



2020

annual report

FARMERS AGAINST HUNGER






farmers Against Hunger





is a program of the
501(c)3 non-profit
New Jersey
Agricultural Society.

 www.njagsociety.org/farmers-against-hunger

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Volunteer gleans cherry tomatoes at Original Columbus Farm (8.31.20)

INTRO

a letter from the team

In 2020, as NJ residents faced a dual crisis of health and economics, millions were plunged into food insecurity. Our team was left stunned and heartbroken as we witnessed firsthand the drastic spike in need for fresh and healthy food. Fortunately, with the benefit of 24 years' experience as part of the food security solution, Farmers Against Hunger (FAH) was well-positioned to step up as a front-line responder.

We have always been a lean-run program operating with an all-hands-on-deck mentality, but this was never more true than in 2020. It was a year of purpose and proactive emergency response, as our small team rapidly altered plans and mobilized resources to scale up our operation, hoping to reach many more families in need.

Of course, we relied on a vast network of collaborators to achieve our lofty goals. As ever, we were humbled by the tireless efforts of our many partners: the farmers, distributors, volunteers, funders, and community organizers who performed daily miracles to serve our neighbors in need. When the issue of hunger feels overwhelming or insurmountable, one need only look to all of these incredible individuals who have decided to make this work personal and choose action over indifference.

With their help, we were able to recover and distribute nearly *double* our usual volume of food in 2020, reaching tens of thousands of families impacted by the pandemic. To all of our friends and supporters—thank you for your service, a true beacon of light amidst a difficult year.



Elyse pulls a load of gleaned squash at Grasso Girls Farm (10.8.20)



In solidarity,

Elyse Yerrapathruni,
Brian Strumfels
& the FAH team

BACKGROUND

food waste & food insecurity in the time of COVID

In the United States, an estimated **30-40%** of all food is wasted. For fruits and vegetables, the figure is even more dire. A staggering **52%** of all produce goes not from farm to fork, but instead to the landfill or compost heap.¹ **Why** does so much good produce go uneaten?

FRUIT & VEG

52% lost

consumed **48%**

SEAFOOD

50% lost

consumed **50%**

GRAIN

38% lost

consumed **62%**

MEAT

22% lost

consumed **78%**

MILK

20% lost

consumed **80%**

DRIVERS OF WASTE:

- **Weather/disease**
- **Market conditions**
- **Labor shortages**
- **Food safety scares**
- **Buyer quality standards**
- **Order changes**
- **Forecasting errors**
- **Improper handling**
- **Rejected shipments**

Consider the plight of a **small-scale farmer** deciding whether to harvest her last field of tomatoes. Last year, she lost a few fields to bad weather and disease, so she planted a few extra this year to hedge her bets. This time, nature is on her side, but market forces are not. Tomato prices are low, especially after a recent food safety scare (unfounded, but still wreaking havoc on consumer demand). Meanwhile, tomatoes aren't cheap to bring to market. With the COVID travel restrictions, half of her seasonal workers didn't make it this year. So labor is expensive and hard to find, not to mention the cost of packaging and transport. To top it off, buyers expect perfect specimens of even color, size, and ripeness, regardless of whether these traits affect the taste. Between the selective harvest and severe culling, half the tomatoes in the field will never make it to a shelf, much less a plate... Perhaps the farmer decides not to harvest this field after all, just plow it under.¹²³

Related forces cause waste among produce distributors and retailers. Consider the manager of a **distribution hub** that sends produce to grocery stores and restaurants statewide. He planned his tomato orders based on last year's sales and now he's stuck with the surplus.



Meanwhile, some new staffers left the latest banana shipment on the loading dock for too long, outside of the necessary refrigeration. While they still look perfectly fine, he can't risk selling them and upsetting clients, in case their shelf life has been reduced. Then there are the COVID-related issues, including a slew of canceled orders as restaurants shut their doors. To top it off, his remaining clients keep rejecting shipments over minor issues, from pallet configuration to a 15-minute delay in delivery. If he can't find new buyers in time, the next stop is the landfill.¹²³

What is the cost of wasted food, in a country where millions are hungry?

Back in 2019, in the midst of a strong economy with low unemployment, **9 million** adults in America, or **4%**, reported that members of their households sometimes or often did not have enough to eat (**very low food security**).⁴ That was before COVID-19 struck, bringing mass unemployment and school closures. Now, that number has surged to **25 million**, or **11% of all adults**.⁵ That's over one in ten adults reporting that within the past week, their families have been unable to fill their plates. New Jersey is no exception, with rates increasing from 3% to 10% post-COVID.⁴⁵ (In the broader category of food insecurity, researchers estimate that U.S. rates rose from 10% to 25%.)⁴⁶

The demographic profile of severe food insecurity during COVID largely reflects those same populations that have long suffered disproportionately from poverty: Black and Latinx families, those without a college education, and those with children. However, COVID has also pushed many new families into crisis—of those without enough to eat, nearly 1 in 4 have a *typical* annual income of over \$50,000.⁶

FOOD INSECURITY

very low food security:
multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake

low food security:
reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet (little or no indication of reduced food intake)

Imagine if we could leverage our surplus produce to serve our many neighbors in need.

SOURCES:

1. FAO, 2011, via: Gunders, Dana. *Wasted: How America is Losing up to 40 Percent of its Food from Farm to Fork to Landfill*. Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). Aug 2012.
2. Vared, Sarah & Eva Fowler. *A Roadmap to Reduce U.S. Food Waste by 20 Percent*. ReFED. 2016.
3. ReFED. "ReFED's COVID-19 U.S. Food System Review." 2020. <https://covid.refed.com/overview>
4. (NJ rate uses a 3-year average to increase the sample size.) Coleman-Jensen, Alisha, et al. *Household Food Security in the United States in 2019*. ERR-275, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.
5. (Average of weekly/biweekly surveys, Apr 15–Dec 21, 2020. Latest figures reach >29 million, or 14% of adults.) U.S. Census Bureau. "Household Pulse Survey." 2021. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/household-pulse-survey.html>
6. Schanzenbach, Diane W. *Not Enough to Eat: COVID-19 Deepens America's Hunger Crisis*. Food Research & Action Center (FRAC). Sep 2020.

OVERVIEW

Our Mission:

- **To reduce food waste, by helping farmers and wholesalers throughout New Jersey share their surplus produce with those in need**
- **To reduce food insecurity, by ensuring access to fresh and healthy produce for every family in New Jersey**

With all of the time and effort that goes into growing a single item of produce, no farmer wants to see their crops go to waste. In the event that certain items cannot be sold for profit, most farmers would love to donate to a local food pantry or soup kitchen. However, in the midst of a busy season at a small-scale farm, it can be hard to allocate limited resources to harvesting, storing, and transporting produce, all for a non-paying destination.

Meanwhile, hunger relief agencies often have multiple sources of non-perishable food—the canned and boxed goods donated at food drives or supplied through government programs like TEFAP. Fresh produce, nutrient-rich and delicious, is much harder to come by, especially for a small non-profit without a truck or cold storage.

Here is where Farmers Against Hunger (FAH) enters the picture. Since our founding in 1996, FAH has been working behind-the-scenes as a bridge between New Jersey's agricultural sector and hunger relief organizations. When farmers throughout the state call us with produce to share, whether boxed and ready to go or still out in the fields, we are standing by with one of our iconic trucks. With the support of our devoted volunteers, we go out to harvest the surplus crops (a process termed "gleaning") and take them back to our cooler for inventory and storage. Particularly during the off-season, we supplement our stock with produce donations from various grocery retailers, distributors, and transporters. We then distribute the products among a network of regional food banks, smaller food pantries, churches, and other groups engaged in feeding their communities.



1781

Local farmers established the **New Jersey Agricultural Society (NJAS)**, intended to showcase the best of NJ agriculture, promote agriculture education programs, and provide a forum for collaboration and discussion on the issues of the day, from seed varieties to the latest machinery.

1996

A group of NJ farmers were on a farm tour with legislators when they saw how much perfectly good produce was going to waste because of minor cosmetic imperfections or gaps in the market. In an effort to collect this produce and bring it to food-insecure families, NJAS began the **Farmers Against Hunger** program, with one staffer and a rented truck.

