



CAROLINA
FARM TRUST

CAROLINA FARM TRUST

STRATEGIC PLAN
2021-2024

STRENGTHENING EQUITABLE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS IN
THE CAROLINAS, FROM PRODUCTION TO CONSUMPTION.

Winter 2021

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ABOUT US

Carolina Farm Trust (CFT) is a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization (tax ID# 47-4089099) that was established in 2015, and is headquartered in Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.



STRENGTHENING
EQUITABLE LOCAL
FOOD SYSTEMS IN
THE CAROLINAS,
FROM
PRODUCTION TO
CONSUMPTION.

BUSINESS OVERVIEW

Core Statements

Vision

CFT's vision is a region in which food systems promote social, environmental, and economic resilience.

Mission

CFT's mission is to strengthen equitable local food systems in the Carolinas, from production to consumption.

The Methods:

- Preserving land for farming
- Supporting the next generation of small farmers
- Fostering a network of sustainable farms
- Coordinating the distribution of affordable, nutritious foods
- Collaborating with front line partners

The Outcomes:

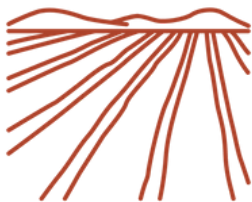
- Builds regional food security
- Increases the availability and affordability of fresh, nutritious, culturally-appropriate food
- Supports agriculture as a viable profession
- Creates economic opportunity in agriculture and supporting sectors, such as distribution, marketing, and sales
- Reduces the environmental impact of the food we eat
- Shifts the power of food systems toward consumers and local growers
- Rebalances the relationship between people and land

Carolina Farm Trust believes:

- All people have the right to healthy, sufficient, culturally appropriate food
- Relationships between land and people matter
- Food systems should be rooted in equity

BUSINESS OVERVIEW: THE METHODS

FEEDING THE CAROLINAS



Preserving land for farming.



Supporting the next generation of farmers.



Fostering a network of sustainable farms.



Collaborating with on-the-ground partners.



Coordinating the distribution of affordable, nutritious foods.

BUSINESS OVERVIEW: THE METHODS

How CFT...

Preserves land for farming

CFT preserves land for farming by securing long term (from ten to 100+ years) leases from public or private land owners. In the future, CFT endeavors to purchase land to ensure the availability of such land for farming for generations to come.

Supports small farmers

CFT assists farmers in becoming more sustainable and profitable by helping, as needed, to:

- Connect to available land
- Acquire small pieces of equipment
- Build out business infrastructure
- Assist with marketing efforts
- Focus on building revenue-generating customer relationships

Collaborates with front line partners

Since CFT's mission is based in systems change, the organization builds deep, trusting relationships with partners who directly serve the constituents CFT would like to reach. Examples include the Latin American Coalition, Iredell County Council on Aging, and Roof Above.

Fosters a network of sustainable farms

The organization's network of sustainable farms are located throughout both urban, semi-urban, and rural areas of the Charlotte Metro. The farms fall into one of two models:

1. The farms in more urban or semi-urban locations are managed by CFT, who contracts with expert farm consultants to manage the daily operations of the farms. At these farms, CFT oversees community engagement and educational programming, as well as any initiatives that build social capital within the surrounding communities. The urban farms are crucial tools to build constituent awareness and support for farming efforts in rural areas.
2. The farms in more rural locations are managed by partners of CFT, who oversee all daily operations, including any community engagement, educational, or social capital-building programming.

Coordinates the distribution of affordable, nutritious foods

Bridging its connections with small, local farmers, food producers, and front line partners, CFT facilitated and managed the distribution of thousands of pounds of food in an effort to strengthen the local food supply chain in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. CFT will more heavily focus on this component of its work in the next few years.

BUSINESS OVERVIEW: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

CFT strongly condemns racism, white supremacy, institutionalized violence, and structural oppression of people of color, and is committed to playing a part in dismantling the systems that continue to uphold racial inequities in the United States.

CFT was founded with the knowledge that structural racism and institutionalized violence against Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color (BIPOC) was born out of fueling our country's early economy with agriculture. It also recognizes that food systems perpetuate racial inequities that appear in our communities as health disparities. Today, food systems represent an incredible opportunity to affect change for equity-seeking communities.

The organization's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is stated in CFT's core beliefs:

- That all people have a right to healthy, sufficient, culturally-appropriate food
- That food systems must provide equitable opportunities
- That relationships between people and land matter

CFT is actively working on strengthening food access by expanding the Charlotte region's network of urban farms to connect communities to sources of nutritious, affordable foods. Additionally, it is committed to and working on creating sustainable professional opportunities in agricultural and supporting sectors through intentional hiring practices.

Recognizing the historic and contemporary discrimination faced by underrepresented farmers, CFT centers farmers from BIPOC communities in its work and will continue to prioritize the hiring and training of individuals from and partner with organizations led by individuals from BIPOC communities.

BUSINESS OVERVIEW: BACKGROUND & STATISTICS

Over the last 60 years, international conglomerates have steadily taken over the responsibility of feeding Americans. These multi-billion dollar businesses, more focused on reducing costs and expanding market reach than safeguarding human and ecosystem health, have undermined local food systems and made the survival of small farms incredibly challenging.

As these conglomerates grow, purchasing acreage and acquiring smaller farms, land access becomes a significant barrier for new farmers and established, independent small farms. A recent American Farmland Trust report ranked North Carolina second in the nation for endangered farmland. Not only is farmland important for food production, but also for recreational and community space and ecological stewardship.

Supply chains and distribution channels are major challenges for small farmers. Inconsistent marketplaces leave farmers guessing as to what they should plant for upcoming seasons. Farmers markets take time away from the farmers' ability to be working in the field, and farmers are left negotiating complex contracts for wholesale accounts through which they can sell their products.

Consequently, the current state of our food systems is fragmented. The food most people consume today is grown on large industrial operations whose farming practices harm the environment through monocropping and soil depletion. The application of chemical pesticides and fertilizers threatens the health of entire ecosystems, humans included, and the exploitation of low-wage farm workers maximizes profits while providing the workers with few, if any, workplace protections.



