2019 Annual Report

Asap
Local Food Strong Farms Healthy Communities
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 growing 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 2019 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.

—Trey Scott, Mountain Meadows Farm & Nursery

“[ASAP is] consistently our first reference as a resource to every farmer we know, especially the new ones. You consistently offer mind-blowing resources to our local and regional farm community.”
Double SNAP | ASAP launched a program to match SNAP dollars at all locations of Asheville City Market. Double SNAP is an expansion of ASAP’s existing SNAP market program, which works to accomplish two goals: increase healthy eating options for SNAP users and support local farms. Looking forward to 2020, ASAP is working to expand the Double SNAP benefit to other markets.

New and Beginning Farmers | In 2019 ASAP supported more than 900 farmers and their families, including 300 new and beginning farmers. The first cohort of ASAP’s New and Beginning Farmer Working Group received marketing support from ASAP and partner organizations.

Community Supported Agriculture | ASAP published the first issue of Full Share, a free guide to help consumers learn more about CSAs; offered two educational CSA Fairs, in Asheville and Boone; and facilitated workplace CSAs with area businesses and institutions, including a wellness programming partnership with the City of Asheville.

Growing Minds @ Community Colleges | ASAP launched a statewide initiative to embed farm to preschool into NC Community College early childhood programs.

Farm Fresh Prescription Program | ASAP began a trial program in which healthcare providers prescribe healthy and local foods to patients. The pilot at Asheville City Market–Winter will expand in 2020.

Growing Local Radio | ASAP’s weekly podcast passed its 200th episode, with features on workplace wellness and CSA programs, diverse voices, new and beginning farmers, local chef-farmer partnerships, and more.

ASAP continued to offer core programs and resources, such as the Business of Farming Conference, the Local Food Guide, the Farm Tour, Asheville City Market and Growing Minds @ University. These long-standing programs are at the heart of ASAP’s mission to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food.
Impact

Local Food Campaign
- 500+ farmers and buyers provided with training and technical assistance—workshops, events, and one-to-one assistance—focusing on market opportunities, 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.
- 14,000 Appalachian Grown–branded materials (including boxes, produce bags, bundles of twist ties, etc.) 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.
- 1,500 customers shopped each week at the downtown Asheville City Market, keeping $1 million in the local economy.
- $14,639 SNAP dollars were matched at Asheville City Market, allowing customers to spend nearly $30,000 on local farm products.

Growing Minds Farm to School Program
- 3,000+ farm to school and farm to preschool experiences were provided to children, including in 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.
- 805,000+ people participated in the North Carolina Crunch statewide.
- 300 educators, community members, parents, and high school students were trained in farm to school and farm to preschool programming.
- 22 community colleges in North Carolina signed on to embed farm to preschool into their early childhood education programs through Growing Minds @ Community Colleges.

Community Engagement
- 800,000+ page views across ASAP’s websites.
- 70,000 copies of the Local Food Guide and 5,000 copies of Full Share, the CSA guide, printed and distributed across the region.
- 24,000+ e-newsletter subscribers, including monthly news from ASAP, weekly farmers market reports, and farm to school news.
- 22,000+ social media followers (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).
- 6,000+ listeners each week for Growing Local Radio, live on WNCW or online via SoundCloud or iTunes.
- 1 million+ consumers reached through local food and farm stories in regional media.
- 1,700+ attendees at community events, including the Farm Tour, CSA Fairs, and Local Food Experience.
- 1,500+ hours worked by 90 volunteers and interns.

“ASAP has helped us gain skills we use every day in making Highgate Farm a successful business. The friendly, supportive, and helpful staff has made us feel a part of the region’s local food movement. We are proud to display the Appalachian Grown label on our products, and appreciate the message it communicates to our community.”
—Melissa Harwin and John Kunkle, Highgate Farm

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Resources

REVENUE

51% restricted funds
49% unrestricted funds

unrestricted funds
26% donations and sponsorships
74% program income

program expenses
63% Local Food Campaign
19% Growing Minds
18% Local Food Research Center

expensive

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

EXPENSES

restricted funds
82% government grants
18% private foundations

operational expenses
6%

resource development
4%

program expenses
90%
ASAP’s mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food.

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Lee Seabrook | Graphic Designer
David Smiley | Local Food Campaign Program Manager
Debbi Timson | Growing Minds Program Coordinator
Trish Tripp | Asheville City Market Manager
Support local food and get involved with ASAP’s work!

Shop at a farmers market.
Attend an ASAP event.
Volunteer with us.
Donate.

“I am so glad to help show the greatness of what is happening at the market and to help give back to the farmers and vendors that help the community. It is so heart-warming to give back while connecting to so many great people—including your team!”

—Camilla Calnan, ASAP volunteer