



Galveston's Own FARMERS MARKET

2019 Annual Report

Mission Statement:

To build and sustain a local food community through a vibrant, producers-only marketplace, improved food access, and educational programming



Young Gardeners Program students showing off the sweet potato harvest at their Rosenberg Elementary School site in October 2019

“[GOFM’s] impact brings added value to the community by increasing access to affordable/healthy food and educating the community of the benefits of living a healthier lifestyle.”

-Alexander Stephens, Assistant Project Manager, Urban Strategies, Inc.

Galveston’s Own Farmers Market has grown in scope and shape over the past several years. Beyond the weekly market where our mission began, we continue to expand our reach throughout the island and connect more households to their local food economy, their own health and one another. GOFM’s current 4 arms of programming have each grown from need within the community: our weekly markets, the Real Food Project’s Community Cooking Classes & Community Dinners, Food Access Programs and the Young Gardeners Program are all under the umbrella of GOFM.



We are grateful to our funders’ understanding of GOFM’s multifaceted approach to elevating the quality of life and health for Galvestonians in a holistic way.

We have reached new families through increased cooking classes, community dinners, market tastings, concentrated marketing campaigns, a strong and expanding reach into the local schools through our Young Gardeners Program, and collaboration with peer organizations who educate on our behalf and allow us to create unique learning environments.

Each of these arms of programming are integral to cultivating a growing community of families and

individuals of all races, incomes and neighborhoods who incorporate GOFM into their lives.

2019 Operational Budget: \$149,680.00

2020 Operational Budget*: \$186,928.00 (approved October 1, 2019)

*****UPDATE: 2020 Budget later amended to \$211,228.00*****



**“You guys have no idea
how much you mean
to our campus and to our gardens!!!”**

-Cherie Spencer,
Principal at Rosenberg Elementary (formerly
Coastal Village Elementary), our 1st Young
Gardeners Program site

**“Galveston’s Own Farmers Market
regularly provides family engagement
for MECC families and have been a
tremendous asset in promoting
healthy eating.**

**The families truly enjoy attending the
events they host. We greatly support
the efforts and growth of GOFM.”**

-Karin Miller, Executive Director,
Moody Early Childhood Center

As a direct result of our efforts in 2019, we wanted to bring about **more**:

- customers buying local food at GOFM markets
- customers using Food Access Programming at markets
- students in YGP overall
- YGP students eating vegetables
- productive harvests coming from our YGP gardens
- volunteers involved with GOFM overall

Important Outcomes of 2019:

We debuted our #WhyIGoFM promotional video!
[Watch it here.](#)

FARMERS MARKET & FOOD ACCESS PROGRAMMING:

- 2019 Market attendance total: 27,809
- 2019 Average Thursday Market attendance: 162.07
- 2019 Average Sunday Market attendance: 399.10
- Vendor count: 29 vendors total at end of 2019
- Bilingual Food Access Program & farmers market advertising created and distributed widely
- 4 distribution/flyering events were held
- Introduced BonusBucks as part of Food Access Programming
 - For every SNAP dollar spent, we match the customer with \$1 of Bonus Bucks (up to \$15), meaning a customer's



budget is supplemented by 2 additional sources of funds—FreshBucks and Bonus Bucks. In 2019, more benefits were redeemed with FreshBucks and BonusBucks (\$3,646 combined) than were for SNAP benefits (\$3,132). From 2018 to 2019, we saw a decrease in both FreshBucks and SNAP usage (18 & 24% respectively); FreshBucks usage was affected by the introduction of Bonus Bucks & some of the loss of SNAP spent at market is due to the decreased usage of Disaster-SNAP coverage following Hurricane Harvey in August 2017. 2018 saw far higher than normal usage of SNAP, which we attributed largely to households receiving additional assistance following the storm. By 2019, D-SNAP usage had diminished and thus our SNAP/FreshBucks usage decreased as well.

- \$3,132.00 in SNAP benefits spent at GOFM's markets in 2019
- \$1,852.00 in Fresh Bucks spent at GOFM's markets in 2019
- \$1,794.00 spent in Bonus Bucks at GOFM's markets in 2019
- \$1,128 in WIC Vouchers were spent on fresh produce at market in 2019.



