



Funding Local Food In Virginia



October 2020

As we round the bend toward the end of 2020, I just want to express deep gratitude to all those who support our work at Foodshed Capital. The pandemic has created an urgent need for generosity and we see that generosity flourishing in so many expected and unexpected places. Knowing the demands on everyone makes it difficult to ask for continued support. But we are more determined and energized than ever about the work before us, the projects we're working on, and the partnerships we're cultivating.

Please help us continue on our mission with a monthly donation to sustain our operations and help us provide low-cost, equitable and accessible Nurture Capital to our local family farms. Whether you can give \$10 a month, \$50, \$100 or more, it will go a long way in helping us create the stability we need to pursue our work promoting an equitable and regenerative local food economy. Please click on the link below to Give Monthly.

Investors who want to support our work in other ways can please contact me directly at michael@foodcap.org. Thank you.

Michael Reilly
Co-founder & Executive Director

Please Support Our Work

New SOIL Loan: RealRoots Food Systems

Meet Mark Davis from RealRoots Food Systems in Richmond. Mark founded RealRoots to increase participation in the food system by implementing and supporting regenerative agricultural practices, both locally and regionally. Growing from its roots as a humble

compost pickup program and vegetable garden installation service, RealRoots now centers around three main functions: Local food production, waste diversion and the creation high quality compost products.

RealRoots operates from two sites in the Richmond Metropolitan area, one of which is a 3-acre plot owned by First Baptist Church in Richmond. This plot is farmed collectively by RealRoots along with [Hazel Witch Farm](#) and [Shine Farms](#), both of which are women-owned enterprises.

With its 0% SOIL Loan, RealRoots is building an on-site harvest/processing station complete with a small outdoor refrigeration cooler, a wash and pack area, and dry storage. The facility will be accessible to all three farms on the property and Foodshed Capital is working with them to create a fair and equitable operating agreement.

[You can read more about Mark in this recent Richmond Magazine article.](#)

Please see our [website](#), [Facebook page](#), and [Instagram account](#) for ongoing updates on all our projects.



Mark Davis, founder of RealRoots Food Systems in RVA

Total Loans Made: 33
Total Value of Loans: \$251,800

** since January 2019*

Foodshed Capital Webinar:

Expanded Financing Options Through Our Nurture Capital Loan Fund

Attention all farmers and food entrepreneurs: Foodshed Capital is in the process of expanding its menu of loan programs. While our SOIL Fund will always be the cornerstone of our work, we recognize there's a variety of needs for patient capital in the foodshed. Mark your calendars for **Tuesday, December 8 at 7pm**, and look for sign-up information coming to your inboxes soon.

Nurture Capital At Work

Nurture Capital continues to produce results in our local foodshed. At the end of May we made a 0% SOIL Loan to [Verdant Acres Farm](#) in Rockbridge County to help them complete their poultry processing shelter. However, the very evening they closed on their loan, a severe summer storm ripped through the property, owned by Mary and John Pedersen, and tore down their two high tunnels. The Pedersens applied to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which is a department of the USDA, for a grant to build a new one through the [EQIP High Tunnel Initiative](#). They received approval for the grant, but funds are not awarded from the program until the new high tunnel is built. So the Pedersens used their SOIL funds as a bridge loan. Once they are reimbursed by NRCS, they will then use the SOIL funds as originally intended. We couldn't be more excited about this double use of the funds as a true example of Nurture Capital's patience and flexibility. Below is a picture of the high tunnel being constructed.



With Thanksgiving just around the corner, [ShireFolk Farm](#) in Fluvanna County, run by Logan and Emilie Tweardy, is hyper focused on its turkey operation. With the help of its 0% SOIL Loan in August, ShireFolk purchased a new Featherman Prairie Schooner, pictured below, to boost turkey production. While the equipment was a nice addition to the farm, it pales in comparison to the new addition to the Tweardy's family: a baby boy named Oscar, welcomed into the world a few weeks ago. Congratulations to Emilie and Logan!



