

Wellspring Cooperative

Creating a Community-led Economy

2022 Annual Report



Letter from directors

This has been a year of growth and multiple accomplishments at Wellspring. We achieved a milestone of ten cooperatives in our network after welcoming three new members this year including Northeast Biodiesel, Energia and Natural Living Landscapes. Based on goals established in our 2021 strategic plan, we expanded our focus on cooperative community initiatives and community engagement. Wellspring also played a leading role this year in developing the cooperative and solidarity economy movements statewide. And while economic uncertainties added to the challenges of fundraising, we succeeded in meeting our financial goals through the generous support of our donors. These accomplishments are a tribute to the hard work of our leaders, board and committees, and our dedicated staff.

Wellspring also prioritized public events this year to better engage our community and expand local leadership in our organization. The success of our first Earth Day event convinced us to make this an annual tradition. A leadership caucus, summer barbecue and annual General Assembly provided multiple entry points for new people to learn about and become involved with our work.

Wellspring continues to build our capacity to strengthen communities and create an inclusive and just economy. Our organization works to address root causes of inequality and poverty in our community. Cooperatives that are owned and controlled by workers are invested in sustaining the local economy, in contrast with large privately owned and capitalist companies who commonly commodify their workers and disregard needs of the community. Wellspring is also building development capacity that has often been missing in communities. We are bringing people together across the many divisions of language, race and culture to work for a shared vision of an economy that meets basic needs such as food, housing and jobs. Greater equality, where wealth and control are widely distributed will result in a community that is more resilient, sustainable and prosperous. The initiatives described in this annual report represent practical steps to move this vision forward.

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New to the Network in 2022:





Catalyst Cooperative Healing

Catalyst joined our network as a pretty self-sufficient co-op. Nevertheless, we have provided technical assistance, a \$3,000 bridge loan, and helped them access resource such as a project management software for their business.



Northeast Biodiesel

Wellspring was one of the three catalyzing forces to revive the Northeast Biodiesel plant, offering the cooperative model as an alternative to selling off the business. Wellspring Co-director, Emily Kawano, facilitated a 10-week co-op training for the first group of prospective worker-owners and continues to provide the co-op with training support as needed.



Natural Living Landscapes

When Natural Living Landscape was just a seed of an idea, Wellspring Cooperative helped worker-owners Eric and Luis get the co-op off the ground through fundraising efforts and connecting them to Suffolk Transactional Law Clinic where they were adopted as a project which helped develop by-laws with undocumented workers in mind. We continue to help them with frequent technical assistance as well as community support by connecting them with customer anchors and other landscaping co-ops.



Wellspring's Support Makes a Difference for New Co-ops!

Building Economic & Community Leadership



"Training is key to understanding co-ops. For most of us Wellspring's training was our first experience with co-ops. People embraced the philosophy, and many wouldn't have been interested in working at Northeast Biodiesel if it wasn't a co-op. There is a cooperative atmosphere, and members are always willing to chip in to help."

– Rick Durepo, Manager Northeast Biodiesel Cooperative

Wellspring supports the leadership of workers to govern their own cooperative businesses, and of community members to collectively meet shared needs and goals. We provide workshops for individual cooperatives, as we did for Northeast Biodiesel so they could launch as a worker owned company in October. Wellspring also assists member cooperatives to understand business operations and learn about cooperative management, as we have done through weekly meetings at the Wellspring Harvest greenhouse. The annual Co-op Boot Camp provides a fourteen-week co-op academy where aspiring co-op workers and entrepreneurs can learn about cooperatives and develop their own business plans. Sixteen people participated in the 2022 Boot Camp held from March 1 to June 31. These formal and informal programs enable workers to gain the skills, confidence and tools needed to be full citizens of their democratically managed businesses – a kind of leadership that workers do not learn in traditional companies.

Community leadership and partnerships are central to Wellspring's work by design. Core constituencies essential to achieving Wellspring's vision are represented on our board including member cooperative businesses, community and labor organizations, anchor institutions, development organizations and community members. Wellspring's leadership caucus brought these diverse constituencies together on October 25 at Western New England University to build relationships and identify areas for collaboration. Board and committees involved 27 active volunteers in 2022. Building leadership is also a priority for Wellspring's cooperative community collaborations, especially through our first neighborhood initiative in Indian Orchard, Grow IO. New leadership teams formed this year to organize our first Earth Day celebration, the Wellspring-lead Springfield Prescription Produce Collaborative, organization of the Building Worker Power conference by our Labor-Co-op committee, and statewide gatherings by the Coalition for Worker Ownership and Power (CoWOP) and the Massachusetts Solidarity Economy Network (MASEN).

