



2014 Annual Report

APPALACHIAN
sustainable
DEVELOPMENT

LIVING BETTER. LOCALLY.



Word From the Director

All too often we view our food system as being just about farmers or food insecurity or local purchasing and the local food movement or nutrition or organic or farm to school. In reality it is “just about” all of it. Food and nutrition is one big messy, difficult system that involves culture, transportation, economics, health care, seniors, children and almost every other aspect of a community. ASD has seen that leveraging this interconnectedness, as difficult as it may be to corral, is where the greatest impacts can be realized and we are finding more and more opportunities to infuse this model into our programs and our work in the communities we serve.

This past year provided ASD with the opportunity to work on multiple efforts to increase food security in our region. We are leading a collaboration that engages food system, public health and health care practitioners with funders in southwest VA and northeast TN to seek ways to improve regional vitality and individual health by building the connectivity and capacity of the regional food system. We are participating in the Appalachian Foodshed Project and on the oversight committee for the Appalachian VA Food System Council. We are partners on a Local Food Promotion Program grant with the Appalachian RC&D Council and Jonesborough Locally Grown to increase the consumption of fresh, healthy food in northeast TN and southwest VA. And in 2014, ASD was honored when I had the privilege of being appointed to the VA Governor’s Council on Bridging the Nutritional Divide.

It is an exciting time to be working in community development. There is an increasing awareness of the connectedness between the many different parts that make up our communities and the importance of working together to make a difference. We are proud to say that every program we operate recognizes and seeks to leverage that interconnectedness by engaging with and honoring many partners, including those we wish to assist, academics, philanthropists, NGOs and so many others.

As you can see, we’ve been busy. It is productive, important and exciting work and we hope that after reviewing this annual report you will know a little more about us and join us in making our region a place where we can all Live Better. Locally.


Kathlyn Terry
Executive Director

Our Focus Going Forward

When the Strategic Planning Committee began its work in 2013, they elected to use a method for examining ASD’s work that is called the Theory of Change (TOC). The group tasked with this responsibility was comprised of board and staff. For over a year, the Committee met on a regular basis to re-evaluate the role of ASD through the parameters of TOC development. Our goal was to create a strategic plan that stated the impact that ASD could have and that we recognize as its mission. The following is an overview of the committee’s conclusions based on the TOC process.

Strategic Plan Goal 1

Our local economy/community grows in a healthy, sustainable way that provides opportunities for entrepreneurs, landowners, and manufacturers, and creates value for consumers and the community.

Strategic Plan Goal 2

The well-being of people in the community improves because there is a model in place that provides greater access to and interest in choosing to consume fresh, healthy and nutritious food.



In Summary

We develop markets for local agricultural and forest products. We create networks and partnerships that connect local producers and manufacturers with consumers.

We promote the value of healthy, locally grown and sustainably harvested food by expanding education and increasing public awareness.

We work to combat hunger in our region by increasing access to healthy, local food.

A Few of Our Impacts



Appalachian Harvest
Revenue Generated

\$1,510,452 in 2014
\$8,543,489 since 2001



Agroforestry
of Trees Planted

317 in 2014
447 since 2011



Grow Your Own
Pounds of Produce Grown

19,810 lbs. in 2014
38,125 since 2012



Healthy Families - Family Farms
Pounds of Produce Donated

124,000 lbs. in 2014
872,203 since 2004

Appalachian Harvest - Filling a Critical Need for Farmers

Appalachian Harvest is a food hub that assists local farmers with accessing markets for their products by providing marketing, aggregation and distribution services. Farmers also receive training and support to help them overcome any barriers they face such as understanding the quality, packing and food safety requirements for selling to grocery store chains. In 2014 this Duffield, VA based enterprise generated \$1,510,452 in revenue.

Farming is an investment.

That means farmers need to be able to trust that Appalachian Harvest will be around to sell their products. Therefore it is vitally important that Appalachian Harvest be financially viable. We are proud to report that in 2014 Appalachian Harvest only required that 14% of its operating funding come from grants. Our goal is to reduce that to 0 over the next two to three years.



