ASAP (Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project) is dedicated to building strong farms, thriving local food economies, and healthy communities, where farming is valued as central to our heritage and our future.

What would become ASAP’s Local Food Campaign began in the mid-1990s as an effort to reverse farm loss in Western North Carolina and to help farmers transition from tobacco. ASAP incorporated as a 501(c)(3) in 2002 and printed the first Local Food Guide, listing 58 local farms, 32 tailgate markets, 19 restaurants sourcing local ingredients, and 12 CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) programs. In 2018 the Local Food Guide included more than 1,200 listings.

ASAP has three primary program areas:

The Local Food Campaign drives demand for local farm products, builds farmer capacity to access market opportunities, and creates connections within the food system.

Growing Minds Farm to School Program provides training and resources to educators, health and wellness professionals, and others to create positive local food and farm experiences that promote health and education for our children, farms, and communities.

The Local Food Research Center studies and communicates the impacts of localizing food systems.
Our Work

Highlights from 2018

ASAP celebrated the 10th anniversaries of the **Farm Tour** and **Asheville City Market**, as well as its 15th annual **Business of Farming Conference**. These long-standing programs are at the core of ASAP’s mission to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food.

**Healthy Eating in Practice** was a new and ambitious project to expand ASAP’s community health efforts within the healthcare field. The hands-on conference brought together physicians, nurses, dietitians, health coaches, farmers, and chefs around changing eating behaviors through local food and farm experiences.

The **Local Food Research Center** published three new reports and presented at two conferences (Southern SARE’s Our Farms, Our Future in St. Louis, and the Appalachian Studies Association Conference in Cincinnati).

- The Growth and Transition of Sustainable Production Practices in Western North Carolina
- The End of Tobacco and the Rise of Local Food in Western North Carolina
- The Influence of Farmer-Customer Interactions at Farmers Markets on Farmer Growing Practices

Looking Forward to 2019

Work on Healthy Eating in Practice set the stage for **Farm Fresh for Health**, a farm-centered wellness initiative designed to connect people to environments and activities that support healthy lifestyles and eating choices.

“Thank you and congratulations on putting together and executing an amazing conference. I am buzzing with ideas, excitement, and hope for how I and others can continue to change the face of health and wellness in our hospitals, doctors offices, communities, homes...and within our own lives.”

—Ali Casparian, Healthy Eating in Practice attendee
Our Impact

“Our business never would have gotten started if it weren’t for ASAP. Without the help of ASAP in identifying farms that could sell the products we needed, we would have had a lot of trouble in determining whether our business would even be viable.”

—Jessie Dean, Asheville Tea Company

Local Food Campaign

- 500+ farmers and buyers provided with training and technical assistance—workshops, events, and one-to-one assistance—focusing on market opportunities and requirements, farm business planning, marketing, and promotions.
- 900+ farms and 450+ partners participated in our Appalachian Grown™ program—branding, local food and farm promotions, market planning and assessment, grower-buyer connections, and community events.
- 22,200+ Appalachian Grown—branded materials (including boxes, produce bags, and bundles of twist ties) were purchased by farmers to identify their products as certified local.
- 100+ farmers markets across the region received direct assistance—training, marketing, community engagement, promotional materials, and planning support.
- 60,000+ customers shopped at the downtown Asheville City Market, spending over $930,000.

Growing Minds Farm to School Program

- 9,000+ farm to school and farm to preschool experiences were provided to children, including school gardens, cooking in the classroom, cafeteria taste tests, farm visits, and locally grown food in meals/snacks.
- 3,000+ individuals participated in local food/farm to school activities led by Dietetic Interns through the Growing Minds @ University project.
- 300,000+ people participated in the North Carolina Crunch statewide.
- 345 educators, community members, parents, and high school students were trained in farm to school and farm to preschool programming.
- 300+ health professionals attended Healthy Eating in Practice, gaining tools, resources, and knowledge to change the culture of healthcare and better support healthy eating behaviors.

Community Engagement

- 1 million+ page views across ASAP’s websites.
- 50,000 copies of the Local Food Guide distributed.
- 23,000+ e-newsletter subscribers, including monthly news from ASAP and weekly farmers market reports.
- 21,000+ social media followers (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).
- 6,000+ listeners each week for ASAP’s Growing Local radio show, live on WNCW or online via SoundCloud or iTunes.
- 2,000+ attendees at community events, including the Farm Tour, CSA Fair, and Local Food Experience.
- 2,000+ hours worked by 85 volunteers and interns.
Our Financial Health

REVENUE

- 54% restricted funds
- 46% unrestricted funds

EXPENSES

- 5% operational expenses
- 5% resource development
- 90% program expenses

ASAP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with a $1 million+ annual budget.

Revenue Breakdown:

- 88% government grants
- 12% private foundations
- 23% donations and sponsorships
- 77% program income

Expense Breakdown:

- 43% Local Food Campaign
- 45% Growing Minds
- 12% Local Food Research Center
ASAP represents the ideal for individuals, families, and communities. By educating ourselves and others about local food sources (even growing some of our own) we are standing up for values that run deep in our human existence.

—Carrie Keller, Board of Directors

ASAP’s mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food.

Our Staff and Board

“ASAP represents the ideal for individuals, families, and communities. By educating ourselves and others about local food sources (even growing some of our own) we are standing up for values that run deep in our human existence.”

—Carrie Keller, Board of Directors

Board of Directors
Carrie Keller | President
Brian Asbill | Vice President
Julie Jensen | Secretary
Terri Orange | Treasurer
Duane Adams
Amy Ager
William Dissen
Craig Mauney
Joey Owle
Lisa C. Payne

ASAP’s mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food.

Staff
Eva Garza | Receptionist
Kate Hanford | Asheville City Market Manager
Sarah Hart | Communications Coordinator
Charlie Jackson | Executive Director
Emily Jackson | Development and Growing Minds Program Director
Kim Knoppel | Growing Minds Program Coordinator
Robin Lenner | Events Coordinator
Melinda Lequin | Finance Manager
Amy Marion | Local Food Research Center Program Coordinator
Mike McCreary | Local Food Campaign Program Manager
Molly Nicholle | Local Food Campaign Program Director
Allison Perrett | Local Food Research Center Program Director
Lee Seabrook | Graphic Designer
David Smiley | Local Food Campaign Program Coordinator
Jessica Sparks-Mussolin | Growing Minds Program Manager
Trish Tripp | Asheville City Market Assistant Manager
Support local food and get involved with ASAP’s work!

Shop at a farmer’s market.
Attend an ASAP event.
Volunteer with us.
Donate.

“ASAP has made Western North Carolina a better place. Connecting community through food and sustainable agriculture is a mighty gift you’ve given us all. I’m happy to help support—in fact, honored.”

—ASAP volunteer