers.

Arcadia's Theory of Change

Arcadia takes a holistic approach to reforming the food system to achieve not just public health benefits but environmental and economic benefits as well. We approach food systems reform by addressing the gaps and root causes, rather than just the symptoms.

Our work repairs the frayed links between the urban and rural areas to the economic, environmental and health benefit of both. Our interlocking programs achieve strong results individually but maximize their impact when combined.

For instance, rather than distribute free food, we are increasing the supply of wholesome food and the farmers who grow it; the affordability and fair distribution of that food in neighborhoods that lack access; and the desire for the food among children and families who may not have developed an affinity. While we are not an anti-hunger organization, if we do our work well there will be fewer hungry people.

We work hard to anticipate and avoid unintended consequences with each of our programs. For example, introducing children to healthy food via school gardens is a laudable effort with a proven impact on their willingness to eat vegetables, but it does not make a lasting impact if their families can't obtain, afford, or prepare the vegetables at home. Building demand among low-income families for healthy food does little if there is not also a steady and growing supply of sustainably grown, affordable wholesome food produced on local farms by an increasing number of skilled farmers. We grow food and farmers to meet the demand. We grow the demand through our school programs. We satisfy and further stoke demand through our Mobile Markets, which in turn triggers the production of more food, and the training of more farmers. Our commitment to regenerative agricultural practices underlies all this work.

Arcadia's Program Areas

Arcadia works toward our mission in four program areas: Sustainable Agriculture, Food Access, Farm and Nutrition Education, and Veteran Farmer Training and Support.

Sustainable Agriculture: Growing the supply of responsibly grown, affordable food & the number of sustainable farmers

Land under cultivation: 5 acres

Total 2020 Harvest

- **Over 30,000** pounds of fruits and vegetables harvested
- 48 types of crops and over 80 different varieties grown
- **~141,496** fruit/vegetable servings harvested
- **~\$55,395** in wholesale value



Season Review

The close of 2020 marks the end of the tenth season for the Hilltop Farm and the fifth season for the Dogue Farm. As a team, we are proud of what we were able to accomplish considering the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, which deeply impacted the farm's activities. The number of volunteers hosted was greatly diminished (by at least 85%) and new protocols were implemented to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID through the employee and volunteer community (such as face masks, social distancing, and more frequent hand washing).

While the weather in 2020 wasn't quite as ideal as the optimum conditions experienced in 2019, we still benefited from relatively mild and agreeable weather throughout the year. And we managed to produce (in terms of unit/bed foot) on par with other seasons. We increased our productivity of scallions, garlic, and lettuce per bed foot from last season and grew potatoes and onions for the first time in over five seasons. However, we experienced some significant crop loss in our fall brassica planting due largely, we believe, to a cutworm outbreak in early fall. Despite that and a diminished volunteer crew size as well as the added hurdle of adjusting to a new protocol, we managed to produce plenty of produce for our 27 CSA families, to ensure that our Farm Fellows met their core learning objectives, to distribute over 13,000 pounds of produce to the Mobile Market, and to donate a greater quantity and percentage of farm production to food pantries and food-relief efforts in our immediate community than in any previous season.

Some of our major accomplishments include:

CSA Program:

This year, we piloted a 27-member CSA program. Ten shares were delivered to Harmony Place, less than four miles from the farm, by a social worker and given away at no cost to the recipients.

Community Partnerships:

Responding to increased food insecurity in our local community this year, the farm directed produce that might normally go to other Arcadia programming or wholesale outlets to food pantries and other pandemic emergency food relief efforts. We donated 33% of the pounds of produce distributed (or 30% of the total servings), up from 12% and 11%, respectively, in 2019.

Pounds of produce distributed to Community Partners/Food relief: 8,992 pounds

Servings donated to Community Partners/Food relief: ~40,439

Orchard:

This season, with the support of several grants and generous donations, we designed and began planting a half-acre orchard. We worked with an external consultant to develop a site preparation plan and select crops and varieties to be planted. In the fall, we planted 15 Asian pears, 7 apples, 8 Asian persimmons (astringent and non-astringent), 18 pawpaws, 10 figs, and 36 blueberries. Blackberries and more fig trees will need to be planted in the spring of 2021 to complete the plan.