Cost Savings

One way Appalachian Harvest will reach breakeven is by managing costs. Truck repairs were identified as one of the biggest risk factors affecting the food hub and a significant barrier to reaching our financial goals. In 2014 ASD leased a road tractor from Penske, obtained grant funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission to support the purchase of a new tractor and obtained grant funding from USDA Rural Development to support the purchase of a new refrigerated trailer. The higher miles per gallon and warranties offered by these three new pieces of infrastructure will enable Appalachian Harvest to greatly reduce costs and minimize the risks of costly repairs.

Organic Growers Group

In 2014 ASD created an Organic Growers Group which assisted small scale farmers with obtaining organic certification. In the past ASD had operated a similar growers group but the costs of operating it became prohibitive. This new iteration of the group is limited to a small number of crops that can be grown and a limited number of inputs that can be used. The partnership with Quality Certification Services out of FL has been invaluable in providing this service to our farmers. In 2014 these farmers sold over 17K in product!

Growing Farmers



Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition

The average age of an American farmer is either 57 or 62 depending on the source you reference - which makes ASD's efforts to support beginning farmers critically important. As a member of the VA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition, ASD is able to provide farmers in our region with business and marketing planning support including on-farm assessments and one-on-one guidance. With a new round of funding received in the fall of 2014, ASD has been able to use a combination of classroom, technical assistance and farm tours to help farmers and ranchers identify and implement the best practices that will make them successful.

Strip Tilling

With support from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, ASD was able to perform

strip tilling trials at four farms in VA and TN. We worked with farmers to plant thick cover crops and till in strips with the goals of boosting the amount of organic matter in the soil, preventing soil erosion and increasing farmer profitability. ASD staff and Extension worked together with farmers to plant dense cover crops, strip till and plant broccoli, pumpkins, tomatoes and winter squash. Data was collected throughout the first year of the trial. Based on first year findings, we found that pumpkins and winter squash benefitted the most from strip tilling. The residue of the cover crop kept the harvestable fruit cleaner while also reducing soil erosion. ASD continues to work with NRCS to share learnings from this project that can be shared across the region.

Food Safety Modernization Act—GAP

Since 2011 the VA Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) has supported ASD's efforts to provide small scale farmers in our region with access to markets by providing them with GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) training and certification support. GAP certification is not yet required by the US Government but it is required for all of the markets served by Appalachian Harvest (grocery stores and produce brokers). ASD has partnered with VA Cooperative Extension and AgCon to develop an 8 hour training class which is followed up with on-farm support and development of Standard Operating Procedures that are specifically tailored for the individual farm. Mock audits are performed on the farm by specially trained contractors, assuring that when the independent audit is performed there is a high degree of confidence that they will pass. Since this program began, 100% of farmers attending this training session who sought certification have passed. ASD and its partners held 12 training sessions across the region which attracted 262 attendees. Experts then followed up with 72 on-the-farm mock audits and manual reviews in preparation for GAP inspections from a third party inspector.



Connecting Farmers with Markets for Their Products



ASD coordinates the Appalachian Farmers Market Association which serves the 30+ farmers markets in the region. In 2014 the annual conference attracted 110 attendees and two farm tours to cattle operations drew 40 people. A very popular item in our region is the Local Food Guide which is created by ASD and the Appalachian Farmers Market Association every year. In 2014 ASD sold ads to local businesses to cover most of the cost of printing 10,000 copies which were distributed all across southwest VA and northeast TN.

ASD is constantly seeking ways for its programs to pay for themselves. While this food guide has not yet paid for its development and printing, the first hurdle of almost covering printing costs was achieved in 2014 thanks to folks in the community providing their support! The guide contains 149 listings with information on farmers, farmers markets, restaurants and businesses that serve local food.



In 2014 ASD piloted a new model with Wellmont's corporate offices when it set up a "pop up" farmers market onsite once/week. The goal of the pilot was to provide corporate customers with an easy to access means of supporting local farmers and eating fresh, healthy food. The pilot taught us a great deal about the effort required to implement such a model including the volume necessary to make it financially viable. Plans are currently under way to implement a new popup market on Eastman's Kingsport, TN campus in 2015.



