

Annual Impact Report 2024



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Director's Statement

2024 was a year of abundance shared, long-standing ideas manifested, and foundations repoured for future progress toward our mission. And of course, our amazing volunteers and funders lead us every step of the way.

This was a year of integrating and expanding initiatives and centering the farm as the community hub it is meant to be. We were able to expand community giveaways and resource-sharing opportunities: from seeds and tools to plants and compost, our Bounty Farm hosted material and resource exchanges to share abundance and promote gardening and farming in our community.

The farm team relaunched the sliding scale CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program, known as Bounty Bags, which provides a weekly subscription of farm-fresh produce on a sliding scale price structure. Alongside that effort, farm production increased and data tracking improved significantly.

Additionally, we were able to orchestrate a reconstruction of La Tercera Community Garden with the support of the City of Petaluma Parks and Recreation, The Eames Institute and Girls Garage, Friedmans, Grab n' Grow, and the amazing volunteers and neighbors of the La Tercera neighborhood.

Farmers Market Ambassadors dug in deeper to better understand the barriers of participation at farmers markets by non-traditional customers. And they started to implement community-based marketing initiatives in partnership with farmers markets in the Farmers Market L.I.F.E. consortium. We finished the Senior Bounty Bucks/SFMNP initiative, which expanded the nutrition incentive compensation for low-income seniors between August 2023 and January 2024.

The Bounty Hunters initiative saw process and protocol improvements as a result of having a staff member coordinate efforts. Additionally, we were able to bring on AmeriCorps members for the first time.

Please take a moment to celebrate and cherish what a small team of dedicated people can do to improve community food security in our amazing hometown of Petaluma and vicinity.



Bounty Community Farm



Petaluma Bounty's community farm continued to evolve with streamlined operations and increased production. 2024 was the second year under Farm Manager Shanee Barner's leadership, with Farm Assistant Paige Taylor's invaluable contributions propelling us forward.

Here are some highlights.

- Harvested **17,318.56 pounds** of sustainably grown, nutritious produce.



- Production increased significantly compared to 10,000 pounds in 2023.
- Increased sales.
- Converted some fields to no-till.
- Wood chipped paths for weed suppression and reduced weed-wacking demands.
- Implemented use of silage tarps.



Produce Sales



In 2024, we ran the following sales outlets.

- Petaluma Walnut Park Farmers Market every Saturday, May to November.
- Sliding-scale farm stand every Thursday afternoon, June to December.
- Bounty Bags weekly CSA program from July to December. The farm team successfully ran the program on the online platform, GrownBy, for the first time.

	Walnut Park Farmers Market	Weekly Farm Stand	Bounty Bags CSA
Number of Weeks	28	25	22
Pounds Sold	1,767	2,354	2,814 pounds 24 members including 12 CalFresh or discount members
Total Sales	\$11,339.83	\$11,185.24	\$5,797.19



Produce donations

In 2024, Petaluma
Bounty's Community
Farm donated **6,753**
pounds of freshly
harvested produce to
local pantries serving our
food insecure neighbors.



Spring and Fall Plant Sales



Our spring and fall plant sales are exciting times for us. We not only ramp up our growing efforts but also volunteer and community engagement efforts. It's uplifting to see the customer turnout. Sales income directly supports Petaluma Bounty operations and programs. Here are the results of our 2024 plant sales.

2024 Spring Plant Sale

- Plants sold: 2,325
- Total sales: \$11,090.00
- Total CalFresh sales: \$241.00
- Additional services: Master Gardeners' succulent sale, free compost.

- Ended customer sign-ups, which were in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.



2024 Fall Plant Sale

- Total sales: \$3,131.00
- Additional services: Master Gardeners' succulent sale, free compost.

Community Plant Giveaways

After the public sale ends, Petaluma Bounty donates remaining plant starts to local community and school gardens. In 2024, [we donated](#) 2,700 plants to 25 gardening organizations that provide services ranging from youth development for at-risk young people to garden education for veterans. Remaining plants were given to nurses in celebration of National Nurses Week — an effort coordinated by a volunteer/gardening evangelist with ties to our local health clinics.

- 2,700 plants given to 25 community and school gardens.
- Remaining plants were given to nurses at Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital in celebration of National Nurses Week.