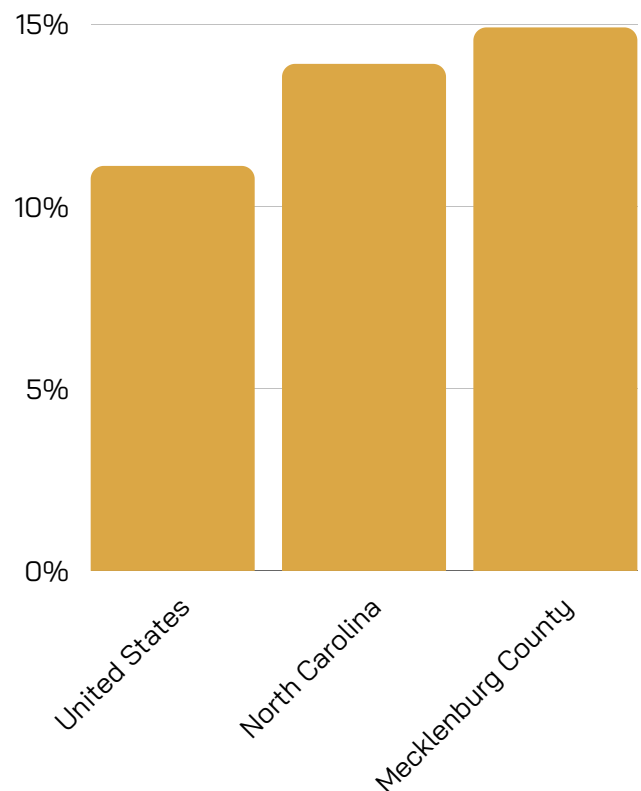
BUSINESS OVERVIEW: BACKGROUND & STATISTICS

The average American meal travels 1,500 miles before reaching a kitchen table - a distance that increases to 2,300 miles when purchasing out of season. Long transportation distances reduce food's nutritional density while emitting greenhouse gases that exacerbate climate change. Produce that arrives at the market with cosmetic defects is disposed of and sent to the landfill, representing massive losses in edible food that could otherwise be feeding families or become compost to create nutrient-rich soil.

The human cost of food waste becomes even more stark when framed in terms of the marginal level of benefits received by those enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). In fiscal year 2018, the average SNAP household received about \$256 a month, and the average recipient just \$127 a month – about \$1.40 per meal – leaving many families hungry at the end of their benefits period every 30 days. Instead of sending unwanted or uneaten food to landfills, improved food distribution systems could help feed families who rely upon government nutritional assistance.

Regional and local food insecurity statistics support the importance of CFT's work to strengthen local food systems. According to the U.S. Census, approximately 15% of residents in Mecklenburg County live in poverty, with even higher percentages experiencing poverty in East Charlotte - home to CFT's flagship Urban Farm at Aldersgate. A higher percentage of households in North Carolina experience food insecurity as compared to the national average, and the rates in Mecklenburg County further exceed the state-level rates (see graph on the right). A dismal 22% of children in Mecklenburg County live in food insecure homes.

% OF HOUSEHOLDS EXPERIENCING FOOD INSECURITY



Source: <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/map-the-meal-gap/by-county>

BUSINESS OVERVIEW: BACKGROUND & STATISTICS

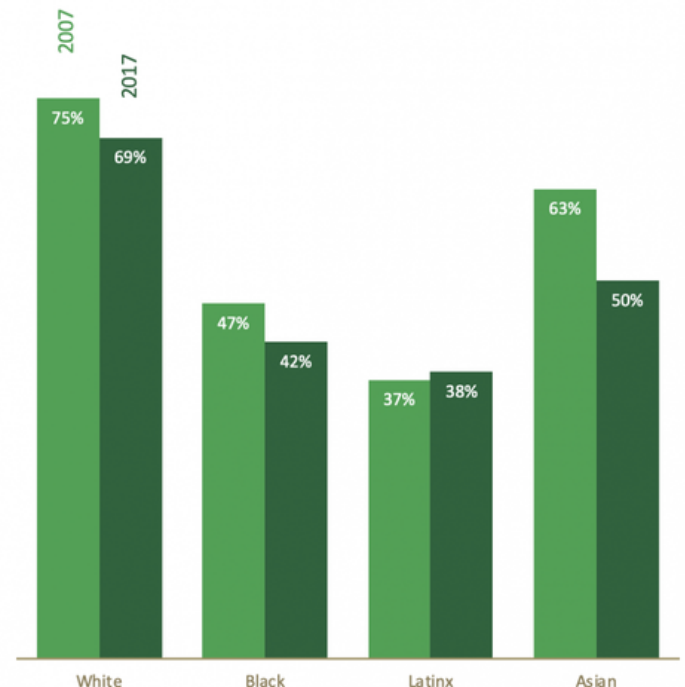
Food maldistribution also occurs in our food systems due to geographic mismatches between the placement of full-scale grocery stores and the demand for fresh, healthy foods. Corporate control of food distribution results in a caste-based system in which members of racialized and divested communities often face barriers in access to sufficient, affordable, nutritious, and culturally-relevant foods.

North Carolina ranks 29th out of the 50 states and Washington D.C. for racial disparities among its residents. Some recent statistics that highlight this inequality include:

- 57.6% of Black households reported liquid asset poverty compared to 35% of White households
- 24% of Black residents reported poor or failing health compared to 16.8% of White residents
- Only 14.4% of Black eighth-grade students were proficient in mathematics compared to 47.3% of White students
- More than 50% of African American students attend schools that are majority non-White.

While Charlotte has gained national attention for its population growth, tech boom, and Best Places to Live, the city ranks last out of 50 cities for upward mobility among those who are born into poverty and has a history of taking wealth from Black communities through displacement. The UNCC Urban Institute cites that “a Black man in Charlotte is 10x more likely than a White man to be incarcerated and, at the median, a White family’s wealth is ten times greater than a black family’s”. In 2017, Black homeownership rates in Mecklenburg County only amounted to 60.9% of White homeownership rates. (see graph below).

Home Ownership
Mecklenburg County, 2007 & 2017



Source: American Community Survey 1-year estimates, 2017

Source: <https://ui.uncc.edu/story/home-ownership-and-legacy-redlining>

BUSINESS OVERVIEW: BACKGROUND & STATISTICS

CFT was created not to focus on awareness, education, lobbying, policy, or litigation but, rather, to partner directly with the Carolina-based small farming community to directly support their needs so that they can thrive operationally while more equitably serving residents of the region.

The organization focuses in and around the communities in which it has existing relationships so that it can broaden its coalition, work with community leaders to influence key stakeholders, and rapidly adapt its concept other regions.

It is CFT's belief that farm-to-table food is not a social-class privilege. Instead, it's a human right that has measurable health and economic advantages for the community.

The environmental, economic, and social health of our communities depend on a paradigm shift in how we grow, distribute, source, and consume food.



Pictured left: Windsor Park residents purchase vegetables from the Urban Farm at Aldersgate Farm Stand in September 2020.

STRATEGIC GOALS

The CFT Board of Directors meets twice annually to review, forecast, and confirm alignment of its long-term strategies, initiatives, and projects.

CFT's long-term (3+ years) strategy is comprised of three comprehensive goals and allows CFT to focus on creating its own business infrastructure to best support Carolina-based farmers.

Primary Goal	Operate a Network of Local Farms	Urban farms will connect communities experiencing food apartheid to affordable, accessible sources of local, sustainably-grown produce. The urban farms will be training grounds to support the next generation of farmers, foster agripreneurship, and strengthen a sense of community.
Secondary Goal	Establish the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Local Foods Distribution & Production Center	The comprehensive Local Foods Distribution & Production Center plan streamlines local food supply chains through retail, wholesale, butchery, and value-added products. This project endeavors to build a circular economic model, yielding health, economic, and environmental benefits.
Third Goal	Acquire Land	Land access represents a significant barrier for new farmers and is vital to the expansion of established small farms. Thus, it is critical that CFT is proactive in acquiring and/or leasing land and competing with developers in both rural and urban areas to make sure that there is enough land is available to feed the region.

