

# ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



## CITY FARM SLO STAFF

Kayla Rutland, Executive Director

Shane Lovell, Farm Manager

Lauren Picone, Programs Manager

Sequoia Colvin, Farm Education Coordinator

Kate Ditrani, AmeriCorps Volunteer Services

Caroline Smith, Farmer

Sarah Raines, Administrative Assistant

Emily Rose Friedman, YEP Facilitator

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gina Ruedebusch, Chair

Kenneth Triguero, Treasurer

Anne Marie Bergen, Secretary

Steven Marx

Leo Ontiveros

Claire Tuohey-Mote

Ryan Rich



Dear Friends,

This year marked a remarkable milestone - the **10th Anniversary** of our farm-based education programs. Since 2013, City Farm SLO has been tasked with managing 19 acres of the Calle Joaquin Agricultural Reserve in sustainable agricultural production and community education. For the past 10 years, we have done that and so much more.

Over the years, we've engaged more than **9,000 youth** in robust education programs, welcomed over **7,500 community members** for on-farm experiences, and supported small-scale growers in sustainable and regenerative practices. Each year, our programs have grown to welcome an ever increasing number of youth. In 2024, our Youth Empowerment Program received a record number of applications, and thanks to a generous donor we expanded the cohort to welcome all applicants. During the 2023-2024 school year, more than 900 k-5th graders visited City Farm for Farm Field Trips. Thanks to our supporters, fee waivers are offered to schools that need it, ensuring that every student can visit the farm to explore where their food comes from. In the last year, our staff, students, volunteers, and interns have scaled our regenerative farming operations to grow and distribute a record amount of wholesome produce. Our growing programs are moving the needle on community health outcomes and contributing to a resilient local food system!

In the next year, we plan to impact more youth than ever before. Equipped now with full funding, we will build our long-anticipated **Wash & Pack Facility**- a critical new space which will allow us to expand our farming and education programs.

We have ambitious goals, and none of this work would be possible without your generous support. I'd like to extend heartfelt appreciation to our dedicated staff, volunteers, donors, and partners.

Together, we are growing the next generation of agricultural leaders!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kayla Rutland".

**KAYLA RUTLAND**

Executive Director



# 2023-2024 IMPACT AT A GLANCE



## EMPOWERING YOUTH

2,295 Students were enrolled in education programs

## ENABLING FARMERS

6 tenant farmers operate on 13 acres using organic and regenerative methods

## ENGAGING COMMUNITY

438 Volunteers worked on the farm, contributing 4,460 hours

## MODELING REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

14,326 pounds of produce were grown and distributed locally

# YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS



City Farm SLO's **Youth Empowerment Program (YEP)** provides career and college readiness workshops and technical instruction to underserved youth in SLO County through intensive summer workshops and internships.

To date, 133 teens have graduated from YEP and 8 graduates have served as Leadership Interns. As a result of programming:

- 100% of graduates are more prepared for employment opportunities
- 94% of graduates reported that they are better equipped to make healthy choices
- 100% of graduates report an improvement in their mental health



“ My favorite part about YEP is the people that are so supportive and welcoming ...this experience has made me more social and being here has made me feel more open and comfortable. This program was amazing... I got to take my mind off things!”

- Summer 2024 YEP Graduate

City Farm SLO's **Therapeutic Horticulture Program** helps students with disabilities build critical life skills through farm-based activities.

“Through working at City Farm, our students have grown immensely and gained leadership skills. Students have become more independent and learned to stay on task. All students get to practice their social skills by interacting with staff members, volunteers, and fellows.

-Christian Parra, PREPARE Education Specialist



City Farm SLO's **Farm Field Trips** connect students with food and where it comes from. Students experience the farm as a living classroom, investigating concepts in plant science, soils, nutrition, and food literacy. In 2023-2024, 916 students visited City Farm for field trips, and an additional 1,170 students participated in **Virtual Field Trips**.

“My students loved trying the new foods! I have a few moms who mentioned their kids requested kale for dinner!

-Claire McGuire, 2nd Grade Teacher, Del Mar Elementary

# REGENERATIVE FARMING

14,326

pounds of produce grown using regenerative techniques

7,370

pounds of produce donated to the SLO Food Bank

6,300

hours of hands-on regenerative agriculture instruction for youth



We use regenerative farming techniques that improve soil health, sequester carbon, enhance biodiversity, and promote environmental and community well-being.

Our farming practices include:

- No-till & reduced till
- Cover cropping
- Rotational cropping
- Compost applications
- Integrated pest management
- Livestock integration



# TENANT FARMING PROGRAM

City Farm SLO provides affordable land leases and supportive services for small-scale farmers on the Central Coast.

