FROM THE DIRECTOR

Fresh Approach has evolved significantly since its founding in 2008.

Fresh Approach was initially formed by the Pacific Coast Farmers’ Market Association to offer complimentary food and farming-related educational programs like cooking classes and farm tours.

Fast forward to January 2018, and Fresh Approach has gone from an early stage non-profit to a more strategic, data-driven, and values-driven organization with a bright future. Our merger with Collective Roots accelerated our progress towards our existing 2017-2019 Strategic Plan, which emphasized deepening and integrating programs in the communities where we work. Non-profit mergers can be tricky, but the merger proved successful in strengthening the overall organization. Indeed, more dollars now go directly to vital community-based programming, serving a larger population and achieving greater community impacts.

WHO WE ARE

We realize that healthy, local produce can be an unattainable luxury for many families in the Bay Area.

Today, as many as 1 in 3 families in California struggle to meet their basic food needs every month. These lower income households are much less likely to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables due to cost and transportation barriers, leading to higher rates of chronic disease.

Since 2008, Fresh Approach has been working to address these inequities by improving healthy food access in Bay Area communities. Our programs empower families to make sustainable lifestyle changes by expanding their nutrition, cooking, and gardening skills, and by boosting their access to local, affordable produce.

Local farms benefit, too, as our programs make it possible for small farms to sell in communities that would otherwise lack access to their products, while helping farmers diversify their sales through guaranteed weekly orders to our Mobile Farmers’ Market trucks.

This grassroots community empowerment has a ripple effect that supports small family farms, promotes sustainability and responsible stewardship in agriculture, breaks down systemic barriers, and strengthens the local economy – all while growing community interest in healthy eating.

We believe that everyone should have equal access to healthy food, and that the health of our communities and the livelihood of our local farmers go hand-in-hand.

Join us in our mission to make healthy food accessible in all Bay Area communities, by volunteering, donating, sharing our information, or shopping at local farmers’ markets!

OUR MISSION:
To create long-term change in local food systems, by connecting California communities with healthy food from California farmers and expanding knowledge about food and nutrition.

OUI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Patrick Fabian • Board President
Law Offices of Patrick Fabian

Christina Stork • Vice Chair
Sun Basket

Mike Billigmeier • Secretary (through 8/2018)
B & B Ranch

Vicky Bevilacqua-True • Secretary (8/2018 – present)
Navigate CPG

Steve Fernandes • Treasurer
Sunrise Nursery

Allen J. Moy • Board Member
Pacific Coast Farmers’ Market Association

Sahar Shirazi • Board Member
WSP USA

Janet Venturino • Board Member
Kaiser Permanente
MARIA HERNANDEZ

Customer at East Palo Alto Community Farmers’ Market, Recipient of Collective Roots Community Garden In-Home Planter Box

“My family has been eating so much more fresh fruits and vegetables since I started shopping at the East Palo Alto Community Farmers’ Market. I can shop with my CalFresh benefits here and get extra money to spend on produce with Fresh Approach’s Match Programs, which help a lot.

We also now have a planter box installed at our house thanks to Collective Roots! We’ve just picked up some lettuce and cherry tomatoes to start our summer garden.

I have five kids, so somebody in the house is always wanting a snack. With the Farmers’ Market and our garden box, I’m so happy that I have the resources to feed my family healthy food.”
During the first quarter of 2018, the Fresh Approach board and staff co-created a set of four core values to serve as a guidepost for organizational strategic planning, operational planning, and programmatic implementation. These core values – which aim to empower community members, volunteers, and staff through grassroots engagement – have inspired new pilot projects and a reframing of our current, core programs.

**OUR CORE VALUES**

**A SEAT AT THE (KITCHEN) TABLE**

We believe healthy food is a human right and that all communities should share in the tools, knowledge, and resources towards achieving food security and food sovereignty.

We work to create an equitable food system by directing resources to those who have been historically denied access to healthy, fresh, local and culturally relevant foods, particularly communities of color.

We stand with marginalized communities in the face of adversity, and work to nurture grassroots action and influence policy that supports health, wellness, and self-determination.

**CALIFORNIA ROOTS**

We believe that economically-viable small farms and accessible community gardens are the foundation of a resilient, community-based, local food system.

We recognize that growing, cooking, and sharing food are acts of empowerment and foster self-reliance.

We support farms that produce food using sustainable and ecologically sound growing practices, that value responsible stewardship of natural resources, and that value diversity and fairness in agriculture.

