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OUR MISSION

"Food, What?!" is a youth empowerment and food justice organization. At FoodWhat, youth engage in relationships with land, food and each other in ways that are grounded in love and justice. We provide meaningful space where youth define and cultivate their empowerment, liberation and wellbeing.

OUR PROGRAM

Youth from Watsonville to Santa Cruz join the FoodWhat Crew through our Spring Internship, Summer Job Training and Fall Project Management programs. FoodWhat youth use organic farming, nourishing food and loving community as vehicles to grow on their own terms and in lasting ways. As a FoodWhat Crew, we grow, cook, eat and distribute fresh, healthy food while also addressing local food justice issues.

OUR IMPACT

FoodWhat's impact is a direct result of the way youths' wisdom, experience and personal gifts are trusted. As such, FoodWhat is a safe space where youth are centered as agents of their own future. Youth use their strength to access opportunities that lead to radical diet change, critical job training, personal growth and more. Many youth share that through FoodWhat, they find healing, inspiration and family.

OUR VISION

We envision liberation in all ways, love at all levels and wellbeing in all forms for youth and our community.







A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Friends.

I woke up most days last year feeling the great challenges in this time, especially after listening to the news. It felt really hard. However when I got to FoodWhat, I felt energized and reinvigorated with hope. Working with such resilient young people and having my hands in the soil feels curative at a time when our collective wellbeing is at an all-time low. We're excited to share that hope and inspiration with you in the pages that follow.

If you're long-time FoodWhat Family, like many of you are, you know how FoodWhat supports youth growth, agency and dignity. If you're new to FoodWhat, you will understand this process better through the youth narratives you are about to read.

It's important to take a moment to clarify that FoodWhat doesn't empower anyone. What we do is create a space for youth to choose their own path forward, to heal, to find their voice, to try it on, to be in a safe space, to fill their lungs with fresh air, to own their confidence, and to be in a supportive, loving community of adults and peers. We shape this space and give it meaning, and we do so through food and agriculture.

We create these spaces with great intentionality. One such space, at our Annual Benefit, includes multiple youth hopping on the mic to speak. There's a reason why we create a space for youth to testify what they are most proud of for themselves as our community gets to bear witness.

Storytelling is a huge part of the DNA of FoodWhat. It's how we connect in the fields, over meals. It's how we understand our histories and the systems that surround us and the role they play. It's how we share who we really are, not just who the world looks at us and judges us to be. So much of the growth that youth experience at FoodWhat comes from this shared telling and listening.

It connects us.

If you're reading this then you're part of our FoodWhat Family. Thank you. We appreciate you. We honor the role you play in each level of our work with youth. May you continue to seek and create opportunities to hold space for youth and others. And I offer you the wish that you too are seen and heard completely in this time.

Thank you.

Down Comerchero

Doron Comerchero

GREAT NEWS TO SHARE!

A 5-year longitudinal study of FoodWhat has been completed by researcher Morten Kromman Nielsen. We can't wait to share this work which highlights FoodWhat's unique approach and impact. Keep your eyes peeled for a sharing party in 2019!

"FOOD, WHAT?!" STAFF



Moriah Barrow Programs and Operations Coordinator

Moriah couples her dedication to youth and justice with her versatile skill set to support all organizational functions.



Doron Comerchero *Executive Director*

Doron continues to believe he has the best job in the world while leading the organization with heart, laughter, and intention.



Mary Hillemeier Farm and Culinary Manager

Mary is a farmer who is passionate about the transformative power of growing your own food and preparing it with joy.



Irene Juarez O'Connell Programs Manager

Irene is an experienced mentor, educator, and youth advocate who manages FoodWhat's core programs.



Kayla Kumar *Development Director*

Kayla secures resources and cultivates community partnerships that are impactful, down-to-earth, deeply heartfelt and all about the FoodWhat youth.



Bruno Nell *Programs Coordinator*

Bruno brings a rich perspective on the power of food and music in building community.