Rooted in Appalachia continues to connect small scale farmers with restaurants and other retailers. The volumes moved by this program are still quite small but provide a valuable opportunity for small scale farmers to connect with buyers who are outside of their footprint. For example, some products have been sold to Johnson City buyers through Rooted in Appalachia by Grow Your Own gardeners in Abingdon.



Learning Landscapes

Learning Landscapes teaches children how to grow and prepare food and gets them excited about tasting it while providing them with healthy outdoor activities and a chance to learn in a new setting. In 2014 Learning Landscapes managed or implemented projects in 5 locations! A garden program was started at Haynesfield Elementary in Bristol, TN, the Panicello Trail was completed and held a grand opening attended by 75 people, and an edible park was created at Sugar Hollow Park in Bristol where 3 site visits were conducted, reaching 149 students!

This year also saw the implementation of a wonderful project at Central Christian Church (CCC) in Bristol, TN. This project is an excellent example of Collective Impact in our region. River's Way of Bristol, TN led a project to implement two high tunnels on CCC's property. Bristol Rotary funded the high tunnels which ASD ordered and facilitated erecting including building 6 raised beds. Raised beds were planted with lettuce, spinach and garlic which the Central Café (located in the church) began using in lunches that were served to the public once a week. Special needs and at-risk students from Vance Middle School and Virginia and Tennessee High Schools helped erect the high tunnels, build and plant the raised beds, maintained and harvested the gardens, and then worked in the kitchen, learning culinary skills and handling money. It is truly a wonderful project that we feel can be a model of collaboration and impact in our region.

Grow Your Own & Learning Landscapes Join Efforts

As we look to the future of educating youth and encouraging a healthier lifestyle, we are finding opportunities to combine Learning Landscapes with Grow Your Own. For example, our efforts to create a regular team of youth to help maintain the Ecumenical Faith in Action training garden shows promising partnerships. The 12 Special Education students at Abingdon High School who have been growing in two round gardens at their school have "outgrown" their garden. This class has now partnered with Grow Your Own and has adopted the garden at Ecumenical Faith in Action (the training site for Grow Your Own gardeners). Students travel once a week in a school van to the training garden site to help with whatever needs to be done like harvesting, weeding and seeding. Plans are being made to allow students to travel to the Abingdon Farmer's Market on Tuesday afternoons to sell produce. These kids are so excited about these activities - and so are their teachers. They are now including regular garden sessions into students' Educational Plans. Students have spoken to School Board representatives to ask for funding to allow them to travel by bus to Ecumenical Faith in Action so that the whole class can travel together instead of just half. Funding from Grow Your Own will support some educational outreach of this project. We are currently seeking funding from other community sources to support continuing this aspect of the work.

Grow Your Own

2014 was Grow Your Own's 3rd year at its original location in Abingdon, VA! The program reached out to over 700 individuals, teaching them about the benefits of fresh garden produce. Over 150 individuals were directly influenced by being part of the program with gardens at their homes or schools. The number of people indirectly benefiting from this project through volunteering or obtaining fresh produce was greater than 300!

The Bristol, VA Grow Your Own location impacted over 180 individuals. Over half of these people received fresh produce on a regular basis from the garden, and all were educated about how influential a community garden can be. This garden was primarily focused on youth, with over half of the participants being challenged by some type of learning disability and/or behavioral challenge.

Participants included:

Home gardens: 25 families

Community gardens: 59 families worked in and benefitted from community gardens

Market gardens: 6 families sold their products at various markets



Grow Your Own gardeners are becoming more comfortable with marketing their produce to generate income. We learned a lesson that some folks were reluctant to earn income from these sales because they were so pleased to have the opportunity to give back to others. We have worked with program participants to help them strike a healthy balance between consumption, donation and income generation. In 2014 six active participants sold at farmers markets and through ASD's Rooted in Appalachia program, demonstrating the social and economic impact that growing food can have on individuals, families and the community.

This is Barbara from Bad Ridge, VA. Thanks to the help of the Grow Your Own program, Barbara was able to grow two large gardens to feed the seven people in her household and to provide extra income by selling the excess produce.

