

Who's Your Farmer?



Land to Hand
M O N T A N A

2024 Annual Report to Our Community



Our Mission:

To build a strong community food system that fosters socially just ways of accessing food.



Nourishing People. Cultivating Community.



Land to Hand
MONTANA

Dear Friends and Supporters,

2024 was a monumental year for Land to Hand. We significantly expanded our reach, touching more lives within our community as the need for our programs continues to grow.

As I mark my ninth year leading this incredible organization, I'm profoundly humbled by the deep relationships and connections we've forged in this community. What I cherish most about this work is our partnerships. When faced with a new challenge, I can readily connect with fellow executive directors for guidance. These invaluable collaborations are at the heart of our Flathead nonprofit values. We uplift each other, whether through accessibility training, mental health first aid, or collaboratively tackling food insecurity—we are truly in this together.

I'm incredibly grateful for the Whitefish Community Foundation's vision of fostering collaboration. My sincere thanks also go to the Nate Chute Foundation for prioritizing our team's mental well-being through essential training. We appreciate Dream Adaptive for helping us make our events more accessible, and the North Valley Food Bank for our collaborative efforts in combating hunger across the northern valley and Lincoln County.

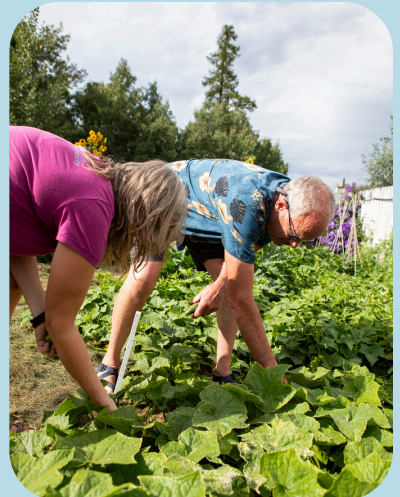
Most of all, I am grateful for the neighbors we serve. They inspire us every day to do better and be better. And particularly, the children with whom we share the joy of planting, tending, and harvesting. It's an honor to inspire the next generation to understand and care about where their food comes from. This year, we have so much to be thankful for, and I am most grateful for our community's continued support.



Thank you for being part of our journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gretchen A Boyer". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gretchen Boyer, Executive Director





FARM TO SCHOOL



We're proud to share that in 2024, Land to Hand taught 187 second-grade students through six months of immersive nutrition and cooking classes.

The curriculum was truly hands-on, with students making everything from rainbow smoothies with local beets to savory salads featuring Montana-grown carrots, lentils, and chickpeas.

Farm to School education is vital for the next generation to truly understand and appreciate where their food comes from.

65 Classes visited the Wildcat Garden

1628 Students sampled Harvest of the Month recipes made by their classmates

65 Kids attended free summer art classes in the Wildcat Garden



"I wanted to do something new and learn to garden. We live in the woods so we can't have a garden at home. I've learned how to plant things that I've never planted before. I've also learned what you can and can't eat like different types of flowers. I never knew that golden raspberries existed, and now my parents look for them when we go to buy food. I definitely want to plant golden raspberries in the future. I want to grow plants for the deer and myself in the future."

-Emma (CFSD Student and Garden Club Member)

Classes in the Wildcat Garden

Our educational reach is growing! From 2023 to 2024, we saw a 25% increase in the number of Columbia Falls School District classes visiting the Wildcat Garden to engage with plants and food systems.



School Coins

Local students can pick up a \$5 coin at the L2H booth for free and can spend it on fresh fruits, vegetables, or plants that grow food. 232 students from 15 different Flathead Valley schools engaged in School Coin spending at local markets in 2024.



Harvest of the Month

In 2024, our Harvest of the Month programming soared, putting hands-on cooking into the classroom. Fourteen different classes successfully prepared seven seasonal recipes throughout the year, resulting in samples reaching over 1,600 students throughout the school district.





FOOD FOR ALL



We've seen another year of significant growth in the utilization of our Food for All programs, particularly at the Kalispell market. The community's need is clear, and we're proud to be addressing it.

Across both markets in 2024, we provided \$10,689 in Double SNAP Dollar incentives, which our participants then turned into \$33,500+ in SNAP-eligible sales. This spending directly supports our local producers, proving that our clients are actively choosing to back the local food system. Thank you for making such a positive impact!