Pictured: Co-director Fred Rose with then Wellspring Harvest General Manager, Do-han Allan, accepting a 2022 Co-op Hero Award at the River Valley Co-op award ceremony.



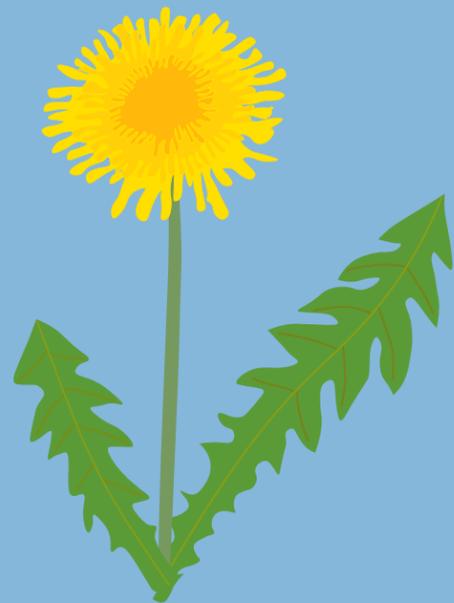
Community Cooperative/ Solidarity Economy Initiatives

At the end of 2021, Wellspring broadened our mission to include cooperative community, or solidarity economy, initiatives. Wellspring continues to build up our network of cooperatives and we are proud that there are now ten co-op members—with more in the pipeline. Not everyone, however, is able to, or interested in, starting up or finding a job in a worker co-op. Building other on-ramps to engage in cooperative initiatives is important for several reasons.

Our work to create jobs through co-op development is an important piece of how people meet their needs (livelihoods), but there are other, equally important, ways that contribute to their livelihoods. Examples include community gardening, collective food preparation, skill shares, mutual aid, community maker spaces, community land trusts, and time banking.

These initiatives build local self-reliance, collective provisioning and resilience. Recent global supply chain disruptions due to climate change or the pandemic, are only likely to increase over time and therefore, we must take the challenge of local provisioning very seriously.

These on-ramps build an experience and culture of cooperation and democratic decision-making which hopefully will grow the pool of people who are interested in getting involved in a worker co-op.



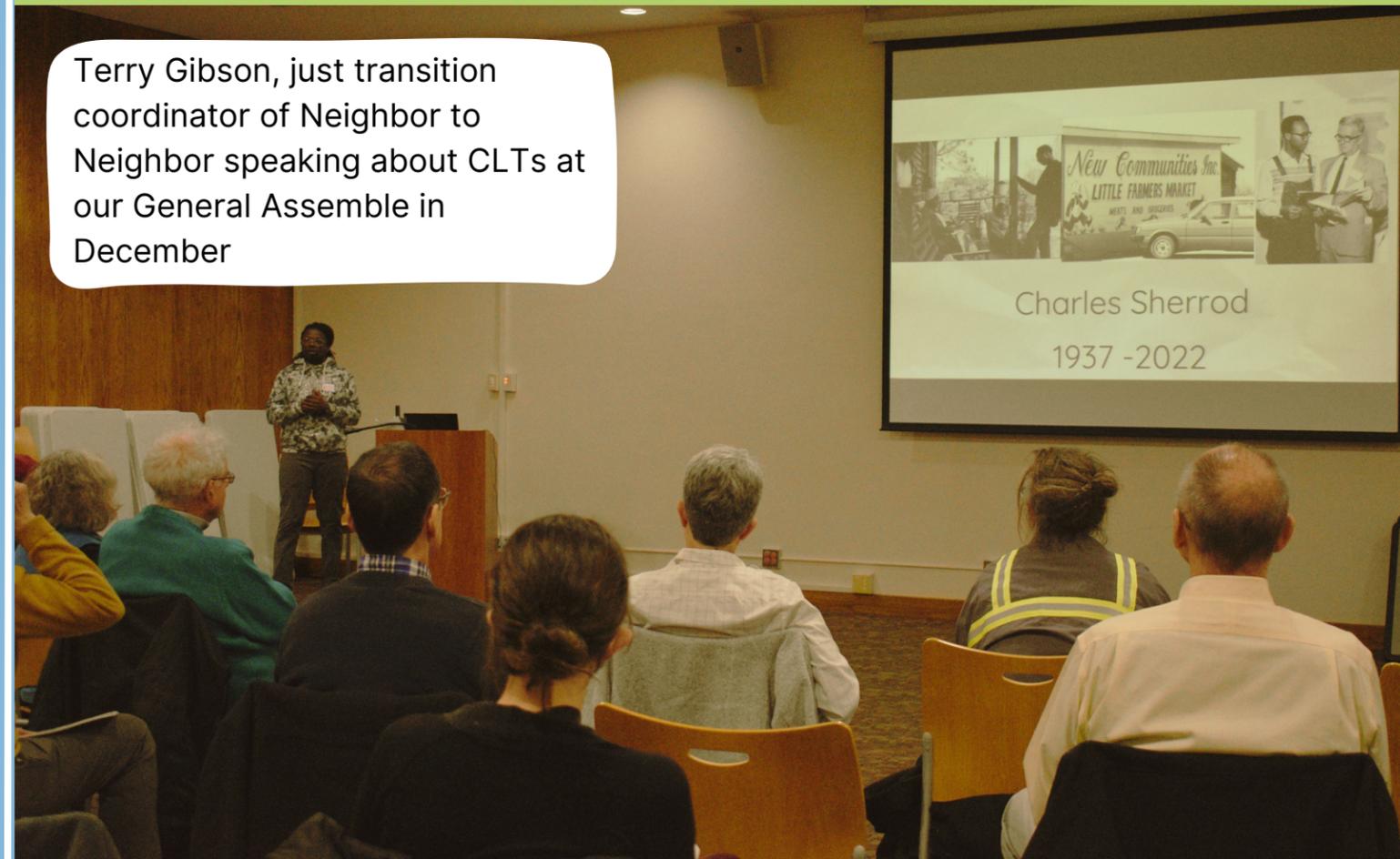
Highlights:

Community Land Trust

Wellspring and WMass Neighbor to Neighbor are exploring the development of a Springfield/Holyoke Community Land Trust that can be leveraged to build local solidarity economy ecosystems, interconnecting elements such as affordable housing, regenerative agriculture, co-ops, and community production, including cutting edge digital fabrication. Equity Trust serves as an advisor which is invaluable as they have deep expertise in best practices as well as pitfalls for CLTs.



Terry Gibson, just transition coordinator of Neighbor to Neighbor speaking about CLTs at our General Assemble in December

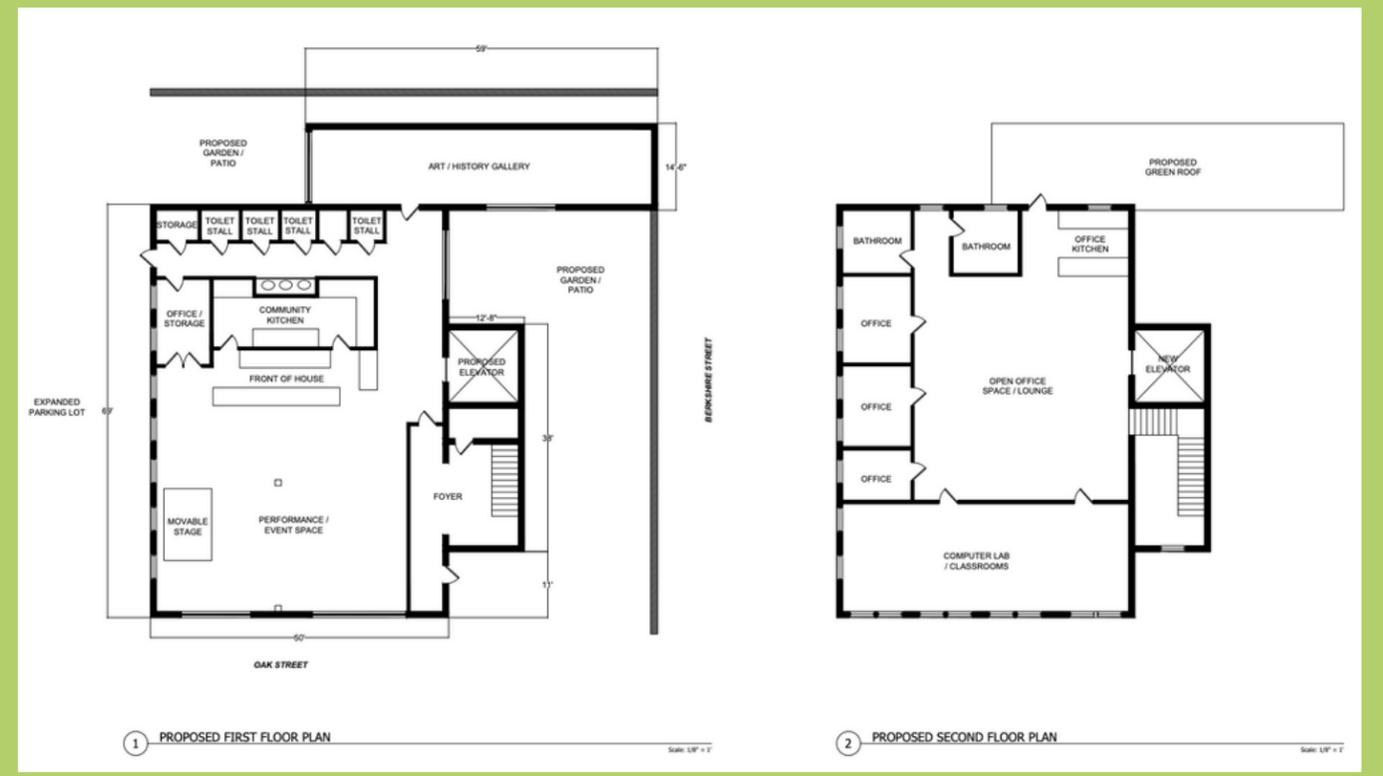


Grow IO (Indian Orchard) is a collaboration of local groups that includes Wellspring, the Indian Orchard Citizens Council, the IO Library, the Community Survival Center, the Greater New Life Christian Center, Orchard Covenant Church and individual community members. Grow IO's vision is to support a thriving, healthy community--it has supported community gardening projects, skills shares, a soccer camp for youth, and a community design partnership with UMass to improve the neighborhood. Grow IO is in the process of becoming a non-profit in order to take on the management of the vacant IO Fire Station that will be turned into a community center.

Pictured: community members gathered to discuss what they would like changed, improved, and added to their community like more street lights, murals, and bike racks. Grow IO and Wellspring worked with the UMass Graduate Urban Design Studio to hold community vision sessions that led to new community projects in Indian Orchard: mosaicked benches throughout the town.



The beautiful and historic IO Fire Station has been sitting vacant for a number of years and is in a state of serious disrepair. The City has committed \$1.5 million to redevelop it as a community center on the ground floor and offices, meeting space and class rooms on the second floor. We look forward to creating a co-op hub to support both co-op business development and cooperative community initiatives. The City will retain ownership of the building and Grow IO will manage it.



