TEN YEAR ANNUAL REPORT

People's Grocery

Letter from the Executive Director

Hello all,

I can't believe it's been 10 years. When we decided to put together a "10 Year Anniversary" annual report, we looked through a decade of photos, project binders, and memories. We were humbled and inspired by the sacrifice and commitment of the People's Grocery's founding team, and all those who continued the vision in the years following. We're grateful we have the opportunity to share that journey with you.

Starting in the **past**, we're reminded of how we got here: in 2002, three folks living in West Oakland wanted to do something about the lack of access to fresh and healthy food. They began engaging youth, focusing on urban agriculture, enterprise development, and community nutrition education. People's Grocery landed on the national scene with our Mobile Market enterprise, innovative Youth Programs, and multi-scale farming and gardening projects. Between now and then, in our **present**, we scaled up our community engagement activities with the Growing Justice Institute, supporting residents to launch their own food enterprises and projects. We've continued the Grub Box food distribution program, partnering with Dig Deep Farms and Produce to deliver even more fresh produce to families. We focused our urban agriculture efforts on the California Hotel Garden, creating a demonstration site for greenhouse production, animal husbandry, aquaponics, beekeeping, vermiculture, seed saving, and mural-making. We deepened our commitment to racial justice with our Allyship program, offering internships and workshops that discuss race, class, power and privilege in relation to the food system.

We're now looking toward the **future**, and seeing the seeds we planted blossom into new food systems solutions. We're looking forward to supporting our grocery-store spin off, People's Community Market, on an investment campaign that will allow them to open their doors within the next two years. Our first round of Growing Justice Institute projects have launched, and will form a Food Project and Enterprise Network that will link health, economic development and community building on offline and online platforms. We're also looking forward to expanding our movement building activities—continuing our work with the Edible Schoolyard Project on UC Berkeley's Edible Education, and traveling the country to share our model and learn from other food organizations.

This is a dynamic time to be working for food and justice. In the last few years, the somewhat separate fields of childhood nutrition, school gardens, food justice, farmworker rights, restaurant worker rights, farm bill reform, and many others have come together. The American "Food Movement" is now an established, if somewhat fledging, social movement. And even more hopeful—equity, in the form of food access, has been a central issue for those discussing the future of food. Our movement has the unique potential to be driven by principles of justice, while maintaining our identity as the community-centered "feel good" network. If we can cultivate this potential, we'll be unstoppable. That's our mission in the next 10 years—to embody justice, relationship building, and social action in a way that inspires our country to create the policies and systems that ensure healthy food for all.

Glad you're on this journey with us. We hope you enjoy this reflection on our first decade, and join us in future years as we all build a healthy food system—together.