VOLUNTEERS:

- Increased GOFM volunteers by 48%
- We began using “Signup Genius” volunteer management software for all programming in April 2019. Moving forward this easily gives us exact data and will make comparisons from year to year all the more exact.
- Volunteer Coordinator organized 5 mainstay Volunteer Appreciation events attended by at least 50% of all volunteers

YOUNG GARDENERS PROGRAM:

- All current YGP sites (Morgan, Oppe, Rosenberg) are in excellent condition and with complete garden & curriculum inventory & new greenhouses & sheds. We added a new site on Bolivar Peninsula (Crenshaw Elementary).
- Students harvest and take home vegetables at least 70% of the school year.
- On average, every child at every school site went home with min. 1lb of food every week.

- Students follow a recipe/prepare food during YGP at least 1x per month—and Crenshaw does it every week!
- YGP saw a 41% increase in enrollment from SY 2018-19 (107 students) to 151 students by the end of SY 2019-20.
- YGP saw a 54% increase in Garden Facilitator volunteers, to 161!
- YGP compiled a comprehensive handbook for future site coordination



- expansion, including but not limited to standards of communication between YGP & school sites, necessary personnel roles, basic equipment needs, expected budget, etc.
- YGP students were evaluated at the start of 2019-20 school year by survey to establish their food literacy, interest in YGP & basic nutrition/gardening/food knowledge.

REAL FOOD PROJECT:

- 31 Community Cooking Classes hosted in 2019
 - Halfway through the year, we began opening our monthly WIC classes to any interested students. At our Galveston WIC clinic site (located at the Island Community Center) this enabled us to serve more Galveston Housing Authority clients, Headstart staff & clients, Catholic Charities staff & food pantry clients.
 - We began reserving 5 spots for GHA residents at every public class we hosted at the Kitchen Chick site.
 - We held 1 class at the Boys & Girls Club and developed 4 new class sites: Galveston College, NIA Cultural Center, Galveston Children's Museum & the Kitchen Chick.
- 20 Community Dinners hosted in 2019
 - New partnerships were forged, with dinners at Moody Early Childhood Center, Rosenberg Library's Adult Services, Catholic Charities, 21st Century ACE GISD afterschool program and Urban Strategies (a GHA partner)
 - We've begun to host monthly "Family Dinners" at our YGP school sites, modeled after our Community Dinners model. These dinners are a collaboration between our YGP staff and 21st Century ACE staff & GISD staff.
- Interim Real Food Project Coordinator Jaclyn Perkins (Registered Dietician & GOFM's former UTMB School of Nutrition & Metabolism intern) hired to manage classes & dinners while GOFM's ED is on maternity leave November--February
- 12 regular volunteers are part of the RFP Volunteer Crew, cooking & serving for all Community Dinners



FUNDRAISING, SPECIAL EVENTS & BEYOND:

- We hosted the most successful OkraFest yet with over 325 event attendees and over \$19,000 in gross revenue and \$15,000 net income.
 - At OkraFest, GOFM debuted our new ['Friends of the Farmers Market'](#) membership campaign to encourage recurring donations & sponsorship
 - In spring, GOFM moved into our new office at 302 Kempner St. in downtown Galveston. This space is generously donated by Mitchell Historic Properties and is shared with 3 other local nonprofits: Vision Galveston, Galveston Sustainable Communities & Better Parks Galveston.





“We believe the Young Gardeners Program is important in educating students and their families in food literacy and vegetable consumption. We would like to see this program eventually expand to all the elementary schools within our district. “

-Mary Hutton, District Coordinator of Afterschool programs for Galveston ISD

“One of our first adventures after moving to Galveston Island was to visit GOFM. We at once felt welcomed, comfortable and secure in this community enterprise. We immediately signed on to volunteer at the Farmers Market and six years later we still find this organization vital to our island and the people it serves.

From the cooking classes and the community dinners to the Young Gardeners Program, which has truly impacted the youth of Galveston in so many positive ways. GOFM's best quality and what keeps us actively involved is the sense of community which abounds in every aspect of GOFM. We were blessed to have found this organization, its leadership, volunteers and local participating businesses who support GOFM. The family keeps getting bigger and better.

-John & Mary Hayes, GOFM volunteers since 2013

Food Access Program Data, 2019:

SNAP, FreshBucks, & BonusBucks usage at GOFM: 2018 vs 2019					
SNAP Benefits Redeemed at GOFM		FreshBucks Redeemed at GOFM		BonusBucks Redeemed at GOFM	
2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
\$4,133.00	\$3,132.00	\$2,266.00	\$1,852.00	\$0.00	\$1,794.00

2019 Farmers Market Nutrition Program - WIC Voucher Data					
Month	#Booklets Distributed	# Vouchers Distributed	Value Distributed	# Vouchers Redeemed	Total Value Redeemed
March	0	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00
April	5	25	\$150.00	13	\$78.00
May	41	205	\$1,230.00	59	\$354.00
June	34	170	\$1,020.00	37	\$222.00
July	12	60	\$360.00	23	\$138.00
August	20	100	\$600.00	27	\$162.00
September	0	0	\$0.00	17	\$102.00
October	0	0	\$0.00	12	\$72.00
Totals	112	560	\$3,360.00	188	\$1,128.00

Feedback from our community...