INDIAN ORCHARD FIRE STATION
Drawings by Mikal X. Malkovich - March 26, 2023

The floor plan illustrates an accessible, versatile community space that will be an anchor space for cooperative community development.

Sketches by Mikal X. Malkovich

Expanding The Local Food Sector and Food Access

Access to local, fresh produce and healthy food is a right as well as a development opportunity, and Wellspring's expansion of the local food sector illustrates our strategy to create cooperatives and community partnerships that meet local needs. Over the past year Wellspring continued to expand the Wellspring Harvest greenhouse and Go Fresh Mobile Market, and established a new prescription produce initiative that are creating a more resilient and inclusive local food system.

Wellspring Harvest is a 12,600 square foot greenhouse, the largest urban greenhouse in Massachusetts, that employs eight people growing hydroponic lettuce varieties for commercial and institutional markets. An environmental control system installed this year dramatically increased the greenhouse's ability to maintain ideal growing conditions for crops year-round. Wellspring has supported the greenhouse to increase production, identify new customers including the Big Y Supermarket warehouse and raise additional financing that together are projected to lead to profitability for the greenhouse in 2023.

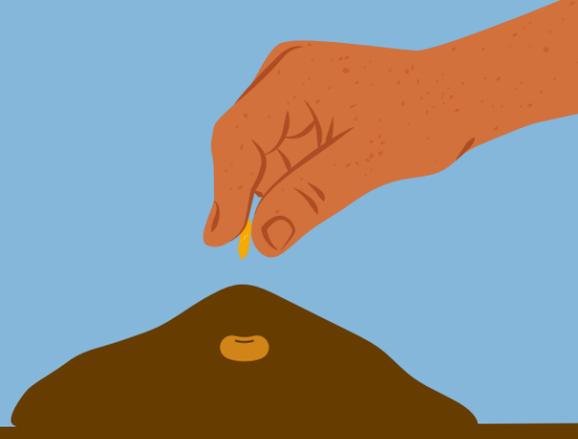
Springfield Prescription Produce Collaborative is a new community partnership between Wellspring, Baystate Health's three Springfield health centers, and the Center for Research on Families at the University of Massachusetts. Medical providers "prescribe" healthy eating through Go Fresh Mobile Market produce, and then monitor the health benefits. Wellspring is the lead organization for a three year USDA grant that contributes to a national database about produce consumption and health. At the conclusion of the grant, the goal is to develop a sustainable prescription produce program at Baystate.