1998

With the purchase of our **first truck**, we were able to dramatically increase our food rescue and delivery capacity. We also began to implement our current distribution model, bringing truckloads of mixed produce to central locations across the state, from which multiple food pantries could pick up.

2003

Our **weekly distribution sites** in Camden, Burlington, and Trenton were first established 17 years ago. To this day, many of the same volunteers still come to pick up their organizations' weekly allotments of produce.

2014

In addition to food rescue and distribution, FAH began a program for **culinary and nutrition education**. In our first year, we conducted seminars and cooking classes on healthy eating and produced a cookbook of recipes featuring NJ produce. (The program is currently on hiatus, while we focus on providing emergency relief through the pandemic.)

2016

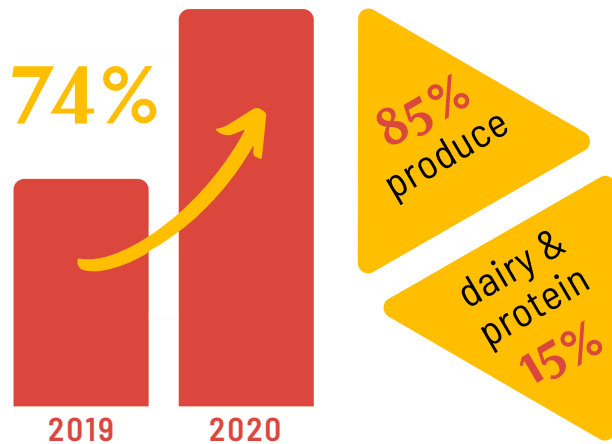
The NJ State Legislature passed Joint Resolutions 93 and 94, recognizing FAH and the potential of gleaning as a tool to reduce food waste and food insecurity. In the third week of September, we celebrated the state's first annual **Gleaning Week** and **Farmers Against Hungers Day**.

2020

With the **COVID-19** pandemic driving unemployment and food insecurity, the mission of FAH has been more important than ever. To meet the demands of the moment, we have both expanded our regular operations and created new distribution mechanisms to directly reach NJ families in need.

BY THE NUMBERS

2,260,000
pounds



= 11,300,000

½-cup servings

= 10,400

people served weekly

2020

63 food donors

including **44** NJ farms

87 hunger relief agencies

food pantries, senior centers, regional food banks (serving 700+ agencies)

35-40 per week



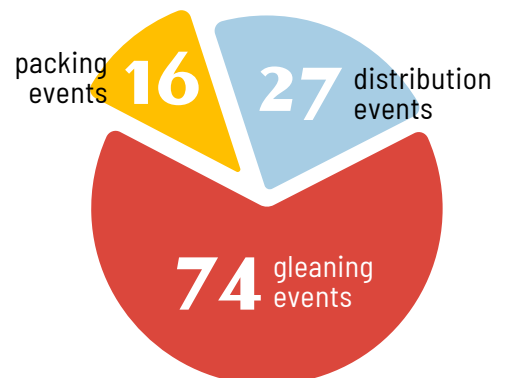
4 staff members

& 3 trucks

42 pop-up distributions

serving **32,000** households

4,500 volunteer hours

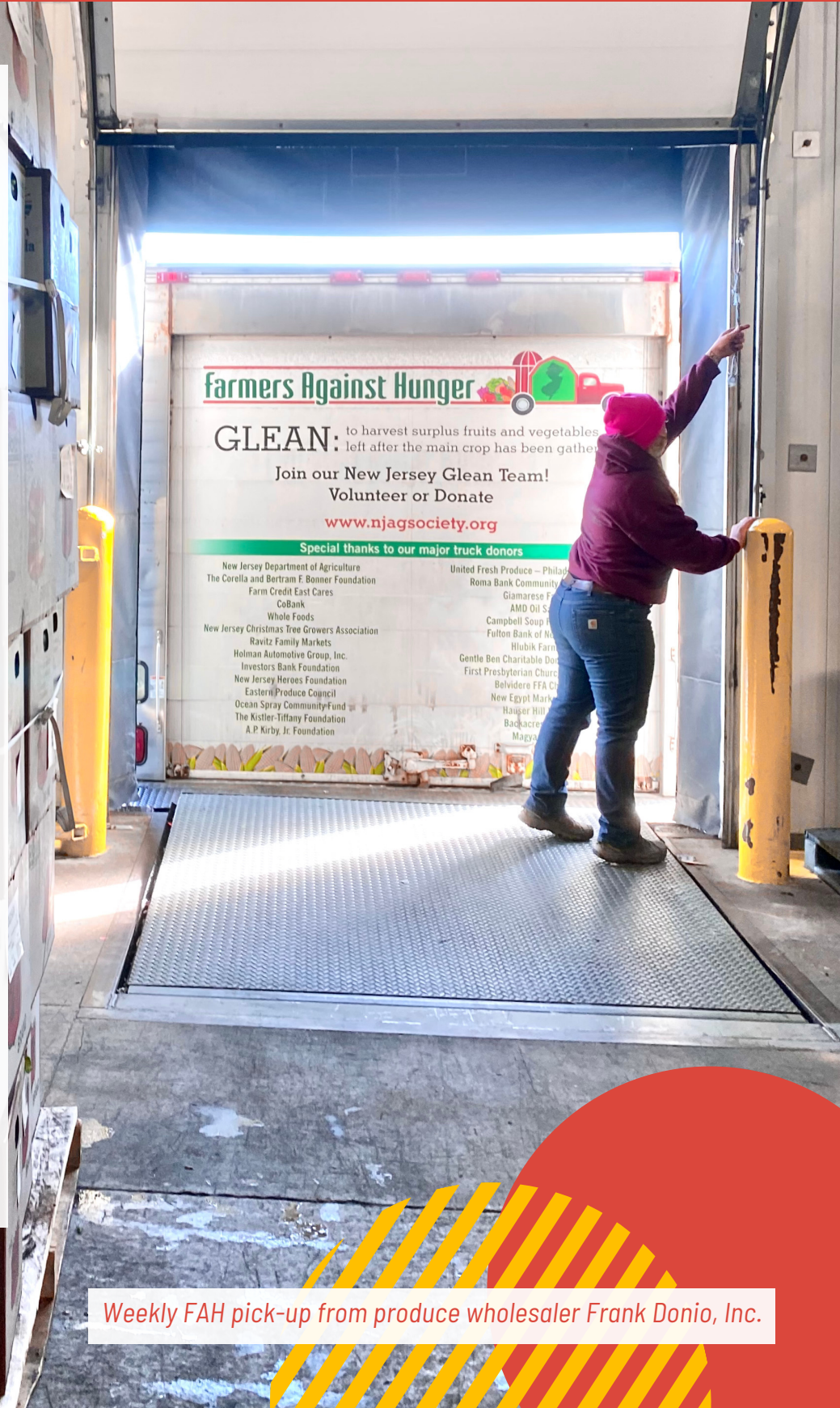


FOOD RESCUE

In 2020, FAH rescued a record **2.3 million pounds** of food (mostly produce). That's a **75% increase** from previous years, one that we hope to sustain post-COVID.

Over the past 24 years, we have built a coalition of **60+ food donors** who are willing to offer us their surplus products—still fresh and delicious—for redistribution to families in need.

While our donors range in scale and frequency, they are matched in their commitment to our joint mission: reducing waste and ensuring food justice. Whether they fill up the truck every week or dig out our number once a year, we are tremendously grateful for their support.



Weekly FAH pick-up from produce wholesaler Frank Donio, Inc.

Because FAH is a program of the New Jersey Agricultural Society, founded by and for farmers, we are able to tap into a network of produce donors that is not easily accessible to other hunger relief agencies. These companies and farms have grown to trust us as **responsible stewards** for their surplus, in the knowledge that we will be flexible and reliable with pick-ups, arrive with trained staff and the necessary equipment to handle large quantities (refrigerated truck, pallet jack, containers), safely store the donations at our cooler, and distribute them out to communities in need in a fair and timely manner.

Our donors broadly fall into two categories: 1) the companies that supply, distribute, and transport produce within NJ, and 2) the small-scale NJ farms that grow it themselves.

