



VEGGIELUTION

COMMUNITY FARM

ANNUAL REPORT 2010



Look outside your window and you will see a community being transformed, cultivated by innovative, community-driven ideas at the forefront of food, environment and social justice.

Here at Veggielution, 2010 was a year that welcomed tremendous progress and numerous milestones. We increased crop yields, volunteer participation and food distribution at times when food insecurity is at one of the highest levels ever recorded in the nation; in the Bay Area food insecurity has risen to nearly 30 percent, where 1 in 3 people cannot afford enough food.

We empowered our youth to become the next generation of leaders, advocating for and positively changing the community in which we live. We helped improve food access and nutritional awareness for our most underserved and vulnerable populations, when Americans have increasingly relied on food assistance. We continue to examine the social determinants of health that persistently and pervasively afflict our communities, addressing land use, urban planning, and health education, among numerous others. Most importantly, we at Veggielution recognize the important relationships that have nurtured our project since the beginning: organic intersections that have grown from people caring about each other and our community.

Veggielution is proud to share our community's successes and accomplishments in our annual report; highlighting our bountiful 2010 season, our innovative youth and educational programs, our emerging community-driven collaborations, and last but not least the tireless commitment of our workday leaders and volunteers who represent the energy and spirit of our vision.

We welcome you to share in our journey!





A Letter from the Directors

Veggielution Community Farm began as a collective dream and a vision to change our relationship with our urban landscape for the benefit of our communities. Along with several college students, we took it upon ourselves to explore new ways in which the intersection of food, environment, and health could be addressed holistically and comprehensively.

We started out in 2008 as a backyard project and now have expanded to cultivate more than one acre of land, as a pilot partnership with the City of San Jose and Prusch Park Foundation. Our incredible progress is due to the tremendous momentum cultivated by our tireless volunteers and staff to meet the increasing needs of our community. As a next step to accommodate our accelerating growth, we are preparing to submit a proposal for the RFP that would shape the long-term development of Emma Prusch Park, potentially allowing us to cultivate an additional four acres of land. Since the beginning, we've worked to ensure a collaborative and participatory process by including the community's voice in developing this new plan.

We at Veggielution are proud to become a viable organization transitioning into a sustainable non-profit. Your ongoing support at this important crossroad in our development would help us achieve our long-term mission: to create a sustainable and equitable food system for all.

Sincerely,

Amie Frisch
M. A. Medieros

Amie Frisch
Co-Founder
Executive Director

Mark Medieros
Co-Founder



Community Engagement

In the past year, we worked toward our goal of building a strong and diverse community of people at the farm. Based on the philosophy that our outreach efforts should be focused on populations who are least likely to participate, we sought to collaborate with other local organizations and schools in order to better reach people of all ages and from all backgrounds to serve their needs.

These efforts led to a larger and more diverse farm community than ever before.

Workshops

We now offer 10 classes on a wide variety of subjects including cooking and nutrition, food preservation, apartment gardening, composting, sustainable agriculture and much more. Currently, we have almost 200 participants.

Internship Program

The internship program provided college students great opportunities to gain professional and educational experience. Interns worked as part of the farm crew, helped with community outreach, program evaluation, donor development and event planning.

Youth Program

This year welcomed Veggielution's first full year of youth programming for San Jose teens. The 8-week afterschool Spring program brought 13 youth out to the farm twice a week, introducing them to gardening, sustainability, cooking, nutrition, and food systems. They served at a local soup kitchen, created a mural for the farm, and cooked a meal every Saturday for the community potluck. Youth formed friendships outside the program and many continued on to the summer program.

This summer, we offered a 6-week paid employment program where 17 youth worked on the farm 4 days a week. By offering employment, we fostered important job skills, built resumes, and made the program accessible to low-income youth. Two Spring youth were also hired on as Youth Leaders, acting as positive role models and helping to facilitate farm work. In addition to connecting with the local volunteer community through workdays, the youth also enjoyed three off-site field trips to local farms, and cooking and serving farm produce at the InnVision soup kitchen downtown.