**INCLUSIVE COLLABORATION**

We value inclusion and diversity, recognizing that different backgrounds and experiences lead to more meaningful collaboration and deeper community impacts.

The success of our programs depends on mutually beneficial and trusting partnerships with diverse stakeholders, including Bay Area residents, partners, farmers, farmers’ markets, and supporters.

We are enthusiastic about community-led innovation, and recognize that through collaboration, we can build a stronger, more resilient community-based food system for all.

**PEOPLE FIRST**

We care about the health and well-being of Bay Area residents, and we provide quality service and treat every human interaction with compassion and integrity.

We are sensitive to the lived experiences and cultural identities of the people we meet and the communities where we work.

We create a respectful, safe space for collaboration, honesty, personal growth, and transparency within our workplace and in the field.

**VOLUNTEERS & INTERNS**

Volunteers and interns help us achieve big impacts in the communities we serve. Thanks to the support of our Public Ally AmeriCorps member, our volunteer program grew markedly in 2018.

**Unique Volunteers**

196

**Volunteer Hours Worked**

2,638

**WHERE YOU CAN FIND OUR VOLUNTEERS**

- 78% Collective Roots Community Garden
- 12% Mobile Farmers’ Market
- 6% East Palo Alto Community Farmers’ Market
- 4% VeggieRx Classes

**OUR INTERNS**

Our interns support all levels of our work while gaining experience in public health and sustainable food systems.

16

2,000
FOOD ACCESS PROGRAMS

Our Food Access Programs bring California-grown produce to Bay Area neighborhoods lacking in affordable, healthy food options – with substantial discounts for our lowest income customers.

FRESH APPROACH
MOBILE FARMERS’ MARKET

In 2018, our Mobile Farmers’ Market trucks brought fresh, California-grown produce to communities in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties.

We source produce primarily from small, minority, and beginning farmers who use sustainable growing practices. We work hard to stock produce that fits the cultural and economic preferences of our customers, from bitter melon to nopales to heirloom tomatoes.

Shoppers who participate in the CalFresh (SNAP), WIC, SSI, SSDI, and Medi-Cal programs are all eligible for a 50% discount, for up to $20 in free produce every market day.

Site visits with the Mobile Farmers’ Market trucks in 2018

Total people reached (by household size)

Total unique customers

Children Under 18 with more access to fresh, local produce

Percent of customers who are older adults (65+)

Varieties of produce sold on the Mobile Farmers’ Market trucks

WHO’S USING MATCH
 WITH AN EYE ON SUSTAINABILITY

Improving Healthy Food Access at the Mobile Farmers’ Market

“...The truck really catalyzed it, because it made eating that way affordable. The Match has been tremendous for us – it really encourages us to eat more fresh fruits & vegetables. I love this place, this is my spot.”

– Earl Miller, Mobile Farmers’ Market Customer

$135,029
Produced purchased from local farms

$132,916
Produced sold at the Mobile Farmers’ Market

$10,000
Produced donated to food pantries

< 1%
Produce goes to waste

46%
Latinx

20%
Black

15%
White

7%
Prefer not to answer

5%
Pacific Islander

4%
Asian

2%
Native American

1%
Other

41%
Have diet-related diseases

$20,000
Median household income

18%
Extremely food insecure
EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Our Education Programs empower families to make healthy, sustainable lifestyle changes by expanding their nutrition, cooking, and gardening skills.

COLLECTIVE ROOTS COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Collective Roots Community Garden in East Palo Alto is home to a strong network of volunteers who share gardening skills and resources while helping to preserve the food sovereignty of the local community. Through workshops, volunteer workdays, and community resources, the garden equips families with the skills and means to grow their own fresh fruits and vegetables.

Low-income East Palo Alto residents can apply for free home garden installation and use of garden plots at the Collective Roots Community garden.

14,210
Volunteer hours worked in the garden

55
Edible food varieties growing in the Collective Roots Community Garden

181
Collective Gardening Network volunteers, with 18 new this year

77
Unique workshop participants, from nine garden workshops

WHO’S USING MATCH AT THE EAST PALO ALTO COMMUNITY FARMERS’ MARKET

Now in its 12th operating season, our Community Farmers’ Market was the first of its kind in East Palo Alto. The Farmers’ Market serves as a crucial resource for ensuring healthy food access for the East Palo Alto community every Wednesday from April to November.

The Fresh Checks and Market Match nutrition incentive programs offered at the Market have created a loyal community of regular shoppers, in turn benefiting the local family farms who sell at the Market.