In 2020, 1.9 million pounds (85% of our intake) came from the former category, a set of **19 non-farm donors**. These donors manage produce at a scale unmatched by most farms, leaving them with much more surplus to offer FAH. For example, our biggest donor, Wakefern Food Corporation, is a retailer's cooperative that serves over 350 supermarkets along the East Coast (including ShopRite in NJ). Our weekly collections from their produce warehouse singlehandedly account for 55% of our 2020 intake. Other major donors in this group include the produce wholesalers Frank Donio, Inc. and Nardelli Bros. Inc., the dairy suppliers Garelick Farms and Clover Farms, and the meal kit delivery service Sun Basket. We also receive donations from other hunger relief non-profits who pass along their surplus to us, including Rise and MCFOODS.

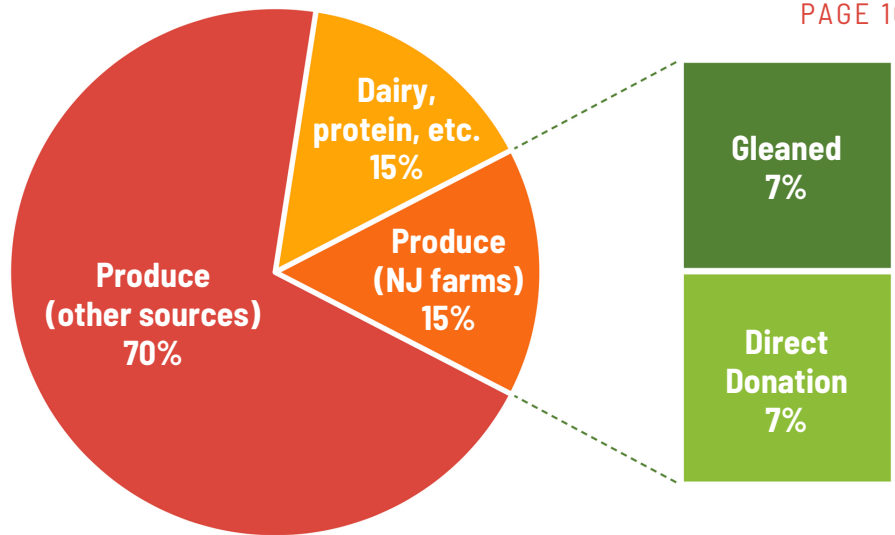


Fig 1. Of the 2.3 million lbs we collected, the majority (85%) was produce, from either a New Jersey farm or one of our other sources (wholesalers, distributors, etc.). The remaining 15% was other perishable items: dairy, protein, juice, and bread. Of the NJ farm produce, about half was gleaned and half directly donated.

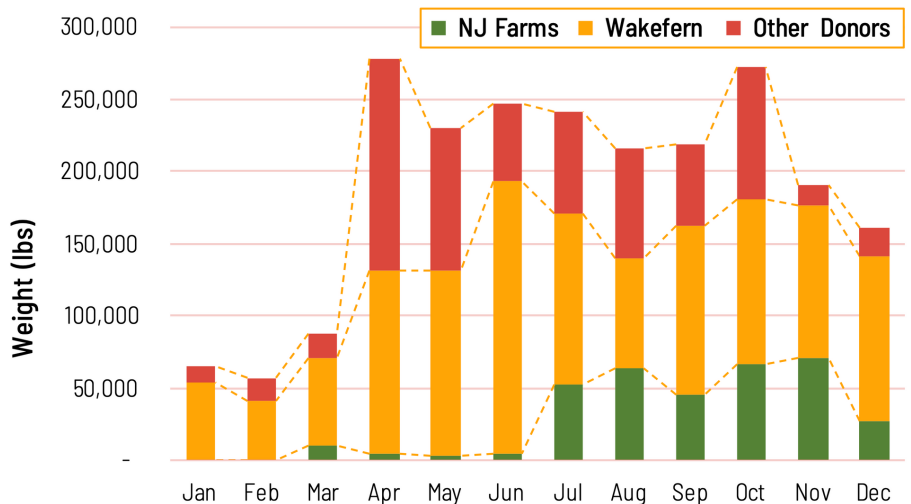


Fig 2. The amounts and sources of food donations shifted over the course of the year. In addition to the usual seasonal increase during NJ harvest months (Jul–Nov), we saw a spike in food donations starting in April, coinciding with the COVID shutdowns.

Our total collection from non-farm sources was more than double that of previous years. When the pandemic struck, leaving schools closed and millions unemployed, the FAH team saw a surge in requests for produce. We also envisioned a series of pop-up events across the state—free farm markets offering a selection of pre-packed fresh goods. To accommodate the increased demand, we would need more food. When we relayed our requests to potential sources, old and new, they stepped up to the plate. By April, we added a second weekly pick-up from Wakefern and began to collect dairy products for the pop-ups. By June, we started connecting to sources with 'Farmers to Families' food boxes via the USDA's COVID-relief program. By the end of the year, these donors had contributed an extra one million pounds compared to 2019. We are hopeful that as the urgency of the moment fades, our new relationships and logistical arrangements will enable the current volume of donations to continue.

The remaining 345,300 pounds (15% of our total intake) came from our network of **44 small-scale farms** across NJ. About half of this produce was gleaned from their fields with the help of our volunteers and half was a “direct donation,” already picked and packaged by the farmers. Our top farm

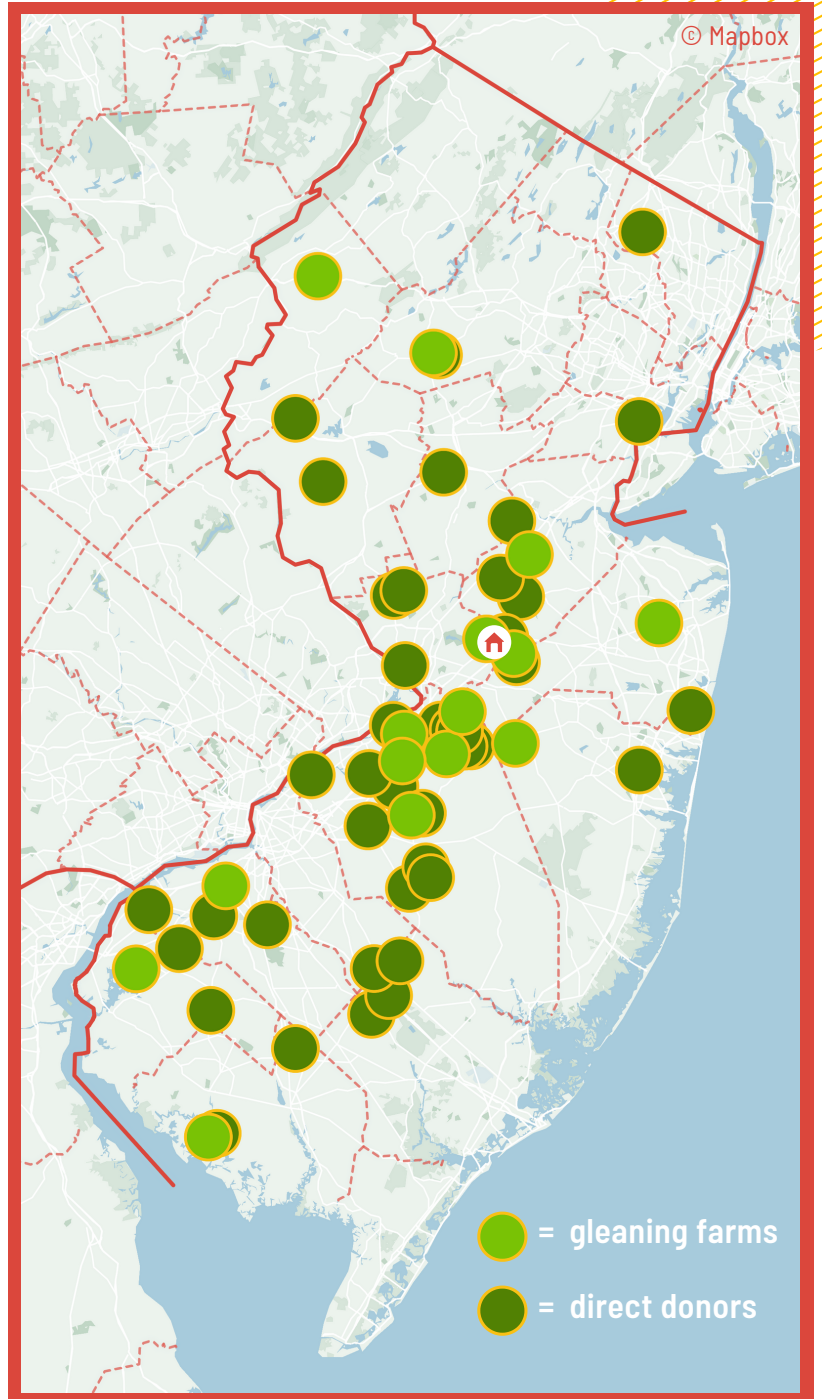
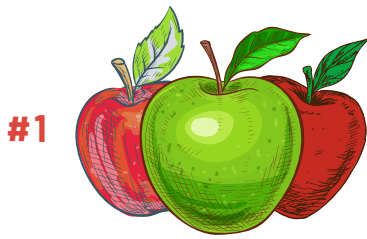
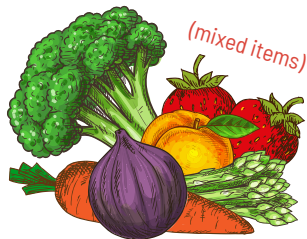