FARM OPERATIONS

In May 2018, CFT acquired its first piece of leased land - the Urban Farm at Aldersgate - and, since then, formed a cooperative at the Mill Grove Farm, supported Janco Farms in its expansion, and started fundraising to break ground on its fourth plot of land - Free Spirit Farm.

CFT relies upon the knowledge and expertise of its expert farm consultants to plan and implement operations for its urban farms, manage its farm apprenticeship programs, and continuously improve production opportunities. CFT partners with entities with aligned values in sustainable farming, equity, social impact.

The network of farms generates revenue through produce sales at on-site farm stands. In the future, CFT plans to also offer CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) boxes and provide venue space rental. CFT-managed farms operate year-round.

Other activities that occur at the farms include:

- Learning opportunities for schools and corporations through field trips and tours
- Volunteer opportunities
- Community and stakeholder events encouraging intergenerational, multi-cultural gathering



MILL GROVE
FARM CO-OP



FARM OPERATIONS: APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

CFT, in partnership with Deep Roots CPS, launched a farm apprentice program in 2020 at the Urban Farm at Aldersgate. In a six month (minimum), paid program, apprentices learn how to manage and operate a small agricultural operation - including crop planning, planting and harvesting, marketing & communications, community engagement, retail sales, and inventory management. Apprentices are trained and supervised by the respective farm team on site.

Upon satisfactory completion of the program, apprentices are considered for permanent employment at one of CFT's farms.

In addition to prioritizing the recruiting of individuals from BIPOC communities for the farm apprenticeship program, plans are also underway to recruit individuals facing additional barriers to workforce opportunity, including individuals who are formerly incarcerated and/or experiencing homelessness. To expand the program to serve such individuals, CFT will partner with organizations such as Roof Above or Supportive Housing Communities.

Pictured below: Deep Roots CPS Co-Founder and Co-Owner Wisdom Jzar with the first UFA Apprentice, Sam Hargrove.



FARM OPERATIONS: SNAPSHOT

Operation	Established	Land Opportunity	Level of Involvement	Business Stage
Urban Farm at Aldersgate	2018	Leased from a nonprofit	Managed and operated	Operational/requires additional fundraising
Janco Farm	2018	Leased from a nonprofit	Managed	Operates indepently
Mill Grove Farm Co-Op	2019	Lease/opportunity to acquire and own	Managed and operated	Operational/requires additional fundraising
Free Spirit Farm	2020	Lease/opportunity to acquire and own	Managed and operated	Actively fundraising
Local Foods Distribution & Production Center	TBD	Looking for land donation	To be managed and operated	Actively planning

FARM OPERATIONS: URBAN FARM AT ALDERSGATE

The Urban Farm at Aldersgate (UFA) is a collaboration between CFT and Aldersgate, an independent living retirement community, to create a nonprofit urban farm model in the East Charlotte community of Windsor Park.

A once dilapidated area that included tennis courts, a pool, and out buildings is now a working farm serving Aldersgate residents, East Charlotte, and the broader Charlotte region. UFA has quickly become a hub of community engagement with a farm stand, special events and entertainment, volunteer opportunities, and educational programming (paused due to COVID).



Pictured above: Rendering from *Feeding a Region*, a promotional film produced by CFT.

FARM OPERATIONS: URBAN FARM AT ALDERSGATE

Spanning 6.7 acres, UFA grows produce year-round and is home to several beehives. CFT is responsible for all aspects of this urban farm and has entered a contract with Deep Roots CPS to both manage the daily operations of the farm and train novice farmers as an apprentices at UFA.

As CFT's first and most established farm, UFA is the organization's flagship location. Since the farm is nearly fully operational (full build out scheduled for Spring 2021), additional funding for UFA will improve upon and expedite business development and community engagement for the operation. The farm is an exceptional educational opportunity for local public and private schools, such as Windsor Park Elementary School - with whom CFT has partnered to develop curriculum around the environment and sustainability.



Pictured above: Rendering from *Feeding a Region*, a promotional film produced by CFT, of what UFA will look like once fully built out by Spring 2021.

FARM OPERATIONS: URBAN FARM AT ALDERSGATE

Partnerships

- **Deep Roots CPS** manages the day to day operations of the farm, including planting, harvesting, sales, and the apprenticeship program
- **Trees Charlotte** has donated fruit-bearing trees and bushes for the orchard
- **Windsor Park Elementary** is developing educational programming related to beekeeping, urban farming, and the environment. Students will create a name for the UFA honey. At Windsor Park Elementary School's request, UFA rebuilt three of the school's raised garden beds. Future plans to add raised beds and a fruit orchard at the elementary school will expand UFA production
- **She Built this City** has commenced renovations on the UFA Farm Stand, refinishing and repairing the existing building to improve safety, functionality, and aesthetics for visitors, staff, and volunteers
- Produce grown at UFA that isn't sold during regular farm stand hours is donated to **Roof Above**. When the new Roof Above affordable housing complex in Windsor Park is complete, UFA will partner with Roof Above to recruit apprentices
- **Supportive Housing Communities** is in conversation with UFA to create workforce development programming for their residents
- As UFA grows, the operation will host a regular farm stand at the **Latin American Coalition** to further broaden its ability to serve Latino communities
- **Providence Day School** has placed three beehives at UFA. It has also adopted the stream that runs through the Urban Farm property and currently has students volunteering on the farm on a regular basis. Recently, Providence Day School installed a little library at the entrance to UFA with free school supplies
- **Fox Farm** provides soil amendments to ensure soil health



FARM OPERATIONS: URBAN FARM AT ALDERSGATE

Funding Sustainability

- **Lowe's** committed to supplying lumber, hand and power tools, and other building materials
- **DPR Construction** committed to providing in-kind construction services for the build out of the master plan
- **Little Architects** committed to finalizing the site master plan and working with DPR for the build out in 2021
- **Reemprise Fund** has made a \$100,000 multi-year commitment to bridge funding until UFA is self-sustaining
- Other funders: The Gambrell Foundation, Charlotte Hornets, Accenture, Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC, LendScout, Foundation for the Carolinas, Bank of America, Truist, Sierra Nevada*



*Detailed financials for UFA may be available upon request.

FARM OPERATIONS: JANCO FARMS

In the summer of 2018, CFT acquired a lease on two acres of property from a local food pantry in Statesville, NC. In 2020, Christina Benton, founder and owner of Janco Community Farms, approached CFT about her search for land to scale her business. CFT has since sublet the property to Benton, supporting her as she independently runs Janco Farms and produces fruits and vegetables to serve communities facing barriers in access to healthy food, including the food pantry.

CFT continues to support Janco Farms in various ways, such as by facilitating an alliance with 5th Street Ministries so that Janco can now utilize a previously unused greenhouse space.

While there is great growth potential for Janco Farms, especially in Iredell County where Statesville is located, funding remains a challenge. CFT will continue to support Benton's mission through strategic partnerships, wherever possible.



Pictured Above: Christina Benton of Janco Farms and volunteers set up the greenhouse, space donated by Fifth Street Ministries - an alliance facilitated by CFT.