Improving Health - One Meal at a Time



In addition to raising funds to purchase seconds from limited resource farmers, the Healthy Families - Family Farms program works with many partners in the region to create opportunities for those in need to try new foods that are fresh, healthy and local. For example, the Healthy Families - Family Farms Coordinators worked with their wonderful committee of volunteers and members of Washington County, VA Rotary to host two Good Food For All events (pictured below) at Ecumenical Faith in Action in Abingdon, VA. The events were celebrations of local food and a way to honor and respect those who need to take advantage of Ecumenical Faith in Action's food pantry services. Both events included music from the Abingdon Thumb Strummers, food tastings, and activities for children including corn hole - complete with veggie patterned beanbags sewn by a Garden Box project recipient from Ecumenical Faith in Action.



2014, what a year! The biggest ever!

According to the American Cancer Society, an average serving of vegetables is 4 oz. The 124K pounds of food donated by Healthy Families - Family Farms in 2014 brought our total pounds donated since 2004 to over 872K! That means 3,488,813 meals were made healthier for those in need in our community!



**124,000 lbs. of
produce
=
496,000 servings
of veggies**



Garden Box Project - Growing More Than Veggies!



Healthy Families - Family Farm's Garden Box Project was created to give food pantry participants access to fresh, healthy food by providing them with a Garden Box - a waist-high container garden which is on casters to make for easier use and movement by those with physical difficulties. In addition to using boxes that have a high degree of success because they are bottom watered and easy to manage, Healthy Families - Family Farms implemented this program using Garden Partners - volunteers who work one-on-one with gardeners to ensure they are successful and to aid in increasing social connections for participants.

In 2014 the number of Garden Boxes increased to 85 from 43 in 2013. A new installation was implemented at Girls Inc. in Bristol, VA where 12 boxes were planted! Two boxes were planted and cared for by girls at Girls Inc. itself and 10 were planted at the homes of 10 girls. Healthy Families - Family Farms committee members and Garden Partners trained Girls, Inc. staff to serve as Garden Partners. Growing and eating fresh vegetables was a unique summer experience for the girls, making the project a great success with almost all girls planning to replant in 2015.

Growing Leaders

A key aspect of the Garden Box project is providing a sense of empowerment to participants and ensuring that the program can continue and grow by developing leaders within the community. In 2014 four Garden Box recipients served as Garden Partners to new recipients! This shows a wonderful progression in leadership which positions this program to grow and be sustainable and, more importantly, shows the impact this project and the connections made with the Garden Partners can have on making the participants feel confident and empowered!



New Opportunities for Wood Products Manufacturers



WoodRight is a social enterprise that was formed to help Appalachian wood products manufacturers create and sell products that can bring more work and income to their businesses and communities. Traditional products like hardwood flooring and trim are often viewed as commodity products and, while they move a great deal of wood and can earn good income for manufacturers, they are not differentiated products. Therefore manufacturers often end up competing strictly on price, resulting in extremely low margins and an inability for very small scale manufacturers to compete effectively. To address this challenge, WoodRight focused energy on new product development in 2014, creating the Waveform Series of wall claddings and StakWood.



To promote WoodRight, ASD created a Continuing Education Unit (CEU) course. Through in-person presentations and the CEU course, over 400 building professionals learned about Conservation Grade hardwoods from Appalachia and WoodRight. The majority of wood that comes out of a typical log is not perfectly clear but contains some knots, mineral streaking, or other character marks. Conservation Grade wood makes the most use of timber, as it does not produce the waste that results from clear or mostly clear products.



Unlike wall covering products that rely on individually glued or nailed pieces, StakWood's patent pending StakLok™ configuration and offset joinery design allow individual boards to not only be secured to the wall, but also to each other - regardless of board width or thickness. This interlocking design also allows StakWood to

span across most wall imperfections. StakWood is largely made from waste wood - mill remnants that are most commonly exported to overseas furniture manufacturers if they are too small or have too many character marks to be sold domestically as graded lumber. Along with aesthetic preferences, the movement towards natural material usage has been fueled by a focus on indoor air quality. StakWood contains no added urea formaldehyde, VOCs, iron oxide, silica, titanium dioxide, carbon black, or other nasty stuff found in some simulated stone veneer systems and other wall cladding products. StakWood will be available through retailers in 2015.