In Community,

Nikki Henderson, Executive Director

The Past

Youth Programs

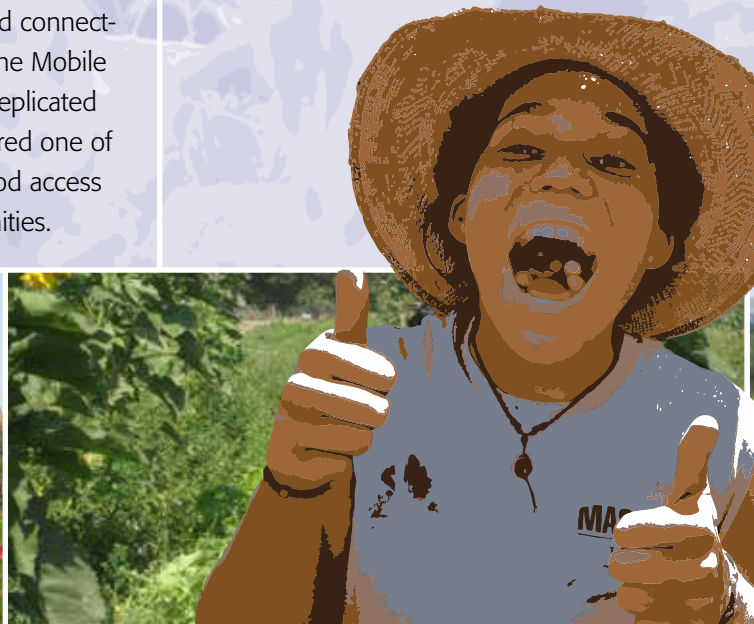
Historically, People's Grocery provided a wide variety of programs for youth. In June of 2003 we launched the ***Collards & Commerce Youth Program***, and employed 8 youth who participated in urban gardening, community outreach, business classes and cooking and nutrition workshops. The program continued year-round for three more years, educating and employing 25 youth until it grew into the ***Peer-to-Peer Youth Educator***. Based upon the belief that informed young people are the best agents for delivering relevant nutrition education to their peers, youth in our Peer-to-Peer Youth Program delivered workshops about nutrition, fast food, obesity, gardening, and organic farming to local schools, churches and community venues. During the summer of 2003 we also launched our first ***Urban Rootz Food Justice Camp***. The camp gathered young people from throughout the Bay Area to learn about organic agriculture, nutrition, and issues surrounding our food system. Urban Rootz continued for four summers, involving hundreds of young people as our youth developed new curricula. Through educational workshops, field trips, and hands on work experience in business and agriculture, we helped expose youth to different job opportunities and perspectives that will be useful in building the future of our community. Our Youth Programs went on hiatus in 2009, and we look forward to re-launching them in 2013.

The Mobile Market

In August of 2003 the founders and our first youth crew launched what has become the flagship enterprise of the organization: the Mobile Market, a solar panel-powered grocery store on wheels that sold fresh produce, packaged foods and bulk foods at affordable prices. The Mobile Market served over 3,500 people annually for five years and responded to the needs and preferences of West Oakland residents regarding types of products, prices, locations of truck stops, and much more. Our youth staff also conducted an annual membership survey focused on customer service and product quality, to ensure that the program was conscious of and connected to the community we work with. The Mobile Market, the first of its kind, has been replicated across the country, and is still considered one of the most innovative approaches to food access in historically under-invested communities.

The Sunol Farm and Urban Gardens

From its founding, People's Grocery grew produce in local gardens—by 2006, we'd established four community gardens by partnering with various community organizations, and served hundreds of residents fresh food and garden workshops. In 2007, we expanded our food production activities through the launch of an Agricultural Park in Sunol, CA. We rented 3 acres of land from the Agricultural Park, and created a model in which youth interns learned theoretical and practical applications of sustainable and organic agriculture, through food production and agricultural education. Youth were introduced to the principles and values of sustainable agriculture, as well as basic operational aspects of running a sustainable farm. In 2007, the 10,000 pounds of produce harvested from the farm contributed 60-80% of the produce in our Grub Box.



The Present

The Growing Justice Institute

The ***Growing Justice Institute*** supports Oakland residents with designing and implementing community-driven solutions to food insecurity. Over two years, with technical assistance and training from People's Grocery, a group of Fellows launch income-generating projects that build the local food system. Currently, six Fellows are in-progress, and over $50,000 has been rerouted to fellows and community members through project funding and food-industry jobs secured through People's Grocery. 2011 Fellows: Raheemah Nitoto (Urban Holistic Solutions, health services), Billy Page (Divine Raw Foods, raw food service), Shalina Allen (Get Cooking!, cooking class), Jacqueline Thomas (Ghetto Girls Fresh Eats, catering service), Deborah Carney (Food Transportation Resource Connection, transportation service to food pantries), Paula Beal, and Virginia Hall.

The California Hotel

In 2009, People's Grocery became involved in the ***garden at the historic California Hotel*** in West Oakland. Building upon the resident planter boxes that already existed, we expanded the lot to include a greenhouse, chickens, field asphalt garden beds, fruit trees, an outdoor kitchen and multiple murals depicting the history of the community. In 2012, we sponsored programming and quarterly events that brought over 2,000 people together as we supported neighborhood residents in identifying issues, creating solutions, and building community. Additionally, our plant sales generated over $8,000 in revenue as part of our garden enterprise program.

