



Delivering Wholesome Food to our Neighbors in Need — Summer 2017 Newsletter

Dear Friends of Willing Hands,

We often simplify our work into raw numbers, but these numbers don't adequately tell our story. In 2016, our food donations totaled an impressive 606,888 meals, but to understand the impact of our work we need to dig a little deeper.

Don and Ruby have lived on a fixed income since Don retired from his job as school janitor. For many years they supplemented their food purchases with a large garden, however episodes of ill health have made gardening impossible. To stretch their budget they shop weekly at their local food shelf and then spend what they must at the supermarket. They are acutely aware of the dollars they spend and know that a healthier diet can cost more. Without Willing Hands' donations to their local food shelf, their consumption of healthy fruits and vegetables would dramatically decrease. This experience of the high cost of healthy food is supported by a studies that have estimated that a diet containing nutrient dense food, including more fresh fruits and vegetables, costs on average \$550 more per person per year (Rao et al., 2013).

The US Census estimates that 11.4% of Vermonters and 10.1% of New Hampshire residents were food insecure in 2015. The unfortunate truth is that hunger and poor health are correlated. All of our neighbors need consistent, affordable access to healthy fruits and vegetables in order to maintain healthy diets. Those who rely upon the "charitable food system", the network of food pantries, community dinner sites, and other places that offer free food, often have the hardest time accessing healthy, nutritious food. This is what makes Willing Hands' work so critical. Without our deliveries, most of our recipient organizations, and the families who rely upon them, would not have access to healthy fruits and vegetables.

A tremendous amount of appreciation is due to the large Willing Hands family of volunteers, board members, donors, drivers, and friends who make it possible for us to bring this healthy, delicious food to those who need it most. Thank you!

*Sincerely,
Gabe Zoerheide
Executive Director*



FEATURED PARTNER: SUNRISE FARM



Chuck Wooster started farming in Hartford, Vermont in 2000, a year after he and his wife Sue bought their farm on Orizzonto Road. The farm was founded as a diverse vegetable, meat, and maple operation. Summer Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares continue to be the main focus. In 2015, Chuck and Sue purchased the nearby Perkins Farm on Route 5 in Hartford. The purpose was both to preserve the farm forever with a conservation easement and to grow the size of Sunrise Farm.



Volunteer Worth Parker showing off a Sunrise Farm CSA share.

Willing Hands was an additional beneficiary of the growth of Sunrise Farm. In 2016, Chuck approached Willing Hands with an idea. He wanted to invite his CSA members, and anyone who was interested, to contribute Sunrise CSA shares to Willing Hands. Over the course of 2016 and 2017 generous donors have donated 17 shares from Sunrise Farm. Sweetland Farm in Norwich, and Edgewater Farm in Plainfield have followed Chuck's lead and are inviting their members to donate shares to Willing Hands. This fresh produce is being delivered weekly by Willing Hands to our neighbors in need.



Chuck (far right) and his crew with one of the first CSA donations in 2016

Willing Hands News: New Faces and A New Truck



Remy Loading the Truck

Summer at Willing Hands is a hectic and busy time. Last year we expected a small increase in our food donations. However, rather than this small increase, the floodgates opened and we finished the year with a record of over 500,000 pounds of food donated. This year we are more prepared. Our preparation includes our new second truck and two new summer employees.

New Staff: Please welcome new staff Jared Freidland, Remy Eisendrath, and Lars Sandvik. Jared is driving three days a week through August. Remy is helping Jim pick up gleaned crops, making extra deliveries, and conducting a consumer survey. Lars has taken over our Tuesday route. They join current drivers Iain Wallis (Friday), Ray Brewster (Monday), Operations Manager Jim McCracken, and Executive Director Gabe Zoerheide to round out our staff.



Say Hello to Lars

Welcoming Volunteers: As the summer gets going we would love to have more volunteers for our farm gleanings, our garden in East Thetford and as driver helpers on our busiest delivery days. If you are interested, please email volunteer@willinghands.org for more information.



Jared Delivering to the Upper Valley Haven



Our New Truck Is On the Road: You have probably already seen it traveling through the Upper Valley. Our new 2017 Isuzu was put into service in early May, just in time for our increase in summer produce donations. The Willing Hands' drivers are very happy with the new truck. With the extra refrigerated space we have been able to increase our deliveries this summer.

IN 2016 . . .
25 LOCAL FARMS AND ORCHARDS DONATED 200,566 POUNDS OF FOOD WITH AN ESTIMATED VALUE OF OVER \$480,000.

IN ADDITION . . .
The Coop Food Stores donated 197,707 lbs of food.

Upper Valley Produce donated 59,352 pounds.

King Arthur Flour donated 6,315 pounds of whole grain bread.

Looking To The Future: We are excited to share a few things on the horizon and get the word out about some of our up coming needs.

Gleaning Pick Up Truck: Do you have an old but well maintained pick up truck that you would love to see go to a good place? By next year we would like to add a farm gleaning vehicle to our fleet. If you have something that you may be willing to donate please let us know.

Looking for a New Facility: Do you have, or know of, a commercial building or building lot in Norwich, Hartford or Lebanon that you are considering putting on the market? We are growing out of our current leased space. The Willing Hands Board has made the decision to pursue a permanent future home that will have increased storage, a garage for our trucks and perhaps much more.

A Few Small Needs:

Refrigerated Display Cases: our food shelf partners are in need of attractive refrigerated displays for our veggies.

Gas Powered Pressure Washer: To more efficiently clean our truck and storage containers we have decided that we need a gas powered pressure washer.

150 Volunteers donated over 2,000 Hours in 2016.

In 13 years, 4.5 million pounds of food have been donated.

The estimated value of our food donations in 2016 was over \$1 million.



Willing Hands

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

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

Enclosed is my tax deductible contribution of \$ _____

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Email Address _____
 Home phone _____ Cell _____



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



THANK YOU TO THE BUSINESSES, FOUNDATIONS, AND OVER 120 INDIVIDUAL DONORS WHO SUPPORTED THE PURCHASE OF OUR NEW TRUCK



Mascoma Savings Bank



LAKE SUNAPEE BANK
A division of Bar Harbor Bank & Trust

The Jane B Cook 1992 Charitable Trust
The Rockwell Family Charitable Trust
The Dextra Baldwin McGonagle Foundation



Executive Director Gabe Zoerheide and Allan Reetz from the Coop Food Stores admiring the new truck.

Thank you to everyone who joined us to celebrate the launch of our new truck in May.

Thank you to King Arthur Flour for hosting the celebration.



Ceremonially placing the first loaves into the new truck at our celebratory event.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Board of Directors:

Peter Carter - President
Carolyn Frye—V. President
Susan Gault- Secretary
Phil Lapp - Treasurer
Tim Fisher
Rebecca Hooper Holland
Birgit Humpert
Bartlett Leber
Pooh Sprague
Jay Van Arman



Food Delivery Staff:

Jared Freidland
Ray Brewster
Iain Wallis
Remy Eisendrath
Lars Sandvik

Operations Manager:

Jim McCracken

Executive Director:

Gabe Zoerheide

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