Incubator Farm:

The Production Farm supported the efforts of 6 incubator farmers operating three incubator farm businesses in 2020. Teamwork, cooperation and collaboration were the hallmarks of this community of incubator farmers this year. Incubator farmers managed their own irrigation schedules and made independent sales to various market outlets.

Farm Volunteers:

Because of the challenges posed by training new volunteers in a pandemic, we limited the volunteer opportunities to individuals who would be able to volunteer on the farm on a regular weekly or biweekly basis. While this diminished the number of hands working on the farm, the restricted size helped our Farm Fellows form a strong team ethic in the early season and ensured that there were fewer COVID



transmission opportunities with fewer people coming and going throughout the week.

Volunteer Data:

Total Number of Volunteers: 58

Total Volunteer Hours: 814

Average Volunteer Hours/Person: 14

Number of separate Volunteer Groups: 1 (orchard day)

Veteran Farmer Program: Growing the next wave of American farmers

The nation needs 700,000 new farmers to replace the farmers aging out of the profession over the next 20 years. The military produces 200,000 new veterans annually. This demographic is particularly well suited – through their resourcefulness, grit, physical capabilities and entrepreneurialism – to careers in agriculture if they have the opportunity to be retrained for it.

Arcadia trains military veterans to farm on land that George Washington once cultivated a few miles outside of the nation's capital. Through 2020, Arcadia has graduated 84 military veterans, active duty personnel, and their family members, from the program. Half of those graduates are currently farming and 2/3 of the graduates reported they are still engaged in agriculture in some form (farming or continuing their training and education).

There are three training tracks:

The Veteran Fellowship is a one-year, salaried on-farm apprenticeship for military veterans to learn and practice sustainable agricultural methods. It is approved by the Veteran Administration as an official OJT program, allowing participants to draw down GI Bill benefits while they train.

The Veteran Farmer Reserve program meets one weekend a month for 12 months for intensive cultivation, business, botany, and farming skills training, along with field visits to successful farms to explore the full range of agricultural businesses. The Reservists also work two weeks a year on Arcadia Farm to experience the challenges, rewards, and day-to-day rhythms of agriculture.

The Veteran Farm Incubator dismantles the primary barrier to new veteran farmers – access to affordable land and infrastructure. Graduates of our training program may apply for farm plots on our vegetable farm, supported by our irrigation, power, greenhouse, farm equipment and market access. They establish their own farm businesses on our farm paying modest rent and adhering to sustainable agricultural practices. Arcadia offers a one-year wholesale buying contract so they can focus on building their business and cultivation skills. Three years on our low-cost, low-risk incubator qualifies our graduates for low-interest FSA loans as farm operators.

2020 posed challenges with in-person training for the Veteran Farmer Reserve program, which we overcame with the introduction of Zoom for academic instruction. This kind of training was

found to be effective and impactful, allowing trainees to focus for four three-hour instructional blocks, while also allowing trainees to get to know one another through unstructured group conversations and written chats.

We front-loaded the season with academic training, and began meeting outside, in person – masked and socially distanced – for farm field trips and on-farm cultivation and farm walks. The year was a success in no small part to the extraordinary members of the training class. Seven members of our 21-member training class had already started farms before the end of the season, and an eighth member of the class took over a turn key organic vegetable operation in Lovettsville, VA, a direct result of Arcadia’s robust network in the local farm community.

Fair Food Access: Building equitable access to nutritious food in underserved communities
Mobile Market:

Arcadia launched its Mobile Market in 2012, as a rolling farm stand stocked with locally, sustainably grown foods including fruits and vegetables, herbs, pastured eggs, grass-fed and pastured beef, pork, organic milk, cheese, handmade bread and honey.

The Mobile Market has sold and distributed more than \$1.5 million in affordably priced, high-quality local fresh food in under-resourced neighborhoods in Washington, D.C. since 2012. The significance of this figure is not just the sales but what it represents: the growing and barely scratched surface of the demand for fresh healthy food in resource-constrained neighborhoods that suffer a disproportionate rate of chronic diseases that correlate strongly to the food to which these neighborhoods do – and do not – have regular access.