Fig 3 shows the geographic distribution of our 63 food donors, including 16 farms that invite FAH volunteers to glean from their fields. Our donors span 16 of the state’s 21 counties, from Bergen to Cumberland.



#1

86,600 lbs



#7

18,900 lbs



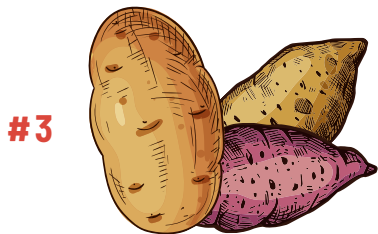
#2

68,100 lbs



#8

10,300 lbs



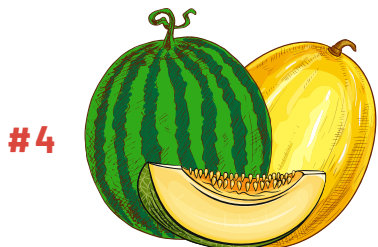
#3

39,400 lbs



#9

9,600 lbs



#4

30,700 lbs



#10

9,500 lbs



#5

29,100 lbs



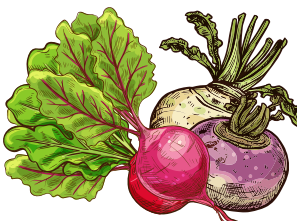
#11

8,700 lbs



#6

27,600 lbs



#12

6,900 lbs



donors of 2020 included Hallock's U-Pick, Abrams Homestead, A.T. Buzby Farm, Eastmont Orchards, and Russo's Fruit & Vegetable Farm. Their donations showcased the best of Jersey Fresh produce: apples, sweet corn, potatoes, melons, and more.

Our total intake from NJ farms was slightly lower than usual, due in part to adverse weather conditions for certain crops. More significantly, COVID drove an unprecedented flow of customers to farms, as a safe destination for both grocery shopping and family fun. Unfortunately, a good year for business can also leave farms with less surplus to donate. While we are satisfied that the decrease in NJ donations does not represent extra produce going to waste, we remain eager to increase these numbers. In the coming years, we hope to expand our reach, ensuring that every NJ farm knows of this option to reduce their food waste and serve their communities.

= 345,300 lbs of NJ produce

GLEANNING

Of our many food recovery projects, gleaning at New Jersey farms is the heart and pride of FAH. More than any other source, gleaning involves **active food rescue**, leveraging our personal relationships with farmers and community volunteers to reach a source that most non-profits cannot access.

Indeed, each of those **172,000 pounds** was hard won in a battle against nature and time. In the course of **74 gleaning events** at **16 farms**, through smothering heat and freezing rain, our volunteers were directly engaged in NJ agriculture and the struggle against food waste. As a tool for building public awareness and inspiring further action, gleaning is invaluable.



Apple gleaning at Giamarese Farm (NJ Gleaning Week, 9.26.20)

Gleaning is a hallowed and ancient tradition, practiced across the years from ancient Israel to 18th century France. In fact, the Hebrew Bible commands that farmers leave the corners of their fields unharvested and do not return to gather any produce that is dropped or overlooked in the initial harvest. These crops, termed "gleanings," are to be left for the poor, strangers, and others in need, to pick freely from the remnants left in the fields. While the details can vary in practice, the principle remains the same: to return surplus crops—perfectly healthy and delicious but unprofitable to harvest—from the fields to the food stream, in service of those in need.

gleaning: the gathering of any crops left in the field after the commercial harvest is complete

Gleaning is rare in America today, as farmers contend with issues of private property, safety, liability, and basic logistics. Gone are the days when the entire village knew the last date of the harvest and could walk over to glean together, with a local warden to oversee. Today, it is FAH that hopes to serve as the middleman between New Jersey's farmers and those families in need.

This year, our gleaning season ran from early April to the very last days of December. Throughout this period, the FAH team fielded calls from farmers inviting us to glean. Sometimes, this was the traditional gleaning of crops left behind in the main harvest (overlooked, dropped, or left because



Painting entitled "The Gleaners" (1854) by Jules Breton, set in his hometown in Northern France. The main harvest having been completed, local women and children gather in the fields to glean wheat, as a guard looks on.

they were cosmetically imperfect or not yet ripe). Other times, markets conspired to make an entire field unprofitable to harvest, leaving our gleaners with the first pick of a delicious bounty. In either case, FAH would schedule a date, spread the word to our mailing list of 1,500+ volunteers, and arrive within a few days with a truck, baskets, boxes, and any other equipment we'd need. On average, we found that a group of 10-15 volunteers could collect around 2,300 lbs in each 2-hour session (depending on the crop).

One of our most frequently gleaned crops of 2020 was **sweet corn**, available at A.T. Buzby Farm and Lee Turkey Farm, among others. While most plants will yield two delicious ears of corn, the second takes longer to mature and never gets quite as big, so many farmers choose not to harvest it. But rather than simply plow it under, farmers Eric Buzby and Ronnie Lee invited FAH to glean as much as

“Whatever product we’re not able to market, or not able to harvest for whatever reason, we make available for gleaners. [FAH] does a great job getting the volunteers out and they handle all the logistics. They move that product from the field to the people who need it.”