232 School Coins redeemed by local students



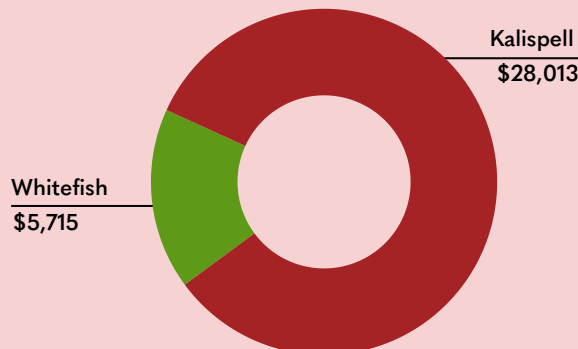
166 Senior Coupon Booklets given away to local seniors



637 Staff and Volunteer hours committed to markets



Food For All Spending by Market





FOOD RX

Food Rx is designed to address the interconnected issues of food insecurity and diet-related health risks. We supply participating families with a regular share of fresh produce, completely free of charge, ensuring that healthy eating is accessible to those who need it most.

In 2024, every member of the Food Rx program received tools to maximize their health journey. In addition to regular fresh produce shares, they had access to seasonal nutrition education, user-friendly recipes corresponding to their produce shares, and hands-on learning through in-person classes offered at Logan Health.

In 2024, we saw an increase of 13% in the total amount spent on fresh produce through the Food Rx Program, which directly supports our local farmers and economy.

\$38,093 Total spent on fresh produce in 2024

85 Families served

1423 Total shares distributed

"I haven't been hungry since being in the program. I really like the paperwork sent that describes what the vegetables are and how to use them. Really appreciate your creativity, willingness to listen, and that you are open to suggestions."

-Food Rx participant





WEEKEND BACKPACK PROGRAM



Our Columbia Falls based meal program ensures students don't go hungry when school is out. We provide essential supplemental meals during weekends and school holidays. Elementary and middle school students receive pre-packed food bags, all assembled by our incredible volunteers.

Columbia Falls High School students benefit from a choice-style food pantry right on campus, allowing them to select foods that fit their specific needs.

80,700 Total meals distributed in 2024

1,623 Holiday bags handed out

375 Students receiving weekend food each week

Thursday Pickup | 3pm - 6pm

For families not enrolled in the school-based distribution, we offer an open food pickup every Thursday at our Columbia Falls location. This option ensures any family in the community can access essential weekend food support.

Through our fresh snack program, over 27,000 pounds of local produce were distributed to CFSD schools in 2024. Through this program, we spent over \$7,800 on locally sourced apples and carrots.



Community Produce Fridge

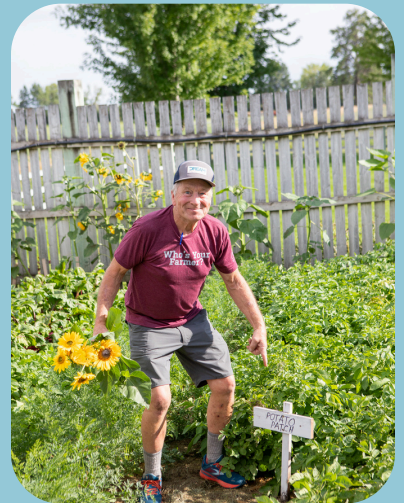
After a successful launch of our community produce fridge, we now have one fridge at the Wildcat Garden and one at our office in Whitefish.

The fridges are often stocked with fresh produce harvested from the Wildcat Garden or donated by Whitefish Lions Club members and other local farmers. We also had many community members who donated produce grown in their backyard gardens. The fridges make it easy for Backpack Program participants to take fresh food home for the weekend.

If you have extra abundance from your own garden, we accept donations of fresh produce! Find the fridge at 279 Veteran Dr, Columbia Falls on the porch, or at 311 E 1st St B, Whitefish, MT 59937 in the alley.

"The community fridge at the Wildcat garden has been wonderful to supplement our food this summer and to include more fresh produce!"

- a community member





FREE THE SEEDS



Free The Seeds is our largest annual educational gathering, offering interactive workshops, activities, and free seed sharing for everyone in the community. Our 2024 event, themed "Honoring Our Roots: Sowing the Seeds of a Sustainable Future," was our most attended yet! Additionally, we ensure year-round access to seeds through our Seed Library at the Columbia Falls Imaginelf library.

