

**2022
ANNUAL
REPORT**



Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture

BUILDING A FAIR AND VIBRANT HIGH COUNTRY FOOD SYSTEM



**YOUR CONNECTION TO FRESH, LOCAL FOOD
AND TO THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT POSSIBLE**

WHAT WE DO

Mission

We support producers and cultivate community connections that educate, inspire, and increase the demand for local food.

Vision

We envision an equitable and sustainable High Country food system where producers are thriving and local food is accessible to all.



Blue Ridge
Women in
Agriculture

SERVING THE HIGH COUNTRY SINCE 2003

PROGRAMS



★ HIGH COUNTRY FOOD HUB

★ KING STREET FARMERS' MARKET

★ BOONE'S WINTER FARMERS' MARKET

★ DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS

★ BLUE RIDGE COLLABORATIVE
REGIONAL ALLIANCES FOR FARMER
TRAINING (CRAFT)

★ LOCAL FOOD AS MEDICINE
(LOCALFAM)



WHO WE ARE

Message from The Director



In 2022, our community, together with the generosity of our donors, enabled Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture to provide educational opportunities to High Country producers, expand local food access through the Food Hub's satellite pick up locations, and purchase over 20,000 pounds of local food to fight hunger in our community. As we look ahead to 2023, which marks BRWIA's 20th anniversary, we're reflecting on the organization's rich past and its promising future. The strength of this organization, and one of the values it was founded on, is collaboration. We bring people together, we share knowledge, we create new systems and imagine new realities - together.

In community,

Liz Whiteman

Executive Director, Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture

GOALS



Increase Consumer Demand for Local Food



Ensure Equitable Access to High Quality Local Food



Provide Producers the Support They Need

BOARD & STAFF



Board of Directors:

Madelyn George, Chair
Caroline Stahlschmidt, Vice Chair
Lanae Hood, Secretary
Amy Roberts, Treasurer
Ann Brown
Kara Dodson
Lori Ludwig
Ellen Murphy
Sydney Phillips
Kelly Renwick



Advisors to the Board:

Laura Graham
Judith Phoenix



Staff:

Liz Whiteman, Executive Director
Shannon Carroll, Finance Coordinator
Rachel Kinard, Farmers' Market Manager & Double Up Food Bucks Coordinator
Taylor Campbell, Food Hub Manager
Katie Cavert Ferrell, Community Relations Manager
Sam Springs, Distribution Coordinator
Jess McClelland, Producer Programs Coordinator
Maggie Caswell, Delivery & Satellite Coordinator
Courtney Wheeler, Events & Outreach Coordinator
Meredith Sigler, AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer
Jay Meier, Food Hub Assistant
Sarah Edmonson, Food Hub Assistant
Lily Lipford, Farmers' Market Assistant

HIGH COUNTRY

FOOD HUB

★ \$859,800 ★

TOTAL SALES
GENERATED in 2022



About The Program:

The High Country's year round, online farmers' market for local food and artisan goods



Who We Serve:

Local community members: producers, families, students & Double Up Food Bucks participants



7 Pickup Locations in:

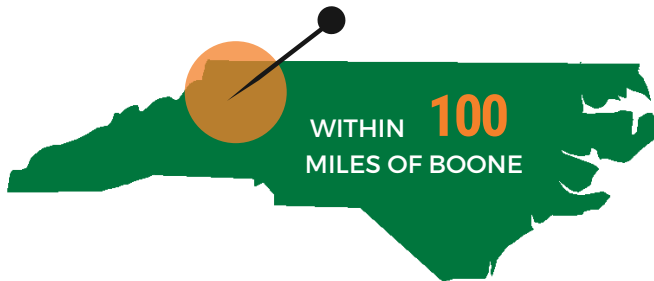
Watauga County
Ashe County
Avery County

100+
PRODUCERS




5000+ LOCAL
PRODUCTS

FOOD HUB IMPACT AREA



- ★ 558 NEW CUSTOMERS
- ★ 73% REPEAT CUSTOMERS
- ★ 12,706 LOCAL FOOD ORDERS PLACED
- ★ 730 VOLUNTEER HOURS

WHAT CUSTOMERS SAY:

 "So grateful to have local food brought closer to home. Local farming families are being supported, too!"