- Eric, Buzby Farm

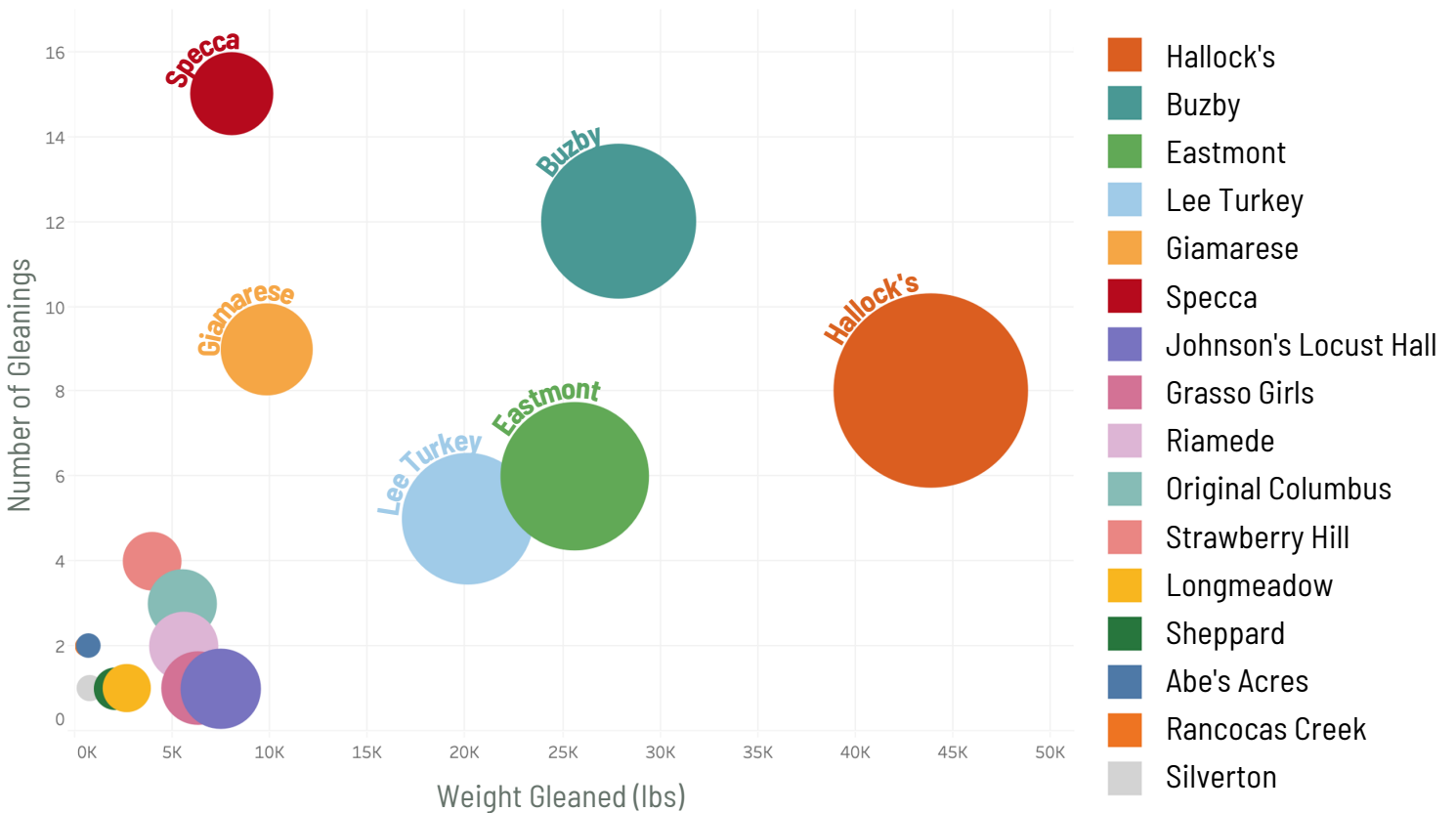


Fig 4 depicts each of the year's gleaning farms by the total weight collected and the number of gleanings held there. The size of each circle represents the weight, ranging from 700 lbs at Abe's Acres Farm to 44,000 lbs at Hallock's. Note that the particular crops picked at a given farm impact the weight collected. For example, Hallock's offered heavy items like potatoes, sweet potatoes, and cabbage, while Specca offered a lighter fare of greens, peas, and beans. Weight is an imperfect metric for measuring and comparing food, as it does not account for variance in calorie density or other aspects of nutritional value.

we could. With willing volunteers and no commercial quality standards to worry about, we gave the second ears some extra time to grow and then filled up our box truck, week after week.

Another common gleaning crop this year was **apples**. During harsh weather and the normal harvest (especially by pick-your-own customers), many apples inevitably fall to the ground. Most farms won't sell this fruit to paying customers, so they end up mowing it over as next year's fertilizer. Instead, the owners of Eastmont Orchards, Giamarese Farm & Orchards, and many others chose to offer the crop to FAH. It certainly took some extra effort to sort through these apples and find those that were recently fallen and still fresh. But with a devoted volunteer crew, the trips were always worth our time. What's more, when the customers dried up and trees were still bearing fruit, we were often invited to pick straight from the tree.



Aside from the sweet corn and apples, our gleaned crops ran the gamut of NJ produce: tomatoes, potatoes, turnips, bell peppers, spinach, squash, and more.

We are so grateful to all the farmers who recognize that good crops are going to waste and choose to welcome FAH volunteers onto their fields. On behalf of food pantry clients across the state, we thank them for ensuring that our neighbors have access to the fresh produce they grow, regardless of income or circumstance.

GLEANNING WEEK

(sep 20-26, 2020)

DID YOU KNOW? Back in 2016, the NJ State Legislature passed two resolutions to recognize FAH and promote gleaning as a tool to reduce food waste and food insecurity.

This year, we marked NJ's 5th annual "Gleaning Week" and "Farmers Against Hunger Day" with a packed schedule of **8 gleanings**, on top of our usual operations:

- pick-ups from 6 direct donors
- deliveries to 38 hunger relief agencies
- a volunteer packing event
- a pop-up distribution, and
- a fundraiser.

By the end of the week, we had collected and distributed over **50,000 lbs** of produce (including 13,000 lbs gleaned) and engaged **120 volunteers**.



SUN

Gleaning sweet corn at Lee Turkey Farm
'Social Sunday' fundraiser at Cream Ridge Winery

MON

Gleaning bell & hot peppers at Sheppard Farm

TUES

Gleaning beans & collards at Specca Farm
Gleaning apples at Strawberry Hill Farm

WED

Farmers Against Hunger Day!

Gleaning apples at Giamarese Farm

THURS

Gleaning sweet corn at A.T. Buzby Farm
Gleaning beans at Rancocas Creek Farm

FRI

Produce packing for distributions

SAT

Gleaning apples at Giamarese Farm (with NJ Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin)
Produce distribution event in Burlington



“ We grow food for people, not the compost heap. As long as people are enjoying it, we’re happy to do it. ”

- Gabe,
Abe's Acres Farm



• Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who came out for the harvest—
• *climbers, diggers, and crawlers,*
• *pickers, slingers, and haulers*
• —the seekers and the gleaners.

DISTRIBUTION

In an average week of 2020, FAH rescued **43,000 pounds** of fresh produce. Our next challenge: to bring these perishable items from our cooler in Hightstown to the families who needed them, spread all across the state. In the era of COVID, our approach was twofold.

With food pantries seeing an unprecedented flow of clients, we doubled down on our deliveries, overcoming the many logistic hurdles to reach **35-40 hunger relief agencies each week**.

Meanwhile, we worked with partners to host **42 pop-up events** for COVID relief, directly serving families with a 25-lb allotment of mixed produce.

Overall, we served an average of **10,400 people each week**.*

Assembling individual pallets of mixed produce for delivery, in the early days of COVID (3.26.20)

As COVID struck and the shutdowns began, families across the country were left reeling from the combined impacts of illness, job loss, and school closures. As always, those who were already struggling now faced a disproportionate risk of further harm. With savings depleting quickly and extra mouths to feed at home, government support often proved too little and too late. Instead, NJ residents relied on their communities to bridge the gap, whether a church food pantry or a drive-up distribution at the local high school.

The FAH team saw the severity of the situation in our own inbox, as requests for produce surged. While some food pantries shut their doors, others were left struggling to accommodate the flood of new clients. Government agencies and non-profits realized the emerging crisis in their communities and began reaching out in search of partners. Meanwhile, individuals from across the state were sending in heartbreaking appeals for help. Sikudhani had no vehicle or money for transportation but was desperately low on food for her 4-year-old daughter. Tina's kids were home from school and couldn't receive the free meals they had relied on, while her own hours—working at that same school—were shrinking every week. Amalia's entire family was infected with COVID, and her three children were out of food. We heard from Nicky, Faith, Martha, Michelle, Iffat, and many more...