FARM OPERATIONS: MILL GROVE FARM CO-OP

The Mill Grove Farm Co-Op (Mill Grove), CFT's third farm operation, is a 11-acre site in Union County just east of Charlotte, and is home to three producers: Nebedaye Farms, Serendipity Petal Cart, and Crown Town Compost. This co-op was formed in 2019 to support and build a comprehensive farm network of cultivation, pollination, and fertilization, demonstrating the compatibility of local food systems with a circular economy model that minimizes waste, maximizes resources, and creates a closed-loop, regenerative cycle.



Pictured Above: Rendering from *Feeding a Region*, a promotional film produced by CFT.

FARM OPERATIONS: MILL GROVE FARM CO-OP

Nebedaye Farms at Mill Grove occupies 8 acres of the site, where it primarily grows moringa. In addition to growing other crops, such as blueberries, indigo, and rice, Nebedaye crafts value-added products, including preserves, fermented beverages, and hand-dyed textiles. The farm sells its food products on site and at farmers markets in Charlotte area. Nebedaye Farms is owned by master gardener/entrepreneur Bernard Singleton - a local community influencer who mentors at-risk youth in urban agriculture, teaching them food production and preparation, canning techniques, and salesmanship.

Nebedaye Farms has served over 1,000 individuals through farm sales, educational events, and outreach programs. Educational events and outreach programs have included a racial day of unity, dinners featuring indigenous ingredients and foods, and a class on the connection between rice, slavery, and the African Gullah community.

In 2020, CFT purchased a John Deere tractor which stays at Mill Grove for use by Nebedaye, can be borrowed by other small farmers and growers in the area and by CFT's other urban farms.



Pictured right: Owner of Nebedaye Farms, Bernard Singleton, rests on the new tractor that CFT purchased in 2020 on behalf of his farm. The tractor will assist in soil amendment and expanding the production of moringa.

Moringa is often referred to as the "Tree of Life" due to its exceptional medicinal, nutritional, and environmental benefits. In Senegal, it is nicknamed Nebedaye which is derived from the phrase 'never die'.

– Bernard Singleton

FARM OPERATIONS: MILL GROVE FARM CO-OP

Crown Town Compost has two acres and uses the site to process some of the food scraps it collects into nutrient-rich soil for its customers.



Pictured left: A compost bucket from Crown Town Compost's residential composting program.

Serendipity Petal Cart currently has one acre and grows decorative flowers for bouquets via its retail flower cart.



Pictured left: Amanda and Eric Theys, Co-Founders of Serendipity Petal Cart.

FARM OPERATIONS: MILL GROVE FARM CO-OP

Mill Grove farm is a passive investment for CFT, as it is self-sustaining and requires little day-to-day involvement from the organization's team.

In December 2020, Nebedaye's Singleton approached CFT suggesting a merger between the two organizations. Singleton has offered that, in the next stage of his life, he's interested in expanding his farming success on a local and regional scale, and that a merger between CFT and Nebedaye could provide him the financial and organizational support to do so. CFT is actively entertaining this possibility as it would be mutually beneficial, propelling CFT's revenue through expansion of moringa production (which has the potential to yield a significant ROI) while further enacting CFT's core value of supporting the success of Black farmers.

Assuming CFT is able to raise the capital needed to acquire Nebedaye Farms in the first half of 2021, the organization will be able to fulfill the verbal contracts Singleton has in place for moringa orders. Doing so will allow CFT to break even on its investment within five years.



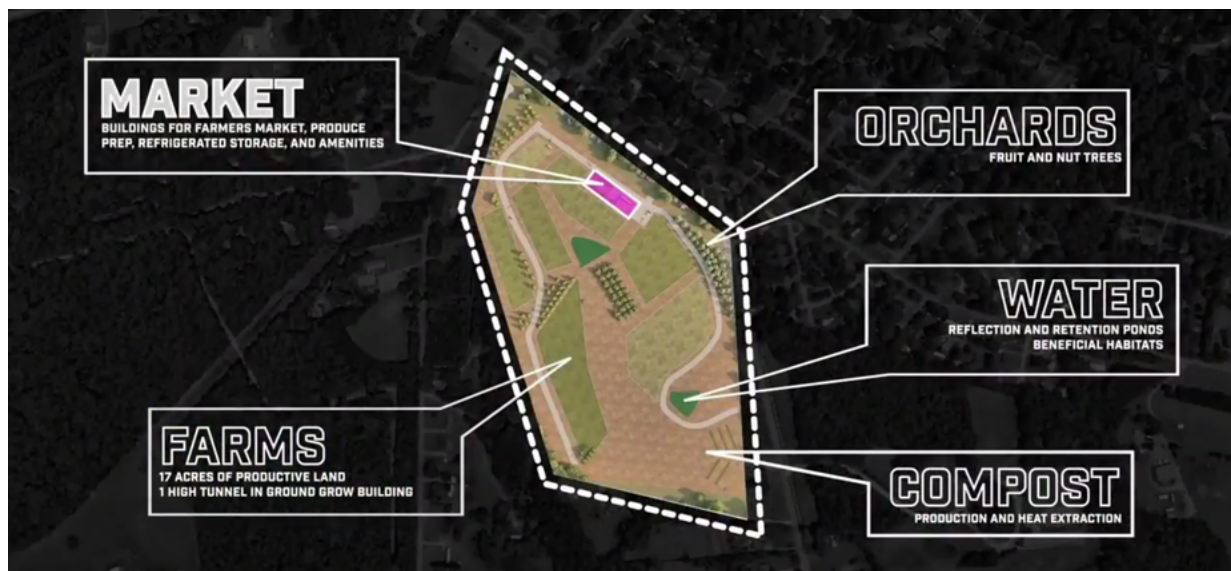
Pictured left: Nebedaye Farms Founder and Owner Bernard Singleton experiments with growing rice varieties at Mill Grove.

*Detailed financials may be available upon request.

FARM OPERATIONS: FREE SPIRIT FARM

Free Spirit Farm (FSF), 27.9 acres with 17 acres of productive land located in Huntersville, NC, was leased to CFT in December 2019. CFT's largest undertaking yet, this farm will soon be among North Carolina's largest urban farms. Therefore, fundraising efforts over the next few years will be heavily focused on FSF as it has the strongest potential to deliver upon the organization's mission to feed the Carolinas from production to consumption.

FSF is located on Kerns Road in Huntersville, near Huntington Greene, an economically stressed community that is predominantly home to Black residents. While the focus of FSF is to serve those residents and residents of neighboring communities who might face barriers in accessing fresh, nutritious, affordable food, FSF will also serve the broader North Mecklenburg geography and Mecklenburg County as a whole.



Pictured above: Rendering from *Feeding a Region*, a promotional film produced by CFT.

FARM OPERATIONS: FREE SPIRIT FARM

As the newest addition to the CFT family, FSF will be a living and working farm that will cultivate community-led food systems change with a focus on racial equity and food justice through partnerships with Black farmers in the Charlotte area. Its comprehensive urban farm micro-system will provide opportunities for employment, housing, learning, recreation, leisure, gathering, and entrepreneurship.

