

COMMON GROUND FARM

A Community Farm Project in the Hudson Valley

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

EDUCATION

FOOD JUSTICE

**SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURE**

COMMUNITY



Common Ground Farm is a farm project that serves our community as an educational model for people of all ages to learn how foods grow, how to raise ecologically sound crops without chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides, and how to keep farmland healthy for generations to come. As a working farm, we strive to interpret anew the agricultural experience and tradition that is a precious part of our nation's heritage.



STAFF

the staff, board, and volunteers of Common Ground Farm

Outgoing 2014 Farm Crew:
Arielle Narva, Eli Friedman-Heiman, Lindsay Davis



Sember Weinman *Education Director*

Sember Weinman oversees all aspects of programming at CGF, including Farm to School programming, our popular Pre-school Series, weekend and after school programs for school aged children, adult workshops, and Farm Camp. During her almost four years at CGF, she has established our Farm to School programs in the Beacon School District while growing all other programs. Farm Camp in particular has grown from a small 3 week program to a full summer with multiple sessions each week. Prior to her work at the farm, Sember was the education coordinator at Lehman College Art Gallery. She's also taught art to middle school students in the Bronx, and monitored Section 8 Housing for the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority. She holds an MFA in painting, and is teacher certified for the state of New York.

Looking forward: The New Farm Crew



Susan Paykin *New Farm Manager in 2015*

Susan Paykin is excited to join Common Ground Farm as the Farm Manager. Originally from New Jersey, Susan previously worked on farms in the Hudson Valley, the East End of Long Island, and Tuscany, Italy. She was drawn to Common Ground for its commitment to social justice and the opportunity to work closely with and for the local community. Susan lives in Beacon and holds a B.A. from Brandeis University.

Erika Brenner

Erika Brenner is an experienced farmer with a diverse farming background. She is committed to food justice and building a more equitable food system. Her favorite squash is the kabocha.

Sarah Simon

After studying literature and dance in college and teaching for a year, Sarah Simon followed her heart to a vegetable farm in Maine, and after that first season was drawn to Beacon by the mission and values of Common Ground. She already loves being part of this wonderful town and organization, and looks forward to the season. She also enjoys drinking coffee, reading, and exploring nearby hikes and lakes.

Matt Dami



BOARD of DIRECTORS	2014 BOARD MEMBERS
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SUSTAINABILITY & FOOD JUSTICE

2014 was another successful season building our food access programs. We are now delivering vegetables each week during the season to St. Andrew's Food Pantry, Fishkill Food Pantry, and the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen. We completed our sixth season of the Common Greens Mobile Market, run in partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension's Green Teen Community Gardening Program, bringing fresh produce to low-income neighborhoods in the City of Beacon in our signature green Market Bus. To further expand access to our produce, we are certified to accept all food & nutrition benefit programs at our markets, including SNAP/EBT, WIC, and FMNP coupons for seniors and low-income families.

The farm is looking ahead to the 2015 season with the goal of strengthening its infrastructure and production systems, as well as expanding its food access initiatives and education programs. Our new farm manager will develop a plan for soil health and sustainable, diversified vegetable production. With a new farm crew of two full-season apprentices, one summer apprentice, and one high school intern, we are bringing young people into the Hudson Valley farm landscape, giving them the tools to develop as growers and food justice advocates. We plan to construct a new high tunnel to extend our growing season on both ends of the season, allowing us to deliver more fresh produce to food pantries and soup kitchens. Building on the successes of 2014's inaugural U-Pick CSA, which gives community members the opportunity to learn about and harvest their own food from the farm, we will open up this program to more families, and extend the number of weeks and vegetables available for harvest.



"My goal is to develop a long-term plan for Common Ground to responsibly farm its land for generations to come. In doing this, I hope that we can continue to grow good food for our community, donating much of it to people in need and using it to teach children (and adults) about nature, nutrition and the joy of farming. I envision Common Ground as being an educational and interactive farm, where there are great hands-on learning opportunities for farm apprentices, students, families and other visitors."

- Susan Paykin, Farm Manager



<p>3247 Pounds of produce donated to food access programs</p>	<p>3 Food pantries and soup kitchens supported</p>
<p>42 Mobile Market neighborhood deliveries</p>	<p>700 Approximate number of families supported</p>

EDUCATION

making food and farm-based education accessible to all children and adults

Our education programs have continued to grow in their impact and popularity, highlighted by our Summer Farm Camp, Farm to School Programs, and workshops on the farm.

Our five-week Farm Camp is an opportunity for over 100 children between the ages of 3 and 12 to explore our relationship to food and to nature through hands-on experiments, movement, games, and art. In 2015 we will be offering six weeks of camp, with slots for 48 campers each week, and will introduce a new Scholarship Program for low-income families.

Our Farm to School Programs provide rich food-based education for our local elementary schools. The in-school programs include chef-in-the classroom visits, where students work with a local chef to create a dish using a seasonal vegetable; we also collaborate with Hudson Valley Seed and the Beacon Food Services Director where we coordinate a vegetable of the month taste test. Additionally, many local elementary schools take educational field trips to our farm, where kids get their hands dirty harvesting fresh vegetables and can be seen excitedly eating lettuces, tomatoes, carrots, turnips, and many other vegetables.

Our Preschool on the Farm Program continues to grow, providing the opportunity for parents and caregivers to spend an adventurous hour together with their little ones and learn about life on the farm and in nature through movement, stories, walks, and art.

We also continue to offer a variety of DIY workshops for adults, including beekeeping, raising chickens, and gardening for beginners.



“Food education helps kids to understand how to make choices to support themselves and the world in a healthy way, and it’s becoming more and more important for our children to learn how to be stewards of the land.”

- Sember Weinman, Education Director

169

Kids served through the Farm Camp

675

Kids served through the Farm to School Programs

306

Kids visited the farm for the Preschool Program

1308

Total children and adult attendance for all education programs





DEVELOPMENT

our operating budget and grant funding



Income

Donations & Sponsors	\$42,214
Education Programs	\$46,230
Farm Income	\$31,575
Fundraisers	\$31,739
Grants	\$36,900
Interest Income	\$2,004
Total Income	\$190,662

Expenses

Advertising	\$334
Contract Services	\$24,730
Depreciation Expense	2,454
Education Materials	\$10,257
Facilities	\$9,170
Fiscal Sponsorship: HV Seed & Fareground	\$28,217
Farm Expenses	\$17,136
Farm Sales & Transportation Expenses	\$1,320
Fundraiser Expenses	\$6,615
Insurance Expenses	\$6,261
Memberships, Training, Conferences	2,109
Office/Administrative	\$9,928
Other Expenses	\$51
Total Payroll, Expenses, Taxes, & Fees	\$73,258
Total Expenses	\$191,840
Net Income	-\$1,178





OUR DONORS & PARTNERS

the generous community members who make our work possible

\$1,000+

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