2024
Annual Report







A non-profit Certified Organic and sustainable farm with an educational mission.







## Dear Friend of the Farm,

I am very pleased to share our 2024 Annual Report with you. Last year, we built upon our solid financial and operating foundations to create a sustainable future for our organization today and in the years to come.

Witnessing the magic that happens here is truly a joy, and it also serves as a reminder of the purpose we serve to the land and our community. Whether it's watching children stepping off a school bus to explore nature and a working farm for perhaps the very first time, our farmers harvesting and washing crops by hand to feed the community, families visiting with our barnyard animals and watching our farmers tend to the fields, or teen volunteers helping us harvest fresh food for local food pantries, our work to grow healthy food for the community, educate, care for the land, and instill a curiosity and love for the natural world is what creates the magic and community that is Holly Hill Farm.

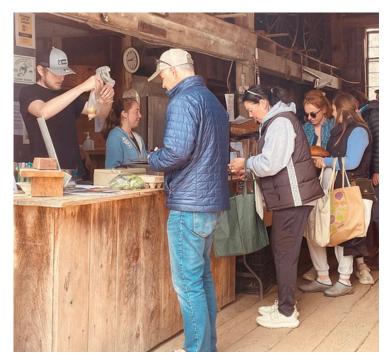
To ensure we can continue to see all these things flourish and build a sustainable future for our organization, we remained focused on delivering the second year of our three-year strategic plan.

In 2024, we: welcomed new board members; donated the most fresh produce in our farm's history to address rising food insecurity in our region; received an impressive three-year grant from Liberty Mutual Foundation Climate Resiliency to bring three community gardens, healthy foods, and education to people in Quincy; were recognized for our positive contributions to health by the Brain Health Initiative, a program launched with Massachusetts General Hospital; received two Best of the South Shore awards for our summer programs and farm stand; weatherized our greenhouses and took measures in our growing fields to mitigate climate change and make our farming operations more resilient; continued to make educational programs more accessible to everyone through reduced pricing; and provided open and free access to this precious natural setting to explore, learn, connect, and build a sense of belonging and community.

Thank you for helping us continue to build, grow, and flourish sustainably today and into the future!

Meredith Laban, Executive Director









# Best Summer Programs & Best Farm Stand Runner-Up 2024\*

People from around the South Shore region nominated and voted for us in 2024! Our popular Summer Programs were awarded for the second consecutive year! Our Farm Stand received its first-ever Best of the South Shore award as runner-up! The community helps make what we do possible, and we are honored to serve them and so appreciative of this meaningful community recognition.

\*Source: South Shore Home, Life, and Style Magazine June 2024











## Protecting the health of the soil

Farming sustainably means we put the health of our soil, crops, and community at the top of the list. To protect against potential soil erosion and ensure crop health, our farmers created raised beds and drainage ditches in our growing fields. By doing so, we ensured the soil and crops remained safe and secure during periods of heavy rain and rising water tables.



Each growing season and before planting new crops, our farmers must prepare the fields by "turning the beds." As a sustainable farm, we follow regenerative practices that care for the health of the soil. This means we do not till or mechanically turn and break the soil, as it damages it, disturbs beneficial ecosystems, and releases carbon into the atmosphere. In 2024, to improve this labor-intensive process, our farmers introduced an electric wheel hoe. This protected the soil, the environment, our crops, and saved time and labor!



# Safely delivering fresh food

Every week of the year, we grow, harvest, sell, and donate fresh organic vegetables, herbs, and flowers.

Thanks to generous donors, in 2024, we purchased a used **refrigerated van** to safely and reliably transport food to our local farmers' market and local food pantries.





# Organic cut flowers and native plants

We're the only Certified
Organic farm in the area, and
this year we expanded our cut
flower program to include
more bouquet varieties and
new environmentally friendly
paper wrapping.



## More local vendors

We partner with over 30 local food producers and artisans to offer our customers items like candles, fresh pasta, raw milk cheeses, locally sourced grains, and fresh baked breads and pastries. In 2024, we added three new vendors to provide local prepared soups and salads, fair trade cashew



# Expanding our organic plant sale

Each spring, we host our popular Organic Plant Sale for the community. This year, we offered our first-ever sale in the fall! Our farmers grew dozens of varieties of crops suited for fall and late fall gardens. We hope to expand upon this new seasonal sale next year and in the years to come so that our community can continue to grow healthy food at home, in every season!

## Farming grants making an impact

### Massachusetts Food Security Infrastructure Grant

Thanks to generous grant funding, we were able to take steps to make our farming operations more resilient to changing weather and climate. The projects funded through this grant allowed us to grow food for the community more sustainably and reliably, in all seasons.





#### Helping us combat a very dry summer

2024 was the hottest year on record, and the summer was extremely dry. Funding for a new pump and water tank system in our growing fields allowed our farmers to efficiently water crops, install drip irrigation, and prevent crops and soil health from suffering in the extreme heat and dry conditions. With this support, our farmers also installed new single exterior "skins" with roll-up sides for our caterpillar growing tunnels, which provided better temperature control and ventilation for our crops.