“I'm a part of GOFM because of the sense of community I get from it. I started volunteering at market, where I was exposed to all the wonderful vendors that come and share their goods with Galveston. From there I've had the opportunities to help with community dinners where we get to share the value of market with people who may not otherwise be aware of what market has to offer, as well as with the Young Gardeners Program. The Young Gardeners Program is currently where the majority of my GOFM time goes to. Being able to help the kids understand the value of hands on gardening and the benefits of fresh produce mean a lot to me. I can see their sense of wonder and excitement as they see the seeds that they planted grow into a carrot they can eat fresh from the dirt. There is also the added benefit of me being able to learn more about gardening and plant life myself. Overall, GOFM has shown me the importance of how a community filled with a wide variety of different people can come together and work towards a mutual goal of better health and better eating.”

-Tyler Murray, current GOFM volunteer

“I was drawn to Galveston's Own Farmers Market as a member of the community looking to support local vendors and have a place to buy fresh foods, but was given the opportunity to be a student volunteer through grad school and eventually to even work with these fantastic folks coordinating cooking classes and community dinners, and spread my knowledge of nutrition as a dietitian through their programs. GOFM has grown into an impressive organization that provides food access, education, and community to people of all walks of life. I'm grateful to have been a part of this organization and continue to watch people throughout the community come together, volunteer, and support each other through food. Galveston wouldn't be the same without GOFM!

-Jaclyn Perkins, former UTMB Dietetic Intern for GOFM

“Along with my daughter, I have been volunteering at Oppe Elementary's school garden for the past two years. I enjoy watching the students get their fingers dirty in the garden soil,

pointing out insects, amphibians, and reptiles they find, picking honeysuckles for sipping nectar, and eating vegetables fresh from harvesting. They work together as a team to water, fertilize, weed, and harvest. A cistern is used to collect rainwater to water the vegetables, and no pesticides/herbicides are applied to the garden beds. The garden attracts the attention of Oppé's school community, and serves as an example of how and why children (and adults) should be outdoors. Nurturing connections outside is one of the most important skills we can pass along to the next generation."

-Leslie Clift, volunteer with GOFM's Young Gardeners Program

"...Varied, nearly constant outreach is essential to the success of access programs at GOFM or any market serious about creating an inclusive community and simultaneously expanding farmers' customer base. Not just GOFM but other similarly effective markets – for example, the Sustainable Food Center's markets in Austin – do extensive outreach and public education. It is not enough just to become authorized to serve people in SNAP and WIC. It is not a case of, "If you build it, they will come." "

-Pam Walker, "Why can't Houston's farmers markets be more like Galveston's?" Houston Chronicle, September 4, 2018

"[I am so grateful for] Galveston's Own Farmers Market for so many reasons. I think the biggest reason is the friendliness of the people. The next biggest reason would be that my Food stamps go a long way there! Being a cancer patient who's not working and on chemo, I am grateful to have my dollars stretched and to be able to buy healthy local food. I've also made many friends at the market, it feels like home. Thank you, GOFM!"

- Jill Carlier, longtime GOFM customer

"As a vendor who can accept the SNAP program tickets it is truly exciting to put real food in the hands of our customers. To listen in as parents teach their children the difference between "fast food" and what we lovingly call "slow food" is such a delight. I am very grateful to be participating in this super program."

- Phil Gerding, owner of Galveston Bread, vendor at GOFM's weekly markets

Thank You



The ways in which our non-profit organization has grown is a testament to the flexibility, creativity and innovation allowed us by the support of our numerous donors, sponsors & philanthropic funders. Thank you for providing us this opportunity; we are grateful for the generosity which empowers us to reinforce, improve and grow our organization's impact for years to come.



Special thanks to our philanthropic funders:

Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word
First Presbyterian Outreach Fund
Gardening Know-How
Harris & Eliza Kempner Foundation
Moody Foundation
Permanent Endowment Fund, Moody Methodist Church
Texas Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture–National Resource Conservation Service
Whole Kids Foundation
Yaga’s Children’s Fund

Thank you from all of us at Galveston's Own Farmers Market!

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