Pennsylvania Farm Vitality Program Update

Our bridge loan program in Pennsylvania continues to grow. The program, in collaboration with [Kitchen Table Consultants](#), assists farmers participating in a business training program. The program is called the [Farm Vitality Planning Grant](#) and is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA). Its purpose is to enhance the long-term vitality of Pennsylvania's farms through sound business planning, efficient transitions of farm ownership, strategic farm expansion, diversification of agricultural production, and development of financial and technical expertise for farmers.

Two of our recent bridge loans were made to [Josie Porter Farm](#) and [Willow Haven Farm](#). Josie Porter is a 300+ organic CSA in the Cherry Valley area of the Pocono Mountains. The farm, run by Heidi Secord and her husband Gary Bloss, carries on the legacy of Josephine Porter who pioneered biodynamic agriculture on the property for 30 years. The [Josephine Porter Institute](#) in Floyd, Virginia, was named in her honor.

Willow Haven Farm is a 500+ organic CSA in New Tripoli run by Reuben and Tessa DeMaster, and their large staff, which includes several generations of family members.



The Staff at Willow Haven Farm

Free Webinar Series

from Virginia Community Capital & Virginia Foodshed Capital

Food System Financing in Virginia

August 11
August 25
September 22
October 27
November 17
December 15

Hear from food system funders, technical assistance providers, incentive programs, and organizations who have received financial resources.



On October 27, we held our third webinar as part of a monthly food financing series with [Virginia Community Capital](#). This month's session focused on [Virginia Fresh Match](#), a nutrition incentive program which doubles the value of SNAP (or food stamps) spent at participating farmers markets. It is truly an incredible program that makes you wonder, "why can't we fund this program to be thousands of times bigger than it is?" It supports local producers while helping low-income families access the healthy nutritious food that everyone deserves.

Our October speakers were Maureen McNamara Best, VFM administrator & Director of [Local Environmental Agriculture Project \(LEAP\)](#), Elizabeth Borst, VFM administrator & Executive Director of [Virginia Community Food Connections](#), and Megan Marshall, Director of Food Access at [Project GROWS](#).

Our "Food System Financing" series is exploring how we get money to the people who need it to build a healthy, equitable, regenerative local food economy that is accessible to everyone. The series extends to the end of the year. At the end of the series we hope to compile the lessons learned into roadmap for a more resilient, robust and equitable food system in Virginia. Our next webinar is scheduled for November 17 and will feature a discussion on the [Virginia Food](#)

[Access Investment Fund Program.](#)

[Please join us for the next webinar in October. Click here to find out more.](#)

Accepting Farmer Loan Applications

As we have always done, we continue to accept loan applications for our signature grassroots program called **SOIL**, a 0% revolving loan program for amounts up to \$10,000. Applications are typically accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis. However, due to high demand for financing, we may not be able to accommodate those who have immediate needs. Please consider how your project could be spread out over the longer term. Also, if you are interested in financing for your farm or food enterprise, please attend our webinar scheduled for December 8, at 7pm (sign-up details coming soon).

[Virginia Foodshed Capital Borrower Information Form](#)

VIRGINIA IMPACT INVESTING ECOSYSTEM MAPPING

AUTUMN 2020

A SURVEY OF THE IMPACT
INVESTING LANDSCAPE IN THE
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



Prepared By:
Sean Bielawski
Tatenda Mabikacheche
Dr. Christine Mahoney

The [Virginia Impact Investing Forum](#) has released a new report featuring Virginia Foodshed Capital. The report establishes a baseline of private capital committed to place-based investing in historically disinvested communities in Virginia, to provide an illustration of capital providers in the market, their priorities and investment focus areas, and to identify the needs of investors.

Virginia Impact Investing Ecosystem Mapping Project compiled responses from dozens of impact capital providers, showing a clearer view of what these investors value and where strides can be made to allow for better community impact across Virginia.

[Download the Report Here](#)

"Healing the wounds of the earth and its people does not require saintliness or a

political party, only gumption and persistence. It is not a liberal or a conservative activity; it is a sacred act. It is a massive enterprise undertaken by ordinary citizens everywhere, not by self-appointed governments or oligarchies."
—Paul Hawken, *Blessed Unrest*

FoodCap.org

(434) 409-0053 | info@foodcap.org



Share



Tweet



Share

STAY CONNECTED



In affiliation with:


SLOWMONEY