



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2023**

Our Work

At the core of our mission lies a commitment to advocate for and support small-scale farmers to build sustainable and successful agricultural businesses. We carry out this mission by providing mentorship, training, and hands-on assistance to refugee and immigrant farmers, building their capacity to operate individual farming enterprises from farm to market through our flagship initiative, the Flats Mentor Farm program.

Since 1984, our founding program farm site of the same name and affectionately known as The Flats, has been a place where immigrants and refugees from agrarian backgrounds have found an opportunity to re-engage in farming as a way of life, ensuring food sovereignty for themselves and their families and cultivating shared spaces for learning and mentorship.

Our aggregation and distribution model provides a stable market for farmers within our network, particularly those specializing in cultural crop production, and assures immigrants and refugee communities are allowed access to crops from their home countries. We specialize in connecting farmers to resources. Flats Mentor Farm hosts fifteen high tunnels, each individually owned by immigrant and refugee farmers, extending growing seasons and linking produce to grocers and community-driven sales outlets.

World Farmers' programming goes beyond commercial farm development. In a good production year, every farmer cultivates enough food to sustain their family year-round, encouraging good health, financial resilience, and cultural connection. These same impacts radiate through the farmers' communities.

In 2023, World Farmers supported 280+ farmers from over 25 countries, cultivating over 100 acres of crops.

World Farmers is more than an organization; it is a community that nurtures farmers' dreams, fosters cross-cultural connections, and builds resilient futures. Our commitment to sustainable farming, mentorship, and community building echoes through every acre of Flats Mentor Farm, and all other program sites, creating a legacy of growth and community strength.

Finding Success in 2023

16,265 shares delivered

Packed and delivered **16,265 shares** to families in Massachusetts through various CSA and food distribution programs, majority of which were free to the consumer. World Farmers collaborated with Just Roots for a year-round food-as-medicine initiative, delivering produce and proteins directly to consumers' homes. And we operated a state-administered grant called LFPA to distribute shares through key community partners in 8 MA communities from Springfield to Fitchburg to Brockton.



sales for 35 farmers

Facilitated **sales for 35 farm businesses** through our expanding markets, aggregating and distributing to schools, restaurants, ethnic grocers, and non-profits, and through our CSA programs. Of these farmers, 26 were commercial FMF farmers. This low number was due to intense flooding this season, whereby not only the amount of food produced was greatly reduced, but some farmers were not able to produce any marketable crops for sale.

farm planning with 114 farmers

Engaged 114 farmers in pre-season farm planning, ensuring sales commitments from World Farmers for the upcoming season, and holding discussions to hear new or changing farm and land needs on behalf of the farmer. This process allows farmers to adjust their crop plans to prepare for the upcoming season.



connected 18 farmers

Promoted business growth by connecting **18 Flats Mentor farmers to expanded land**. World Farmers increased the number of acres under operation by FMF farmers.

120 acres in production

FMF farmers cultivated 105 acres of vegetables on program land this season and a total of **120 acres in production** when including farmland managed independently by FMF farmers on independently leased land.



acquisition of 7 acres of farmland

Acquired 7 acres of new farmland for use by FMF farmers in Worcester County.

18 farmers manage independent land

18 FMF farmers operated farmland independently from FMF program land, through leases and for some, land ownership. For those who seek it, World Farmers supports farmers to build their businesses and operate autonomously outside of FMF program land.



