



Mercy Regional  
Medical Center  
Centura Health®



# EMPLOYEE FOOD SHARE PROGRAM

## THE PROGRAM

The Roots of Health Employee Food Share Program was made possible thanks to a unique partnership between Centura Health, Mercy Regional Medical Center, and the Good Food Collective. Community Supported Agriculture programs are instrumental in cultivating sustainable food systems which, in turn, results in healthy individuals.

Thanks to the collaboration of these three partner entities, along with the enthusiasm and loyalty of 100 Mercy Employees as CSA members, this program easily managed to achieve each of its goals...

- 1) increase food security among Centura associates
- 2) support local agriculture
- 3) build community
- 4) promote healthy behavior

"This program is so special for my family. It's made a huge difference since we are forced to try new foods and spend time together cooking healthy meals. When can I sign up for next year??"

- CSA Participant

## THE IMPACT

- 100 CSA participants
- 4 local, small-scale, organic farms supported
- 14,000 lbs of local produce purchased & distributed
- \$48,000 provided as payment to local farmers
- 117 lbs of GFC-gleaned fruits offered with shares
- 193 unclaimed shares redistributed to 8 hunger relief entities
- Increase in Healthy Food Awareness among 89% of participants
- Increase in knowledge of healthy crops among 72% of participants
- 100% of participants cited the convenience of the 'at-work pick up location' and payroll deduction as making the difference between eating healthy and grabbing quick food-to-go.



“This program has truly made the difference between success and failure in this year when institutional sales have disappeared, and restaurant sales have become erratic. Couple that with grasshoppers, fires, and drought and the Mercy Roots of Health program saved our farm”

– Max Kirks; Outlier Farm



## 1) SUPPORT LOCAL AGRICULTURE

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs are increasingly important for small-scale farmers due to the financial stability that they provide. Many of these producers lost their wholesale accounts due to pandemic-induced system challenges. Luckily, the CSA model acts as a sort of insurance for farmers since growers and eaters (like you) take on the risk together!

## 2) BUILD COMMUNITY

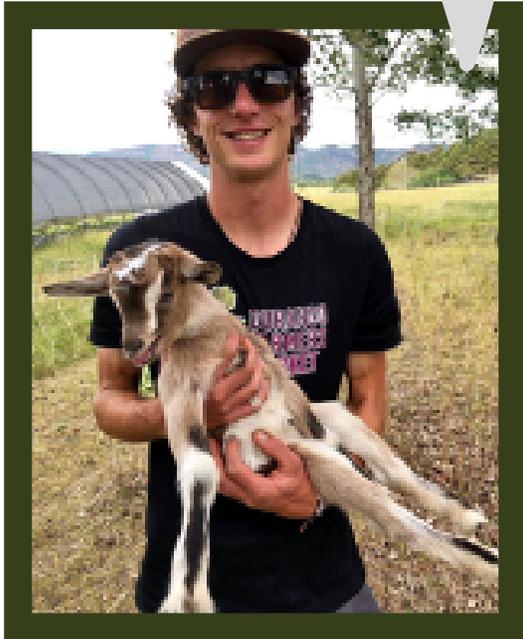
Mercy Hospital employees are united through the shared interest to nourish your bodies with fresh, healthy food. Your enthusiasm for this aspect of the program was evident in your eagerness to share recipes with each other and to communicate gratitude to the farmers for their hard work. Thank you for contributing to the online recipe-sharing document, for voicing your concern during droughts and grasshopper infestations, and for expressing your appreciation for the program overall. Last, but not least, this program sought to show appreciation for individuals working on the frontlines in the healthcare industry. Your work is incredibly important, and your health is our top priority. THANK YOU.

## 3) PROMOTE HEALTHY BEHAVIOR

The CSA model goes against what so many of us have come to expect from a modern food system: relatively easy access to an extensive variety of foods year-round! Each week, the veggie goodie bag consisted of different and sometimes unfamiliar items. This aspect of the program challenged each of you to expand your pallet, eat seasonally, and cook creatively!

Furthermore, this program aimed to break down common barriers to food security such as time, transportation, money, and availability of healthy foods. We tackled each barrier through the following tactics:

- offering a convenient pick-up location
- offering a sliding-scale payment option
- providing access to simple and relevant recipes
- facilitating communication between eaters and growers for future purchasing and program participation



## GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS...

We are so appreciative of your enthusiasm for this program, and for your patience and companionship as our guinea pigs for Year 1! Look out for advertisements next spring for 2021 program enrollment. We hope to expand the program to more Mercy Associates, while also launching a Produce Prescription Program for Mercy Hospital patients. Subscribe to the Good Food Collective's biweekly newsletter to continue to learn about fun ways to get involved in the local food system! Visit [www.goodfoodcollective.org](http://www.goodfoodcollective.org)