The site plans for FSF include:

- One high tunnel grow building
- Orchards for fruit and nut trees
- Water features that will serve as reflection and retention ponds
- Compost production
- A structure for a farmer's market, produce preparation, refrigerated storage, and amenities

As this farm is on an accelerated growth plan to feed the community as swiftly and strategically as possible, a significant amount of work needs to be accomplished in the next few years.



Pictured above: Rendering from *Feeding a Region*, a promotional film produced by CFT, of future site plans for FSF.

FARM OPERATIONS: FREE SPIRIT FARM

Community Engagement

The goal for the first two summer seasons of FSF (Summer 2021 - Summer 2023) is to engage at least 500 stakeholders at the site through community events, including social gatherings and educational opportunities (see Timeline of Activity, page 35). Examples of social gatherings include outdoor movie screenings, community meals, campfires with live music, or any other event that serves to connect communities and build social capital. Examples of educational opportunities include how to build a planter box for your home garden, beekeeping 101, or planting and harvesting 101.

FSF Apprenticeship Program

The goal at FSF to hire and train 12 apprentices in 2021 - four during Y1, and eight during Y2. The timeline for the farm apprenticeship program is as follows: Hire and train four apprentices during the first year of production - two for six months (July - December 2021) and two for the next six months (January 2022 - June 2022) (see Timeline of Activity, page 35).*

*Detailed financials for Free Spirit Farm may be available upon request.

Pictured Below: CFT is actively fundraising for the project, with initial donations that would allow the land to be cleared and planted in time for Summer 2021 production.



LOCAL FOODS DISTRIBUTION & PRODUCTION CENTER

The Charlotte Metro has a dire need for a centralized facility to maximize the distribution of and access to fresh, local foods. In partnership with the West Boulevard Neighborhood Coalition (WBNC), CFT will launch significant fundraising efforts this year to support this brand new, multi-faceted project in Mecklenburg County.

The Local Foods Distribution & Production Center (LFDPC) will serve both residential and commercial customers by buying and selling real food, for real people. Foundational to the project are principles of equity, with a focus on access and affordability, in order to connect equity-seeking communities with food that is flavorful, vibrant, and packed with nutrition. The undertaking of this project is critical to achieving food justice in Charlotte.

The LFDPC will provide the following:

- A reliable, year-round source of fresh, affordable, nutrient-dense foods, including value-added products, for constituents
- A reliable, year-round marketplace for farmers and agripreneurs to sell their products, including value-added products
- Educational opportunities
- Employment pathways
- Entrepreneurial development

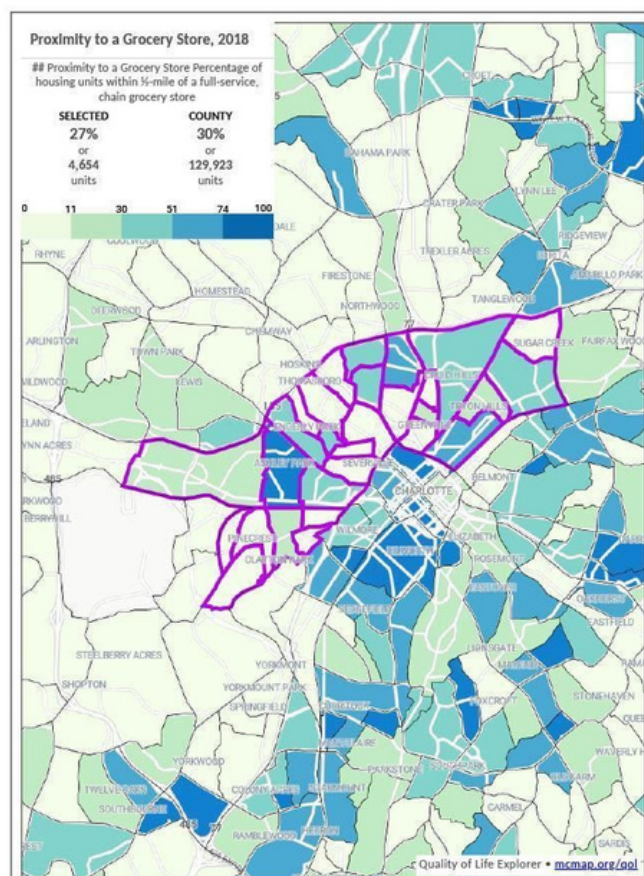
Agripreneurship:
The application of
entrepreneurial principles to
identify, develop, and manage
viable agricultural
enterprises/projects
optimally and sustainably for
profit and improved
livelihoods

– Stephen C. Mukembo

LOCAL FOODS DISTRIBUTION & PRODUCTION CENTER

While the location of the DPC is still being determined, CFT is prioritizing location on Charlotte's West, Northwest, or North Side. Between the areas of the West Boulevard Corridor and I-85/Sugar Creek:

- 75% of the population identifies as Black or African American (compared to 30.7% in Mecklenburg County)
- 36% of residents use Food and Nutrition Services (compared with 12% of Mecklenburg County)
- Median Household Income is \$31,749 (compared to \$61,695 in Mecklenburg County)
- 16% of adults over the age of 25 have a Bachelor's Degree (compared to 44% in Mecklenburg County)
- Average age of death is 67 years (compared to 71 years in Mecklenburg County)
- 26% of housing units are located within ½-mile of a full-service, chain grocery store (compared to 30% of Mecklenburg County)
- 100% within ½-mile of public transportation stop (compared to 67% in Mecklenburg County)



Source: Charlotte Mecklenburg Quality of Life Explorer

Placing the LFDPC in this geography would most effectively serve communities that face challenges in accessing fresh, locally-grown and -produced food. The proposed geography is ideal due to access via public transportation and proximity to communities which have experienced decades of systematic divestment.

LOCAL FOODS DISTRIBUTION & PRODUCTION CENTER

CFT is looking for 100,00 square feet of building space on a 30-acre parcel. Seven acres will be used for the building and parking lot, while the remaining 23 acres will host an urban farm to support the LFDPC.

CFT is currently engaging with potential partners including:

- WBNC (Three Sisters Market)
- Historic West End Partners
- HEAL Charlotte
- Loaves and Fishes

A partnership with Loaves and Fishes would increase the requisite building size to 250,00 square feet as the space would house operations for DPC and Loaves and Fishes.



CFT is interested in pursuing a profit sharing model with its anchor partner organizations. For example, if HEAL Charlotte and the WBNC are the second and third anchor organizations, CFT would consider splitting the profits equally between the three groups, each receiving 33.33%. The purpose of profit sharing is to use the DPC as a consumer-driven revenue model that supports the local economies and wealth-building vehicles of the surrounding community.

The LFDPC will provide the supply chain for the upcoming WBNC Three Sister's Market, a grocery co-op that will provide full service food access on Charlotte's West Side, which hasn't had a full service grocer in over 40 years.