Our 10-week Fall Program is designed to build upon the spring and summer experiences by helping the youth step forward as leaders in their communities. Youth attended workshops focusing on leadership, activism, resume building, and public speaking, then worked in small groups to complete a project. One project focused on entrepreneurial skills, with the youth designing and producing a value-added product from Veggielution produce, our new line of tomato sauce. The second group worked with community organizers to advocate for healthier food in their schools, running a student food preference survey and presenting their findings at the annual board meeting of the East Side Union High School District. The school community and the Board heard the students' concern and agreed to run a larger school-wide food survey.

Highlights

- Over 20 middle school and high school groups came for one-time visits to the farm where they received a tour, helped with farm work, and sometimes even took home food
- Hosted the Children's Discovery Museum youth program for 8 weeks, and the MACSA youth program for 5 weeks. Each group visited the farm for 2-3 hours, harvested food for distribution to our various community programs, and helped with farmwork in a variety of different ways
- Planted Okra, Taro, Potatoes, Collards, Chiles, and Tomatoes in partnership with community gardeners
- Chosen as the service site for SJSU Day of Service where student volunteered for 15 hours



School Garden



In recognizing the wealth of educational, physical and social benefits of school gardens, **Veggielution launched two school garden projects at local elementary schools in the Mayfair and McKinley neighborhoods.** We envision a school garden not only as an outdoor classroom in which to provide an interdisciplinary learning environment for students, but also as a way to engage parents and community members, and to serve as a source of healthy food.

By partnering with the Alum Rock School District, SOMOS Mayfair, La Mesa Verde and the Health Trust, Veggielution helped support school garden efforts at Cesar Chavez Elementary and Lee Mathson Middle School. School garden coordinator, Guadalupe Perez, has been instrumental in rounding up support from

parents in the Mayfair community. **Lupe is a graduate of La Mesa Verde backyard program, an expert gardener and a Promotora with Veggielution partner, Somos Mayfair.**

At the close of the year, Veggielution founding member, Monica Benavides teamed up with McKinley Elementary School, through a grant from the City of San Jose to build a school garden program, as well as generate community support needed to sustain it in the future. Developing the McKinley garden demonstrates a collaboration between McKinley Elementary, Slow Food South Bay, the San Jose State Health Science Department and the non-profits Veggielution Community Farm and Living Better Lives.

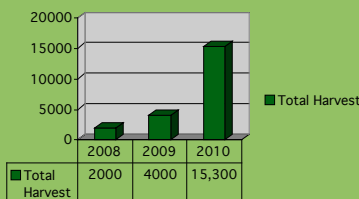
What's Next? Veggielution 2011 Plans

- Engage over 2000 volunteers in our workdays
- Harvest over 25,000 lbs of veggies
- Serve at least 20 low-income families with a new weekly produce subscription program
- Accept EBT (food stamps) as payment for produce subscription and Farm Stand
- Sell produce at the Downtown San Jose Farmers Market and sell our eggs at the Farm Stand
- Plant two school gardens in the Alum Rock School District as part of the Healthy Schools Collaborative, funded in part by The Health Trust
- Engage 30 high school youth in our summer Dig Crew program
- Offer at least 4 sessions of Cooking Matters, a free 6-week cooking and nutrition class for low-income families
- Provide two sessions of workday leader classes. In 2011, we will formalize the training into a 6-week class covering all aspects of farm management, food justice topics, and volunteer management skills
- Offer elementary school school farm field trips through Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF)
- Build a new outdoor kitchen to increase our cooking capacity and improve our cooking workshops
- Plant an orchard of 40 apple trees as a partnership with the Prusch Park Foundation

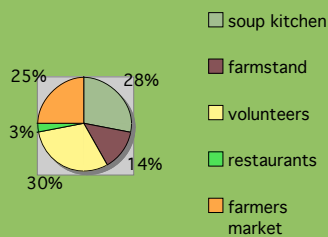
Community Food Access

Food Distribution

In 2010, we expanded food distribution to include a weekly farm stand, downtown San Jose Farmers Market and restaurant sales. **We served almost 800 customers, with an average of 60 customers per month.** Approximately 30% of our harvest was reserved for revenue-generating sales through the Farmers Market and restaurants to support our programs and farm operations.