Uriel ReyesSummer Program Farm
Coordinator

Having first-hand experience as a FoodWhat Youth in 2015, Uriel brings relevance, strong leadership, and tons of fun to our Watsonville farm work.



Puiyee TseFinance Manager

Puiyee comes to FoodWhat with a love of numbers and over 20 years of experience in nonprofit finance in Santa Cruz County.



AurelioJunior Staff Member



EustoliaJunior Staff Member



EvelynJunior Staff Member



IrisJunior Staff Member

SPRING INTERNSHIP

Another powerful **Spring Internship** to share with you all! Spring is the first step in our graduated leadership model. For 11 weeks, youth spent one hour with their hands in the soil, one hour in empowerment workshops and one hour cooking and eating together. Three Youth Event Planners joined the team to put on a large countywide event for youth. Upon completion, each teen earned a \$175 stipend, 2 school credits and the opportunity to apply for FoodWhat's summer program.

64 Youth Completed the Spring Internship

Spring 2018 Highlight:

We are REALLY proud of this one. **We translated our entire curriculum into Spanish this year!** This serves as a critical equity bridge for monolingual Spanish speaking youth seeking access to health, job and growth opportunities. As a result, five monolingual Spanish-speaking Spring Interns successfully completed this season.

Youth Share Impact

As a result of their time at FoodWhat:

- 98% of Spring youth said that they were more interested in growing and eating healthy food.
- 95% of Spring youth said they were interested in cooking something they cooked in the FoodWhat kitchen on their own.
- 95% of Spring youth shared that they believed they have valuable experience to offer their community as a FoodWhat intern.
- 100% of Spring youth agreed that they have the power and ability to make positive changes in their lives.













STRAIGHT FROM THE YOUTH

How would you describe FoodWhat to your friends?

"[FoodWhat] is a program that helps young people to focus on cosas positivas (positive things): the farm, new plants, cooking and enjoying each other's company, and how we are respectful with each other."



Carlos

"I would encourage them to try FoodWhat because there was a lot of delicious meals that we don't know back at home. Try new things!"



Alliah

"I would tell a friend that FoodWhat is a good program that helps you learn more about the outdoor world. They teach you about plants and dirt. It helps you relax and eat better."



Jaime

"I always tell my friends about FoodWhat. I say it's a spring internship where you learn to farm and cook healthy fun meals and enjoy nature without our phones."



Dafny



Moriah Barrow // Programs and Operations Coordinator

Moriah joined the team in 2018 to fill a newly created position: FoodWhat Programs and Operations Coordinator. Her first week at FoodWhat was also the first week of programming. According to Moriah, being able to grow and learn alongside the youth was nothing short of a joyful and amazing learning experience. An activist and proud defender of social justice, Moriah feels right at home sharing these passions with, and learning from, the youth and staff at FoodWhat. In her role, Moriah provides versatile and robust support to her team members in virtually all aspects of the organization. Moriah hails from Raleigh, North Carolina and received her Master's Degree from Central European University in Budapest, Hungary.

SUMMER JOB TRAINING

During the Summer Job Training Program, youth build on the foundation of the Spring and dive deep into a spread of opportunities to grow in big ways. Whether it's on the farm, out in the community or across the country, FoodWhat youth are taking their empowerment and doing heart work with it. They are harvesting produce boxes to take home to their families, they are running affordable farm stands that bring food they grew to their community, they are maintaining school gardens and they are engaging in intensive workshops that are designed to support their path. After a summer of deep work, youth often share that this is when FoodWhat becomes like family to them.

24 Youth Powered FoodWhat Summer Jobs

Summer 2018 Highlight

FoodWhat participated in the 2018 Rooted in Community Regional Youth Summit hosted by our friends at Pie Ranch. This year, FoodWhat Junior Staff led the youth attendees in creating a healing space with a ceremonial altar and music cypher. This event is a key moment in the year where FoodWhat youth connect with their peers from around Northern California to build community within health, environmental and liberation movements.

Youth Share Impact

As a result of their time at FoodWhat:

95% of youth reported they felt more confident in their ability to get and keep a job.