LOCAL FOODS DISTRIBUTION & PRODUCTION CENTER

The LFDPC, through equitable and sustainable food distribution, will yield a **multitude of social, environmental, and economic benefits**, including:

- Serving an average of three people/sf annually (i.e. 150,000 people with 50,000 sf of retail food space)
- Better health through improved access to and affordability of local, nutrient dense foods
- Culturally responsive food sources and services serving the diversity of Mecklenburg County residents
- Enhanced viability of agriculture as a profession through improved access to local markets for farmers and growers
- Upward mobility through workforce opportunities for individuals interested in agriculture, food systems, and supporting sectors
- Improved soil, water, and air quality through support for small-scale, regenerative, and sustainable farming practices
- Improved air quality and climate change mitigation by reducing food-related transportation and minimizing waste going to landfills

Pictured below: In June 2020, CFT facilitated the distribution of over 8,000 units of locally grown and produced food to on-the-ground partners serving people experiencing food insecurity - an example of CFT's ability to connect supply chain stakeholders.



LOCAL FOODS DISTRIBUTION & PRODUCTION CENTER

The LFDPC will source and sell local food items to residential and commercial (wholesale) customers, including produce, livestock, and dairy.

- **Seasonal Items:** Fresh items will be available on a seasonal basis. Value-added products, such as pickles and preserves, will extend the shelf life of fresh seasonal items so that they can be sold throughout the year. Contracts with produce and livestock farmers will allow the LFDPC to purchase items at a reasonable price, reducing the shelf cost of the item and guaranteeing a market for farmers.
- **Customized Orders:** Items can be broken down, divided, and processed based on the needs and wants of the customer.
- **Sections:** The LFDPC will be divided in sections: Meats, produce, and commercial accounts. Each section will function in one capacity only to keep orders organized and eliminate cross-contamination.
- **Kitchens:** A Test Kitchen and a Production Kitchen will allow employees and entrepreneurs to develop, prepare, and sell recipes and value-added products on-site.*



Pictured left: CFT's Stone Soup, a Buy 1 Give 1 concept started in response to COVID that will be continued as a part of the LFDPC in partnership with local chefs and farmers

*A Comprehensive Business Outline for the LFDPC can be read [here](#).

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Fundraising

Since its inception, CFT's mission has resonated with and influenced several local, high profile corporations, organizations, community-based stakeholders, and residents.

CFT launched its annual music festival fundraiser, Carolina Jubilee, in 2015. The festival celebrates Carolina agriculture and the Carolina-based businesses that support it. The event is open to the public in effort to raise awareness for CFT and the vital role agriculture plays in our lives.

Centrally located to high population areas in Central and Western North Carolina, the weekend-long festival is designed to be a culmination of food, community, and celebration. 2020 plans included a partnership with the Charlotte LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce - however, due to COVID, the festival was postponed to Fall 2021.

The Carolina Farm Trust Urban Soul on the Farm Dinner Series shines a spotlight on CFT's mission by featuring food from regional farms, prepared and served by regional chefs. Over the years, more than \$15,000 in has been raised through this fundraising vehicle to assist farmers in various initiatives, such as updating their bee colonies, upfitting greenhouses, and helping repair vital farm equipment.

A Night at the Museum is another annual fundraiser that features seven local chefs serving food from North Carolina farms, a keynote speaker, and music from local bands. This event takes place at Charlotte's arts and cultural institutions.

Pictured right: Urban Soul on the Farm dinner, which takes place annually as a part of Carolina Jubilee



BUSINESS OPERATIONS: FUNDRAISING

Until this point, CFT's annual operation costs of approximately \$280,000 have been covered by fundraising events and individual and philanthropic organizations. To advance to the next phase of business development, the organization will focus on ramping up and accelerating its fundraising efforts by:

1. Aligning with private donors and impact investors
2. Pursuing public and private grants
3. Launch monthly donor program for community members

A more sizable, aggressive fundraising campaign will allow CFT to fully unlock the potential at FSF, acquire Nebedaye Farms at Mill Grove, and jumpstart the LFDPC.

In order to accomplish these three reasonable and achievable goals, CFT needs to raise in excess of \$35MM over the next three years.

	CFT Fundraising Goal			
	2021	2022	2023	2024
Corporate Sponsors	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000
Private Impact Investors	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$15,000,000	\$0
Private Donors	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$2,000,000
Community-Based Supporters	\$225,000	\$500,000	\$1,500,000	\$500,000
Federal & Foundation Grants	\$500,000	\$750,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Annual Total	\$2,975,000	\$3,750,000	\$25,500,000	\$5,500,000
TOTAL FUNDRAISING GOAL		\$37,725,000		

BUSINESS OPERATIONS: FINANCIALS

CFT Operating Expenses				
	2021	2022	2023	2024
UFA	\$205,868	\$239,468	\$244,868	\$244,868
Free Spirit Farm	\$296,733	\$350,176	\$353,776	\$359,776
Mill Grove	\$240,667	\$290,876	\$290,876	\$290,876
CFT General	\$395,000	\$450,000	\$750,000	\$1,000,000
Distribution Center	\$0	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Annual Total	\$1,138,268	\$1,330,520	\$2,639,520	\$7,895,520
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES		\$13,003,828		

CFT Capital Requirements				
	2021	2022	2023	2024
UFA	\$106,000	\$25,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Free Spirit Farm	\$326,500	\$469,500	\$25,000	\$25,000
Mill Grove	\$1,400,000	\$25,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
CFT General	\$395,000	\$450,000	\$750,000	\$1,000,000
Distribution Center	\$0	\$0	\$22,000,000	\$0
Annual Total	\$1,832,500	\$519,500	\$22,055,000	\$55,000
TOTAL CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS		\$24,462,000		
Total Yearly Operating + Capital Requirements	\$2,970,768	\$1,850,020	\$24,694,520	\$7,950,520
GRAND TOTAL		\$37,465,828		

BUSINESS OPERATIONS: FINANCIALS

CFT Revenue Forecast				
	2021	2022	2023	2024
UFA	\$163,000	\$188,000	\$215,000	\$215,000
Free Spirit Farm	\$215,000	\$280,000	\$365,000	\$392,000
Mill Grove	\$155,000	\$233,400	\$317,600	\$398,800
CFT General	\$125,000	\$200,000	\$250,000	\$300,000
Distribution Center	\$0	\$0	\$500,000	\$3,000,000
Annual Total	\$658,000	\$901,400	\$1,647,600	\$4,305,800
TOTAL REVENUE GOAL	\$7,512,800			

Financial Snapshot

Although yearly operating expenses for each CFT farm are below the national average, the costs associated with running a pesticide-free, regenerative farm is steadily increasing by approximately 10-15% annually. At this time, there are few state and federal government incentives for natural, organic farming. Therefore, CFT relies upon farm revenue and sponsorships to offset its farm operations.

As the farms' capacities increase, so does the demand for support from CFT. The next several years' projections for operational expenses cover typical business costs, such as expanding software usage and licenses, professional fees, and additional team members.

A large portion of the proposed capital requirements are designated for the LFDPC. Note that the LFDPC Business Plan will be completed by end of year 2021, at which time the complete costs associated will be finalized and shared with existing and potential donors and investors.