Go Fresh Mobile Market operates out of the Wellspring Harvest greenhouse to deliver fresh produce to food insecure families across Springfield. Go Fresh enables senior citizens, public housing residents and other residents of Springfield with SNAP benefits to access produce from our rich agricultural region through their state Healthy Incentive Program benefits. In 2022 the mobile market expanded 67% to 20 weekly delivery sites, and operated year-round for the first time. Further expansion is planned in 2023 based on a Massachusetts Food Security Infrastructure grant that enabled the mobile market to purchase a second delivery van.

Pictured: (Left) A worker at Wellspring Harvest; (Below) A Springfield resident shopping for produce at Go Fresh Mobile Market



Building the Movement



Given the urgency of the moment, Wellspring is deeply invested in connecting up our work with movements that are working to transform our economy and world into one that centers the welfare of people and planet, rather than profit maximization and blind growth.

In 2018, Wellspring along with other organizations across the state, convened a gathering at STCC (Springfield Technical Community College) on resist and build. Kali Akuno came up to share Cooperation Jackson's experience in joining up the 'build' of solidarity economy work with the 'resist' work of grassroots organizing and electoral strategy work.

The next year we convened a follow up statewide gathering in Worcester which was attended by over 100 activists and solidarity economy practitioners. The MA Solidarity Economy Network (MASEN) emerged out of that gathering, along with the Coalition for Worker Ownership and Power (COWOP), our sister network which focuses on worker co-ops. Together, we are building the solidarity economy which already has a strong foundation in this state, and solidifying our connection with organizations that focus on electoral and grassroots organizing. This work has included statewide events, convenings, and trainings that our Wellspring community has plugged into.

Pictured Below: COWOP, members, and worker owners outside the statehouse advocating for legislature supporting cooperatives. : Worker owners at the MA Solidarity Economy Festival & Gathering



MA Solidarity Economy Festival & Gathering

In June of 2022, MASEN and COWOP organized an exciting two day Gathering at Global Village Farm, a community land trust in Grafton, just outside of Worcester. Around 150 people from across the state participated in the weekend of celebration, tabling by organizations and vendors, music, spoken word, art-making, workshops, tractor rides, wonderful meals, and swimming. Some people who camped out the crackling bonfire and sing-alongs before turning in for the night. The gathering was festive and welcoming-- free childcare, stipends to enable under-resourced co-op members to attend, interpretation for Spanish speakers were available and the facilities were all accessible.

At the gathering, Wellspring offered workshops and support that allows us to share our wealth of knowledge gained through this work and help other cooperators. Events like this connect Wellspring with folks beyond our local area that want to offer support and solidarity to our work, which proliferates into powerful collaborations and connections.



Strengthening Capacity for Change

Wellspring recognizes that good programs strengthen our organization by building leadership, relationships, collaborations, financial support, and a learning culture. We have taken the long view, as our website says, “building a just and sustainable economy. . . one co-op at a time.” As a result each three-year strategic plan integrates organizational with mission goals – to expand community participation, strengthen our board and committees, and develop a supportive ecosystem. Most significantly the current plan prioritizes outreach events; and, to provide more avenues for participation, we expanded our repertoire of activities to include community building projects in addition to the longer process of developing cooperative businesses. To achieve these goals we have also prioritized financial stability and increased staff.

We accomplished a number of milestones in 2022 that have built the capacity of Wellspring to more effectively achieve priorities in the years ahead.

- Our development consultant, Kristan Bakker, joined the staff this year to expand our fundraising and organizational capacity.
- Our communications coordinator, Nellie Marshall-Torres, stepped into new event organizing and teaching roles that have greatly expanded our community outreach.
- Additional staff manage the Go Fresh Mobile Market, Grow IO, and the new Springfield Prescription Produce Collaborative.

