



APPALACHIAN  
R&D COUNCIL

GROW  
CONNECT  
PRESERVE  
FOSTER

# ARCD IMPACT REPORT

# 2022



**For Appalachian RC&D, 2022 was a year of unprecedented growth. Looking to 2023 and beyond, we are poised to capitalize on that growth and increase our impact in the communities we serve.**

In 2022, ARCD invested over \$700,000 into Northeast Tennessee through our programming. We connected more than 200 people to farming education and training through Field School and focused workshops. In Build It Up, our backyard gardening program, participating families harvested over 15,000 pounds of food. Through Farmacy Fit, our farmers market walking program, we infused \$8,000 directly into the local food system. Altogether, this represents a 23% increase in investment from 2021.

ARCD also secured a record amount of grant awards in 2022. As of year-end, we secured \$8.3 million. These funds, some of which support multi-year programs, will help to fund ARCD's continued work training local farmers and gardeners, supporting the local food system, and aiding in conservation efforts.

We stand energized and focused; driven forward by our mission to conserve natural resources and improve rural economies. We are grateful for your continued support.

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

# CONSERVATION

## WOMEN PRESERVING FARMLAND FOR THE FUTURE

Nationally, there are **1 million** women farm operators and over 500,000 additional women who lease their land to farmers. Over the next 20 years, around 240 million acres of farmland is expected to change hands as farmers retire or pass their land to the next generation.

From 2001 through 2016 in the U.S., **11 million acres** of farmland was paved over, fragmented, or converted to uses that jeopardize agriculture. Tennessee accounted for 659,000 of those acres.

In 2022, ARCD launched a series of workshops for women farmers and landowners to create a succession plan for their farmland to curb farmland loss in Tennessee.



# 30

### WOMEN REACHED

In our first session, held in Washington County, ARCD empowered **30** women farmers or landowners to create their farmland succession plans. The participants received instruction from experts in legal, financial, and agricultural areas of focus.

# 6

### WORKSHOPS PLANNED

Thanks to grants from the National Association of RC&D Councils and the USDA, ARCD will hold at minimum six workshops to reach as many women farmers and landowners as possible. Each workshop will include county-specific information.

# 3

### YEARS

Workshops will be held over the course of three years. Our goal is to connect **180** women to the resources they need to make conserving their farmland as simple and easy as possible. Conserving farmland in Tennessee is critical for the future of farming in our state.

# BEGINNING FARMER & GARDENER TRAINING

Build It Up, ARCD's backyard gardening program, celebrated its 10th year of service in 2022, and so far over **240 families** have participated. In 2022, families harvested over 15,000 pounds of food. In total, Build It Up participants have harvested over **95,300 pounds of food**.



In 2022, **49 farmers** attended Summer Field School – learning about various production methods and farming techniques. In addition, **37 farmers** graduated from Field School's Winter Business Intensive, the ARCD's course which focuses on the business, financial, legal, and marketing aspects of farming.

ARCD also expanded its workshops to include a la carte sessions focusing on special subjects such as beekeeping, silvopasture, agroforestry, homesteading, elderberry production, and more. These workshops are funded through grants from the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block program.



**Each of these programs connects local farmers with the education and training they need in order to start, grow, or improve their businesses.**

# FOOD JUSTICE

Appalachian RC&D envisions a Northeast Tennessee where all people have access to healthy local food. With this in mind, we have a number of projects which support this goal.

Appalachian Farmacy is a trio of programs including **Farmacy Fit** which allows farmers market shoppers to earn \$3-5 tokens toward fresh fruits and vegetables by walking one mile, **Build It Up Bucks** which gives \$5 farmers market vouchers to students in participating schools, and (launching in 2023) **Food Rx** which partners with local clinics to provide patients with vouchers for fresh fruits and vegetables. Farmacy Fit and Build It Up Bucks are funded under a grant contract with the State of Tennessee. Food Rx is supported by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Additionally, **Northeast Tennessee Food Vision** is a project funded by the USDA's Regional Food System Partnership grant program and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture to increase investment in, access to, and consumption of locally grown food. This project launched in 2022 and will span the coming two years.

## WHY IT MATTERS

According to  
Feeding America's  
Map the Meal Gap 2021:

**15.9%**

of all Northeast  
Tennesseans are  
considered food  
insecure.

**18.8%**

of children in  
Northeast  
Tennessee are  
considered food  
insecure.

Food insecurity describes a household's inability to provide enough food for every person to live an active, healthy life. Food insecurity is one way we can measure and assess the risk of hunger.  
*(Second Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Tennessee)*





## **YOUNG SOUTHEAST ASIAN LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE**

In July, 2022, ARCD welcomed three fellows from Southeast Asia through the professional exchange program, Young Southeast Asian Leadership Initiative (YSEALI). Kevaly, Longlao, and Htetzaw are each young professionals working in agriculture or sustainability in their hometowns in Laos and Burma. They visited local farms, learned about sustainable agriculture in Northeast Tennessee, and experienced many American foods and traditions for the first time.

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One of our largest endeavors of 2022 involved the Appalachian Producers Cooperative and their effort to construct a meat processing facility in Washington County. ARCD served as a fiscal sponsor, secured funding, and continues to advise the APC. ARCD is proud to have supported this effort, and looks forward to continuing this partnership.



# CONNECT WITH US

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*Conserving natural resources and improving rural  
economies through community leadership and  
enhanced educational opportunities since 1994.*