Compost Giveaways



In 2024, Zero Waste Sonoma transitioned from compost giveaway events to permanent compost hubs. Our longstanding relationship led to Petaluma Bounty being chosen as one of the hubs where community members pick up compost for free. We designated a corner of our farm for the compost and scheduled a regular, twice-a-week schedule, for compost pick ups. With Zero Waste Sonoma's funding, we built a gate for easier access.



Education and Engagement



Farm volunteer program

In 2024, we continued our on-farm volunteer sessions every Wednesday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Notable volunteer contributions include

- Spreading wood chips on the property
- Cleaning up back side of property for a future educational garden
- Establishing and maintaining free garden supply area
- Harvest and field production support throughout the season
- Plant sale seeding, preparation, sales support

Special Days of Service & Volunteer Engagement

Petaluma Bounty held the following special educational volunteering events in 2024.

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service on Monday, Jan. 16, 2024, with more than 60 participants.
- Day of Service in honor of Cesar Chavez and Delores Huerta on Saturday, March 30, 2024.
- Gratitude Gathering on Saturday, Dec. 7, 2024.

2024 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service



More than 60 people, including many children, participated in the MLK Day of Service. One family said they came all the way from San Rafael because they had a hard time finding volunteer opportunities that welcomed young children nearby. Volunteers accomplished projects including

- sort pots and seeds for our upcoming Community Seed Exchange;
- clean the chicken coops and pens;
- set up a new compost bin and harvesting the finished compost;
- moving rock piles;
- prune the hedgerow and preparing the area for mowing and mulching; and
- prune perennials and garden areas outside of cultivation.



Gratitude Gathering

Our 2024 Gratitude Gathering doubled as a send-off of sorts for Paul, who worked on the farm for 12 years. After 2024, Paul transitioned away from the farm to take on another role within Petaluma People Services Center, to nurture community gardens under PPSC's purview.

Educational Visits & Community Workshops

Our community farm provided space for the following educational opportunities.

Youth Groups

- Wise Girl Workshops' Girls In-Service groups came out to the farm to volunteer twice in the fall. The two groups consisted of about 10 high school girls who helped us clear and prep the flower fields and our greenhouses for winter. Girl Wise Workshops aims to connect high school girls and provide opportunities to volunteer in the local community.
- Cypress School continued to visit the farm on a near-weekly basis.

Corporate/Service Organization Groups

- Amy's (May 2024)
- World Centric (Mid summer)
- Becoming Independent visited the farm on a weekly basis and performed chicken coop cleaning.

Master Gardeners Workshops

Our partnership with the Master Gardeners of Sonoma County continues to thrive, as evidenced by their caretaking of the Unity Garden on the farm grounds. In 2024, the Master Gardeners held gardening workshops free and open to the public, including:

- Seasonal gardening workshops
- Portable container gardening events

Community Seed Swap Event

About 100 local gardeners attended our 2nd Annual Petaluma Bounty Community Seed Swap — and despite the downpour, it was a beautiful, thriving event. The community came together to share seeds, stories, and gardening tips.

We were lucky to be able to share generous seed donations from Swallowtail Garden Seeds and Petaluma Seed Bank, and passionate gardeners shared seeds harvested from their own gardens.

We were thrilled that the UC Master Gardeners of Sonoma County were on hand to offer valuable advice about seed starting and gardening techniques. Their expertise was a fantastic resource for both new and experienced gardeners.



Bounty Hunters Food Rescue Program



Petaluma Bounty's Allison, left, and volunteers collected produce donations from vendors at the Petaluma Walnut Park Farmers Market.

The Bounty Hunters gleaning program made the following accomplishments in 2024.

Total pounds of food donated: 13,697 pounds

- From farmers markets: 885.5 pounds

- From Bounty Farm: 6,753 pounds
- From local gardens and farms: 6,058.5 pounds

Donation sites served

COTS, Sonoma Family Meal, Salvation Army Petaluma, Elim Interfaith Pantry, Senior Nutrition Services, Redwood Empire Food Bank

Volunteer participation

- Total gleaning volunteer hours: 328
- Total gleaning volunteer shifts: 276
- Number of new gleaning volunteers: 50
- Number of NEW Harvest Leads trained: 3
- Number of NEW Donations Drivers trained: 6



Food recovery events

- Number of gleaning events: 172
- Total Number of food donors: 81
- Number of NEW food donors: 41

Qualitative Accomplishments

- Along with our partners at Zero Waste Sonoma, we launched the Food Recovery Network (FRN), a coalition of organizations throughout Sonoma County focused on recovering food at risk of going to waste.