The Mobile Market makes regular weekly stops in low-food access neighborhoods and accepts and doubles the face value of food stamps (SNAP, WIC, and Senior FMNP). The neighborhoods we serve typically have high SNAP usage, low car ownership, and are at least a mile from a grocery store that can support a healthy diet.

In testament to the success of the model, SNAP customers have increased the amount of food they take home from an average of \$4 per transaction in 2012 to \$12 per transaction in 2019 – with Arcadia doubling the take home amount to \$24 on average. In 2020, during the pandemic markets, the average SNAP sale value was nearly \$25 per transaction, with our doubling program increasing the average value of SNAP transactions to \$50. Our sales have increased by 537 percent since 2012 with a limited marketing budget – just customer word of mouth.

The Mobile Market is not just about food access. It also supports the local farm economy. Arcadia grows much of the food on the Mobile Market but we also purchase food at wholesale prices from other farmers to resell. This diversifies their businesses and gives them new

customers in a market at no risk that they would not otherwise reach. The Mobile Market represents more than \$1.4 million in wholesale revenue for local farms. In fact, when a regional organic cooperative of farmers closed down, the farmers reached out to Arcadia as a group and asked if we would continue buying from them if they reorganized because Arcadia's customers – the lowest income neighborhoods in the city – were the single largest customer group for the organic cooperative. We enthusiastically agreed, and the Franklin Sustainable Farm cooperative was formed, with Arcadia as its anchor client.

The remarkable effectiveness of the Mobile Market is attributable to our high quality food, excellent customer service, affordable prices, and locations that are convenient to people with limited incomes.

Equally important, strong sales at the Mobile Market demonstrate the growing and unmet demand for healthy food in low-income neighborhoods. Year over year increases in sales subvert the pernicious idea that low-income people don't support healthy food retail. We have demonstrated every year since 2012 that if the food is high quality, conveniently available, and affordable, customers will flock to it regardless of income.

In 2021 Arcadia transitioned its first Mobile Market stop to a new provider – Common Good City Farm. We have served the LeDroit neighborhood since 2012, partnering with Common Good in various ways – buying their food, selling it for them on consignment, sponsoring their fruit and vegetable match – while they built capacity to serve their neighborhood independently. They achieved that capacity in 2021. Arcadia provided them with 5 years of sales data from their location, and are assisting them in finding sources for the products they do not carry.

Every neighborhood is different, and we hope to support each location we serve in finding permanent, affordable sources of nutritious foods unique to their needs, be it a brick and mortar store, a neighborhood co-op, a full farmers market, or some other format. We will support those efforts, transition our customers, and move to new neighborhoods to bring local affordable food to new customers.

Arcadia Farmers Register: Using data to drive food policy and access

With software partner Perigee, Arcadia developed an elegant iPad-based mobile point of sale system for the Mobile Market. The Arcadia Farmers Register speeds customer transactions, tracks inventory, and expedites financial reporting. Because it associates every transaction with the form of tender used to purchase it, the location, time, and price, it also yields valuable data on the food purchasing patterns of our customers. Arcadia is now working with the city of Washington to use the data to inform and design food policies and interventions that encourage the purchase of nutrient-dense foods.

The Arcadia Farmers Register is a scalable solution to creating a national database of healthy food purchasing behaviors available free of charge to government policy makers and public health researchers. It can also be used to ascertain prices at farmers markets nationwide, and to improve the farm business valuation system used to determine capital lent to small farmers. Dozens of mobile market organizations around the country now use the Farmers Register

Farm and Nutrition Education: Building the demand for nutritious food

Field Trips:

Arcadia offers field trips to our sustainable farm for children pre-K through 5th grade. The field trips meet DC and Virginia standards of learning. The visits introduce children to food at its source, and the tenets of sustainable agriculture. The children harvest eggs from our flock of laying hens; dig in the compost pile; interact with worms and pollinators, harvest fresh vegetables and use them to prepare delicious, healthy snacks.

Nearly 10,000 children have been educated on Arcadia Field Trips since 2012. Based on pre-and post testing, we see 37.5 percent increase in the number of children who report liking to eat beets after their farm field trip than before they came.

Farm Camp:

Under non-pandemic circumstances, Arcadia offers five weeks of summer day camp on our farm. The children tend the chickens and compost pile; plant, weed, harvest; interact with visiting goats; create farm-based art; learn about pests and pollinators; make cheese; cook with professional chefs; and follow their own curiosity through independent farm exploration.