96% of youth said they and their families cooked with their weekly FoodWhat produce boxes.

100% of youth reported that they felt more motivated to finish high school.

Rooted In Community National Youth Summit

In July, Irene and four youth from the Summer Job Training Program traveled to Poughkeepsie, New York to be part of the Rooted In Community National Youth Summit. They joined 140 other teens from every corner of this country who are also working towards food justice in their communities. Together, this strong cohort of youth and adult allies shared stories, created community through food, and built collective power!



STRAIGHT FROM THE YOUTH

What does growth look like for you?

"I've grown by being able to be aware of my well being and those around me."



Tomas

"I have grown mentally and personally with working in groups, meeting new people and making new friends and trusting more people."



Tanihya

"I feel like I have grown in different ways...one of the ways I grew was taking the chance to talk to more people I have never met and trying new things like talking in Real Talk as well as going to sell at the farmers market."



Malene

"I rise to help when needed. I take initiative. My positivity comes out in being a team player. I've learned to be reliable and on time to work every day. I'm loving hard work."



Jimmy













Junior Staff

Eustolia, Iris, Aurelio and Evelyn are the superstars that comprised FoodWhat's 2018 Junior Staff team. These amazing young people had one year of FoodWhat under their belts from 2017 and then applied for this second year position to lead the next generation of youth and model the kind of growth they experienced. Junior Staff are one of the most profound ways FoodWhat programming stays relevant and accessible to youth. These young folks constantly brought motivation, inspiration and understanding to this work.

FALL PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The Fall Project Management Program is the third step in our model. Fall is the time youth put the foundational skills of Spring and deep training of Summer to the test. Youth co-manage our two farm sites, ongoing weekly produce boxes, two affordable farm stands, school garden maintenance projects, one large countywide event and FoodWhat farm businesses like our catering, flower and pie operations.

21 Youth Filled 51 Jobs in the Fall Project Management Program

Big Things This Fall



Our Watsonville Farm Stand reached an increased number of local families



Our youth-run Flower Business grew its client base to 10 local

Our youth powered Pie **Business** expanded from 140 pies to 230 pies



Youth attended the National Bioneers conference focused on environmental justice, joining the indigenous forum for the first time.



FoodWhat partnered with Rising Root Wellness to provide restorative bodywork to youth to support their physical health



6 youth in training to do nextfacilitation in our Community **Educators** program



FoodWhat Family Dinner Nights

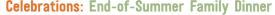


where they can feel safe to be who they truly are. That's why, this fall, youth started Family Dinner Nights to continue creating the supportive space and deep connections they've made through FoodWhat. Every Wednesday night, FoodWhat youth prepared some of their favorite meals for each other using food they cultivated together. Youth used epazote, beans, chiles, tomatillos, squash among many other fresh foods for these meals.

EVENTS

Educational Events: Strawberry Blast and Harvest Festival

With strawberry tarts in summer and fresh pressed apple cider in fall, these large, farm-based, youth-run events bring together approximately 500 students from across the county. At these event, youth have a hands-on day exploring their local food system. Students also have an opportunity to link with a network of youth, health, environmental and justice organizations available in our community.



As the culmination to an intensive Summer Job Training Program, youth invite their friends and family to a special night at FoodWhat. Youth collaborate with local chefs to prepare a celebratory meal for their guests. With everyone's families together, youth share their gratitude and stories of growth.

Alumni: Dig Day

Each year, we invite back FoodWhat alumni starting with the first ever FoodWhat Crew to the most recently completed FoodWhat Crew year (2007 - 2017). This year, we had a blast digging beds, eating great food and playing farm games with each other. The majority of alumni shared that FoodWhat played a role in their completion of high school, gaining employment and continuing to eat healthy foods.

Benefit Dinner: Youth Voice

Nothing brings people together quite like delicious food and heartfelt stories. These are central to the healing and growth that takes place at FoodWhat. Our benefit dinner uplifts youth voice by celebrating narratives that are crafted by youth themselves and received with love from the community. Youth use this space to speak of their power and resilience, and invite guests to practice deep listening.