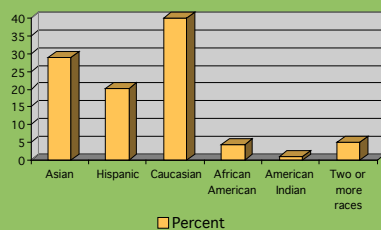
Veggielution Food Distribution



Volunteer Workdays

From the very beginning, Veggielution has relied entirely on volunteer support to manage the operation of the farm. **Our volunteers represent the diverse demographic makeup of our San Jose community, comprising locals, students, families, working professionals, adults, youths as well as various cultural communities.**

Veggielution Volunteers



Average Workday Attendance

Saturdays 10AM-12:30PM - 35 Volunteers
 Wednesdays 2PM-Sunset - 12 Volunteers
 Tue/Thurs 8:30AM-11AM - 7 Volunteers

2010 was a great year for Veggielution. We had our first full growing season on our acre, confirming the success of Veggielution's current operation and demonstrating the feasibility of a larger community farm model with a focus on accessibility and education. **In this way, we were able to dramatically increase the number of low-income families that gained access to fresh and healthy food in a landscape of drive-thrus and liquor stores.**

Over the course of a year, Veggielution produced roughly **15,300 pounds of food, nearly four times the output of the previous year.** We grew almost 50 different organic crops from arugula and lettuces, to carrots and tomatoes, to basil and garlic. Much of our food was donated or distributed at subsidized cost to needy families.

Workday volunteers, Dig Crew youth, Family Day and workshop participants have access to free produce at the end of each daily program. **This provides our community with access to local and sustainable produce, typically reserved for wealthy consumers due to high prices.**



2010 Farm Projects

- Opened our low-cost Farm Stand to the public
- Renovated our worm bin from below ground to built wooden bins that sit above ground
- Installed a 1,440 sq ft greenhouse with support from the Michael Lee Foundation
- Planned a 6-week Workday Leader Institute to strengthen and formalize our Workday Leader program
- Set up produce washing station and outdoor kitchen
- Received a donated tractor
- Started a flock of 30 egg-laying hens
- Planted two native hedgerows to add diversity and attract beneficial insects

Workdays

We engaged over 1,500 individual volunteers who served approximately 7,300 volunteer hours. That's an average of 110 new volunteers every month and almost three times last year's totals!

Workday Leader Institute

We launched this project in order to provide a unique leadership opportunity for committed volunteers; providing specialized training in sustainable agriculture techniques, volunteer facilitation, safety, and a variety of other topics.

Farm Stand and Farmer's Market

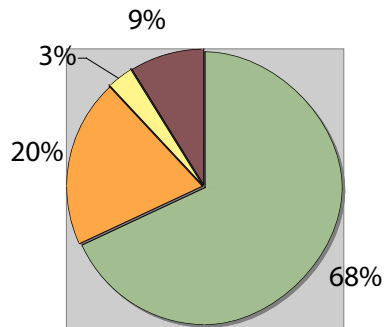
The food we distributed at the farm stand is priced specifically for low-income customers who lack access to other sources of high quality produce. We also began participating in the downtown San Jose Farmers Market.

Volunteer Appreciation Lunch

In honor of our volunteers, we organized a special luncheon that was attended by 80 people, celebrating our strong sense of community.