Twenty-five percent of farm campers attend on full, needs-based scholarships funded by Arcadia donors. More than 1000 children have attended farm camp since 2012. In 2018, 85 percent of campers reported trying a new food, and 75 percent reported looking forward to eating more fruits and vegetables with their families after their camp experience.

HyperLocal Salad Bar:

In partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools, Arcadia has provided fresh vegetables and fruits for three elementary schools close to our farm. These schools all attend field trips to our farm and meet with our farmers, and our farmers then conduct taste tests at the school to promote the new foods. These multiple touch points increase children's enthusiasm and willingness to eat fresh, healthy foods.

The COVID pandemic forced us to modify much of our Farm and Nutrition Education programming in 2020. School Field Trips and Farm Camp were cancelled for the year. Food that was initially planned for the salad bars was distributed to school supplemental feeding programs,

community groups, and distributed through school partners. However, Arcadia staff created a number of new ways to interact with the children who would normally visit the farm in person. We conducted online educational programming with local teachers to support virtual classrooms, and launched a new Farm Camp Kit program, and launched a series of book clubs and online workshops. In the Fall of 2020, we offered small group visits to the farm to accommodate requests from families, home schoolers, and other groups, pods, and quaranteams.

Live, Eat, Grow:

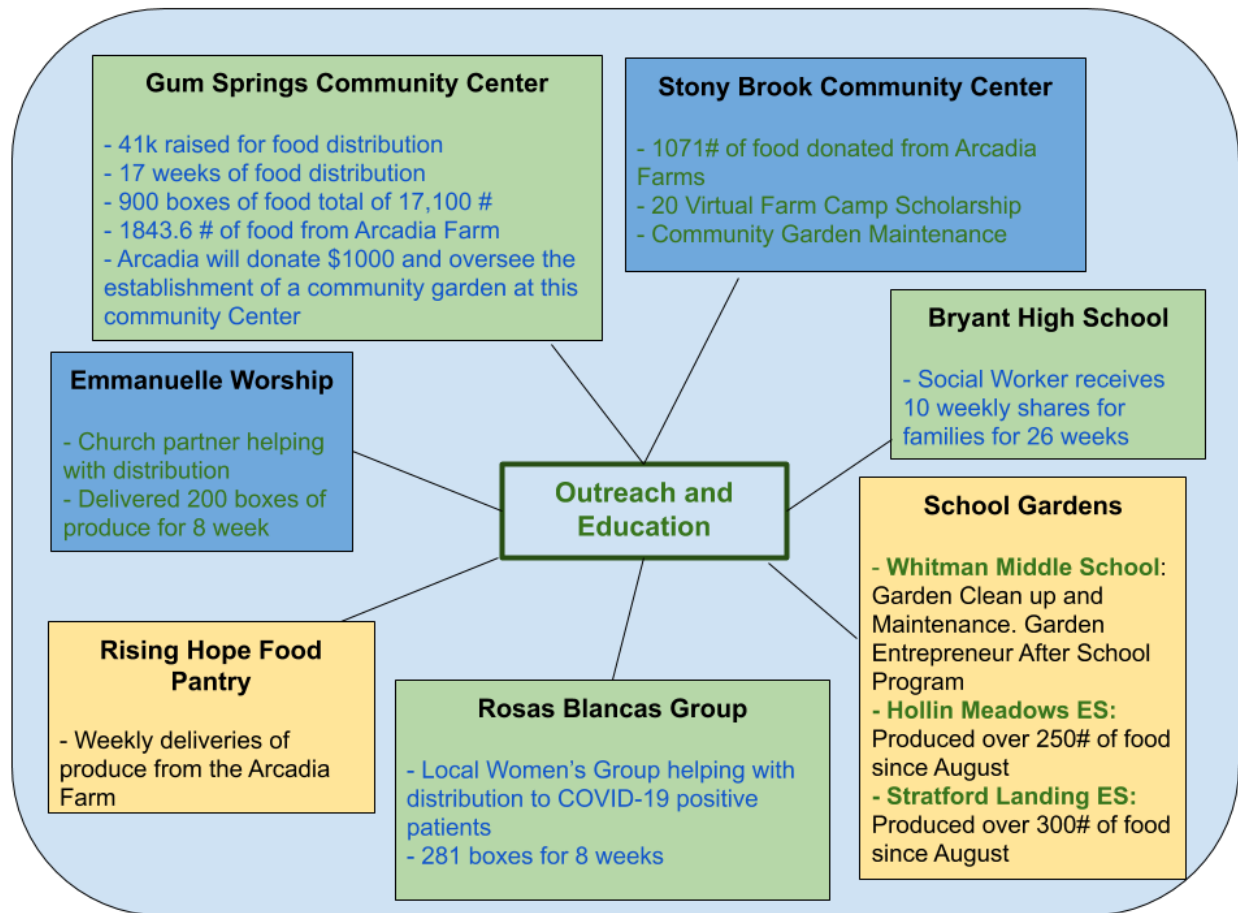
In partnership with Northern Virginia Health Foundation, Arcadia headed a three-year school garden and nutrition intervention in Bailey's Crossroads, VA that includes a school garden, garden educator, nutrition educator, and food access projects including a Mobile Market stop and new in 2018 an experimental low-cost CSA. In 2019, we completed our work in Bailey's Crossroads and relocated to the Route 1 corridor in Fairfax County.

