

Community Harvest Project (CHP) Celebrates 20 Years of "Fruitful" Harvests

"The success of this project has enabled CHP to add more community partners, serving hundreds more families in need within the region."

Tori Buerschaper
Executive Director,
Community Harvest Project



Photo credit: Community Harvest Project Website

As described in this recent newspaper [article](#), the [Community Harvest Project](#) (CHP), a nonprofit farm that engages volunteers to grow fresh fruits and vegetables for families in need, is celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2022. The organization operates out of three sites — the Brigham Hill and White Family community farms in Grafton, and a fruit orchard in Harvard. Once harvested, the produce is donated to hunger relief programs throughout Central and Eastern Massachusetts.

The Foundation was among the early supporters of the Harvard orchard after the 75-acre property was gifted to the organization in 2014. An Activation Fund grant of \$100,000 was awarded to CHP in 2015 to install high-density apple and peach tree systems aimed at producing more fruit in less space, which is more conducive for volunteer harvesting, and to help diversify crops. Seven years later, more than 13 varieties of apples and peaches are grown onsite, and the high-density plantings have yielded approximately 25,000 pounds of fresh apples and peaches annually for local hunger relief. This project is a wonderful example of how an Activation Fund grant can increase an organization's capacity in a way that can be sustained over time, with CHP's larger harvest of apples and peaches to benefit the local community for years to come.

Community partner organizations include the Worcester County Food Bank and its partners (Care Services Project, Catholic Charities North County, CENTRO Inc., Fountain of Life, Jeremiah's Inn); Grafton Food Bank; Hector Reyes House; Virginia Thurston Healing Garden; Visitation House; You Inc.; Loaves & Fishes (Devens); Woo Fridge; Community Servings; Family Health Center (Main South); Lovin' Spoonfuls; Sharing is Caring; and Boston Area Gleaners, among others.

Volunteer drop-in hours are Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon at the Grafton location and there are opportunities for group visits at both the farms and orchard.

For details, visit <https://community-harvest.org/volunteer>.

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