Kayla Kumar // Development Director

Kayla joined FoodWhat in 2018 as our Development Director. She has dedicated her entire career to organizing people around the love, resilience and possibility found within community. Prior to joining FoodWhat, Kayla worked with youth in environments ranging from music classrooms, basketball courts and juvenile halls. Kayla believes the purpose of her work is to contribute to the wellbeing and liberation of marginalized communities. In her role at FoodWhat, Kayla supports FoodWhat programming by securing resources that align with our mission and values. Kayla has experience in restorative justice, harm reduction, liberation economics and grassroots nonprofit management. She holds a Master's Degree in Economics from San Jose State University.

YOUTH VOICES



OF EXPERIENCE

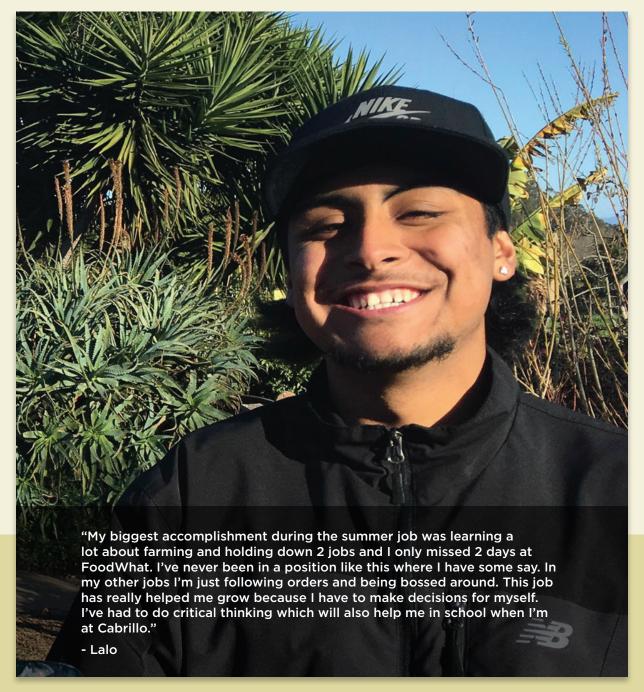




YOUTH VOICES

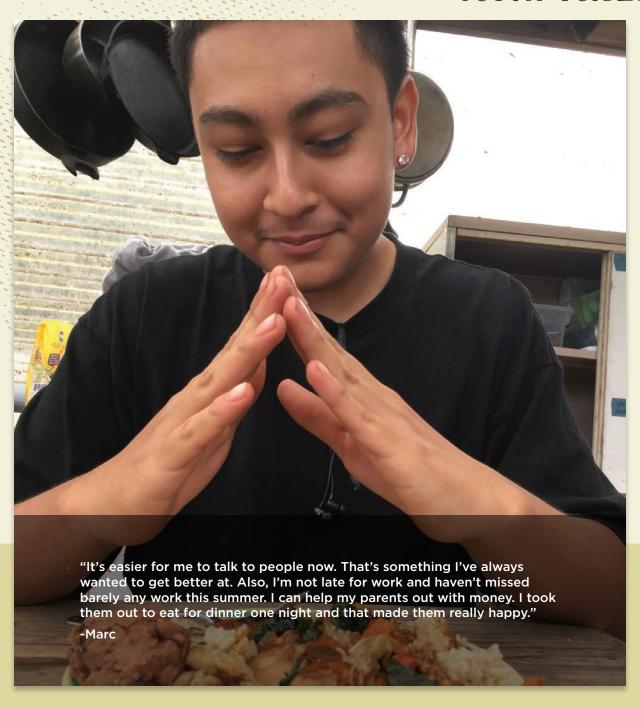


OF EXPERIENCE

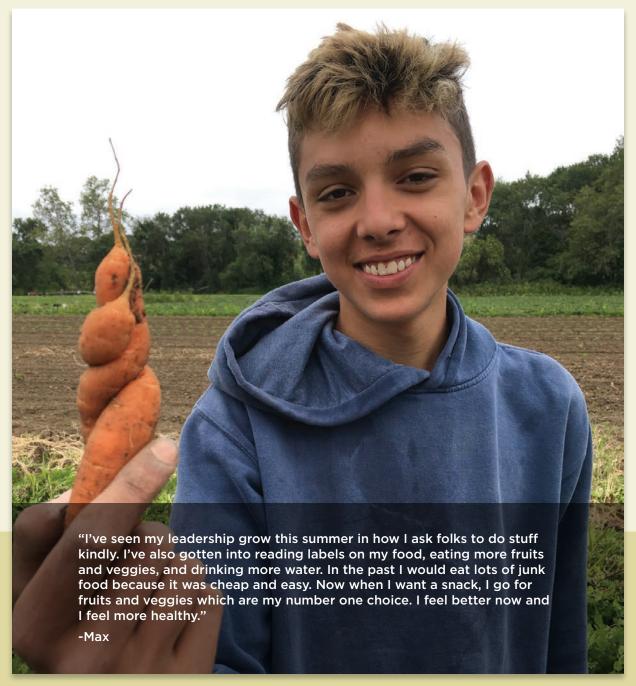




YOUTH VOICES



OF EXPERIENCE





LASTING GROWTH: FOODWHAT SINCE 2007

530+

youth served in core programs.

12

high schools served countywide.

2

program sites based on farms in Watsonville. and Santa Cruz.

29,755

pounds of produce FoodWhat youth helped to grow and distribute.

6000+

additional teens and community members reached through family produce shares, affordable farm stands, youth-led events on the farm, peer-to-peer education, and outreach at community events.