Grub Box

The ***Grub Box*** is a weekly Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) box containing a selection of fresh seasonal produce, and has generated over $250,000 since 2008. In 2011, we entered into a partnership with Dig Deep Farms and Produce, who now manages the production and distribution of the Grub Box. The partnership allowed People's Grocery to invest in the customer service aspects of the enterprise, and expand programming to local hospitals. The Grub Box was a key part of a case study at Highland Hospital called ***Bite to Balance***, in which families in the Pediatric Clinic received weekly Grub Boxes and monthly nutrition workshops while the hospital tracked changes in their health indicators over six months. The program was very successful (in positively affecting diet-related health indicators and attitudes toward healthy food) and will begin a new cycle in early 2013.

Allyship

To us, Allyship looks like equitable relationships (everyone is a peer) and equitable participation (everyone has agency) in cross-racial and cross-cultural food systems work. In 2011 and 2012, over 20 individuals interned with People's Grocery and participated in dialogue sessions, workshops, and trainings on race, class, power and privilege. In late 2011, People's Grocery expanded our Allyship program to include a partnership with Roots of Change, a collaboration that focused on ways of shifting power relationships between "mainstream" food organizations and "grassroots" food organizations. With assistance from Fierce Allies (an intensive training, facilitation, and consulting program that fosters deep partnerships across divides of power and privilege), we will continue our Allyship practice and engage in an in-depth training in 2013.

The Future

People's Community Market

In 2013, People's Grocery looks forward to supporting the investment campaign of People's Community Market (PCM), our sister for-profit enterprise, a new business that emerged from and builds on our ten years of food enterprise experience. PCM will be a small-format, full-service neighborhood food store, health resource center and community hub that will support West Oakland families to attain healthier and more socially connected lives.

Brahm Ahmadi (a co-founder of People's Grocery and current CEO of PCM) applied years of his local market understanding to create a highly targeted business model, which will make it easy for residents to buy quality fresh foods at affordable prices. Their goal is to be "More Than a Grocery Store" by addressing their customers' desires to be more supported in improving their health, building community and becoming more socially connected. They'll partner with us, and other community and health organizations to offer a variety of education programs, food demonstrations and workshops, as well as health services. The store will provide a community gathering space through its Front Porch courtyard, which will feature a stage, a kids play area, a deli service window and a venue for events and other social activities.

To find out how you can get involved with the development of the store and become a Founder and Shareholder, visit www.peoplescommunitymarket.com.

Food Project and Enterprise Network

In 2013, thanks to funding from the Newman's Own Foundation, we have the opportunity to design and launch a Food Project and Enterprise Network. The Network will link current and former enterprises and projects developed in the Growing Justice Institute, and give more residents access to resources that can help catalyze their local food enterprises. In the online component of the network, clients and customers will be able to browse socially oriented, justice driven local food services. In the offline component of the network, clients and customers will have a regular forum to shop for products, meet Institute Fellows, and more regularly support West Oakland's local food system.

Movement Building

In the next few years, People's Grocery will be continuing our movement building efforts, and strengthening our partnerships with allied organizations. In 2011 and 2012, we partnered with Alice Water's Edible Schoolyard Project and Michael Pollan as they brought Edible Education to UC Berkeley, a lecture series on the history and future of the food movement. Guest lecturers included Marion Nestle, Carlo Petrini, Raj Patel, Joel Salatin, and Peter Sellars. In 2012, Nikki Henderson had the pleasure of organizing discussion sections for students with facilitators from the food movement, and we hope to continue partnering on the class in future years. Our organization also had the opportunity to show the linkage between energy efficiency and food systems when Solar Mosaic made it possible for our office to now be powered by the sun! Over 70 individuals helped to finance the solar panels through crowd funding. We hope to continue showing links between food systems and other areas of sustainable development, and be an intersection between different aspects of building a healthy future.

Acknowledgements

So many individuals and organizations have made People's Grocery possible over these last 10 years! Thank you to all of our foundation partners, individual donors, staff, board members, volunteers, interns, restaurant partners, and others who have supported us, and allowed us to thrive.

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