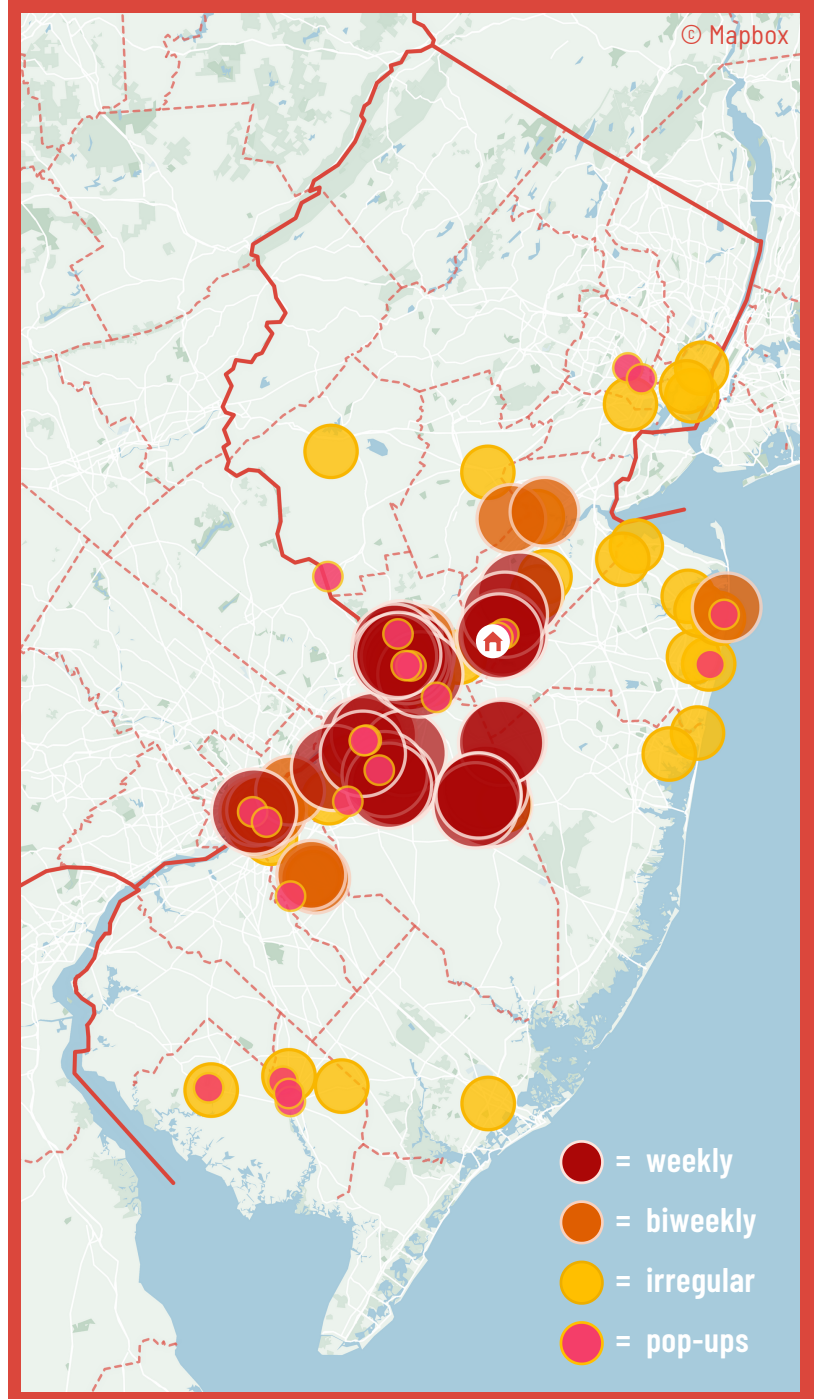


Fig 5 shows the geographic spread of our food distribution efforts, reaching 13 of the state's 21 counties, from Hudson to Cumberland.

* Extrapolated from total weight of food rescued. Feeding America estimates that the average meal weighs 1.2 lbs (based on USDA findings). The latest US Dietary Guidelines recommend that fruits and vegetables comprise half of each meal (thus, 0.6 lbs). For most food pantry clients, our offerings are not their only source of produce; we assume that clients will rely on FAH for about 1/3 of their weekly produce intake (4.2 lbs, or 21 half-cup servings, per week). At this rate, with 2.3 million lbs of food (mostly produce), FAH can serve about 10,400 people per week.

Thanks to our generous food donors, FAH was well-situated to respond to these requests and meet the demands of the moment. Over the course of countless emails and phone calls, making and reconfiguring plans as the situation on the ground continued to shift, we revised our distribution model and stepped into our role as first responders in a national emergency. Our priority: to collect more food and get it out to families in crisis. To this end, we pushed ourselves to nurture relationships with partners new and old, to say yes in inconvenient moments, to rely on our 24 years of experience, and to welcome change as it inevitably came.

“Wherever I go, they only provide canned food. [...] You have no idea how big of a help you were for our family. Every single item was very useful to us. I have no words to thank you enough.”

– Iffat, Lumberton resident

Of the 2.3 million pounds of food we collected, about **two-thirds** were distributed among a network of **87 hunger relief partners**, including regional food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens, and other community feeding operations. While some deliveries were more sporadic, others received steady shipments on a weekly or biweekly basis. In any given week, our produce reached between 35 and 40 agencies. With every delivery, we endeavored to provide our partners with a wide variety of fresh food, in good condition, and in sufficient amounts to meet demand while avoiding waste.

The remaining **one-third** of our produce was distributed directly to families in need, via a series of newly created **pop-up distributions**. Between April and December, FAH and its partners hosted 42 direct-to-client events across the state, serving 32,000 households with bags of mixed produce and other fresh foods (see page 24 for more).

“I am disabled and without a car. [...] Thank you for the produce. I have been sharing [it] with a needy neighbor. There are a few but we can make do with what you delivered. [...] I cannot believe how nice it all looks. You are wonderful. Made my day.”

– Melissa, Magnolia resident



WEEKLY STOPS

Every week, Farmers Against Hunger distributes produce to at least **35 hunger relief agencies**, located primarily in **Mercer, Burlington, and Camden** counties.

In Trenton, Mount Holly, and Browns Mills, we bring a truckload of produce to a central spot, where 6-10 local groups have arranged to assemble for pick-up. On the given day, our FAH driver or a volunteer Site Leader oversees the process as representatives from each organization load up their cars and vans with a selection of the week's products. The recipients then distribute that food amongst their clients and community members in need. While some stock up their church food pantries, others deliver to seniors or disabled individuals with limited mobility. In Camden, we work with the local Housing Authority and property managers to implement a slightly different model, delivering directly to residents living at affordable housing sites.

“Yesterday, you made a lot of seniors very happy! They were telling me that stores were putting their prices up and they have to cut back because they can't afford it. And they said grapes are very, very expensive. So I'm telling you thank you for them and myself!”

- Liz, East Trenton Collaborative

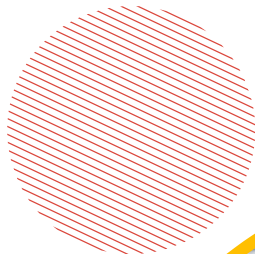
TRENTON, MERCER COUNTY

- Bethel French Seventh-Day Adventist Church
- East Trenton Collaborative / Urban Promise Trenton (biweekly)
- Faith Deliverance Cathedral
- First Presbyterian Church, Skeet's Pantry (monthly)
- House of God Church
- Life Gate Christian Assembly
- Mt. Olivet Baptist Church
- New Holy Cross Church of Christ
- Samaritan Baptist Church
- St James AME Church / Allen Village Community Development Corporation
- West Trenton Community Center (biweekly)



MOUNT HOLLY, BURLINGTON COUNTY

- Beacon of Hope, Inc.
- Equal Partners, Inc.
- First Pentecostal Apostolic Mission
- House of God Church
- Islamic Center of Ewing
- Jacksonville Presbyterian Church
- Ladies in Transit Holistic Community Development Corporation
- Ministry on Wheels Community Outreach
- Sanctuary Foundation for Veterans
- Second Baptist Church
- St. Peter's Igbo Anglican Church



BROWNS MILLS, BURLINGTON COUNTY

- Assorted senior housing complexes (deliveries)
- Browns Mills English Seventh-Day Adventist Church
- Burlington Seventh-Day Adventist Church
- Pemberton Township Senior Citizens Council
- Pinefields Senior Apartments
- St. Ann's Church (biweekly)
- Sunset Road Church of Christ



CAMDEN (& Lindenwold), CAMDEN COUNTY

(direct deliveries to 3-4 sites per week, on a rotating basis; listed in order of frequency)

- Riverview Towers
- Ablett Village Apartments
- Harmony House Apartments
- Washington Park Apartments
- Birchwood at Parker Hall Apartments (via Ingerman Management Company)
- Mickle Tower
- Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church
- Audubon Towers
- Camden Oaks Apartments
- Arborwood Apartments
- Commitment Community Church
- Lindenwold Tower Senior Apartments



Volunteers at Riverview Towers, an affordable housing complex for seniors in Camden, have set up a near-weekly market, serving FAH produce to their fellow residents (8.24.20)

ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS

- Burlington Township Food Pantry, Burlington County
- Oaks Integrated Care Food Pantry, Burlington County
- Good Samaritan Food Pantry @ New Egypt UMC, Ocean County
- **MCFOODS Distribution Center, Middlesex County (serving 140+ agencies)**
- Rise, Mercer County