Wellspring’s board and committees are stronger as we enter 2023 as well. New co-op representation and board officers were elected this year, with additional representation by the statewide Coalition for Ownership and Power. Active working committees with effective volunteer chairs oversee much of the policy work of the organization and bring proposals to the board for decisions. Committees carrying out the internal work of the organization include the Development Committee that oversees donor fundraising, Finance Committee that oversees the budget, and a revitalized Governance Committee reviewing by-laws and election procedures. Mission-related committees work on Education and Training programs, Cooperative Networking including new co-op development, and Co-op Labor collaborations.



Pictured: Co-op members and board members gathered at our spring cookout and Co-op Boot Camp graduation. At the 2022 leadership caucus, co-op members emphasized appreciated this opportunity to build community within the Wellspring Network.



Pictured: A Springfield resident shops for produce from the Go Fresh Mobile Market.



Financials & Development:

Donors stand by Wellspring in tough economic times

2022 was a challenging but successful and rewarding year for development. Donations for many nonprofits were lower this year due to the economic climate of a bear market combined with inflation. How encouraging and reassuring, however, it was when our donors stood with us and made supporting Wellspring a priority. Wellspring raised 97% of our fundraising goal with 140 donors, a record high. Combined with grants including state ARPA funds and a USDA 3-year \$500,000 grant for our new Prescription Produce Collaborative with Baystate Health Clinics and UMass, this support enabled Wellspring to have one of our (if not the most) impactful years since incorporation.

Grants from foundations provided support for education and outreach as well as our projects and programs while our individual donors helped support our working budget including personnel costs.

HOW OUR WORK IS FUNDED

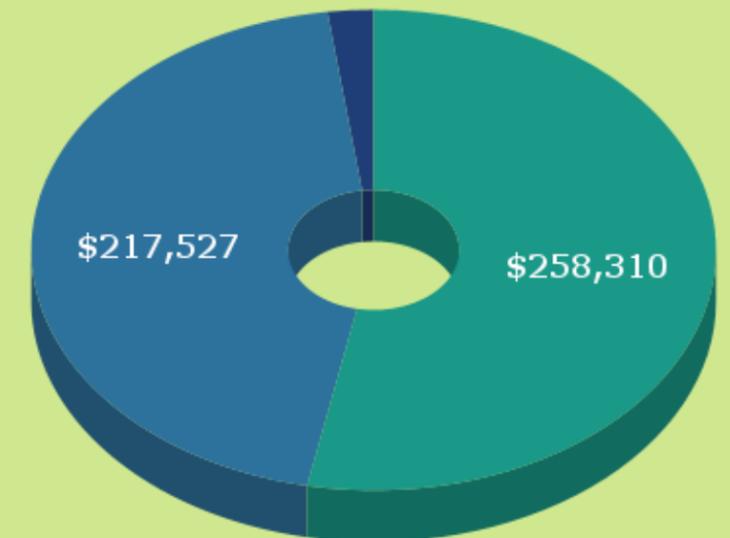


● Donations ● Grants ● Gov't Grants ● Fee for Service

We have the hard work of the staff, board, and committee members to thank for leading our mission driven organization through these challenges to create sustainable change in the Springfield area. We are also extraordinarily grateful for having invested partners in this work supporting us financially.

- Direct co-op financial support
- Co-op development & technical assistance
- Education & outreach
- Community engagement initiatives
- Go Fresh Mobile Market
- Prescription Produce Collaborative Program
- Leadership development
- Feasibility research