29
Operating Days in 2018

4,149
Match Transactions

$4,143
Total Match Redeemed

$26,610
in CalFresh Redeemed

“T’m so happy for the opportunity to harvest my own fruits and vegetables with my new in-home planter box. Thank you!”

Rosalba Legoretta, Garden Volunteer & Recipient of Collective Roots Community Garden In-Home Planter Box
While weight loss is often used to show improvements in health, we recognize that this relationship is complicated. Many participants enter our classes with a “healthy” BMI, but are struggling with diet-related disease. Therefore, weight loss is not their primary goal.

Additionally, there are several ways in which someone, even those with BMI’s in the category of “overweight” or “obese” can improve their health without any weight loss. With more exercise, muscle mass may increase while fat mass decreases, leading to a healthier body composition – but, because muscle is heavier than fat, no weight loss.

The body also has many mechanisms in place to stop it from losing weight. Changes in hormones and metabolism may prevent weight loss, even with healthy changes to diet and lifestyle. Focusing only on the scale ignores those achievements and their impact on health.

While weight loss is a measurable outcome of VRx classes, we also celebrate the less visible, but equally important, improvements in health as a result of improved diet and exercise.

Qualifying participants receive “prescription” vouchers for fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers’ markets, giving a unique no-cost opportunity to learn to shop for and prepare more fresh produce. Every class concludes with a cooking demonstration, where participants taste delicious, healthy recipes made with seasonal fruits and vegetables.

VEGGIE Rx Cooking and Nutrition classes help families learn how to make healthier food choices in a way that’s fun, accessible, and practical. Held in both English & Spanish in health clinics, schools, and community centers throughout the Bay Area, these classes are a free resource for families seeking to improve their health through positive lifestyle changes.

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RUBEN PONCE

Farmer at the East Palo Alto Community Farmers’ Market

The difference between this Market and other farmers’ markets where I usually go, is that here the matching program and all the promotion around it really helps a lot. The vouchers make almost all of my revenue here. As a matter of fact, I just have a handful of clients who do not use the matching programs.

“My “ranch” is very small – only 3 acres – just me and one other worker. I started coming to this Market five years ago, and over those years, I’ve learned that my clients here really love my peas, nopales, cilantro, epazote, and squash blossoms. I started to specialize on those and increase their cultivation, while reducing other more common vegetables. In this way I was able to increase my earnings, and my clients are happy to find produce that they wouldn’t able to find elsewhere.

I am very happy here [at the East Palo Alto Community Farmers’ Market].”
CASE STUDY: EXPANDING MATCH PROGRAMS

Results of widened eligibility criteria for the Matching Nutrition Incentive Program at the Fresh Approach Mobile Farmers’ Market

Making healthy food more accessible for our lowest income customers has always been a core part of our mission.

Since its inception in 2013, the Fresh Approach Mobile Farmers’ Market truck has offered a 50% discount on fresh fruits and vegetables to shoppers paying with CalFresh (SNAP), thanks to the Market Match program.

Funded through the USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant, the California Market Match Consortium is administered by the Ecology Center and provides nutrition incentives for CalFresh/SNAP customers at 260 farmers’ markets throughout the state.

While the Market Match program has allowed our CalFresh (SNAP) customers to double their grocery budget when shopping at the trucks, we recognize the need is greater than just CalFresh (SNAP) participants. There are many people who, for whatever reason, do not receive or qualify for CalFresh but remain food insecure.

Inspired by the East Palo Alto Community Farmers’ Market, in 2017 Fresh Approach expanded its matching programs in order to widen the safety-net beyond just CalFresh participants. This expanded matching model extends the eligibility requirements for any shopper who participates in any income-based state or federal benefit program. This includes WIC, SSI, SSDI, and Medi-Cal. The discount is also extended to families who visit food pantries or food bank distributions, who live in low-income housing units, or who are patients at partnering Federally Qualified Health Centers.

These changes resulted in a dramatic increase in the percentage of low-income customers shopping at the Fresh Approach Mobile Farmers’ Market, bigger basket sizes, improved healthy food access for thousands of families, and more revenue for small, local farmers.

This expanded version of Market Match is now an integral part of our food access program and demonstrates the great potential for matching programs at other farmers’ markets to expand their eligibility requirements beyond SNAP.

$20.10
Average Basket Size by Low Income Customers

$7.46
Average Basket Size by All Other Customers

“Shopping at the Mobile Farmers’ Market is like heaven, because I eat an organic diet but couldn’t afford to buy anything. My money goes so much further with the Match. With seniors like me living on social security, this is a dream. People are so friendly here. Thank you for offering this wonderful service!”