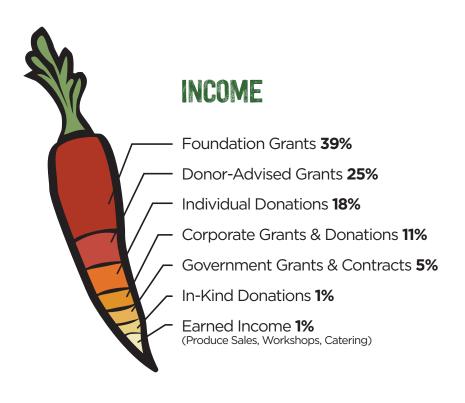
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

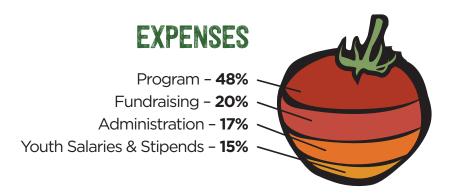
"I have grown into a strong, independent woman who is capable of doing anything and not being scared or shy in communicating. I'm now going to Cabrillo College majoring in Nutrition and the Culinary Arts. As a Dreamer myself, I'm also very motivated to continue to help and support other Dreamers, families, parents especially on their safety and their rights."

- Eustolia

FINANCIAL REPORT

We have nothing but love for all of you who fuel this work with your big hearts and generous giving. Thank you for all you do to support FoodWhat as we continue to grow!





SUPPORTERS

We're deeply grateful to the many generous donors, sponsors and community partners who fuel FoodWhat programs!







BON APPÉTIT

food service for a sustainable future *





































KAISER PERMANENTE



















































Our core partners, CASFS at the UCSC Farm & Garden and Farm Discovery at Live Earth Farm, generously provide field space, greenhouse space and technical expertise as a part of their long-standing commitment to FoodWhat.

Special thanks to Life Lab and Live Earth Farm for years of partnership.

