




**HUNGER TASK FORCE
HARVEST REPORT**

2021




HUNGER TASK FORCE

THE FARM

POWERED BY HARLEY-DAVIDSON





SOWING SEEDS

for the Future

In 2021, despite a season of challenging weather, The Farm harvested 502,338 pounds of locally-grown fruits and vegetables for distribution to Milwaukee's hungry, providing an important source of healthy nutrition for thousands in our community. Cabbage, winter squash and collard greens brought up the rear of this year's produce parade—a bountiful harvest of 24 fruits and vegetables, comprising over 70 different botanical varieties.

Record-breaking heat and drought provided the biggest challenge in 2021, but The Farm's upgraded irrigation system helped keep things growing. Because rainfall was less than half of normal levels, our farmers ran irrigation for as long as 16 hours per day on the hottest, driest days. This was accomplished by creative staffing, with one staff member arriving before the work day to start irrigation, and a second staff member arriving after sunset to shut things down!

The return of our volunteer force was also cause for celebration. Temporarily halted during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Hunger Task Force's volunteer program restarted in April 2021, supplying our team of grateful farmers with many helping hands. In 2021, 2,317 volunteers helped us weed, seed, plant, harvest, wash and package the fruits and vegetables grown on premises—providing an invaluable labor force that shoulders the bulk of the work each growing season.



THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION (DATCP) CHOSE THE FARM FOR ITS FARM TO SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, GIVING COUNCIL MEMBERS A CHANCE TO DISCUSS IMPORTANT LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES AND TAKE IN A TOUR OF THE FARM, INCLUDING OUR MORE THAN 850 FRUIT TREES.



HARD WORK

of Conservation

As stewards of The Farm, Hunger Task Force leads conservation efforts to restore our natural areas, preserve our rich environment and provide educational opportunities for our community. Hunger Task Force actively conserves over 100 acres of natural areas surrounding the Root River—including oak savanna, wetland and prairie. Since 2012, over 75 acres of land have undergone successful land restoration and management thanks to the support of local and national partners.

The ecological benefits from these restoration projects are numerous: increased biodiversity and wildlife habitat, new native perennial vegetation, decreased soil erosion, thriving old-growth trees in the oak savanna, and increased water quality of the Root River Watershed and Lake Michigan.

In 2021, 20 acres of site preparation for prairie seeding was accomplished as part of our 24-acre Root River Prairie Restoration project. We also transplanted over 150 native plant plugs including big blue, Indian, little blue, blazing star, indigo, lobelia, bergamot, vervain, culvers root & milkweed. Our Natural Areas team also completed a sixth successful season of Citizen Based Wetland Monitoring—a program that offers education for community volunteers as well as aid to management of The Farm's unique natural resources.



NUTRITION

Education Returns!

Hunger Task Force provides Nutrition Education for both elementary students and the greater public utilizing The Farm's 28-bed School Garden, demonstration kitchen, oak savanna hiking trails and our children's fitness area. While the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted delivery of this resource in 2020, 2021 saw a return to the classroom in fall.

Hunger Task Force's Farm-To-School program engages an average of 2,200 Milwaukee Public School students in a unique nine-month curriculum that combines in-classroom education with hands-on experiences at The Farm including hikes through The Farm's natural areas, planting and harvesting of vegetables in our School Garden, and preparation of those vegetables into healthy meals in the demonstration kitchen.

While virtual instruction remained the norm at the start of 2021, in-person education began its return in summer at half capacity, and was able to fully return to the classroom in fall. During the period of virtual instruction, Hunger Task Force delivered meal kits and herb kits to schools and homes in order to enhance programming and maintain the hands-on learning that is core to our program.



HUNGER TASK FORCE BELIEVES THAT EVERY PERSON HAS A RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD OBTAINED WITH DIGNITY. WE WORK TO PREVENT HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION BY PROVIDING FOOD TO PEOPLE IN NEED TODAY AND BY PROMOTING SOCIAL POLICIES TO ACHIEVE A HUNGER-FREE COMMUNITY TOMORROW.

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