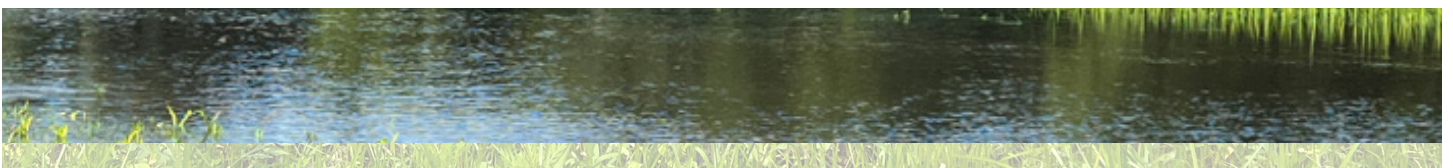
6 disaster assistance programs accessed

Facilitated FMF farmers' **access to 6 crucial programs**. Four of these programs were to support farmers during a devastating year of flooding, including: MA Resiliency Fund, MDAR Natural Disaster Recovery Program, private fundraising by World Farmers for our FMF Flood Relief Fund, and USDA-FSA Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (which functions similar to crop insurance). The remaining two programs were for previous years' emergencies, including: USDA-FSA Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program, and USDA-FSA Emergency Relief Program.



431 donors for FMF farmer flood relief fund

In response to excessive rainfall and flooding affecting the 270 FMF farmers, World Farmers in coordination with our partner Springfield Food Policy Council launched a fundraising campaign for our FMF Farmer Flood Relief Fund. **431 donors stepped forward to assist, providing essential relief** to those experiencing significant or total crop loss during the season. 100% of proceeds went to FMF farmers, distribution of which was determined through our FMF Farmer Committee.





2 significant visits by key governmental stakeholders

World Farmers received 2 significant visits this season. One, was from **Governor Maura Healey** to witness the devastation of the flood this July. She was accompanied by **Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll, Commissioner of Agriculture Ashley Randle, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Rebecca Tepper, Rural Affairs Director Anne Gobi, Director of the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency Dawn Brantley, as well as State Representative Meg Kilcoyne and Senator John J. Cronin**, all of whom highlighted the urgent need for support during flooding disruptions. Our second visit was by **State Senator Jamie Eldridge and State Representative Danillo Sena** to see our new program land-site in their district – Harvard, MA.

11 farmers engaged in advocacy efforts

10 farmers traveled to Washington DC and engaged with legislators on the Farm Bill at the Rural Coalition Winter Forum & National Climate Rally. Additionally, **4 farmers visited the State Capitol for the first time** for MA Agriculture Day.

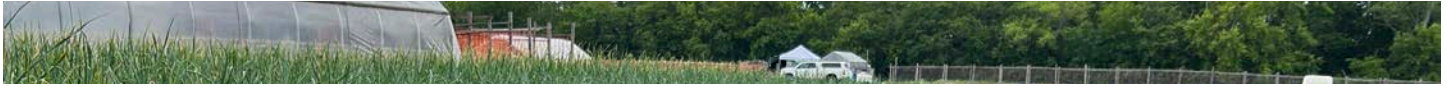
15 promotional materials created for farmers' businesses

Boosted business development by **crafting 15 promotional materials**, including logos and business cards, to enhance the branding of farmers' businesses.

22 farmers supported with taxes and business creation

Assisted **22 farmers in tax preparation and business creation**, providing essential tools and knowledge for successful business development.





collaboration with 18 non-profit partners

World Farmers **collaborated with 18 partners**, ranging from non-profit buyers to food access distribution partners like churches and housing Authorities, enhancing collective efforts for sustainable agriculture, knowledge exchange, and community empowerment.



60 new flats mentor farmers welcomed

Integrated and welcomed **60 new farmers into the Flats Mentor Farm program and World Farmers' community**, prioritizing a community-oriented approach, cultural relevance, and access to viable markets to ensure comprehensive support for their agricultural endeavors.



access to farmland for 283 immigrant and refugee farmers

Facilitated land access for **283 immigrant and refugee farmers** through programming, providing a crucial opportunity for farmers to cultivate farmland and contribute to sustainable agricultural practices.





Giving Thanks

Our work was made possible through the support of:

MDAR

USDA-NIFA

USDA-AMS

USDA-OPPE

USDA-NRCS

USDA-FSA

Windward Fund

Point32Health Foundation

The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts

Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts

Community Foundation of MetroWest

Worcester Community Foundation

NSN Wild & Scenic Stewardship Council

TJX Foundation

Contributions from community members like you!

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