The Importance of Trees

Feeding Our Communities

Appalachian Sustainable Development continued to lead farmers and community groups in developing edible landscapes using native fruit and nut trees in new and innovative ways. Community partners including the City of Bristol, TN at Steele Creek Park, the City of Bristol VA at Sugar Hollow Park, Sprouting Hope Community Garden in Marion, and Build it Up, East Tennessee's Johnson City-based Food Forests all planted a diverse mix of fruit and nut trees in parks and community gardens. The idea of public orchards or edible parks is a fairly new one. They enhance public spaces by providing an outdoor learning lab where children and adults can learn about fruit tree planting and maintenance. This leads to increased food security, as people adopt this practice at their own homes. They also enhance the experience of visiting a park or trail, by inviting visitors to forage and sample the fruits and by attracting wildlife.



Protecting our Stream and River Banks

ASD also spearheaded the effort to integrate native fruit and nut trees into riparian buffer plantings. These buffers play an important role in protecting and improving water quality. Farmers willing to install these buffers will now be able to benefit in a more direct way with a diverse array of fruits and nuts available for personal consumption or market. In partnership with US Fish and Wildlife Service, Katie Commender, ASD's Americorps VISTA volunteer installed 4 of these buffers in 2014. This initial effort has led to a broad reaching NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant project, with the goal of establishing an additional 10 acres of these buffers and influencing NRCS policy to adopt this methodology.



**Total 2014: planted 317 fruit and nut trees
partnered with 7 individuals/landowners**

Total to date: 447 trees planted!

Financials: Statements of Activities and Position

	2013	2014 (unaudited)
Revenue		
Grants	\$ 772,988.00	\$ 607,386.00
Donations	\$ 144,105.00	\$ 213,162.00
Income from Enterprises	\$ 1,626,712.00	\$ 1,640,646.00
Other Income	\$ 25,387.00	\$ 22,150.00
Total Revenue	\$ 2,569,192.00	\$ 2,483,344.00
Expenses		
Program Services	\$ 2,409,995.00	\$ 2,390,307.00
General and Administrative	\$ 106,053.00	\$ 104,291.00
Fundraising	\$ 74,796.00	\$ 65,740.00
Total Expenses	\$ 2,590,844.00	\$ 2,560,338.00
Increase in Net Assets	\$ (21,652.00)	\$ (76,994.00)
Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 123,368.00	\$ 114,441.00
Receivables	\$ 50,216.00	\$ 52,442.00
Fixed Assets - Net	\$ 949,982.00	\$ 862,494.00
Total Assets	\$ 1,123,566.00	\$ 1,029,377.00
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$ 64,559.00	\$ 55,531.00
Notes Payable	\$ 385,301.00	\$ 367,011.00
Other Liabilities	\$ 24,977.00	\$ 35,100.00
Total Liabilities	\$ 474,837.00	\$ 457,642.00
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	\$ 556,204.00	\$ 484,492.00
Temporarily Restricted	\$ 92,525.00	\$ 87,243.00
Total Net Assets	\$ 648,729.00	\$ 571,735.00
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 1,123,566.00	\$ 1,029,377.00

Together, We Make One Great Team

Board of Directors

Paige Baker

Jim Baldwin

Dan Bieger

Margaret Feierabend

Beulah Ferguson

Brock Fleenor

John Gifford

Frank Goodpasture

Antoinette Goodrich

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Healthy Families ~ Family Farms Coordinators

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Deni Peterson
Learning Landscapes & GYO Manager

Robin Robbins
Appalachian Harvest General Manager

Kevin Rowe
WoodRight Business Development Manager

Brian Serway
OSM/VISTA

Kathlyn Terry
Executive Director

Derrick Von Kundra
Appalachian Transition Fellow

*The mission of Appalachian
Sustainable Development is to
grow food, communities and opportunities
to build a thriving Appalachia.*

*Cover art courtesy of Brian Serway,
former ASD AmeriCorps VISTA.*



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