Bounty's Community Resources Coordinator, Allison Eckert, was honored to be awarded the role of District 2 Coordinator for both the FRN and the County's new emergency food systems coalition, the Community-Based Food Network. The work of these collectives explores the intersection of food security program delivery and regional food systems in order to build our region's capacity to prevent hunger.

- Welcomed a Food Recovery Intern to support the launch of a public awareness campaign all about food rescue. Check out our work at the Sonoma County Food Recovery Coalition's [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).
- Secured a new partnership with the Neighbor2Neighbor AmeriCorps program to bring two talented young professionals on board for a year-long fellowship with the Bounty Hunters program to increase our organizational capacity.
- Trained new independent Harvest Lead volunteers for the first time since the Pandemic, allowing community members to safely and effectively lead gleans in backyards, community gardens, and even at farmstands.

Community Gardens



La Tercera Community Garden sprang into life in 2024. This was the first major milestone in Petaluma Bounty's efforts to revitalize and nurture community gardens within the City of Petaluma, following an agreement signed in 2023.

In August, Berkeley-based nonprofit [Girls Garage](#) put their heart and muscle behind La Tercera by building and installing garden beds and structures. Girls Garage is a design and construction school for girls and gender-expansive youth ages 9-18. The nonprofit offers classes in carpentry, welding, architecture, and activist art.

Thirty high school students in the Girls Garage's 2-week summer session built 12 planter boxes and 8 Adirondack chairs for La Tercera. The student group

came to Petaluma to install their creations and to build an amazing shade structure where gardeners can take breaks and chat with others.

With the infrastructure in place, our Community Gardens



Coordinator Cait reached out to the neighborhood to solicit garden members. The plots were assigned to 15 households in November 2024, and garden beds were filled with dirt the same month.

The Community Gardens program by the numbers:

- Total inquiries fielded for community garden plots: 32
 - Percentage of inquiries from
 - Households with children: 22%
 - Seniors: 28%
 - Folks with no access to outdoor gardening space where they live: 50%
- New community garden plots created at La Tercera Community Garden: 9 full and 6 half garden plots.



How it started...



...how it's going.

Supporting Farmers Markets and Community Nutrition

Farmers Market L.I.F.E. and Market Match

Funding crisis and successful advocacy

In early 2024, when the State of California faced a significant budget shortfall, the Ecology Center's Market Match program faced devastating funding cuts. Market Match is a statewide program that helps CalFresh customers purchase more fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets. Petaluma Bounty is one of dozens of partners in the Market Match consortium, helping local farmers markets run the program.

Because of the state budget shortfall, funds previously approved for the California Department of Food and Agriculture's California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP) — which funds Market Match — was identified for rescission. Faced with this crisis, the Market Match consortium, including Petaluma Bounty, banded together for a grassroots efforts to save funding for the program.

After months of letter writing, phone calls, social media campaigns, and an in-person push at the state capitol, the consortium successfully advocated for fully restoring funding for CNIP.

Two new FM L.I.F.E. markets ran a full year of Market Match

Through our program Farmers Market L.I.F.E. (Local Local Incentive for Food and Economy), Petaluma Bounty supports and collaborates with local farmers markets. 2024 was the year that two new farmers markets, Cloverdale and Hamilton Landing, ran a full year of Market Match programming.

For background: in 2023, Cloverdale Farmers Market became under the management of Santa Rosa Original Farmers Market group, which was reorganized as the Sonoma County Certified Farmers Market Group. Agricultural Community Events Farmers Markets opened the Hamilton Landing market in Novato, also in 2023. Petaluma Bounty and the market organizations cleared the hurdles for those markets to be accepted as Market Match sites in late 2023, and 2024 was the first year the two markets ran the program for the full year.

Senior Bounty Bucks Program

The 2023 Senior Bounty Bucks initiative was a state-funded program Petaluma Bounty designed to supplement the federally-funded Senior

Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP). Together, SFMNP and Senior Bounty Bucks empowered seniors on limited incomes to purchase locally produced, nutritious produce at certified farmers markets.

While initially scheduled to wrap up at the end of 2023, we extended Senior Bounty Bucks into January 2024 to maximize funding and utilization.