As a nonprofit organization, CFT is unique in having a source of revenue from an asset and, in this case multiple. Given the funds to capitalize and deliver upon its strategic goals, CFT's initiatives can both turn a profit and ensure a return for investors. Private impact investor funds will provide CFT the opportunity to have access to immediate capital while guaranteeing a modest 4% return over ten years. This return will come from farm-generated revenue and fundraising. CFT will use additional revenue to acquire land, expand capacity at the LFDPC, and reach a broader audience across the Carolinas.*

*Detailed financials for each farm and CFT may be available upon request.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS - 2021 TIMELINE

Operation	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021
CFT- General			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Night at the Museum Urban Soul on the Farm Carolina Jubilee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify new projects Recruit new board member
UFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete revised master plan Secure greenhouse Build out full master plan Direct mailings in surrounding geography Launch bi-monthly volunteer days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UFA in full operation Launch monthly community engagement events Honey label competition Install greenhouse Volunteer day Recruit 2 apprentices - Cohort 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeship program - Cohort 2 - Start Community engagement event Volunteer day Targeted social media ads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundraiser on the farm Community engagement event Recruit 2 apprentices (Cohort 3) Volunteer day
Mill Grove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merge Nebedaye Farms and Bennu Gardens under CFT Kick off The Moringa Project Soil amendment at Nebedaye Farms First planting of moringa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure greenhouse First moringa harvest Community engagement event Volunteer day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wholesale and retail sale of moringa Install greenhouse to expand moringa production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement event Volunteer day
Free Spirit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure \$500k in philanthropic giving, loans and/or investments Clear land Hire & onboard Farm Manager Purchase infrastructure & equipment Launch operations Phase 1 planting Formalize partnerships with Ada Jenkins, Angel & Sparrow, & Caterpillar Ministries Secure Timeline with the Town of Davidson on satellite farm lots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch community engagement/ educational event series Hire & onboard Assistant Farm Manager Launch volunteer program First harvest Launch Farm Stand Recruit 2 apprentices (Cohort 1) Identify satellite farm plots with the Town of Davidson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeship program - Cohort 1 - Start Run paid ads on social media Community engagement/event Secure vote from Davidson Town Commissioners on long term leases on satellite farm plots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit 2 apprentices (Cohort 2) Community engagement event Volunteer day Complete master plans for satellite farm plots in Davidson
Local Foods Distribution & Production Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete first draft of Business Plan 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second draft of Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final draft of Business Plan Launch fundraising campaign Identify land

BUSINESS OPERATIONS - 2022 TIMELINE

Operation	Q1 2022	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022
CFT- General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Night at the Museum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify new projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban Soul on the Farm Carolina Jubilee 	
UFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeship program - Cohort 3 - Start Volunteer day Direct mailings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st farm dinner for community engagement Volunteer day Recruit 3 apprentices (Cohort 4) Apprenticeship program - Cohort 4 - Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2nd farm dinner for community engagement Targeted social media ads Volunteer day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundraiser on the farm Community engagement event Volunteer day Recruit 3 apprentices (Cohort 5)
Mill Grove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure funding to purchase the land Expand education program Expand greenhouse space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer day Community engagement event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer day Community engagement event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement event Volunteer day
Free Spirit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeship program - Cohort 2 - Start Begin land prep for satellite farm plots in Davidson Direct mailings Phase 2 planting Volunteer day Satellite farm plots in Davidson in full production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement/ educational event series FSF fundraiser on the farm Recruit 4 apprentices (Cohort 3) 1st farm dinner for community engagement Volunteer day Apprenticeship program - Cohort 3 - Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement/ educational event series Volunteer day 2nd farm dinner for community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure greenhouse Targeted social media ads Community engagement/ educational event series Install greenhouse Recruit 4 apprentices (Cohort 4) Volunteer day
Local Foods Distribution & Production Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign lease on or purchase land Schematic design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break ground on DPC

BUSINESS OPERATIONS - 2023 TIMELINE

Operation	Q1 2023	Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023
CFT- General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Night at the Museum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify new projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban Soul on the Farm Carolina Jubilee 	
UFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeship program - Cohort 5- Start Volunteer day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm dinner for community engagement Volunteer day Recruit 3 apprentices (Cohort 6) Apprenticeship program - Cohort 6 - Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm dinner for community engagement Targeted social media ads Volunteer day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundraiser on the farm Community engagement event Volunteer day Recruit 3 apprentices (Cohort 57)
Mill Grove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational programming Volunteer Day Community engagement event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer day Community engagement event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer day Community engagement event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement event Volunteer day
Free Spirit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeship program - Cohort 4 - Start Volunteer Day Phase 3 planting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement/ educational event series Fundraiser on the farm Recruit 4 apprentices (Cohort 5) Farm dinner for community engagement Volunteer day Apprenticeship program - Cohort 5 - Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement/ educational event series Volunteer day Farm dinner for community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted social media ads Community engagement/ educational event series Recruit 4 apprentices (Cohort 5) Volunteer day
Local Foods Distribution & Production Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sign contracts with local farmers Recruit management team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire management team Recruit staff members Finalize product line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire staff Management training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff training Launch operations

BUSINESS OPERATIONS: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is composed of six leaders in the food and agriculture space in the Carolinas, each with a wealth of business experience to provide expertise for CFT:

- **Zack Wyatt**, Board President/CEO, Founder of CFT
- **Elizabeth Anne Dover**, Secretary, Owner and manager of Dover Vineyards and The Farm at Dover Vineyards
- **Jennifer Morgan**, Legal Counsel, Williams & Mullen
- **Erin Barbee**, Senior Vice President of Programs and Fund Development for Charlotte Mecklenburg Housing Partnership
- **Jaylon Herbin**, Outreach Associate at Centers for Responsible Lending

The CFT Board serves as accountability and oversight, and to offer advice to the group's leadership. The Board officially meets once a quarter makes itself available as needed. Currently, Board Members can serve two terms of two years each.*

About Zack Wyatt

Zack grew up in northern Virginia working alongside his family which were caretakers of a 300-acre, old dairy farm that included a large garden, pigs, horses, and chickens. He also helped on neighboring farms. After graduating from Coastal Carolina University in 2003 with a degree in Business Administration, Zack worked in home mortgage lending and IT. His passion for bringing community together over food, his understanding of the importance of equitable food access, and his drive to improve local food systems led him to found Carolina Farm Trust in 2015. As the President & CEO of Carolina Farm Trust, Zack has produced two episodes of the docuseries *The Farmer That Feeds Us*, and an annual music festival fundraiser called Carolina Jubilee. Zack lives in Cornelius with his wife and five children.



*Complete biographies for each board member are located in Appendix A.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS: TEAM

In addition to Zack Wyatt as CEO, multiple team members help run the daily operations of the business:

- **Alex Alcorn**, Creative Director
- **Sherry Waters**, Stewardship & Fund Development Consultant
- **Tia Wackerhagen**, Director of Health & Nutrition
- **Wisdom & Cherie Jzar**, Farm Planning and Management Consultants, Deep Roots CPS*

**Complete biographies for each team member are located in Appendix B.*

SUMMARY

It's been more than 60 years since multi billion-dollar international conglomerates have taken control of our food systems - depleting our soil with chemical pesticides and fertilizers, threatening our ecosystems, dramatically reducing the nutritional benefits of the food we consume, and widening the divide between those than can and cannot afford the alternative.

