



30 East Coxon Rd, Brunswick ME | www.growingtogive.farm | Fall '23 Newsletter

Dear Friends,

Every morning, farmers wake up to conditions they can't control but must navigate to keep feeding their communities. This growing season, weather has been tricky for farmers all over the country. Growing to Give, like other Maine growers, has coped with a late spring frost and excessive summer rain that impacted blueberries, fields of spring plantings, and flowers!

And then there was Lee - whose name (Hurricane Lee? Tropical Storm Lee?) and direction changed constantly the second week of September. We tracked predictions daily, and then hourly, to monitor its potential impact on our major annual fundraiser, the much-loved Farmyard Jam, scheduled for September 16.

Thankfully the storm did not turn into the statewide emergency that was anticipated, but its unpredictable path and the need to give ample notice to bands, food trucks, business sponsors, volunteers, and ticket holders forced us to cancel. It was a difficult decision, especially given how much people look forward to this celebration, but the risk was too great.

Once again, we learned that our community stands with us in challenging times. Upon hearing the news of the cancellation, folks from as far away as California bought raffle tickets and sent in "Jam Sympathy" donations of all sizes.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we have made up for much of the financial loss, and - more importantly - we are reminded that our community is far-reaching, and our work is perhaps a beacon that supports communities beyond our own. There is always good that comes out of facing challenges.

Thank you!



Top: Intern Riley asks, "What can you do about the weather?"

Bottom: Farm staffer Genevieve gets creative with her rain gear.

Partnering With CREA To Give Brunswick 5th Graders A Dirt-filled Farm Experience



This September, we were excited to introduce all eight classes of Brunswick 5th graders to the farm! Brunswick teachers have been working with the Cathance River Education Alliance (CREA) to incorporate hands-on learning into a new science unit about nutrient cycling, and everyone agreed a farm visit would be the perfect place to see nutrient cycles in action. When CREA reached out to ask if we could host some farm sessions, we of course jumped at the opportunity. During the visits, students learned how to build "lasagna" beds with layers of cardboard, straw, and manure. They also explored the farm and adjacent woods to take soil samples and met our furry ambassadors - the goats who produced the manure used in the lasagna beds.

Our Newest Volunteer (even if he doesn't know it yet)



Carrie Asselin (our Education, Outreach, and Farm Manager) and her husband Daniel Powell attended our Volunteer Celebration to introduce us to their baby boy, Arden, born October 4, 2023.

Volunteer Spotlight Barbara Guffin

Barbara joined our board in 2021 and has served as treasurer, secretary, Events Committee co-chair, and frequent farm volunteer.

From seed-starting, planting, weeding, harvesting, and (through her connection with Freeport Community Services) bringing our produce to homebound folks, Barbara has experienced the full impact of our work.

Thank you, Barbara, for all you do for us and others!



Meet Our New Board Members

Rachel Rousseau is a native Mainer who grew up in Lewiston. She recently retired from LLBean after 30 years and opened a bake stand in front of her house where her neighbors enjoy fresh baked goods. Her volunteer work includes Maine Adaptive Skiing, American Lung Association Trek Across Maine, and Southern Maine Biathlon Club. Her board affiliations include Freeport High School Ski Boosters, Freeport Community Education, Maine Lung Association, and now - Growing to Give!



Matthew Starr, a graduate of Bates College, works as a Resident Service Coordinator at Avesta Housing, where he helps over 200 low-income households establish and maintain stable tenancies with Avesta. As part of that work, Matt has helped distribute rescued groceries and produce from Wayside Food Programs, Cultivating Community, and the Locker Project to his residents in Portland's Bayside and East Bayside neighborhoods. Matt has also helped the City of Portland's SNAP-ED team organize Cooking Matters classes for residents of three Avesta communities.

Arlene Sagan moved to Maine in 2021 after living most of her life in the Midwest. As a former family physician and current high school math educator, Arlene's motivation to teach has always been present, as has her enthusiasm for volunteerism and her focus on a variety of social justice and environmental issues. When she's not out birdwatching, hiking/walking, biking, or kayaking, she's generally reading, on Zoom with friends and family, or enjoying homemade bagels and a delicious dinner prepared by her husband Andy.



With your help,
we harvested
12,348
lbs in 2023

This brought our
cumulative harvest to
94,240
lbs since 2017

This is the
equivalent of
78,533
nutritious meals





Plant Spotlight: Meet Amaranth!

Expanding our crop repertoire to include culturally-preferred foods is an aspect of Growing to Give's philosophy. Amaranth is one of the diverse plants we now grow at the farm.

Cultivated for over 8,000 years, amaranth is often called an ancient grain, but technically it's not a grain at all. It belongs to the same botanical family as beets, chard, and spinach. Amaranth's seeds, sprouts, microgreens, and leaves are edible. The leaves are a common part of the diet in Africa, India, China, and the Caribbean.

Like other dark leafy greens, amaranth leaves are high in calcium, folate, potassium, lysine, selenium, and vitamins A, C, and K.

Small amaranth leaves can be used in salads. More mature leaves can be cooked the same way as spinach or kale. The flavor is a bit more prominent than spinach, but very tasty!

In addition to amaranth's nutritional benefits, its leaves and flowers are stunning! We love to look at amaranth in the field, and the flowers and leaves often end up in the bouquets we make and distribute to spread the word about our organization and mission.



"When we are together, we have power because nobody knows all. Amaranth, for some people, is a flower. For us, it's food. You may leave it to grow big, but for us, we cut to get more. It's key to not keep my skills to myself. I need to share with other people."

*Sivi,
Farm Skills Program Participant*

Our mission is to harness the power of our community to grow organic vegetables and give them to those in need while practicing, teaching, and promoting climate-friendly farming.

Ways To Support Our Mission

Volunteer

Donate your time,
share your skills,
and make new friends!

Sign up at:
[https://growingtogive.farm/
get-involved/](https://growingtogive.farm/get-involved/)

Wish List

Felco pruners
Duct tape
Scissors
Markers (whiteboard, Sharpies)
Gardening gloves (adults, kids)

Financial Support

Donate online at:
<https://growingtogive.farm/donate/>
or mail checks payable to
"Growing to Give" to
30 East Coxon Road,
Brunswick, ME 04011

We are so grateful for our 2023 grantors and sponsors!

2023 Grantors

Glickman Family Foundation | Quimby Family Foundation | John T. Gorman Foundation
Stephen & Tabitha King Foundation | Maine Women's Giving Tree | Libra Foundation
The Alfred M. Senter Fund | Bangor Savings Bank Foundation | Town Fair Tire Foundation
The Mark Baumer Sustainability Fund | The Nathaniel Davis Fund

2023 Business Sponsors

A special thanks to our Business Sponsors who hosted events to benefit Growing to Give!

Gelato Fiasco featured Growing to Give on 9/18 for a "Scooping for Community" event at their shop in Brunswick, donating 75% of sales purchased by customers who mentioned our name! Gelato Fiasco also donated gift certificates for everyone who attended our Volunteer Appreciation Party in October.

Another supporter of our Volunteer Appreciation Party was **Flight Deck Brewing**, who sponsored the event at their pizza pavilion. Flight Deck Brewing also chose us as a nonprofit recipient of "Brews for a Cause" and donated 20% of all beer and pizza sales on November 15 to support our work.

These social gatherings bring friends and family together, support our local businesses, and build awareness of food insecurity and regenerative agriculture throughout our community.

Please help Growing to Give thank these businesses with your patronage!



Maine Beer Company



David Matero | Architecture



Canopy Hotel - Good Group Decisions - Harraseeket Inn - Maine Ocean Farms - MW Swan Agency