

WILLING HANDS

delivering donations of wholesome food
to our neighbors in need



SUMMER 2013

A Few Highlights:

- *Willing Hands carries only the most wholesome food. Over the years the ratio of the type of food we handle has varied only slightly from: 95% fruit and vegetables, 2.7% locally baked bread, 1.3% frozen meat, and 1% milk and eggs.*
- *The organizations that receive our food report that it serves approximately 2,972 people each week.*
- *Managers of these organizations tell us repeatedly, "I'm sure many of our clients would not have fresh produce if it were not for Willing Hands."*
- *Your support remains strong. We thank you, one and all!*

WILLING HANDS DELIVERS...

Imagine being head of a household of four. Your annual income equals that of many in America. You feel lucky to have a full time job. Your kids are active and happy. The hitch: you live below poverty level.

You make \$8.60 per hour - minimum wage in Vermont. Your wife works as a waitress several evenings a week. When tips are low or business is slow, she makes \$4.17 per hour. You are the "working poor." It is nearly impossible to make ends meet.

According to the US Census Bureau, 46.2 million people, or 15% of the population, was below the poverty threshold in 2011. In VT & NH: about 175,000 people. For a family of four, that amounts to an income of less than \$23,283 per year. For a senior citizen: \$11,011.

Figuring out how to eat well on such limited income is challenging. The produce aisle is loaded with delicious looking fruits and vegetables. Most everyone knows that is important to build meals around such healthy food. But a dollar can be stretched only so far...

At Willing Hands we are doing our best to ensure that our neighbors have access to the abundance of wholesome food grown and sold right here in the Upper Valley. Hundreds of supporters have stepped up to help - as food donors, as funders, as volunteers.

Mary Choate, Food and Nutrition Educator at the Coop Foodstores, recently rode along in our delivery truck. She reports: "I was so impressed with the entire process. The fabulous quality of food; the gratefulness we encountered at each stop; the enormous Willing Hands Garden and the happy volunteer gardeners; the amazing web of drop offs and pickups... It made me feel so good to have this kind of organization in our community."



Making a delivery to Dartmouth's Students Fighting Hunger for the community meal they prepare each week at the Lutheran Church (photo credit: Bob Eddy)

The Numbers:

# of eggs donated to us through West Lebanon Feed & Supply:	22000
# of trays of prepared food donated to us by Kendal at Hanover:	2200
Willing Hands delivers to The Upper Valley Haven six days a week	220
The average # of pounds per delivery:	



FEATURED FOOD DONOR: BLUE OX FARM

When Steve Fulton, owner of Blue Ox Farm in Enfield, NH, arrived in the Upper Valley 34 years ago, he was employed by a hi-tech company. In time, Steve found that he preferred more independence. He started a private engineering services consultancy. Meanwhile, fond childhood memories of early organic home gardening remained strong and led him to also start a small, part-time commercial farm.

Beginning with just 2 acres in 2002, Blue Ox farm grew rapidly and earned organic certification. With 15 acres and 3 greenhouses now under cultivation, farming has become Steve's full time occupation.

Plunging freshly picked emerald green globes of lettuce into ice cold wash water, Steve told us that he and his crew grow vegetables from over 30 crop families. Carrots are one of Steve's personal favorites. Blue Ox produce can be found at the Coop Foodstores and at local restaurants. They also offer a CSA program and are regularly present at the Enfield, Norwich, and Lebanon Farmer's Markets, as well as the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Campus Market.

When you see Steve at one of these markets, please be sure to pass along thanks from all of us at Willing Hands. During each of the last four years, we have gratefully received over a ton of delicious, fresh, organic vegetables from Blue Ox Farm!



Steve Fulton, owner of Blue Ox Farm is a long-standing food donor to Willing Hands

"We could not support the community's need for fresh food without our partnership with Willing Hands."

Upper Valley Haven

WILLING HANDS FOR SENIORS

Nationally, almost 1 in 12 seniors experienced hunger in 2011. That figure is more than double the number of food-insecure seniors in 2001. In VT, hunger affects 4.8% of our seniors. In NH, 5.1%. Here in the Upper Valley, Willing Hands food reaches approximately 1600 seniors each and every week.

At Rogers House in Lebanon, some seniors live on as little as \$400 a month. When Willing Hands delivers, they gather fruits and vegetables for themselves and make up packages for neighbors who are not able to come for their own. Residents have a monthly potluck made in part from Willing Hands food. A local band shares the potluck and provides entertainment for free -- healthy food creating healthy community.

Thetford Foodshelf manager, Roberta Howard, has seen an increase in seniors coming for food. They look for the fresh produce that Willing Hands delivers and are careful to take only what they need. Roberta tells us, "*The biggest problem is food stamps being cut.*"



Roberta Howard at the Thetford Foodshelf

In the coming years, the number of hungry seniors is expected to skyrocket. Feeding America and the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger strive to raise awareness about the pressing issue of senior hunger in the U.S.