In 2019, we launched the Live, Eat, Grow Route 1 program – a nutrition intervention and school garden support program in elementary schools near our farm. We worked with area health providers and food pantries to conduct food insecurity screenings and connect those affected by hunger with resources. In 2020, we continued school & community garden support and launched a youth garden entrepreneur program. The Live, Eat, Grow program has also led our food security response to the pandemic crisis, financially supporting and distributing fresh food to more than 50 families who live near our farm, with food sourced from our farm, from school and community gardens, and from other local farmers.

In 2020, the Live, Eat, Grow program pivoted from its focus on direct farm and garden education to food access for the particularly vulnerable community around our farm.

To accomplish this, we reached out to our community partners. Neighborhood and Community Services welcomed us at Gum Springs Community Center where for 17 weeks we distributed over 19k pounds of fresh produce alongside Food and Nutrition Services, which delivered prepared meals to school families. Fairfax County Health Department's Community Outreach connected us to two local volunteer groups who became the manpower to distribute 50 boxes of fresh produce for 8 weeks to families who had tested positive for COVID-19 and were home bound and needed to access food during quarantine. In the fall we expanded our food distribution to include Stoney Brook Community Center donating over 2k pounds of fresh produce every week since the month of August. Stoney Brook Community Center is a one of our community partners whose residents have suffered from job loss and food insecurity. Rising Hope Methodist Church is a local food pantry open twice a week and Arcadia has donated over 1k pounds of fresh produce. Arcadia is also donating 10 weekly shares of our CSA program to help families in need from Bryant High School.

Once schools were back in session, the Outreach Program contacted local schools to assess their needs and, starting in August 2020, assumed responsibility for two school gardens, turning them into food production (rather than educational) gardens. Working with volunteers and the school's Outdoor Educators we've grown over 550 pounds of produce at Stratford Landing Elementary School and Hollin Meadows Elementary School combined. This food is harvested and delivered, supplementing the rest of Arcadia's food relief efforts.



The History of the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food & Agriculture

Washington, D.C. restaurateur Michael Babin founded Arcadia to fix a problem he first came into contact with when trying to source local, responsibly grown fruits and vegetables for his restaurants: The supply was small and the price was high, putting it economically out of reach for restaurants trying to control food costs.

He asked himself: if this is so difficult for me, what does that mean for the rest of Washington? That question quickly led him to understand the public health crisis engendered by our food system, which is exceptionally effective at producing nutrition-free calories that are cheap at the point of sale but devastatingly expensive for public health. With few nutritious choices, constrained resources, and limited transportation, low-income communities suffer disproportionate rates of chronic disease that correlate directly with the low-quality food to which they have regular access – diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and obesity. The annual cost of this food system to health care in the United States is staggering – nearly half a trillion dollars, and growing.

Babin created Arcadia, a 501c3, in 2010 to innovate and implement solutions to the gaps he saw in the local food system with the mission of improving public health through food.