WHERE YOUR GIVING GOES



● Personnel ● Programs ● Organizational Expenses

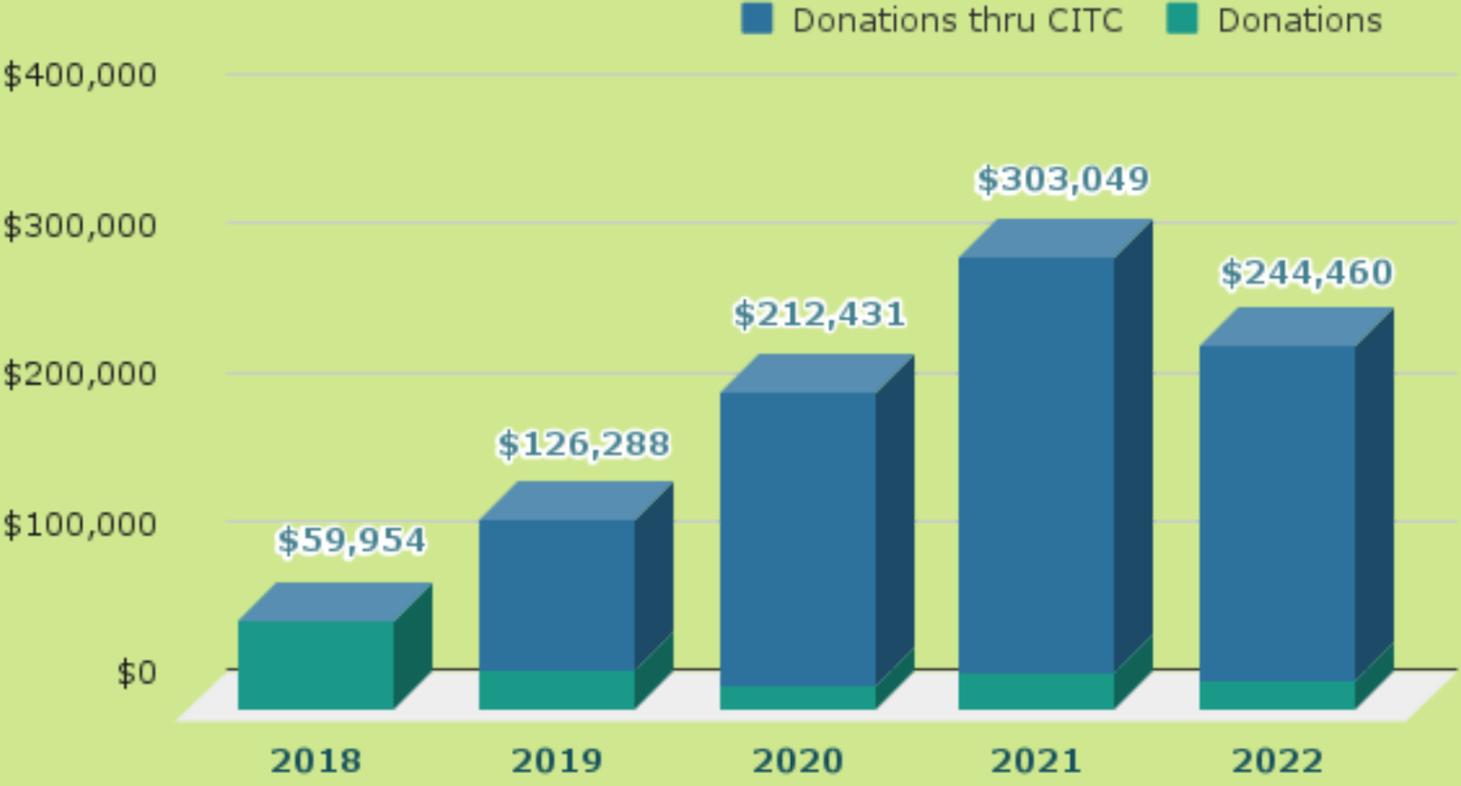
Wellspring Cooperative Corporation Statement of Activities for Year Ending December 31, 2022

Wellspring Cooperative Corporation Statement of Activities for year ending December 31, 2022	
Revenue & Support	
Donations	\$250,040
Grants	\$211,000
Gov't Grants	\$98,318
Fee for Service	\$3,475
Total Revenue & Support	\$562,833
Expenses	
Personnel	\$258,310
Programs	\$217,527
Organizational Expenses	\$10,507
Total Expenses	\$486,344
Net change in assets	\$76,489

Community Investment Tax Credit Program Incentivizes Doubling Gifts

Wellspring is a member of the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC), a state-wide membership association of more than 100 community development corporations (CDCs) and non-profit organizations. **Creating and supporting our cooperative businesses and programs working in the neighborhoods of the city of Springfield takes the investment of our anchor institutions, foundations and individual donors in addition to our elected leaders.** Individual donors provide over half of our working budget. As a CDC we rely heavily on the Community Investment Tax Credit (CITC) Program to help leverage our donors to double their gifts. Donors of \$1,000 or more to Wellspring receive a 50% Massachusetts tax credit through the program. Since joining the CITC Program in 2019, our donations have increased 4-fold. This increase has enabled us to fully fund our 2 co-directors and add 1 part-time and 1 full-time employee. The CITC Program has helped us expand our programs, services, and outreach allowing us to more than double our cooperative businesses and synergistically collaborate with other similarly mission-minded community organizations to increase our impact.

IMPACT OF CITC PROGRAM ON FUNDRAISING





Thank You

to all those that help make our work possible!