Over the course of writing this Strategic Plan, Americans have witnessed and experienced turmoil that is unprecedented in modern-day history. The demonstrations of violence and brutality have highlighted the drastic racial injustices and barriers to equity that continue to exist today, over 250 years after the founding of our country. While this grim reality causes unease in many organizations, it further fuels the work of CFT.

Built out of a deep respect for the land, a dedication to sustainable farming and farmers, and a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, CFT has never been more prepared to revolutionize local food systems in the Carolinas, starting in the Charlotte Metro, through its network of self-sustaining urban farms and food distribution channels.

With clear, achievable goals, visionary leadership, and a broad network of partnerships, CFT can become a national example of how nonprofit organizations can preserve farmable land, support small farmers, bridge group divides, and feed people with nutritious, affordable foods. **With investments and donations from other visionary leaders, CFT will be able to demonstrate how it can deliver upon its mission to strengthen equitable local food systems, from production to consumption.**

APPENDIX A: BOARD OF DIRECTORS BIOGRAPHIES

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Erin Barbee

A native Charlottean, Erin Barbee is an operations executive with over 13 years of experience in the management of varying levels of senior housing. Recently, Erin joined the Charlotte Mecklenburg Housing Partnership as their Senior Vice President of Programs and Fund Development. Deeply embedded in the community, Erin has been challenged with making large community concerns tangible and easily understood to the everyday community member. Outside of work, Erin has been a dedicated community member that focuses on building equity in the city of Charlotte through her volunteer services on various boards and commissions.



Jaylon Herbin

Jaylon Herbin serves as Outreach Associate at Centers for Responsible Lending. Formerly a District Liaison for Congresswoman Alma Adams, he worked closely in federal and local government affairs, as it relates to food insecurity, agriculture, economic development, education, financial services, healthcare, trade, and more. Additionally, Jaylon has consulted with the National Urban League to expand their civic engagement initiatives and voter education. He works intensively with HBCUs across the country to secure funding and to amplify the awareness of the institutions. Working closely with constituents to better lives through crafting and passing of legislation is Jaylon's passion. Jaylon earned his Bachelor of Science in Political Science from Winston-Salem State University, where he served as Chair of the Student Government Associations Political Action Committee and founded North Carolina Students Against Wrongful Convictions. He is currently pursuing his Master's in Public Administration at Liberty University.



APPENDIX A: BOARD OF DIRECTORS BIOGRAPHIES

Elizabeth Anne Dover, Secretary

Elizabeth Anne Dover is the owner and manager of Dover Vineyards and The Farm at Dover Vineyards, a 7-acre vineyard and 6-acre produce farm in Concord, NC. She studied at Davidson College and NCSU, obtaining degrees in Medieval Studies and Horticulture, respectively. She has worked in vineyards and wineries in New Zealand, Australia, and all over North Carolina. She enjoys teaching cooking classes and conducting wine tastings as well.



Jennifer Morgan, Legal Counsel

Jennifer Morgan practices in regulatory and administrative law, with a focus on alcoholic beverage distribution and regulation. She regularly represents suppliers, importers, wineries, breweries, distilleries, brokers, wholesalers and retail permittees before the North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control (“ABC”) Commission. Jennifer also advises clients on utilities law and the representation of businesses and municipalities in various regulatory proceedings before the North Carolina Utilities Commission.

Jennifer is licensed to practice in North Carolina. She has served as chair of the North Carolina Bar Association’s Administrative Law Section; is a past secretary of the Wake County Bar Association and the Tenth Judicial District Bar; and is a past president of the Wake County Bar Association’s Young Lawyers Division. Jennifer earned her Bachelor of Science degree, magna cum laude, and her law degree with honors from Campbell University, where she was a merit scholarship recipient. Jennifer lives in Raleigh with her husband and three children.



APPENDIX B: TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

APPENDIX B: TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Alex Alcorn, Creative Director

Alex Alcorn (she/her/hers) is a community organizer and creative interventionist with experience in organizational strategy, coalition-building, community engagement, fostering participatory spaces, and communications. Alex obtained her Master's in Public Health and Certificate in Urban Policy and Management from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where her work focused on community health, public policy, and environmental justice, and her Bachelor's Degree in Biology, Society, and Environment from the University of Minnesota. Alex's life work is grounded in systems-based and people-centered approaches to building social justice. Alex was born and raised in Minneapolis, MN and now calls Charlotte, NC home. In her free time, Alex enjoys dancing, making art, reading, and spending time outside.



Sherry Waters, Stewardship & Fund Development Consultant

Sherry Waters is a Personal Stewardship Coach/Practitioner who inspires others to use their talents, resources and skills to live their lives serving others and the community through her agency IEnate, LLC. She opened The Pauline Tea-Bar Apothecary - a sacred herbal tea lounge - in July 2019. Sherry's vocational career has been in the fund development/marketing field for several Charlotte nonprofit organizations - including the YMCA, Communities in Schools, The Harvest Center and Supportive Housing Communities. She serves on several community boards - including the McCrorey YMCA, Fashion & Compassion and Novant Health's CPE Professional Advisory Group (which she serves as chair). She has her Master's of Practical Theology/Pastoral Counseling & Care from Pfeiffer University, a B.A degree in Communications from the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill; and her certification in Nonprofit Management from Duke University.



APPENDIX B: TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Wisdom & Cherie Jzar, Farm Planning and Management Consultants, Deep Roots CPS

Deep Roots CPS plans for and facilitates the integration of just and sustainable agriculture activities in urban spaces to improve the physical and environmental health of communities, increase diversity in the food production system, and inspire self-sufficiency through engagement. Located in Charlotte, NC, Deep Roots CPS is fast establishing a reputation for providing unique educational and consulting services to facilitate the integration of sustainable agriculture activities in urban spaces. The organization, led by Wisdom and Cherie Jzar, is passionate about educating the public about the benefits of urban agriculture, including gardening, urban farming, homesteading, composting, bee keeping, backyard chickens, etc. They have experience developing and managing urban agricultural projects in which they introduce agricultural solutions that are tailored to distinct local needs, maximize benefits, and define a path that contributes to the health of city ecosystems.



Tia Wackerhagen, Director of Health & Nutrition

Tia is passionate about health and healthy food access regardless of race, sex or socioeconomic status. Her firm belief that food, spirituality, and relationships to self and others are the drivers of good health and what drive her activism for a better health system. Currently, Tia is the Director of Health & Nutrition for the Carolina Farm Trust with a specialty in relationship building among funders and collaboration with other organizations. She simultaneously is working towards her Doctorate in Nursing Practice. Using her background of over 10 years in nonprofit development and her future DNP, Tia plans to continue to work with Carolina Farm Trust from a clinical health perspective. Tia sees the opportunity to build better health for the community through relationships between the environment [farms] and food.