Big Appreciation To Our Key Collaborators

Abby Bell

Arty Mangan, Bioneers

Brando Sension, Santa Cruz Community Ventures

Cabrillo College

California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF)

Center for Farmworker Families

Central California Alliance for Health

Community Agroecology Network

Consuelo Alba. Watsonville Film Festiva

Fran Grayson, Steamer Lane Supply

Gera Marin and Vanessa Quezada

Homeless Garden Project

Isaias Gebre, Indigenous Surf Cluk

Ivania Angel Design

Jacob Martinez, Digital NEST

Jeanne Howard, Good Times Santa Cruz

John Sandidge, KZS0

Jovenes SANOS, United Way of Santa Cruz County

Kitchen Incubator Project at El Pajaro CDC

Guest Chefs

Alex Mendoza, FoodWhat Parent
Andrea Mollenauer, The Food Lounge
Beverlie Terra, Cabrillo College Culinary Arts Instructor
Cesario Ruiz, My Mom's Mole
Diego Felix, Colectivo Felix
Kenny Woods, 1440 Multiversity
Mario and Jessica Ballesteros,

The Ballesteros Catering Company Martin Madriz, The Green Waffle Mason Franco, FoodWhat Alum Mari Jo Pelzner, PULP ink.design

Maria Cadena, Santa Cruz Community Ventures

Melanie Stern

MESA Schools Program at UCSC

Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP)

Pie Ranch

Rooted in Community

Rubi Sami and Rising Root Wellness

Salud Para La Gente

Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau

Santa Cruz MAH

Santa Cruz Volunteer Center

Tawn Kennedy, Bike Santa Cruz County

The Diversity Center, Santa Cruz County

Tish Denevan Santa Cruz Reach Boardwalk

Vicente Lara, Mesa Verde Gardens

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Your Future Is Our Business

Farm Stand Sites

Heidi Jacobson, H.A. Hyde Elementary School James Cook, Dominican Hospital

Youth Power Champions

\$10,000+

Alec and Claudia Webster

Anonymous Donor

Appleton Foundation

City of Santa Cruz CORE Investments

Community Foundation Santa Cruz County

Harbourton Foundation

Kaiser Permanente, Northern California

Community Benefit Programs

Monterey Peninsula Foundation

Myra and Drew Goodman

Pajaro Valley Community Health Trust

Patagonia

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Santa Cruz County Office of Education

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

The Hastings/Quillin Fund at Silicon Valley

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The Nell Newman Foundation

Youth Outside

Job Preparedness Patrons

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Bud and Rebecca Colligan

Lakeside Organics

Outstanding in the Field

Roberta Gordon & Richard Greenberg and the Ida

and Robert Gordon Family Foundation

Scott Roseman and Jasmine Berke

James Martin and the Kenneth T. and Eileen L.

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Healthy Youth Heroes

\$2,500 - \$4,999

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Nina and Sibley Simon

Patrice Boyle and Enda Brennan

Plantronics

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Ralph Alpert and the Spring Fund at Community

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Rotary Club of Watsonville

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Shmuel Thaler and Kathy Cytron

The Mazal Foundation

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Deven Wood*

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Jessica Mancini

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Katharyne Mitchell and Matthew Sparke

Khaled and Gail Mabrouk

Kris Sidman-Gale and Jacob Sidman Youth

Development Fund at Community Foundation

Santa Cruz County

Linda Wilshusen and Rock Pfotenhauer

Lisa Nielsen and Tim Sawyer

Lynn Renshaw and Neal Langholz

Mason Franco and the Queer Youth Leadership Awards

Rich and Laura Larson

Ron Sandidge

Ryan and Sonja DeWitt

Sarah and Flint Thorne

Sarah Daniel Thorp*

Siko Bouterse and Jake Orlowitz

Sky and Kristina Quinn

Susan True

Teresa and Chance Decker

Tony Hill Awards Committee

Viki Marache Brown

FoodWhat Roots

up to \$249

Aaron and Stephanie Morse

Abby Bell and Jeff Blair

Adam Spickler and Scottie Johnson

Amy and Rob Smet

Andrew Moore and Julie Young

Angela Irvine-Baker and James

Baker

Anita Lechuga

Anna Schlotz Koski and Jason Koski*

Anonymous Donor

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Anonymous Donor

Antonia Franco

Audrelina Mendiola-Arriola

Audries Blake

Aurelio Gonzalez and

Elsa Puentes-Gonzalez

Barbara and Mark Gordon

Barbara and Pete Bye

Barbara Palmer

Basil and Tarquin Alwattar*

Ben and Jennifer Raanan

Beth Benjamin*

Beverly and Charles Brook

Bonny Hawley

Candice Elliott

Cari Napoles and Bradford

FoodWhat Roots cont.:

deCaussin* Alexandra Navarro and Francisco Kristin Wang Carol Hill Roias Laetitia Benador Carola Barton and John Supan* Gail Michaelis-Ow and George Ow Laurie Egan Carrie Birkhofer Galina and Val Sokolov Lenny and Geri Wolff Catherine Steel Gayle and Christopher McCallum* Linda Bixby* Cathy Keaton Gloria Williams Linda Larkin and Harold Widom Ceil Cirillo Halley Finkel Mark and Gail Hoover Cesario Ruiz and Chris Davis Hank Herrera* Martine Watkins Chris and Gwynn Benner Harriet and Steve Mandell Mary Kline-Kaye and Michael Kaye Chris Lay and Elizabeth Andrews Harriet Busman Maryanne Rehberg Chrissy Maclean and Vanessa Harry Friedman Melanie Stern Wilson* Melissa Serrano Heather Allen and Mike Fyfe Christina Cuevas and Gilberto Reyes Heidi Cartan Meris Walton Isabel Bjork Michael and Anne Watkins Christine Sippl and Jon Silver Isabelle and Emre Tuncer Cindy Margolin Michael and Jacqueline Tuttle Claudia Vestal Michelle Keaton-Barrow Jane Sooby Dan and Carla Bolger Jane Weed-Pomerantz and Ron Mike Wojciechowski Dana and Clive Bagshaw Pomerantz Mila B Van De Sande Dana Jacobson* Monica Pielage and Blake Cooper Jeanne Howard Jose-Luis Orozco My Mom's Mole **Daniel Hastings** Judi Sherman Darrie Ganzhorn Nadia Peralta David Schwartz Nancy Faulstich Julie Burr Deborah and Peter Middleton Nanlouise Wolfe and Stephen Zunes Julie Conway Delise Weir Kara Sullivan Nora Skeele Diane Syrcle and Susan Leo Karen and William Fraser Patricia and John Wright Don Burgett and Arlene Kozimbo Karsten Mueller Peggy Flynn Don Lane and Mary Howe Kathie Keelev Penny Ellis Peter and Deborah Middleton Donna Riggs Kathryn and Stan Scott Elisa Orona* Kathy Verhagen Peter Nell and Amy Burrell Elissa Wagner and Robert Bilek Kelly Damewood Rachel Bickert Ken and Pam Newbury Rebecca Garcia Ellen Farmer and Coleen Douglas Emily and Ryan Coonerty Kevin and Rebecca Heuer Richard Sentner Jr. Emily Bondor and Timothy Bragg* Kim Chamlin Richelle Noroyan and Jim Jensen Erica and David Aitken Kim Woodland and Doug Greenfield Roanna Cooper Ethan Baldinger* Kirsten Commons and Stephen Burt Rob Doty and Bridget Semlek* Francisco and Amanda Estrada Robert Smith Korrine and Terry Fitz

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Stacy Philpott and Peter Bichier
Stephen Pierce
Steve and Carol Shapiro
Steve Palopoli and daughter
Susan and Stephen Karon

Susan Clarke
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Bon Appetit Management
Company

THANK YOU



YOU MAKE THIS POSSIBLE!

As the stories on these pages show, FoodWhat is a true community effort. We gratefully acknowledge the backbone of support that we receive from our FoodWhat Family. Whether as a donor, friend, volunteer, collaborator, dreamer or whatever role you see yourself in, we appreciate you! You fuel us personally and organizationally to do this important work in service of youth as they define and step into their own power and success while building a stronger community.

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foodwhat.org



foodwhatfarm