– Suni Nelson, Mobile Farmers’ Market Customer

MATCH SHOPPERS BY TYPE

16% CalFresh (SNAP)

45% Medi-Cal

11% CalFresh shopper paying in cash

8% Other low income

7% Food bank / low-income housing pension

6% Woman, Infants, & Children (WIC)

4% Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

3% Social Security Disability Income (SSDI)

SINCE 2017...

252% Increase in total spending by low income customers ($65,056 spent in 2018)

275% Increase in total match redeemed ($24,776 in 2018)

218% More low income customers in 2018 (1,809 unique customers in 2018)

272% Increase in number of daily match transactions (average of 16 per day in 2018)

84% Match transactions made possible with expanded Matching Program
**2018 FINANCIALS**

In 2018, Fresh Approach’s new fundraising plan focused on diversification by increasing its individual donor base; attracting donations from corporations and businesses through corporate giving, fee-for-services, and team-building workday parties; and raising substantial unrestricted funds to move towards financial self-sufficiency and organizational sustainability.

**REVENUE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Revenue Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Farmers’ Market</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Grants</td>
<td>44%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government Grants</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee-For-Service Contracts</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Individual Donations*</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>&lt; .01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,151,266</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

* Some Donations were rolled into foundation/corporate grants on the financial statements.

**EXPENSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Expense Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,208,194</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This figure includes unrestricted and temporarily restricted funds. A portion of the restricted contributions received in 2018 are for planned program activities in 2019.

**DONORS**

We’d like to thank the following contributors for making our work this year possible.

**Transformation Partners:** $175,000 – $90,000

El Camino Healthcare District, Facebook, Kaiser Permanente Community Benefits Program, Stupski Foundation, Sunlight Giving Foundation, The Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation

**Hope Partners:** $55,000 – $20,500

City of East Palo Alto, City of San Pablo, The David & Lucile Packard Foundation, The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, LinkedIn, Peninsula Healthcare District, Silicon Valley Community Fund, USDA Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) 2017 - 2019, USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Support Grant

**Empowerment Partners:** $20,000 – $1,500

Contra Costa Health Services, Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, Maria “Judy” and Bracken P. Darrell, Ecology Center Collective Roots USDA Food Insecurity and Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Market Match, F&M Bank, The Leonard C. and Mildred F. Ferguson Foundation, Grove Foundation, Los Medanos Community Health District, Patagonia, Santa Clara County Public Health Department, Sweetgreen, USDA Food Insecurity and Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Program 2017 - 2018

**Resilience Partners:** $1,200 – $100


Ruth Tuty Rodas, Randy Ryals, San Mateo County Office of Sustainability, Leah Smith, John & Janice Sykes, Vicky & Tim True, Janet Venturino, Susan Weersing, Mark Wilson, Suzanne Wilson, Jeanne Yu
THANKS.

We couldn’t do it without our amazing staff and community partners.

2018 STAFF

Lucy Norris, Executive Director
Madaly Alcala, Program Specialist
Najiba Al-Asmar, Program Specialist
Betsy Rosales Avalos, Program Specialist
Shelby Bustria, Volunteer Program Specialist (AmeriCorps Intern)
Susana Cabrera-Mariz, Program Specialist
Raffaella Cerruti, Program Development Manager
Clayton Crowell, Program Coordinator
Laura deTar, Program Director
Stephanie Flores, Program Coordinator
Samiha Hamdi, Program Coordinator
Danielle Hamilton, Education Program Manager
Casey Harch, Program Specialist
Andie Kolbeck, Marketing & Communications Manager
Isabel Medina, Program Specialist
Ellen Olack, Program Coordinator
Andy Ollove, Food Access Program Manager
Emily Seferovich, Program Specialist
Leah Smith, Director of Strategic Partnerships
Christopher St. Pierre, Administrative Coordinator

KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Alameda County Community Foodbank
Alameda County Public Health and Nutrition Services
Allen Temple Baptist Church
City of Richmond Public Library’s LEAP Program
Columbia Neighborhood Center
Contra Costa County Employment and Human Services
Contra Costa County Health Services
East Palo Alto Library
Ecumenical Hunger Project
Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano Counties
Monument Crisis Center
Pacific Coast Farmers’ Market Association
Ravenswood Family Health Center
Richmond Main Street Initiative
San Jose State University
San Mateo County Office of Sustainability
Santa Clara County Public Health Department
Santa Clara Valley Health Centers
Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara & San Mateo

We have many more partners than space permits. Thank you for all the work you do!