## Efficiently warming our greenhouses during a cold winter

We grow and harvest vegetables every week of the year, including winter. Funding provided our farm with new, double-skinned materials to better insulate our greenhouses, more efficiently heat them, and protect our crops during the unpredictable and cold weather months. Customers enjoyed organic fresh leafy vegetables, like radicchio, escarole, and spinach thanks to these improvements.



# Growing and donating healthy food to local food pantries

#### Farm to Food Pantry

In 2024, the rates of people experiencing food insecurity in Massachusetts continued to rise. To meet the increased demand, our Farm to Food Pantry program donated more food to more local food pantries than we ever have. In 2024, we **donated 4,500 pounds** to **seven local food pantries** on the South Shore and in Boston.





Empowering teens and adults to make an immediate impact in the community

In 2024, over 150 teens, adults, and students pitched in to support this critical program through every season. Volunteers were involved from seed to harvest and all things in between, including the creation of prepared foods from harvests like pesto, soup, and more!

Providing community members with gift cards to shop our weekly farm stand.

In addition to accepting SNAP payments at our farm stand, we continued to provide gift cards to participating families who may be experiencing food insecurity or financial hardship through our Holly Hill Farm SHARES program. In 2024 we served 15 local families and individuals.

Raising community awareness about food insecurity and how they can help.

In 2024, we hosted three community events to raise awareness about the rising need for healthy, fresh food. Our Winter Fest event, Farm & Sea to Table event, and 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Carrot-by-Cycle Ride provided learning opportunities and helped raise critical funds to help our Farm to Food Pantry program thrive.





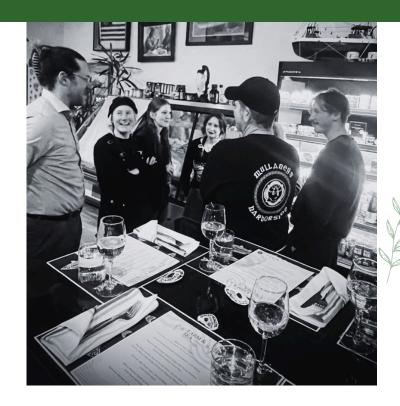
#### Farm & Sea to Table 2024





In 2024, we created a fundraising dinner with our friends at Mullaney's Harborside in Scituate Harbor to raise awareness about local food insecurity and how our Farm to Food Pantry program is helping address this growing need for healthy food. Community guests enjoyed a multi-course meal featuring organic Holly Hill Farm produce and local seafood caught by Scituate day boats. Guests heard first-hand from teens enrolled in the program about how the program has benefitted the community, and impacted their lives and future educational endeavors. Thanks to the support from Mullaney's and our guests, we were able to raise critical funds to support the ongoing efforts to grow and donate healthy food to local food pantries.









Educating all ages about sustainable farming, climate change, ecology, healthy eating, and being good stewards of the land

# Number of students impacted

Over 20,000 children participated in educational programs on the farm, in schools, in school gardens, and during field trips!

In 2024, we partnered **with 45 schools to** provide on the farm and in school learning opportunities.



# Expanding programming to home school families

To meet a rising demand for our dynamic on the farm programs, our Education team expanded programming for homeschool families. These programs helped build community and a sense of belonging in children ages 5 -12. Our 4 -5 hour weekly sessions engaged children in topics such as nutrition, cooking, STEAM, and the environment, all while exploring and using the farm as our ever-changing classroom!

## Number of school gardens

Children from **20 partner schools** enjoyed hands-on learning about where their food comes from, sustainable growing, and healthy eating, right in their very own school garden!

In 2024, we built over 50 new garden beds and boxes to support the growing demand for our school-based educational programs.



## Educational grants making an impact

### Liberty Mutual Foundation Climate Resiliency

In 2024 we engaged community stakeholders and conducted research throughout the city of Quincy to identify suitable locations to build community gardens, with an emphasis on food- insecure neighborhoods. These efforts were made possible by a 2023 grant provided by Liberty Mutual Foundation. Community members and Friends of Holly Hill Farm staff pictured below at the inaugural planting in one of the first garden installations at Quincy Community Action Program in Southwest Quincy. In 2024, we were excited to learn that we received an additional three-year grant to expand this program starting in 2025!



#### **Cohasset Educational Foundation**

In 2024, we received funding to support a school garden and nutrition program in partnership with Cohasset Middle School. Over 24 garden boxes were installed, students received hands-on lessons about garden planning, seasonality, beneficial and non-beneficial insects and plants, soil, garden care, planting, and harvesting. These gardens are intended to provide healthy foods to the Middle and High School kitchens.

#### Massachusetts Cultural Council

Through generous grant funding, we created a free community event focusing on Wampanoag culture and the important role nature plays in it. This first-ever event, led by Wampanoag educators, provided ways for the community to learn hands-on. After the event, Friends of Holly Hill Farm educators met with Wampanoag members to learn more about their worldview and how we might apply it to our educational programming.