Funders

Baystate Health Foundation
 Berkshire Bank Foundation
 Catholic Campaign for Human Development
 City of Springfield - ARPA
 Health New England Foundation
 HEALTHNet Boston Medical Center
 Mass Growth Capital Corporation
 MassMutual Foundation
 Springfield Technical Community College
 US Department of Agriculture
 Wild Geese Foundation
 Workers Lab

In Kind

Carolyn Edsell-Vetter and Johan Matthews, Cooperative Fund of the Northeast
 Amine Benali, Director Strategy and Development, Local Enterprise Assistance Fund
 Alex Pyle, esq; Sheehan Phinney Bass & Green PA
 Stakeholders Capital
 Carlos Teuscher, Suffolk University, Transactional Law Clinic
 Frank Slegers, UMass Landscape and Architecture
 Mikal Malkovich, UMass Architecture student
 Kathy Gregg, esq; West Hill Technology Counsel

and Our Generous Donors

Julia Agron
 Do-Han Allen
 Terry Allen & Ernest Urvater
 Benevity - American Giving Foundation
 Bettye Anderson Frederic
 Jennifer Atlee
 Lee Badgett & Elizabeth Silver
 Jordan Bailey
 Lauren Bailey
 Sandra Bailey
 Todd Bailey
 Kristan and Ben Bakker
 Pancho Cole
 Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts
 Daphne Berry
 Hendrix Berry
 Lucy Blakeley
 Craig Borowiak
 Stephen Boyle
 Jane Braaten
 Syliva Brandt & James Kwak
 Joan & Robert Butler
 Katherine Campbell
 Sandy Cassanelli
 Nathan Chung
 Committee Committee to elect Zaida Govan
 Bouzha Cookman
 Natalie Cotton-Nessler
 Timothy Cronin
 Ernesto Cruz
 Lisa Damtoft
 Gabriella della Croce
 Kathryn & Stephen Derose
 Michael DiPasquale
 Dianne Doherty
 Lynn Duggan
 Elizabeth Eagleson
 Gerald Epstein
 Maribeth Erb
 Eric Fedus
 John Feffer
 Pamela Schwartz & Joel Feldman
 Ann Ferguson
 Fidelity - Two Wheel Fund
 Adriana Fieldman
 Anna Filshinsky
 Nancy Folbre
 Jane Forstadt

Adele Franks
 Joseph & Reena Gerard
 Jeffrey Golden
 Zaida Govan
 Emily Harding-Morick
 Robin Harris
 Carol Heim
 Lydia Hemphill
 Frank Holmquist
 Ianna Hondros-McCarthy
 Mary Hoyer
 Sarita Hudson
 Michael Jarry
 James Jasper
 Douglas & Elizabeth Gardner Johnson
 Frank & Mary Johnson
 Tracy Johnson
 Jeff Jones
 Margo Jones
 T Stephen Jones
 Emily Kawano Donald Keene
 Christina Kirk
 Christina Kopp
 Tracy Kunichika
 Jennifer Ladd
 Joan Lager
 Pierre Laliberte
 Rae Langsdale
 June Lapidus
 Phil Lawrence
 Karen Lee
 Susan Leschine
 Carol Letson
 Paul Lipke
 Penn Loh
 Paula Loudenslager
 Ralph Lowen
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 Sharon Moulton
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 Dara Nussbaum-Vazquez

David O'Leary & Lisa Covi
 PayPal Giving Fund
 Jorge Perez
 Matthew Perpetua
 Aliana Pineiro
 Christina Platt
 Richard Plaut
 Magda Polack
 Katherine Post
 Caroline Quattlander
 Shannon Reen
 River Valley Cooperative Community Fund
 Howard Rose
 Robert Rose
 Brian Rossini
 Lisa Russell
 Louisa Sapienza
 Jeff Scavron
 Charles Schweik
 William Sepaniak
 Patrick Sheehy
 Robin Silva
 Michael Smith
 Cynthia Sommer
 Gabriel Spandau
 Springfield Technical Community College
 Kathryn K. Stevens
 Felice Swados
 Deborah Swan
 Mary Swedlund
 Aaron Tanaka
 TisBest Philanthropy
 UNITED WAY Mass Bay
 Elizabeth Vandermark
 Kathy Weilerstein
 Eve Weinbaum
 Joan Grenier & Jon Weissman
 Joanna Wellman & Joanne Gangi
 Tracye Whitfield
 Ruth Yanai
 Claire Yoo & Tejoon Jung and Jim Dee



Together We are
Visioning
&
Creating
a Community-Led
Economy