 "Starting with locally grown, in-season vegetables, and locally raised meat and eggs makes every meal delicious."

 "I love the convenience and variety of products, all in one place."



HIGHCOUNTRYFOODHUB.ORG



**\$2.3
MILLION**

**REINVESTED IN THE
LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY**

**from 2017-2022
among 151 PRODUCERS**



Producer Distribution

While the majority of Food Hub producers are from Watauga County, producers from 17 counties sold through the Food Hub in 2022.



Sales by County

- Watauga: 51%
- Ashe: 21%
- Caldwell: 9%
- Catawba: 6%
- Avery: 3%
- Wilkes: 3%
- Johnson (TN): 2%
- All Other (10 Counties): 5%

WHAT PRODUCERS SAY:

 "For our farm, it has opened the door for us to help feed even more families a local option and grow our business so we can continue to bring local food to the High Country."
-Chuck and Sandra, Sheraton Park Farms

 "For us, the Food Hub is an easy way to reach a lot of customers that we wouldn't normally sell to."
-Ann Brown, BFR Meats

 "Without the consistent Food Hub sales that we experienced from 2020-2022, we would not have survived as a farm during the pandemic and the subsequent local market shifts."
-Kara Dodson, Full Moon Farm



2022 PRODUCERS AT A GLANCE:

- ★ **104 PRODUCERS**
- ★ **FROM 17 COUNTIES**
- ★ **IN 3 STATES: NC, TN & VA**
- ★ **10 NEW FARMERS
(FARMING <5 YEARS)**
- ★ **14 NEW PRODUCERS**

FARMERS' MARKETS



WHAT VENDORS SAY:

-  "I look forward to seeing everyone each week. The atmosphere is very welcoming and everyone is so kind!"
-  "It is good exposure for our business and our sales have grown from last year to this year."
-  "It has been very enjoyable getting to meet people from the community and make a profit at the same time."



King Street Farmers' Market
Tuesdays
May - October
126 Poplar Grove Connector, Boone



Boone's Winter Farmers' Market
Saturdays
December - March
Watauga Ag Conference Center
252 Poplar Grove Road, Boone

Who We Serve:

Local community members: farmers & artisans, families, students & Double Up participants

- ★ **59 LOCAL VENDORS**
- ★ **200 CUSTOMERS PER WEEK (ON AVERAGE)**
- ★ **\$218,000+ SALES TO PRODUCERS (ESTIMATED)**
- ★ **22 COMMUNITY PARTNERS**



BRWIA.ORG/KSM
BRWIA.ORG/WINTERMARKET

DOUBLE UP

FOOD BUCKS




★ **\$131,580** ★

TOTAL COMMUNITY
IMPACT IN
WATAUGA COUNTY

WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAY:

 "The program helps me stretch my SNAP benefits and allows me to eat more flavorful and healthy food."

 "Double Up Food Bucks makes it easy to choose to buy local and sustainable products that support the livelihoods of my community and myself."



About The Program:

A healthy food incentive program that doubles value of federal nutrition benefits (SNAP) spent at farmers' markets



Who We Serve:

SNAP participants who buy local food, local farmers and food producers



Participating Outlets:

King Street Market
High Country Food Hub
Watauga County Farmers' Market
Boone Winter Farmers' Market

DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS IS A WIN FOR:

FAMILIES



+

FARMERS



+

COMMUNITIES

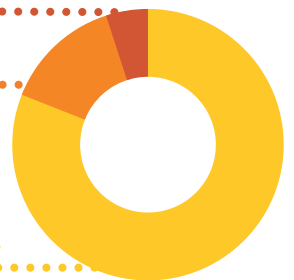


\$88,879 IN DONATIONS

CHURCHES &
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS: 5%

INDIVIDUALS: 14%

GRANTS: 81%



313 DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS
PARTICIPANTS



LOCALFAM

LOCAL FOOD AS MEDICINE



About The Program:

Enables community organizations to provide their clients with fresh, nutritious, free, local food



Who We Serve:

Community partner organizations connecting their clients with free, healthy food; Producers set the price for their products



History:

Pandemic relief for out-of-work restaurant workers which transitioned to filling a vital need in the community




DISTRIBUTION AREA:

Alleghany County
Ashe County
Avery County
Watauga County
Wilkes County

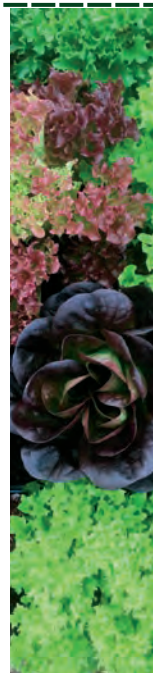


WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAY:

 "Since you've been delivering these boxes to my house, I've lost 56 pounds!"
- Participant

 "I use every bit of what you send me every week, we love getting all these fresh veggies and meats!"
-Participant

 "Our participants are so grateful to get the fresh veggies and meat that the LocalFAM program provides. It's a great addition to the food we already serve each week"
-Local Food Pantry



- ★ 13 COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS
- ★ 3,000 + HEALTHY FOOD BOXES DISTRIBUTED
- ★ \$98,000 OF LOCAL FOOD PURCHASED FROM 57 PRODUCERS
- ★ 27,000 POUNDS OF HEALTHY FOOD

HIGHCOUNTRYFOODHUB.ORG/LOCALFAM

BLUE RIDGE CRAFT

COLLABORATIVE REGIONAL ALLIANCE FOR FARMER TRAINING



About The Program:

Facilitates educational and professional development opportunities to help producers reach their goals and maintain a healthy local food system and rural economy



Who We Serve:

Aspiring, beginning, and experienced farmers and producers



History:

Established in 2014 as a way to provide education and training to farm apprentices; now serves a wide variety of producers and community members



CONVERSATIONS
BEST PRACTICES
PARTNERSHIPS
INNOVATION

★ **8,000+ FARMER
EDUCATION
HOURS**

★ **\$6,000+ RAISED FOR
BETSY L WILLIS SCHOLARSHIP
FOR FEMALE FARMERS**

★ **17 PEER TO PEER
WORKSHOPS**

★ **157 ATTENDEES**



WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAY:

🥕 "It feels great to gather farmers and the farm community together!"
- Producer

🥕 "These workshops are so amazing!"
- Participant

🥕 "I love learning about who and where I get my food from!"
- Community member

🥕 "I learned that it's possible to create a more ideal lifestyle through farming."
- Producer