He established Arcadia on the Woodlawn-Pope-Leighey site in Alexandria, Virginia, just 14 miles from the nation's capital. The historic land was once part of George Washington's Mount Vernon, which sits three miles due east. But its significance for the local food movement goes well beyond the first president.

In 1846, two decades before the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation, timber merchants bought the then-2,000 acre-property from Washington's family. These merchants were, not insignificantly, Quakers and abolitionists, and they had a plan for the property: Woodlawn would be a slavery-free farming community that would prove to the rest of the South that slavery was not necessary for a farm to thrive. They sold plots to free African-Americans, Irish and German immigrants, and other Quakers. They established the mansion as an integrated school for the town's children and created an integrated militia to protect the citizens. As a "free labor zone," for the first time in Woodlawn's history, it was a profitable farming operation. Arcadia, like the Quakers before it, is using food and agriculture to advance social justice. Arcadia continues the legacy of this land to foster a more equitable and sustainable food system through its three mission areas: sustainable agriculture, farm and nutrition education, and healthy food access.

Arcadia's mission is to create a more equitable and sustainable food system. We pursue this mission with work in three program areas, each of which addresses a gap in the regional food system.

Arcadia at Woodlawn

Building on the history of social justice and sustainable agriculture that has played out on our acres, Arcadia is partnering with the National Trust for Historic Preservation to transform the 126-acre Woodlawn-Pope-Leighey estate into a true Center for Sustainable Food & Agriculture. Just 25 minutes from Washington, D.C., Arcadia at Woodlawn will offer a landmark destination farmhouse restaurant, year-round farm stand, farm café, Virginia wine and cider tasting room, and craft food pavilion that will both generate revenue link the property's inspiring legacy of social and racial justice to food equity, public health, and the strengthening of the regional food system.

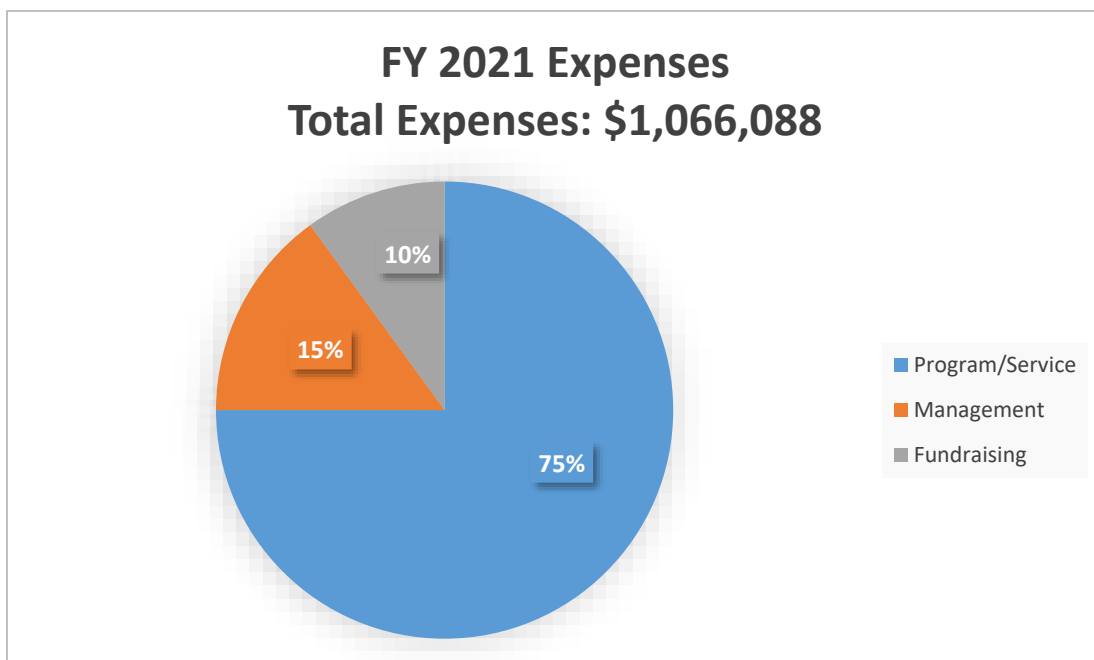
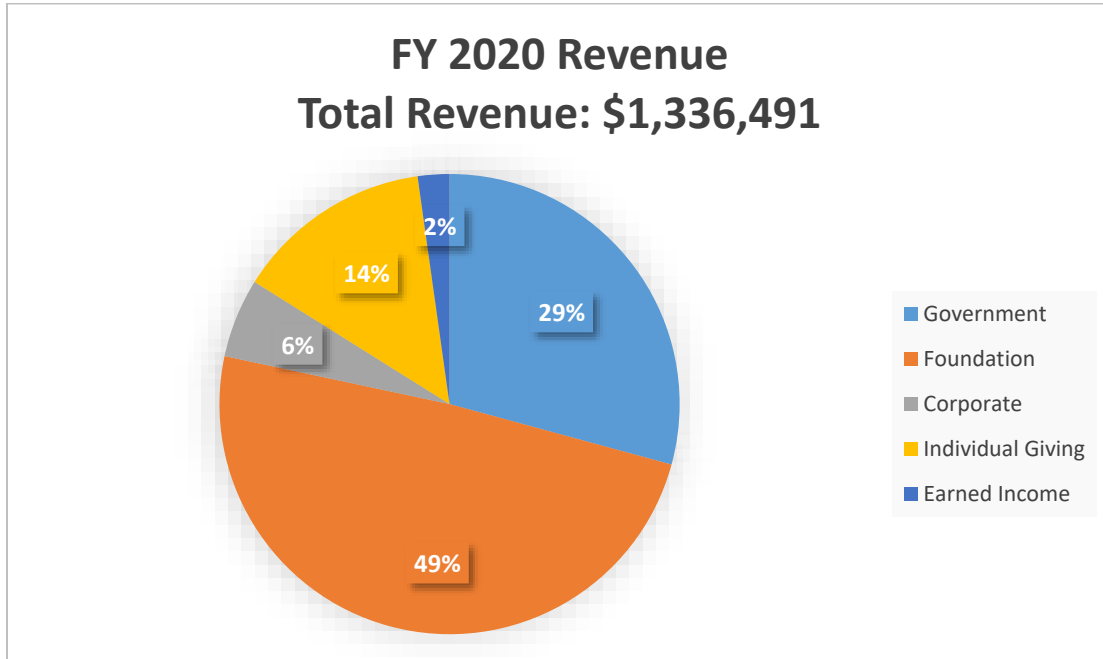
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Arcadia's programming and events will be expanded to include food policy conferences, lectures, culinary and gardening classes, edible landscaping, art and design events, and an expanded veteran farmer training program, enriched school programs, and experiential agriculture.

