



SETTING ROOTS

LEAF ANNUAL REPORT 2016

THIS YEAR WAS SPECIAL AT LEAF -

our first year on our own ground. As I stand on the deck and look over the sparkling blanket of one of the first hard frosts of the fall season, I can remember bringing the spring youth crew to this land for the first time on a similarly cold day. With our hands shoved deep in our pockets and hoodies pulled up around our necks, I remember asking them to imagine just how awesome our gardens were going to be where they only saw a field of grass - and then I handed them the tools to get started. We worked hard as the sun got warmer and the days got longer - and eventually it started to look like a farm, our farm, the LEAF Home Farm.

Now anyone who knows me knows I love a good farming metaphor. I can't keep myself from sharing them, to be honest. So here's one for you: Every seed knows what it is going to be. You can't make a pepper seed bear tomatoes. And in our part of the world, some seeds, like peppers, need to be started indoors. LEAF needed that. We needed this seed of an idea to be incubated in the rich soil of the Myers family farm, and in our remarkable agricultural community of friends, family, and farmers. For three years, just like a pepper seedling, LEAF developed its first true leaves and roots. Experienced farmers know that the next essential step for the seedling is "appropriate adversity" in the form of wind, water,

and fluctuating temperatures and so you move the seedling from the protected environment of the nursery out into the world. The adversity triggers the plant to get strong and grow its roots. LEAF was ready to take on new challenges, too - and moving to our own land is allowing us to grow strong roots.

Then the plant starts to bear its fruit. Throughout the pages of this annual report you'll see LEAF's fruits through the words of our youth, the impacts of our program, and the yields of our ventures. We are excited to share our first ever annual report with you.

Heidi Witmer
Executive Director



2013

PILOT SEASON

- 12 youth hired from 2 school districts
- Launch of 6-week summer internship
- .5 full-time staff
- The Myers, a local family, allow LEAF to begin program on their 4 acre plot

2014

- 15 youth hired from 3 school districts
- Expanded summer program to 8 week and added spring & fall leadership program
- LEAF sells produce to 2 restaurants
- Donations to hunger relief programs start

2015

- 19 youth hired from 3 school districts
- 3 seasons of operation
- Partnership with preschools begins
- CSA program launches
- Youth begin cooking and serving farm to table meals at Salvation Army
- The Lloyds family provided a second farming location

2016

- 24 youth hired from 9 school districts
- 3 full time staff
- LEAF moves operations to it's new home farm
- On-farm kitchen built
- LEAF sells produce to 6 restaurants
- Leadership fellow program starts with 2 LEAF alumni in admin positions
- LEAF Kits program launched

"LEAF changed me...I just see food differently than I did at the beginning of the season,

I see farmers differently, I just see the world in a different light." - Gavin

“The thing that I liked the most this summer is how I evolved as a person... before LEAF, it was hard for me to open up to other people.” - Princess



PROGRAM UPDATE

LEAF continued to grow this year expanding the number of youth served and the length of time we work with them. We hired a total of 24 youth this year, 10 in returning leadership positions ranging from assistant crew leader to college level fellowships in marketing & PR.

There was a lot to do on the new farm and in the kitchen, and these individuals were able to accomplish a great deal. LEAF hosted an Open Farm that featured youth-led tours and games, cooking demos, and product sales. Over a hundred people came out to see the farm and the youth in action! Our diversity & equity curriculum this year was also successful, allowing the crew to open up with each other and talk about difficult issues and differences between them.

Not only were the interns learning, but they were also put in positions in which they educated others. The Carlisle Early Education Center came to the farm with 50 preschoolers, who participated in a variety of activities led by the youth. Later in the summer, the crew spent time in the kitchen with CALC's summer program CONNECT, teaching some basic cooking skills and building kitchen confidence.

“Cooking for my family has been really awesome. **Instead of seeing me as a child that needs [to be] fed, it's like 'you can make dinner tonight.'”** -

At the end of the season, ten crew members chose to continue on with the fall program. They worked every Wednesday and Saturday for 10 weeks, taking a more in depth look into issues of food justice and diversity, while also helping with the newly launched Kitchen Kits program. Youth are already looking forward to next spring with LEAF!

A DAY AT LEAF

8:30 AM



The day begins with a check in and a game. It's our way of knowing how everyone is feeling that day, and getting the group energized and focused for the work ahead.

10:45 AM

Part way through the morning work session! Youth are involved in every part of the farming process, and mornings can be spent weeding, planting, harvesting, washing, and more.



1:00 PM

In the afternoon, the crew sits down for a workshop. These can relate to diversity and equity, the food system, nutrition, or agriculture. Some take place in our outdoor classroom, while others involve hands-on activities outside.