With funding from a USDA Grant, we have expanded services via the City Farm Collaborative which provides training, technical assistance, and marketing services for our tenant farmers. The City Farm Collaborative makes twice-weekly sales to San Luis Ranch Marketplace (delivered in our electric farm vehicle!) and other local restaurants.

“The City Farm Collaborative has helped me expand my sales opportunities in San Luis Obispo and has brought more attention to my small-scale, organic farm.

-Jerry Mahoney,  
Tenant Farmer,  
Blosser Urban  
Garden



## CITY FARM SLO TENTANT FARMERS

Aviator Acres

Blosser Urban Garden

Ethereal Gardens

MG Farms

Monarch Hills

Our Global Family Farm

# COLLEGE CORPS HIGHLIGHTS

Since 2022, City Farm SLO has partnered with the *AmeriCorps Californians For All College Fellowship Program*. Each year, approximately 20 Cal Poly Fellows are placed at City Farm SLO where they each complete 450 service hours. Fellows develop real-world, practical skills while supporting our mission by assisting with sustainable farming practices, leading K-12 educational programs, and contributing to food access initiatives for our local community. **In 2023-2024, our Fellows completed over 8,500 service hours at City Farm SLO.**



*I feel very fortunate to connect with my community and serve them, while also making a living to support me through college.*

*-Holly Brue, College Corps Fellow*

*I am so grateful for the College Corps Fellows assistance on my farm. We have accomplished so much with this great group of hardworking students.*

