



## JABA's LOCAL FOOD PROJECTS

- Our local food efforts began nearly four years ago, when JABA convened a Local Food Advisory Board to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the area's food system. These findings have served as guidance for local food projects by both JABA and other community organizations.
- Since 2007, JABA has been sourcing 20-25% of our senior menus with local food. Over 36,000 meals a year are produced from our Hillsdale location kitchen alone, and local food for those meals is purchased for immediate use. This year we have started freezing local food for long-term storage to use during non-harvest seasons. The same sourcing target has been set for JABA's assisted living facility, which serves 100,000 meals per year, as well as for our rural intergenerational center in Louisa that serves nearly 13,000 meals a year.
- In order to support the increased cost of local food, JABA developed Top Broccoli Catering, a non-profit subsidiary that offers seasonal menus featuring local foods. Money we raise from catering benefits our senior meals program.
- JABA's staff and senior clients attending our community centers have—with the help of community volunteers—cultivated productive gardens at the centers which produce fresh vegetables that benefit the participants. In addition, JABA's clients in the Adult Care Center help prepare local produce for cooking by snapping beans, washing and sorting produce and other activities helpful to the kitchen.
- In 2009 JABA created a local currency for low income individuals and families to access healthy local food at the Charlottesville City Market. The project is possible thanks to funding from USDA, blue moon fund, and Charlottesville City Parks & Recreation, with other organizations pledging funds for future years as the program grows.
- That same year JABA started a gleaning program at the Charlottesville City Market to collect weekly leftover produce which is then donated to low-income meal programs in the area. This will be expanded next year to benefit nutritional cooking classes offered through the Boys and Girls Club and the Community Obesity Task Force. Classes will be taught by the Registered Dietitian for Charlottesville City Schools.
- In 2010 JABA implemented EBT capabilities at the Charlottesville City Market thanks to funding from Wholesome Wave Foundation. This allows SNAP beneficiaries to purchase healthy local produce for their families while supporting the local farming economy with federal dollars. Next year EBT and local food will be even more accessible to SNAP beneficiaries when Boys and Girls Club participants host mini farmers markets in low-income communities using JABA's mobile EBT machine to sell local food purchased from The Local Food Hub.
- In collaboration with other regional entities (Piedmont Environmental Council, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Farm Bureau, University of VA, etc) JABA helped form the Virginia Food System Council.

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*"To promote, establish and preserve sustainable communities for healthy aging that benefit individuals and families of all ages."*



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## **JABA's LOCAL FOOD PROJECTS (continued)**

- An outcome of the Local Food Advisory Board was the creation of The Local Food Hub, a non-profit local food distribution center supplying over 35 restaurants and institutional feeding programs with local meats and produce. The Hub is assisting farmers with increased production and facilitating local food delivery for purchases.
- In response to incoming questions on using local produce, JABA wrote and published a guidebook and step-by-step DVD giving instructions on how to incorporate local food into an institutional meal program. Both are being distributed nationally. (Copies will be given to USDA representatives at the press conference.)
- Along with other community organizations, JABA will be a tenant in the newly renovated Jefferson School, previously Charlottesville's historic African-American High School. We will be opening a café specializing in local food that will provide meals to our seniors as well as the public. In addition, we helped develop a culinary arts program by bringing together Piedmont Virginia Community College and Charlottesville Albemarle Technical Education Center. It will be the first college level culinary arts program in the Charlottesville area, and it will highlight the importance of local food as part of the curriculum. The program will also be housed in the Jefferson School.
- JABA is currently exploring the feasibility of a processing and freezing operation that uses local food to produce bulk meals and individual, home deliverable meals, which JABA alone distributes 50,000 per year to homebound clients. This operation would create meals not only for JABA, but also for numerous non-profits and businesses in Central and Western Virginia. Should the study be favorable, JABA hopes to utilize USDA Rural Development dollars to build a local food facility that also provides jobs for local residents.
- In order to sustain and provide support to our community's local food efforts, JABA is exploring the creation of a local food policy, practice and resource development council.

Funding received thus far from USDA FMPP, blue moon fund, Wholesome Wave Foundation, and the Older Americans Act.

For further information, please contact Judy Berger, JABA's Community Nutrition Manager at 434-817-5234 or [jberger@jabacares.org](mailto:jberger@jabacares.org).

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