2:45 PM

Two days a week, youth spend time in the kitchen with various chefs. Tuesdays involve learning new skills and preparing a meal for the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen. On Thursdays, youth use different fruits and vegetables to make jams and preserves.



4:00 PM

The day ends with a check out where youth reflect on the highs and lows of their workday and give peers positive feedback.



“One of my biggest challenges was **building tolerance**, but that is where I grew the most. I worked through challenging relationships and **gained the ability to cooperate** with people of a different opinion” - Jack

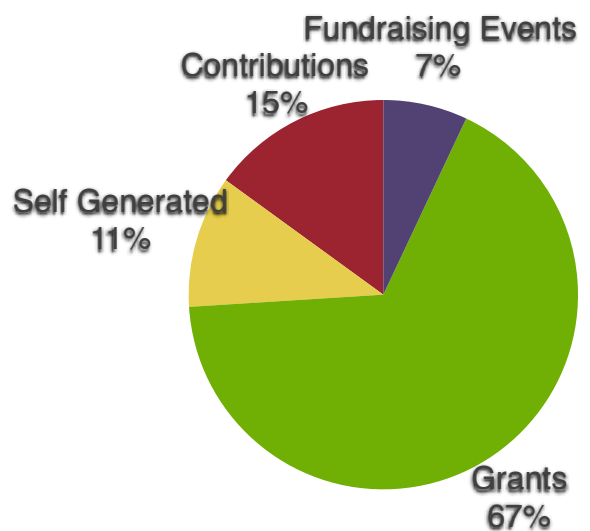
HOW WE'RE FUNDED

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

This year LEAF has continued to grow and develop through seeking innovative and sustainable support from our community. We kicked off the year with a successful LEAF Family Tree campaign seeking sustaining monthly support from our base, which we are incredibly grateful for! Their support has been vital to us this year as we developed our roots at LEAF's own farm property and expanded our program. We are looking to continue to expand our family tree members this year.

In March, we were honored to participate in the first ever “Match Madness,” a matching gift program through the Partnership for Better Health. We launched a successful pilot of a fundraising program, LEAF Kitchen Takeovers, during Match Madness. A friend of LEAF hosts a fundraising dinner party inviting guests to enjoy a farm-to-table meal prepared and served by our youth crew. Guests learn about LEAF and help us expand our network of supporters in the community. Please let us know if you are interested in hosting a dinner party for us this coming year!

At the conclusion of our summer season, we had a wonderful showing of people at our 2nd annual Savor: A Strolling Supper fundraiser. Many braved the heat to explore our creekside property while enjoying a progressive farm to fork meal. The pairings were incredible and a true display of the talent represented by the impressive line up of celebrity chefs, farmers, and youth participants.



ON THE FARM

In the spring of 2016, we broke ground on the new LEAF Home Farm and kicked off our most productive and successful growing season to date. Our new property is located about 12 miles north of Carlisle in Warm Springs Valley.

For the first time, LEAF spring youth crew helped to start our own seedlings in our new propagation house - and from these seedlings raised more than 5000 lbs of produce, a 37 % increase from last year. A record \$3,728 value of produce was donated to preschool partner programs, hunger relief partner organization, and LEAF youth crew families, equal to more than 40% of our yield.

The new farm facility also includes access to a walk-in cooler and a post-harvest handling area.

"I am most proud of gaining a deeper understanding of farming in our region and participating in an important part of our food system. Realizing that I am capable of growing food every step of the way is very powerful." —Elaina



THANK YOU PARTNER FARMS

Our youth visit producers from all parts of the local food system to gain a broader understanding of what it means to farm and be a farmer.

BROOKS MILLER & ANNA SANTINI, NORTH MOUNTAIN PASTURES

BEN WENK, THREE SPRINGS FRUIT FARM

MELANIE DIETRICH COCHRAN, KESWICK CREAMERY

MEGAN RULLI, PINEY MOUNTAIN ORCHARD

SHANA SLOSSBERG & JOE AMSTERDAM, TALKING BREADS

WILL BROWNBAC, SPIRAL PATH FARM



As the fall youth crew gathered for the final Kits cooking session this year, they were asked to reflect on how the kitchen

IN THE KITCHEN

program had evolved over that time, and how it had impacted them. Jamal, a first year intern recalled how in over the summer, this farmhouse basement was transformed into a state-of-the-art, certified kitchen thanks to scores of volunteers and donations. This fall, in that space we prepared and delivered 96 prepped meal kits per week for community members to conveniently cook in as little as 20 minutes.

When asked how he has changed, **Jamal** cited his newfound cooking prowess, and the pride he feels about impacting his community and family:

"All the skills I learned from the summer I used in the Kits program. I like cooking for myself and my family."