In the end, a total of \$62,302 in Senior Bounty Bucks incentives were used by 300 participants over 6 months to purchase locally produced fresh fruits and vegetables. Bounty and farmers market managers were rewarded with positive feedback from participating seniors.

In September 2024, we [published a program evaluation report](#) with the help of the Coaction Institute. Coaction Institute founder Dory Magasis Escobar, PhD, who is on the Bounty advisory board, and her evaluation assistant Camina Gillotti examined the Senior Bounty Bucks program and authored the evaluation report outlining program details, challenges, accomplishments, and recommendations.

Our program was made possible with a grant from the California Nutrition Incentive Program (CNIP). While Petaluma Bounty advocated for distribution of funds to seniors who qualified for, but missed out on SFMNP benefits, existing law and regulations prevented us from doing so.

Farmers Market Ambassador Program

2023/24 was the third year of the Farmers Market Promotion Program grant project *Farmers Market LIFE: Expanding farmers' markets' reach to non-traditional communities through online platforms, access innovations, and place-based outreach*. Petaluma Bounty applied for and was granted a one year, no-cost extension to continue the project through September 2025.

In early summer, Farmers Market Ambassador Carlee Leonhard stepped up to the program coordinator role to fill in the shoes of the original coordinator, Maria Wnorowski. Leonhard brought her depth of knowledge and experience to steer the program to further success.

FM Ambassadors worked closely with market managers to improve the shopping experience at markets for all customers by addressing barriers for market managers, vendors, and customers. After getting training, ambassadors began conducting Farm 2 Facts surveys as a part of this effort. The project is in collaboration with University of Wisconsin's Farm2Facts program and the University of California Extension Services.

Accomplishments in 2024 include

- Data collection through the Farm 2 Facts platform.
- Provided market managers with fact sheets based on data collected.
- Managers at two farmers markets (Sebastopol and Novato) used the data for positive relationship building and deeper understanding with local municipalities and surrounding businesses.



Ambassador Elizabeth collecting data at Petaluma Walnut Park Farmers Market.

Community Engaged Research and Place-Based Interventions

Farmers Market Promotion Program Project to Expand Farmers Markets' Reach

Petaluma Bounty continued to lead the federal grant-funded project, *Farmers Market LIFE: Expanding farmers' markets' reach to non-traditional communities through online platforms, access innovations, and place-based outreach*.

The project focused on strengthening the community presence of farmers markets by increasing the number of in-person customers, expanding online sales, and exploring delivery hubs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farmers Market Promotion Program approved and awarded the three-year grant in late 2021, and a no-cost extension in 2024 so we could continue the project through September 2025.

Our project partners were:

- Agricultural Community Events Farmers Markets (ACEFM, a core member of our Farmers Market L.I.F.E. consortium)
- University of California Agriculture & Natural Resources
- University of California Cooperative Extension
- University of Wisconsin Kaufman Lab / Farm 2 Facts

We held twice-monthly meetings with collaborators and weekly internal meetings to push the work forward.

We also worked with all other Farmers Market L.I.F.E. organizations and a handful of non-FM L.I.F.E. farmers markets in some efforts associated with this project.

Key achievements in 2024 were:

- Implemented *Farm 2 Facts* tools including customer counts and surveys.
- Published findings from a customer survey of online farmers market ordering platform.
- ACEFM switched online platforms for a more customized service and tailored user experience.
- Marketing:

- Go Local joined the project as marketing consultant.
- Launched [Our Farmers Markets Instagram](#).
- Advertising
 - KCRB radio underwriting aired in May.
 - Outdoor digital display ad along Highway 101.
 - Social media ads via Go Local.

Acknowledgements

Petaluma Bounty would like to thank the following organizations for their support.

- Eames Institute
- Petaluma Nursery School
- Elim Lutheran Church
- Unitarian Universalists of Petaluma

We thank the following donors for their contribution to farm operations.

- Greenhouse Megastore (Greenhouse film and silage tarp donation)
- Grab 'n Grow
- Petaluma Seed Bank
- Swallowtail Garden Seeds
- Zero Waste Sonoma (Compost donations)

We are grateful for the partnership of the following organizations.

- City of Petaluma
- Ecology Center
- Master Gardeners of Sonoma County
- USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program
- University of California
- University of Wisconsin
- Farmers market organizations in the FM L.I.F.E. consortium

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