17,000 Seed packets given away to our community

1,500+ Attendees at the 2024 event

31 Workshops taught by local experts



Art: Ellen Mering

Please remember to plant, grow, and then SAVE some seeds to donate back to us so we can get them cleaned, packaged, and back out into the community. Find seeds at our year-round Seed Library in the Columbia Falls Library.



If you've ever planted fava beans or buckwheat seeds from the seed library in Columbia Falls, it's almost guaranteed that they were grown by Christine Dye in her backyard garden in Kalispell. Chris was one of the founding members of Free the Seeds and championed every part of the seed giveaway. Every year, Chris grew and donated seeds, weighed, measured, and sorted seeds to be packed for the event, staffed the seed room, and connected Land to Hand with local classrooms to have kids help with packing seeds. We are so grateful to Chris for 10 years of supporting Free the Seeds and miss her dearly.



Volunteers

We are immensely grateful for the vast network of volunteers who make our work possible. This includes countless dedicated solo and family volunteers, student groups, and a wide array of community organizations. Groups like Rotary, Lions Club, Powdered Soul, various church groups, hockey and soccer teams, and the Girl Scouts consistently share their time and talent. Furthermore, local businesses such as Park Side Credit Union, First Interstate Bank, and Pursuit Collective are invaluable partners. Truly, we couldn't achieve our mission without this incredible support!

1330 Total hours donated from our community

433 Unique volunteers

8 Programs to volunteer for within Land to Hand MT





By the Numbers

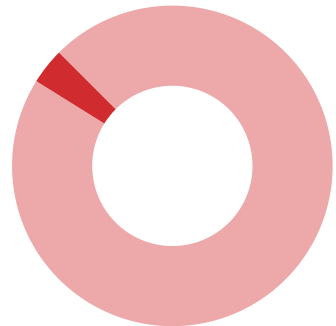
Revenues

● Foundations.....	\$286,531
● Contributions.....	\$145,195
● Great Fish Community Challenge.....	\$212,101
● Earned Income.....	\$31,547
● Reimbursements.....	\$44,985
Total.....	\$720,359



Expenses

● Programs.....	\$737,145
● Administration.....	\$27,784
Total.....	\$764,929



Special thanks to our wonderful community for their continued support of our Food Access & Education programs.





Celebrating our Donors!

To our dedicated donors of 2024, please accept our most sincere gratitude.

Your incredible generosity was the driving force that ensured vulnerable families received consistent access to fresh, high-quality produce and vital nutrition education throughout our service area.

This investment goes directly toward building health and stability in our neighborhoods. Together, we are actively strengthening the foundation of our local food system, working to create a resilient community where every person can be properly nourished and sustained. Thank you for making such a significant impact this year.

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Lori Alsbury
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Colin Young and Becca Barrett
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David Zor





Community Partners

By becoming a Community Partner with Land to Hand, local businesses clearly demonstrate their support for our mission and the well-being of the Flathead Valley. Our two largest initiatives, Farm to School and the Weekend Backpack Program, are proudly based in Columbia Falls, directly benefiting families within that community. Additionally, our programs like Free The Seeds, Food For All, and Food Rx extend their positive impact to a wider audience across the entire Flathead Valley and surrounding areas. We deeply appreciate the generous support of our partners who join us in serving this community.



Beefsteak Tomato

- Corwin Motors Kalispell
- Revel Real Estate

Sweet Pea

- The Body Mechanic
- Freedom Bank
- Backslope Brewing
- Glacier Bank
- Park Side Credit Union
- Whitefish Credit Union





A note from our Board

In partnership with a truly exceptional staff, the Land to Hand board of directors has been fortunate to oversee the growth and maturation of the organization across 2024. We launched the year with a clear roadmap outlined in our 2024-2026 Strategic Plan. The four pillars of the plan are financial sustainability, community engagement, leadership, and governance infrastructure. In each domain, we worked diligently to actualize our goals, further ensuring a sustainable future for the organization. Some of our accomplishments include a strategic investment of operational reserve, refining financial reporting structures, succession planning for staff and board members, and expanding board member education.

Looking ahead, it is clear that the funding landscape for food and nutrition security programs is in flux. We will need to draw on our resourcefulness, this generous community, and several innovative partnerships to sustain our work offering fresh, local, and nutritious food to those who need it most. We are confident that we have built the systems to sustain Land to Hand over time and I am grateful for the commitment, inspiration, and care that our staff, board, volunteers, farmers, clients, and funders offer week after week and year after year.



Thank you for your support.

Erica Lengacher
Board President



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Development Associate

279 Veteran Dr Columbia Falls

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