FINANCES

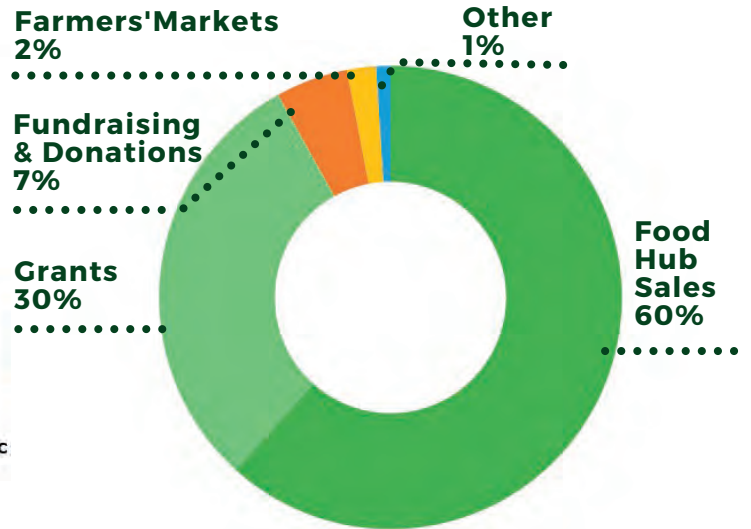
SALES & REVENUE

FOOD HUB SALES



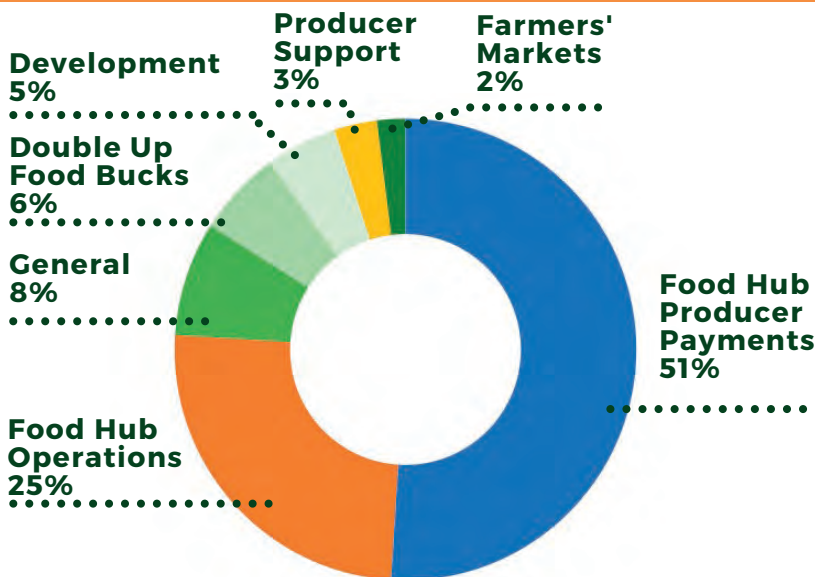
★ Since the pandemic, consumer demand for local food has remained high and trends upward.

BRWIA REVENUE 2022



TOTAL: \$1.45 MILLION

BRWIA EXPENSES



TOTAL: \$1.41 MILLION



SUPPORT

FUNDERS & SPONSORS



Funders

AgFirst Farm Credit Bank
AmeriCorps VISTA
Appalachian State University
Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project
AppHealth Care
Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC
Carolina Farm Credit
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association
Clabough Foundation
Clif Family Foundation

Conant Family Foundation
Croatan Institute
Dogwood Health Trust
Frontline to Farm
Gail Handel Family Foundation
GoldenLeaf Foundation
Grow Watauga
High Country United Way
Impact Health
Moravian Ministries Foundation
MountainWise

Organic Grower's School
Resourceful Communities
Save the Children Federation
Town of Boone
United States Dept of Agriculture
Watauga County
Watauga County Community Foundation
Watauga County Extension
WellCare of NC
Women's Fund of the Blue Ridge
Z. Smith Reynolds



Sponsors

828realestate
Ameriprise Financial
Anna Banana's
Appalachian Mountain Brewery
Be Natural
Beyond Pilates
Bistro Roca
Blowing Rock WinterFest

Boone Sunrise Rotary
Destination by Design
eightpointfive
First National Bank
Hatchet Coffee
High Country Beer Fest
Lifestore Bank
Mast General Store

Neighborhood Yoga
Revolution Boone
Rhoddie Bicycle Outfitters
Ridgeline Leadership
StickBoy Bread
The Riddick Group
Watauga County Farm Bureau



Countless Community Partners



156 Individual Donors



**WE COULDN'T DO THIS WORK WITHOUT YOU!
TO MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION, VISIT US:**

BRWIA.ORG

“Shopping **locally** is an essential way to improve community **resilience**. Buying local products supports the **community** by helping local small farms and business owners, stimulating the local **economy** by keeping food dollars within the region, and relying less on commercial agriculture.”

-BRWIA Supporter



Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture

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