OTHER PARTNERS

In addition to these weekly commitments, we provide fresh produce more sporadically to another **40 organizations** statewide. These include both smaller agencies like food pantries, soup kitchens, and community centers, and larger regional food banks, which redistribute our offerings among their many partners. We visit these groups on a rotating basis, based on seasonal availability, or whenever extra produce is available. We thank them for answering the call and managing the logistics of pick-up/delivery, in order to ensure that their communities have access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

- Alm's Center, Bridgeton
- America's Grow-a-Row, Pittstown
- Arm in Arm, Trenton
- Bridge of Peace Community Church, Camden
- Congregation of Yahweh, Camden
- Elijah's Promise, New Brunswick
- **Food Bank of South Jersey (serving 150+ agencies)**
- Food Bank Network of Somerset County, Bound Brook
- Franklin Food Bank, Somerset
- Freedom Village at West Windsor
- From Jersey With Love, Asbury Park
- **Fulfill, formerly FoodBank of Monmouth & Ocean Counties (serving 290 agencies)**
- Highland Park Community Center
- Iglesia Pentecostal Fuente de Vida, Camden
- Inspira LIFE Center, Vineland
- Keyport Ministerium Food Pantry
- Long Branch House of Hope
- Lunch Break, Red Bank
- Mary's Table, Point Pleasant Beach
- Matawan Community Food Pantry
- **Mercer Street Friends, Trenton (serving 130+ agencies)**
- The Neighborhood Center, Camden
- New Beginnings Food Pantry, Lawrence
- New Life Food Pantry, Helmetta
- Pearson Memorial United Methodist Church, Hamilton
- Presbyterian Church of Jamesburg
- Project Freedom, Inc., Robbinsville
- Seeds of Service, Brick
- **Southern Regional Food Distribution Center, Vineland (serving 50+ agencies)**
- St. Luke Lutheran Church, Willingboro
- St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Long Branch
- St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Moorestown
- Team Walker, Jersey City
- TOUCH New Jersey Food Alliance, Camden
- Triumphant Life Church Assembly of God, Asbury Park
- Union City Community Fridge
- Urban Promise Food Co-Op, Camden
- West Side Community Fridge, Jersey City

POP-UPS



The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting shutdowns created food insecurity at a scale that the existing hunger relief infrastructure was unequipped to handle. With extra produce to offer and food pantries already operating at maximum capacity, we needed a new mechanism to move large quantities of produce directly into the hands of the families who needed it.

Therefore, in collaboration with an array of partners, we arranged a series of large-scale pop-up distributions across the state. By the end of the year, we had hosted **42 pop-ups**, serving an average of **760 households per event**.

Pop-up produce distribution in Bridgeton (7.10.20)

On a typical day, most of our nation's food pantries serve fewer than 50 households. Even over the course of an entire month, few will reach over 300.¹ FAH is eager to support pantries of any size, as even the smaller agencies provide an indispensable service in transporting donated food 'the last mile,' from our central hubs into the communities that need it most—many even deliver to the homes of those who cannot visit in person. In previous years, we have relied entirely on these pantries (and the food banks that serve them) to distribute our produce to NJ residents.

This year, however, with the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting shutdowns driving dramatic spikes in food insecurity, the demand for food quickly outpaced the capacity of New Jersey's food pantry network. From a baseline of 3% in 2019, a staggering 10% of adults in NJ were now reporting that their households did not have enough food to eat over the past week.² Many more were confronting the impossible choice between paying for food, rent, and medical expenses, and saving for a deeply uncertain future with lost incomes. In such a circumstance, compounded by the real danger and time commitment involved in a COVID-era visit to the grocery store, the purchase of fresh food—healthy, but perishable and relatively expensive—often became hard to justify.

Meanwhile, the state's food pantries were also struggling. Under-resourced at even the best of times, they now scrambled to find volunteers and adjust to the new COVID safety precautions. While some pantries were forced to close, others held on and even managed to accommodate an increase in client volume. For those that required extra produce to meet the demand, FAH was happy to help. Still, we knew it was not enough.

We had successfully sourced a great deal of additional produce, tripling our intake between March and April. While our agency partners could absorb some of this increase, we needed an alternative mechanism to efficiently distribute much larger quantities of produce to the families who needed it. In many locations across the state, we suspected that at least 500 families would turn out for food on a given day, if they were assured of fresh and abundant provisions and a safe process for pick-up. We could not simply drop two truckloads of loose produce at any existing pantry—very few had the capacity to handle such a volume without significant on-the-ground support, if at all. The location in question would need to be central, large enough to park the trucks for ongoing refrigeration, and suitable to safely accommodate a long line of cars. Meanwhile, the distribution

1. (A 2002 USDA study found that 40% of food pantries served <10 households per day, 60% served <25, and 74% served <50. Over a month, only 12% of pantries served >300 households, including those households making multiple visits. 46% of pantries delivered food to those who were unable to attend in person.) Ohls, James, et al. *The Emergency Food Assistance System - Findings from the Provider Survey, Volume II: Final Report*. Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Report No. 16-2. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Economic Research Service (ERS). Oct 2002.
2. (Average of weekly/biweekly surveys, Apr 15–Dec 21, 2020.) U.S. Census Bureau. "Household Pulse Survey." 2021. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/household-pulse-survey.html>

process would require a host of volunteers and police involvement, to pack the loose produce into family-sized bags, serve both drive-up and walk-up clients (where possible), monitor the flow of traffic, maintain COVID safety precautions, clean up, and handle any leftover supplies.

Of course, FAH was far from the only entity seeking to provide emergency relief during COVID. Longtime FAH partners at the non-profits Rise (serving Mercer County), CHAI CDC (Burlington County), and Rolling Harvest (Hunterdon/Mercer County) were engaging in similar conversations and sought our collaboration, as did local government agencies, universities, school districts, and community centers across the state. Meanwhile, the federal government launched a new initiative that aligned perfectly with our proposed distribution model—the Farmers to Family Food Box. The USDA contracted with distributors to purchase fresh farm products, package them into family-sized boxes, and supply them to non-profits for community distribution.

Over the next 9 months, in the course of countless email chains and hours of physical labor, FAH would forge lasting partnerships that served our common goal: to bring fresh food to fellow families in need, balancing the needs for safety, quality, and efficiency. We are endlessly grateful for the many partners who offered their time, space, and resources to make this work possible.

“When non-profits can scale up by working together, miracles can happen—and that’s what you’re seeing here.”

**– Cathy Jackson, Rolling Harvest
(4.17.20, Ewing)**



Drenched volunteers serve a steady stream of 800+ cars seeking produce, undaunted by the arrival of Tropical Storm Fay (Bridgeton, 7.10.20)

GRATIS: FRUTAS Y VERDURAS

(lueva o truene!)

25 libras por hogar (mientras disponible).

VIERNES, 11 DE SEP
1-3 PM

No se requiere identificación o registraci3n. Venga en carro o de pie. Se requiere mascarara.

LAKESIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL, 2 N SHARP ST



ESSEX COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE
FARMERS AGAINST HUNGER
in partnership with
MAYOR TED R. GREEN
EAST ORANGE CITY COUNCIL

FREE PRODUCE Supply Giveaway



FRI, AUG 28
10:30AM-12:30PM

(while supplies last)
RECEIVE UP TO 25 POUNDS OF MIXED PRODUCE PLUS ONE MILK PER HOUSEHOLD

FOR ALL RESIDENTS. DRIVE OR WALK UP. MASKS REQUIRED. Rain or Shine!

EAST ORANGE SENIOR CENTER
90 HALSTED STREET, EAST ORANGE, NJ (near Parking Lot)



FOR ANYONE IN NEED:

CAMDEN FOOD DISTRIBUTION (rain or shine!)

30+ lbs of mixed products per household (produce, dairy, and protein), while supplies last.

Walk-up only. Bring a cart or bags!

TUES, OCT 27
10:30 AM - 12:30 PM
WHITMAN PARK
ENTER ON SAYRS AVE

Masks required. No ID or registration needed.



Camden County Board of Freeholders in partnership with Touch New Jersey and Farmers Against Hunger Presents:

FOOD DISTRIBUTION FOR THOSE IN NEED

SATURDAY, JUNE 13 • 12PM

CAMDEN COUNTY COLLEGE
PARKING LOT 6
(please follow directions when entering campus)

Drive-up and walk-up options
MUST wear masks and practice social distancing



FOR ANYONE IN NEED

FREE PRODUCE @ NEWARK, NJ (rain or shine!)