To quote their report: "*in 2011 nearly 65% of food insecure seniors were below the age of 69. Given that an estimated 10,000 Baby Boomers will turn 65 every day until 2030, service providers and policy makers should be aware of the need among seniors in this age range.*" They go on to say that this fact "*has had and will continue to have profound impacts on the demand for nutrition assistance.*"

WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

- In the summer 2011 issue of our newsletter, we reported on two Dartmouth students who were working with the college dining services to enable students to make a donation to Willing Hands using a portion of the leftover balance on their meal cards. What a difference two years has made! Sarah-Marie Hopf and Kate Burns have developed their idea into a sustainable, award-winning program. Through ongoing food drives and “Swipe For Hunger” events, students have donated over \$11,000 towards the purchase of fresh produce for distribution through Willing Hands. Congratulations on your graduation Sarah-Marie & Kate and many, many thanks!



La Panciata donated about 4 tons of bread to Willing Hands in 2012! We love their bread and bet that you do.

- Willing Hands has a new partnership with the Vermont Foodbank. Traditionally focused on boxed and canned food, the state foodbank is now handling increasing volumes of produce. Willing Hands knows first-hand the challenges involved with distributing highly perishable food. We are happy to be able to assist them!

- Willing Hands thanks Schweitzer Fellows, Sadie Marden and Juliana Castedo for their expertise and enthusiasm in running a series of cooking workshops at Romano Circle Family Housing in conjunction with our nutrition education program. Sadie reports, “We really enjoyed the time that we spent at Romano Circle and feel lucky to have been given the opportunity!” Best wishes to Sadie and Juliana as they complete medical school.
- We also thank Lisa Ford of the UNH Cooperative Extension for leading a dynamic and informative series of cooking workshops with seniors at Roger’s House. We hope to partner with Lisa again soon. Over half of our recipient organizations have expressed interest in classes like hers!
- Special thanks to Cat Buxton and her band for the lively dance benefit they held this winter, and to John Mellquist for his lovely harpsichord performance. We look forward to a third benefit concert in July. On the 19th, Opera North will perform at the Student Fighting Hunger community dinner at the Lutheran Church in Hanover. Please join us!

Volunteers from The Family Place learn how to plant peas at our Farm Garden. The Family Place receives weekly deliveries from Willing Hands.



Yes, I want to help Willing Hands deliver donations of healthy food!

Enclosed is my tax deductible contribution of:

- \$30 to cover the cost of delivering five-pound bags of apples to 20 families
- \$100 to cover the cost of delivering 8 big boxes brimming with nutritious food
- \$290 to cover the cost of delivering 1,000 pounds: an entire day of deliveries!

P.O. Box 172
Lebanon, NH 03766
802-698-0265

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

I’m interested in volunteering to help Willing Hands with:
 The Farm Garden Gleaning Nutrition Education Committee Work

Please contact me at this phone number: _____ or this email address: _____



COLLABORATIONS ARE KEY TO OUR SUCCESS

Willing Hands Extends Special Thanks to

These Primary Food Donors:

Blue Ox Farm
Cedar Circle Farm
Coop Foodstores
Crossroads Farm
Dartmouth Food Connection
Edgewater Farm
Hurricane Flats Farm
Kendal at Hanover
Killdeer Farm
King Arthur Bakery
La Panciata
Longwind Farm
Luna Bleu Farm
McNamara Dairy
Norwich Farmer's Market
Poverty Lane Orchard
Riverview Farm
Salvation Farms
Southeast Correctional Facility
The Prouty
Upper Valley Produce
Vermont Foodbank
West Lebanon Feed & Supply
Whitman Brook Orchard
Willing Hands' Farm Garden

These Recent Major Donor Organizations:

Claremont Savings Bank
Cohen Dental
Couch Family Foundation
Dwinell Charitable Trust
Granite United Way
Hanover Lions Club
Hanover Rotary Club
Help The People Foundation
Jack & Dorothy Byrne Foundation
Jane B. Cook 1992 Trust
Lang McLaughry Real Estate
Mascoma Savings Bank
Morgan Stanley Smith Barney
NH Charitable Foundation
Norwich Congregational Church
Norwich Lions Club
Richmond Middle School Empty Bowls Project
Summit Wealth Management
St. Thomas Episcopal Church
Turrell Fund
Thetford Farm Trust
(plus many private family foundations, individuals, businesses, civic and church groups!)



***Making a special pick-up at
Longwind Farm***

BEHIND THE SCENES:

Board of Directors:

Jack Lyons - President
Peter Carter - Vice President
Amy Miller - Secretary
Mark Lindberg - Treasurer
Andrea Colgan
Carolyn Frye
Susan Gault
Tom Ketteridge
Terry Lyons
Pooh Sprague
Jay Van Arman



***Volunteers at Willing Hands' Farm Garden
load their harvest onto our delivery truck.***

***Last season 56 volunteers seeded, tended, and harvested over 5,000 pounds
of organic produce for immediate distribution to our neighbors in need!***

Staff Drivers:

Chuck Egner
Jim McCracken
Zsuzsa Mitro
Mark Pennell
(Substitute: Chico Eastridge)

Executive Director:

Heather Bagley

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www.willinghands.org