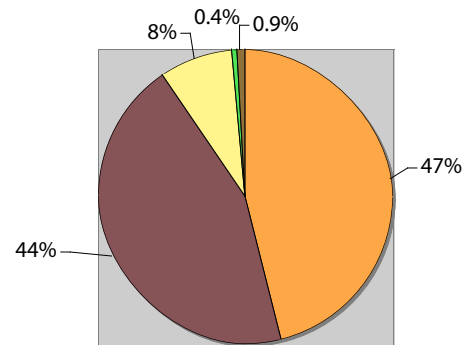
2010 Financial Year-End Review

Income



- Grants & Other Income
- Foundation & Corporate Contributions
- Individual Contributions
- Earned Income & Fundraising Events

Expenses



- Wages & Salaries
- Youth Programs & Supplies
- Overhead/Utility
- Insurance & Registrations
- Marketing & Fundraising

Veggielution received grants totalling over \$55,000 from the following foundations and organizations:

Kaiser Foundation \$25,000
Shortino Family Foundation \$15,000

The Health Trust \$9,450
Michael Lee Environmental Foundation \$6,090

These funds were used for various expenses incurred by Veggielution which included salaries, supplies, and high school program expenses. Some funds were restricted for special purposes, like the Michael Lee Environmental Foundation grant, which was reserved for the construction of the greenhouse on the farm.

Other sources of income for Veggielution included the **Bounty of Hearts Delight Dinner*** and the year-end mailing campaign. For the dinner, we raised a total revenue of \$12,000 which included \$10,000 of cash donations and \$2,000 in-kind donations. The in-kind donations included costs related to the dinner's website and items used for the silent auction. For the year-end mailing campaign, approximately \$4,000 was raised. Bounty of Hearts Delight Dinner honors the autumn harvest and brings together our supporters for a farm, fresh dinner. Held annually, the tradition offers a bountiful feast created by local chefs with local produce and local wine. This year's Bounty of Hearts Delight will be held September 10, 2011.

During 2010, Veggielution operated under the fiscal sponsorship of the William James Association. Throughout the year they provided administrative, accounting, and fiscal support. The majority of Veggielution's cash assets were held in their savings bank account. For their support, Veggielution has paid a 10% administration fee, which is based on the amount of cash held by the William James Association.

Veggielution Partnerships

Staff

Amie Frisch
Executive Director

Mark Medieros
Farm Manager

Jessie Nichols
SVHC Dig Crew Coordinator

Tommy Pierson
SVHC Farm Crew

Sally Neas
SVHC Dig Crew Coordinator

Cody Kraatz
*SVHC Education and Outreach
Coordinator*

Zan Walker
*SVHC Education and Outreach
Coordinator*

Juan Gamoba
*SVHC Education and Outreach
Coordinator*

Angelica Martinez
*SVHC Education and Outreach
Coordinator*

Julia Lang
*SVHC Education and Outreach
Coordinator*

Board of Directors

Diana Foss
Board President

Bernardo Murillo
Board Treasurer

Sarah Gallardo
Board Secretary

Walker Kellogg
Board Member

Liz Snyder
Board Member

Annie Chang
Board Member

Monica Lisa Benavides
Board Member



Thanks to the partnership with Americorps, The Health Trust brought together ten local organizations to form Silicon Valley HealthCorps, an ambitious project to use gardens, farm to school programs, and the work of 46 Americorps members to bring fresh fruits, vegetables and education to residents of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. Starting in 2009, the Silicon Valley HealthCorps plans to produce and distribute 180,000 pounds of locally grown, organic produce through new community and school gardens, and year-round community, school and hospital based farm stands annually. The program seeks to engage the community as active participants in promoting and sustaining community and school gardens.

Veggielution is one of over 10 partner organizations that help Silicon Valley Health Corps reach its ambitious goals, other participants include: Collective Roots, Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens of Santa Clara County, Full Circle Farm, HEAL - Health Environment Agriculture Learning Project, La Mesa Verde and the Santa Clara University Bronco Urban Gardens.

At Veggielution, HealthCorps members played a crucial role in developing our youth program, supporting farm operations, organizing educational workshops and events, and more generally, improving and expanding the quality of services and raising awareness of the organization in the community. The HealthCorps program came at a critical juncture, when Veggielution needed additional staff and organizational capacity to achieve our mission of building community involvement and support.