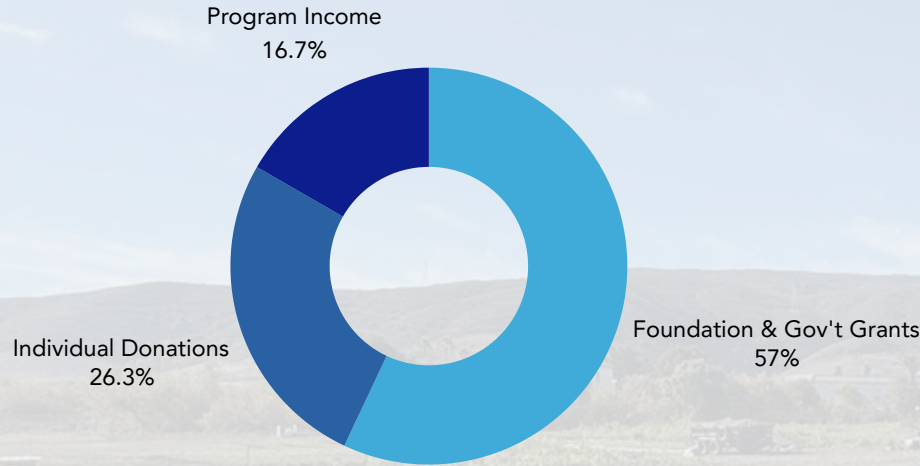
*-Teresa Lees, Tenant Farmer*



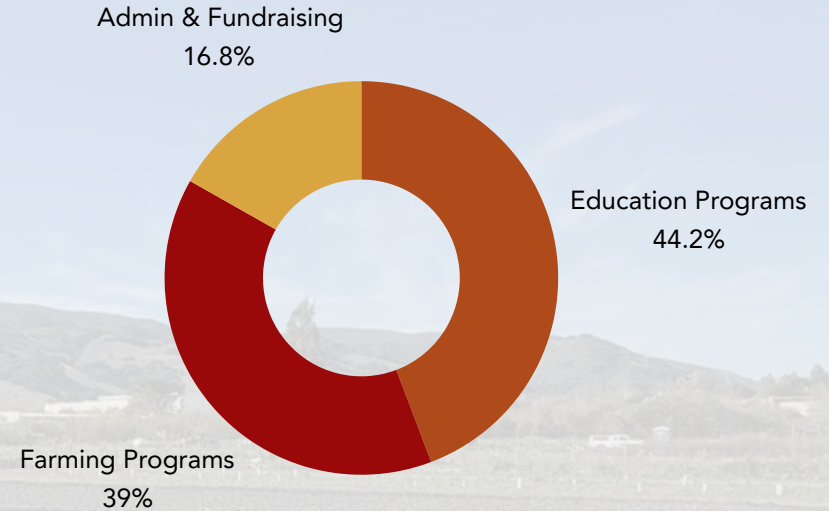


# FINANCIAL GROWTH

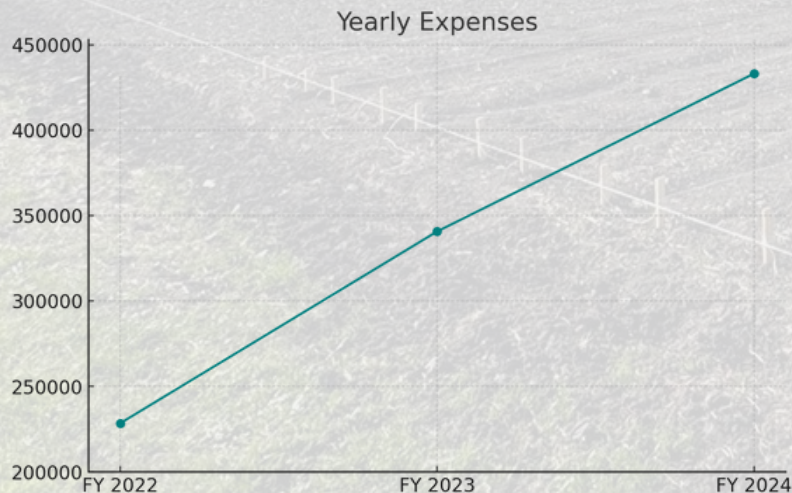
**FY 2024 Revenue: \$453,450**



**FY 2024 Expenses: \$433,053**



## Operating Budget Growth



**Between FY 2022 and FY 2024, our budget increased by 90%**

In that same time period, we increased our **number of instruction hours by 159%**, served **83% more students**, and grew **89% more food**.

In FY 2024, **83.2%** of our expenses were direct program costs.

# GRATITUDE TO OUR DONORS

*The following names reflect those who contributed from September 1, 2023 through November 31, 2024 listed in chronological order. Sincere thanks to the individuals and corporations whose contributions make our work possible.*

## \$1,000+

Harrison Harbers  
Terry Hicks & Megan Michaels  
Linda Halisky  
Steven and Jan Marx  
John Swift  
Gail Williams & Carolyn Bartlett  
Anonymous supporters

## \$500- \$999

Wendy Brown  
Shane Lovell & Candice Enriquez  
Tim LaSalle  
Eric Veium  
Gail Williams & Carolyn Bartlett  
Lee Townsend

## \$100 - \$499

Matt Clevenger  
Kathleen Copeland  
George Cotkin  
Trisha Daughtrey

## \$100 - \$499 continued

Rick Deblasi  
Ron Diamond  
Francesca Fairbrother  
Sandy Greene  
Jane Griffith  
Paul Hatalsky  
Erik Justesen  
Frank Martinon  
Alma Martinon  
Don Maruska  
Richard & Carol Mortensen  
Christian Parra  
John Phillips  
Michael Smith  
Lauren Thomas  
Rosemary & Cal Wilvert  
Julie Workman  
Jane Worthy

## Friends of the Farm (Monthly gift of \$15+)

Anne Marie Bergen  
Lori Bickel  
Susan Conner - Steeb  
Shanny Covey  
Ron Diamond  
Joel Diringer  
Julia Gomes  
Linda Halisky  
Mary Harring  
Gina Reudebusch  
Mary Renard  
Daniel Renner  
Keith Rutland  
Laurie Schneemann  
Anne Marie Simpson

## Corporate Supporters

Central Coast Community Energy  
CB Automotive Group  
Creek Lands Conservation  
Sprouts Neighborhood Foundation

*If you are interested in supporting our work, visit [cityfarmslo.org/donate](https://cityfarmslo.org/donate) to learn more, or contact us at [info@cityfarmslo.org](mailto:info@cityfarmslo.org).*

# JOIN THE "FAMILY"!

## Buy our Produce!

Visit [Harvestly.org](https://www.harvestly.org)

## Tour the Farm!

Private and community tours available! More information at [cityfarmslo.org/tours-parties](https://www.cityfarmslo.org/tours-parties)

## Volunteer!

Every Tuesday, Thursday and 2nd and 4th Saturdays.  
More information at [cityfarmslo.org/volunteers](https://www.cityfarmslo.org/volunteers)

## Donate!

Visit [cityfarmslo.org/donate](https://www.cityfarmslo.org/donate) to make a contribution today.

## Attend an Event!

Our 4th Annual Sheep Shearing Shindig is on Saturday May 17th, 2025.

See our full event calendar at [cityfarmslo.org/events](https://www.cityfarmslo.org/events)

## CONTACT US

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*Join us in empowering the  
next generation through  
sustainable agriculture and  
farm-based education!*

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