# Planning and growing our programming for the future

#### Engaging and inspiring the next generation

2024 was the warmest year on record.\* Our changing climate underscores the importance of our educational programming about sustainability and the health of our environment. This year we built new structures, and new programming to engage students in dynamic ways to help instill a love for the natural world, and caring for it, that sticks with them for life.





## Expanding our education garden on the farm

This year, we built a new hoop house in our education garden on the farm, allowing us to extend our learning and growing all seasons of the year! This experimental greenhouse will create ways for students to learn about sustainable farming, the foods we grow and eat, and will even provide heat and additional lessons through its compost system!

## New in school curriculum for Winter 2025

The natural world is always active, even in winter. This year we created new lessons on topics like fungi and tree relationships, climate change, decomposters, pollinators, and soil, water, and erosion. We hope to connect students to the natural world and inspire them to be curious caretakers.



## Sustainability

We are 100% dedicated to responsible and sustainable farming practices that protect the health of the soil, land, crops, community, and the environment as a whole.

#### On-site composting turns food waste into healthy soil, reduces carbon emissions, and nourishes our growing fields

In 2024, we continued our onsite composting efforts, saving nearly 1,500 pounds of food waste from landfills - that's 37.5 tons! We turned this "waste" into nutrient-rich Certified Organic soil for our growing fields, resulting in healthier, more resilient crops.

## Conservation audit identifies opportunities and plans to support thriving natural spaces

In 2024, our Terra Corps service member conducted a conservation audit to help us understand the scope of opportunities around the farm to support native plants, and identify areas of opportunity to remove harmful invasive species. In addition to this audit, a menu of projects, suggested timelines, and even specific planting recommendations were made, providing a detailed guide for future conservation efforts on the farm.



## Providing a place for people to enjoy nature, learn, make friends, volunteer, nourish their family, and build community.

In 2024, we continued to welcome everyone to the farm to explore, attend community events, volunteer, join educational programs and guided workshops, and to shop our farm stand. In 2024, we also celebrated our 3rd annual **Farm Fest** with over 225 guests on the farm and we created our first annual **Holly Hill Hustle 5K** to welcome community members of all ages and support educational programming for children.





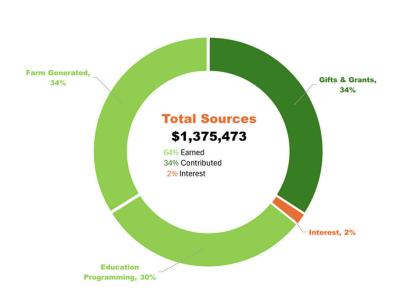


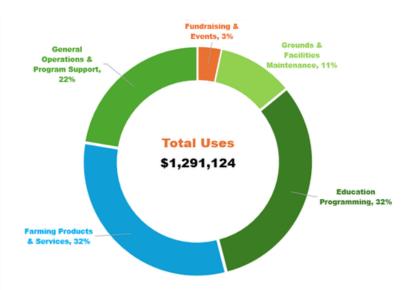






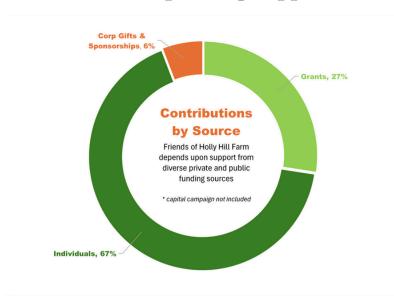
## Consolidated Annual Operating Revenue & Expenditures

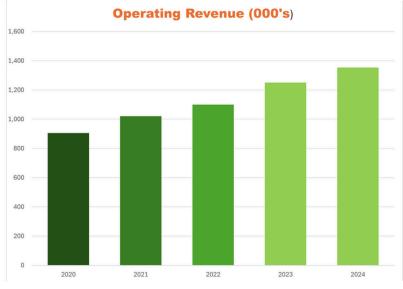




## **Annual Operating Support**

## Operating Revenue









Atherton Hough Elementary Beachwood Knoll Elementary School Bernazzani Elementary School Cedar School Chard Street School Clifford Marshall Elementary School Codman Academy Cohasset High School Cohasset Middle School **Cushing Elementary School** Deer Hill Elementary School **Derby Academy** East Elementary School Erdman Preschool Foster Elementary School Frederick C. Murphy Primary School Gates Middle School Grace Farrar Cole Elementary School Hatherly Elementary School Hobomock Elementary School Joseph Osgood Elementary School Jenkins Elementary School

Kingston Elementary School Lillian M. Jacobs Elementary School Lincoln-Hancock Elementary School Merrymount Elementary School Milton Academy Montclair Elementary School Old Colony Montessori Parker Elementary School Plymouth River Elementary School **Quincy High School** R. Steward Esten School Saint Paul School Scituate High School Snug Harbor Elementary School South Elementary School South Shore Charter Public School Squantum Elementary School Thomas W. Hamilton Primary School Wampatuck Elementary School Weymouth High School Wollaston Elementary School