Our success would never have been possible without our partnership with the City of San Jose and Prusch Park Foundation. Since our inception, we have worked together in a collaborative way. The Prusch Farm Park maintenance staff and park rangers assist us in our everyday operations. In return, we have committed to maintain and improve a section of the park that was previously underdeveloped due to lack of resources and facilitation. Long term, we would like to provide a strong contribution to the future of development of Emma Prush Park and make it an even more remarkable place.



The Veggielution Community

Our fiscal sponsor: William James Association

Based in Santa Cruz, The William James Association promotes work in the arts, environment, education and community development. It is a non-profit community service corporation operating under Section 502(c)3 of the IRS tax code. Through its Fiscal Sponsorship Program, the Association assists individuals and community organizations consistent with its service mission by providing administrative support, tax-exempt status and fiscal sponsorship. The purpose of the William James Association Sponsorship Program is twofold:

1. Provide managerial support and guidance to individuals and organizations so that they may produce temporary projects or begin to develop as ongoing organizations
2. Ensure funding agencies and contributors that funds are well-managed, spent according to their guidelines and that proposed services are delivered.

Participate in Our Weekly Workdays

Our weekly Saturday and Wednesday workdays will continue throughout the year. We also run two harvest sessions each week on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. See our website for directions and times. Bring your family and your friends to participate in farm work. On Saturdays, you can share in a communal potluck lunch.

Join a Committee

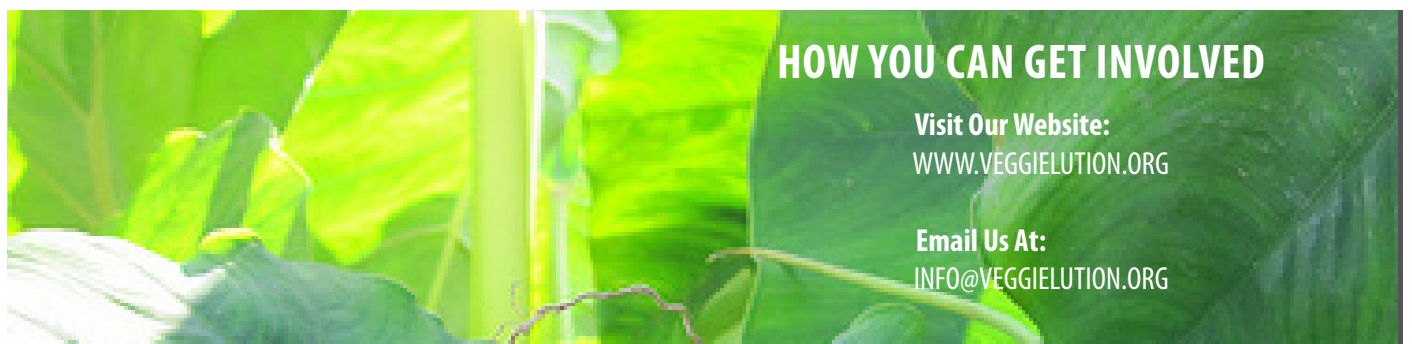
We are currently looking for motivated community members to join our Community Outreach Committee or become Farm Workday Leaders. The Community Outreach Committee makes presentations, tables and distributes flyers at various locations, and also helps to plan special community events. Workday Leaders receive ongoing training and help to facilitate our regular workdays. Volunteers often help us with educational programs, resource development, and other activities.

Donate Money and Supplies

Are you part of a funding organization? Can your business provide in-kind donations of services and supplies? Are you an individual interested in giving a one-time donation? Though we have been blessed with support in obtaining funds to start our farm, many critical resources are still in short supply. Check our website for details on how to give and help Veggielution grow.

Become a Partner Organization

We seek to work with existing community organizations and youth programs in developing our vision. Let's schedule a meeting and talk about collaboration.



HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

Visit Our Website:
WWW.VEGGIELUTION.ORG

Email Us At:
INFO@VEGGIELUTION.ORG