Arcadia has launched a \$20 million campaign to fund the rehabilitation of the historic farm buildings and finance new construction. With a mix of both philanthropy and social benefit investing, Arcadia at Woodlawn will reclaim its place as a beacon for social justice, environmental sustainability, and a healthy food system.

Fiscal Year 2020

January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020



Major Donors

Fiscal Year 2020

ACT for Alexandria	Frances Ha
Anonymous Donor	Andrew Kelley
Bainum Family Foundation	LWH Family Foundation
Bainum Family Foundation	McBride Charitable Trust
Elizabeth Bennett-Parker	Mid-Atlantic Food Resilience and Access Coalition
Brookfield Properties	Morrison Foerster Foundation
Chaney Enterprise Foundation	Naughton Family Fund
Dana Christian	Neighborhood Restaurant Group
Cloudbreak Foundation	Northern Virginia Community Foundation
Commonwealth of Virginia – Rebuild Virginia	Northrop Grumman
Community Foundation for Northern Virginia	Prince Charitable Trusts
Community Foundation for Northern Virginia	George J. & Effie L. Seay Foundation
DC Greens/DCOH Produce Plus Direct Program	Steele Family Foundation
Lisa Dezzutti	USDA AGVETS Grant Program
Lee and Kathy Dotson	USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program
Fairfax County Sustainability Grant	USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program
Fair Food Network	USDA Farm Service Agency
Farm Credit of Virginias	Virginia Humanities
Evan Goldberg	Washington, D.C. Department of Health
Tony & Jean Greenwald	David Wermuth
Greater Washington Community Foundation	Whole Kids Foundation
	Windward Fund

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude to all who supported Arcadia in 2020. Our work is only possible with your support.

Arcadia Food, Inc.

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