This summer, LEAF fed over 400 people at the Salvation Army farm to table feasts, and collaborated with 6 local chefs who taught youth basic cooking skills during weekly skills lessons.

THANK YOU PARTNER CHEFS!

David Mills, Jason Turner, Tracy Stritch, Carey Ehly, John Reis, & Michele Ewell.



THANK YOU SAVOR CHEFS

Ross Morris, Ben Beaver, Jason Viscount, Allen Rupert, Christian Delutis, Lance Smith, Maureen Fowler

THANK YOU!

We wouldn't be able to grow without the help of our many supporters!

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

- Carlisle Area School District
- Carlisle Alliance Church
- Salvation Army
- Dickinson College: Popel Shaw Center for Race & Ethnicity
- Carlisle Arts Learning Center/CONNECT
- Ellerman Family Farm
- Whistleberry Farm
- Roots Flower Farm

BUSINESS SPONSORS

- M&T Bank
- Diebler Insurance
- Orrstown Bank
- Miss Ruth's Time Bomb
- Rice Fruit Company
- Radish & Rye
- Vineyard @ Hershey
- Zeroday Brewing Company
- Midstate Distillery
- Troegs Independent Brewery

GRANT FUNDING

- Partnership For Better Health
- GB Stuart Foundation
- Kline Foundation
- South Mountain Partnership
- The Stabler Foundation
- PPL Foundation
- The Foundation for Enhancing Communities
- Atlantic Health System

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTRIBUTORS

- United Way
- Carlisle Elks 578
- VFW Post 477
- VFW Post 7463
- Rotary Club of Carlisle - Sunrise
- Martson Law Office
- The JDK Group
- Cumberland County Farm Women
- Thrivent Financial
- Chipotle
- Unitarian Universalists Cumberland Co.

MONTHLY DONOR FAMILY TREE MEMBERS

- Anna Bilz
- Ashlee & Erin O'Dugan
- Carla Snyder
- David & Kelli Mills
- Cynthia Lupold
- Diane & Ralph Rulli
- Emily Rice Townsend
- Heather Royer
- Kathy Shreffler
- Kathy Witmer
- Emily & Linda Lingle
- Megan Rulli
- Melissa & Ned Allis
- Matt & Julie Morton
- Rhonda Renwick
- Richelle & Josh Dourte
- Robyn Wampler
- Sarah Bay
- Sue Stonecash
- Suzanne Stritch
- Tracy & Barney Stritch

SUPPORTERS

- Melinda Boomershine
- Liz Lowry & Sam Hewitt
- Chris Shaballa
- Charles Trout
- Jessica Clark
- Chris Kampel
- Dianne Conaway
- Ann Sheehan
- Sharada Krishnamurthy
- Sarah & Charlie Rowe
- Ted Reese
- Betsy Smith
- Holly & Ed Smith
- Stephen & Lauren Winn
- Violet Stailey
- Loryn Way
- Kelsey & Danny Williams
- Lisa Maddux
- Audrey Scott
- Maureen Reed
- June Shomaker
- Nancy Edlin
- Sue Milnes
- Carol Williams
- Karla Browne
- Susan Rose
- Barbara & Carlton Busko
- Juli Daniels
- Kaye Edwards
- Carey & Annette Ehly
- Doug Enck
- Eric & Colleen Fitts
- Mary & Ed Franco
- Ali Frohman
- Katherine Gehris
- Gladys & Arnold Kaplan
- Marilyn Keener
- Rachael Kesler
- Jim & Jan Kohler
- Barbara Kohutiak
- Kevin Witmer
- Angela Thomas
- Sally Currie
- Lu Conser & Tim Potts
- Bonnie Fowler
- Martha Bergsten
- Don & Ann Raley
- Mary Frances Carson
- Lynn Keltz
- Pamela Rhoades
- Wendy Gebb
- Dave Kann
- Camille Marion
- Sandy Musser
- Ellen Peters & Ivo Otto III
- Sue & Bob Otway
- Cheryl Parsons
- Emily Pawley
- Patrice Pickering
- Barb Rose
- Drew Stoken
- Marty Williams
- Carole Alexy
- Joyce Bylander
- Lonna Malmsheimer
- Becky Hammell
- Jenn Halpin & Matt Steiman
- Emily Pawley & Roger Turner
- Becca Raley
- George Rhyne & Kathy Everett
- Tara Renault
- Kathy Hubert
- Donna Williams & Pierce Bounds

"LEAF has helped my child further **develop his leadership skills** and his confidence by offering opportunities to be in charge. His **self-confidence and his self-esteem have increased** with his additional responsibilities this summer. [LEAF] widens the world and gives them confidence and self-esteem and work experience they would not have."—Youth Parent