30 lbs of mixed produce, dairy, and meat products per household (while supplies last).

SAT, OCT 17
10:30 AM - 12:30 PM
233 W MARKET ST

(New Community Corporation)
Newark, NJ 07103

No ID, no registration, no questions. Drive or walk up. Masks required.



NOTE:

We chose to offer ~25 lbs of produce per household in order to serve an average household size of 3 people for 2 weeks, following our assumption that clients rely on our offerings for about 1/3 of their weekly produce intake (see footnote on pg. 20).



25 pounds of mixed produce per household (while supplies last). Drive or walk up. Masks required.

FRI JULY 10 • 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM
RIVERFRONT PAVILION, BRIDGETON
(E. Commerce St. Entrance)



We were proud to offer provisions to any family in need, without requiring ID or registration or asking questions. This approach served multiple purposes: to limit contact with visitors as a COVID safety precaution; to serve visitors facing sudden financial stress, who might not yet have any supporting documentation; to put undocumented residents at ease; and to simplify the process for those who might be visiting such a distribution for the first time and hesitant to receive help.

By the end of the year, FAH and its partners had hosted **42 pop-up distributions** across the state (in-person for 27, plus major contributions to 15 hosted by Rise, CHAI CDC, and Rolling Harvest). Most events served both drive-up and walk-up visitors, offering each household a 25-pound allotment of fresh food—mostly mixed produce, often accompanied by juice, dairy products, and/or meats.

The scale of these distributions ranged from 200 to 1600 visitors, averaging out at **760 households per event**—many more families than we could otherwise hope to reach in a single day. Overall, these pop-up distributions allowed us to serve around **32,000 households**—at least 100,000 individuals over and above a typical year. Of these, about 7,000 were served with USDA food boxes, while the other 25,000 were served with produce that we sourced and packed ourselves, alongside our dedicated volunteers.

I know from personal experience partnering with [FAH] in Camden that the organization has adapted to this crisis and become a lifeline for thousands of families across this state. The compassion, dedication, and efficiency with which FAH delivers fresh produce and other vital and nutritious food is heartwarming to witness and represents the best ideals of humanitarianism.

– Kris Kolluri, Cooper's Ferry Partnership

“It was like a McDonald's on steroids. I mean, the cars just kept coming. [...] It couldn't come at a better time with what's going on with COVID and people out of work and people struggling.”

*– Jody Farabella, Police Chief
(6.26.20, Millville)*

“I haven't been to anything like this, and I've never seen anything like this. This is unbelievable. All these people need to eat. [...] It's absolutely wonderful what they're doing, in the rain. I'm so grateful for it.”

*– Jessica, food recipient
(5.8.20, Mount Laurel)*





Top to bottom, left to right: (1) Sample of our offerings at Asbury Park on 8/7, serving 22-lb USDA food boxes, supplemented by corn, blueberries, and milk from other sources. (2) Volunteer bags greens beans for our distribution in Camden, 4/25. (3) 750 boxes of mixed produce for distribution in Lambertville, 4/18. (4) Setting up and instructing volunteers on the day's plans in Asbury Park, 8/7. (5) Dr. Kate Felice of Rowan College looks over our 500 bags of mixed produce in Millville, 6/26. (6) Volunteers load up a few of the 750 cars that visited our drive-up distribution in Millville on 9/11. (7) Some of the 750 bags of mixed produce distributed at TCNJ in Ewing, 4/17. (8) Elyse (Program Director) instructs volunteers on the day's plans in Millville, 6/26. (9) A peek inside the 450 boxes of mixed produce distributed at one of our first events—Bordentown High School, 4/11.

NEXT STEPS

In 2021, Farmers Against Hunger celebrates its 25th year! While we are immensely proud of all that we have accomplished thus far, our greatest moments are yet to come.

Until now, FAH has never had a home of its own. For years, we have rented a cooler and storage room and borrowed office space from our parent organization. Today, with the support of Burlington County and the NJDEP Green Acres Program, FAH has been entrusted with the operation and maintenance of a 3.5-acre plot, including a cooler, storage area, office/event space, and land to grow our own crops for distribution. Our team is thrilled to embark on this journey, transforming a former peach farm into our new **headquarters**: a land stewardship center that serves our operational needs, models the best practices of regenerative farming, and inspires the next generation of farmers.

Meanwhile, we continue to refine and expand our existing operations—food rescue and distribution. In particular, we are determined this year to build up our **gleaning program** with the addition of new farms that might invite volunteers to harvest their surplus. While much depends on the continued generosity of our donors, we are also looking to expand our presence in **southern New Jersey**, in counties that experience especially high rates of food insecurity but are currently underserved by hunger relief agencies.

Lastly, we intend for 2021 to be a year of **data collection and evaluation**. Following our participation in a training workshop for non-profits, we will be working to better align our objectives, activities, and outcomes, in part by collecting more quantifiable data on our outputs and soliciting feedback from our various stakeholders.



OUR THANKS

Our work at Farmers Against Hunger is made possible by a host of dedicated supporters. It takes a village to combat food waste and food insecurity, and we are so grateful to be part of a village as generous and committed as our own.



Many of our major financial donors, from the Bonner Foundation to the NJ Department of Agriculture, have been with us for years, offering much-needed stability and support. Still, once the pandemic hit, we required extra funds in order to rapidly scale up our operations, paying for extra cooler space, gas for the trucks, and occasional produce purchases to supplement our donations and compensate farmers. To this end, we were incredibly fortunate to receive emergency COVID-relief funding from additional donors, including the Campbell Soup Foundation, Philadelphia Foundation, and the Princeton Area Community Foundation.

A huge thank you to this year's major foundation donors:

- *Anonymous Fund, Princeton Area Community Foundation*
- *Corella & Bertram F. Bonner Foundation*
- *Campbell Soup Foundation*
- *Farm Credit East Cares / Central New York Community Foundation*
- *First Presbyterian Church of Cranbury*
- *George H. and Estelle M. Sands Foundation, Princeton Area Community Foundation*
- *Holman Enterprises, Inc.*
- *Investors Foundation*
- *Kistler-Tiffany Foundation*
- *MagyarBank Charitable Foundation*
- *NextGen Giving Circle, Princeton Area Community Foundation*
- *New Jersey Department of Agriculture Gleaning Support Program*
- *Ocean Spray Community Fund*
- *PHL COVID-19 Fund / Philadelphia Foundation*
- *Princeton Area Community Foundation's COVID-19 Relief & Recovery Fund*
- *Princeton Area Community Foundation's Community Impact Grant / Burke Foundation's Legacy Grant*
- *Phillies Charities, Inc.*
- *Roma Bank*
- *The Wawa Foundation*
- *Whole Cities Foundation (Whole Foods)*
- *Zvilin Fund, Princeton Area Community Foundation*

Meanwhile, we have been blown away by partners in our broader agricultural community who took the initiative, without any prompting, to raise funds for us in creative ways. For example, our old friends at Cream Ridge Winery hosted a series of 'tailgate socials' with socially-distanced wine and live music, while new friends at Simply Bella's threw a spectacular Harvest Festival dinner and awards ceremony. The owners of Abma's Farm Market designed and sold t-shirts to benefit FAH, while the Original Columbus Farm & Market did the same with tote bags. Photographer Allison Gallagher partnered with a flower farm and florist to donate the proceeds from a unique series of family photo sessions.



Last but not least, nearly 90 partners across the state, including farm markets, garden centers, and Christmas tree farms, have graciously collected customer donations for FAH. In lieu of a tip jar, these markets have chosen to put out a FAH donation jar. Not only do customers often donate their loose change to our cause, but many of our partners go above and beyond to tell clients about our work—spreading the word about our movement and encouraging further community engagement. This year, in particular, we found that thousands of generous NJ residents were moved, in a time of widespread fear and isolation, to take a small step to support their neighbors in need.



To all of our supporters, big & small, we thank you.



Farmers Against Hunger is a program of the 501(c)3 non-profit New Jersey Agricultural Society.

Learn more:

- www.njagsociety.org/farmers-against-hunger
- facebook: farmersagainsthunger
- instagram: farmersagainsthunger