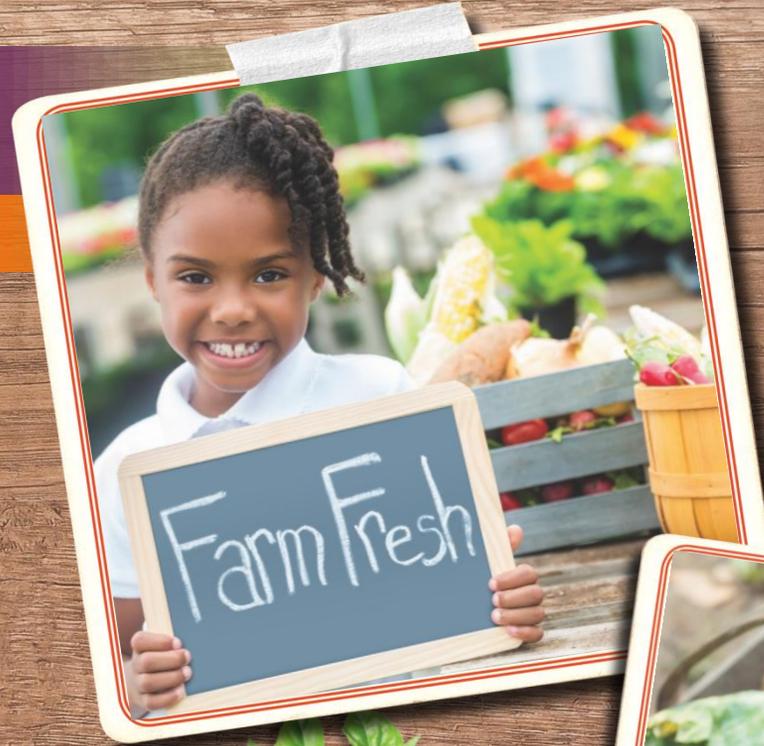
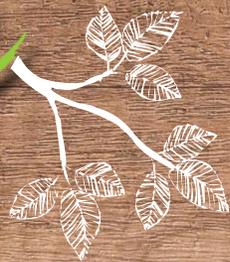




Farm Fresh Initiative

Purchasing Texas-Grown Food During COVID-19

Tuesday, June 23, 2020



Food and Nutrition Division
Farm Fresh Initiative



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

This product was funded by USDA.
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Updated 06/2020
www.SquareMeals.org



Panelists

Ryan Cengel

Dietician

Austin Independent School District

Margaret Smith

Director

The Common Market Texas

Casey McAuliffe & Nan Wilson

Executive Director & Program Director

Galveston's Own Farmers Market

Moderated by Hanneke Van Dyke

TDA Farm Fresh Specialist



AUSTIN

Independent School District

Nutrition &
Food Services



OUR MISSION

Support the achievement of all students by expanding food access, serving healthy, tasty meals, and providing learning opportunities about nutrition, cultural foodways and the food system.

Austin ISD Overview

80,000+

Students
in AISD

65%

**FREE OR
REDUCED**

Serving
75,000

Meals
Per Day

112

**KITCHENS
SERVING**

130

CAMPUSES

31%

of students
EAT BREAKFAST

52%

of students
EAT LUNCH



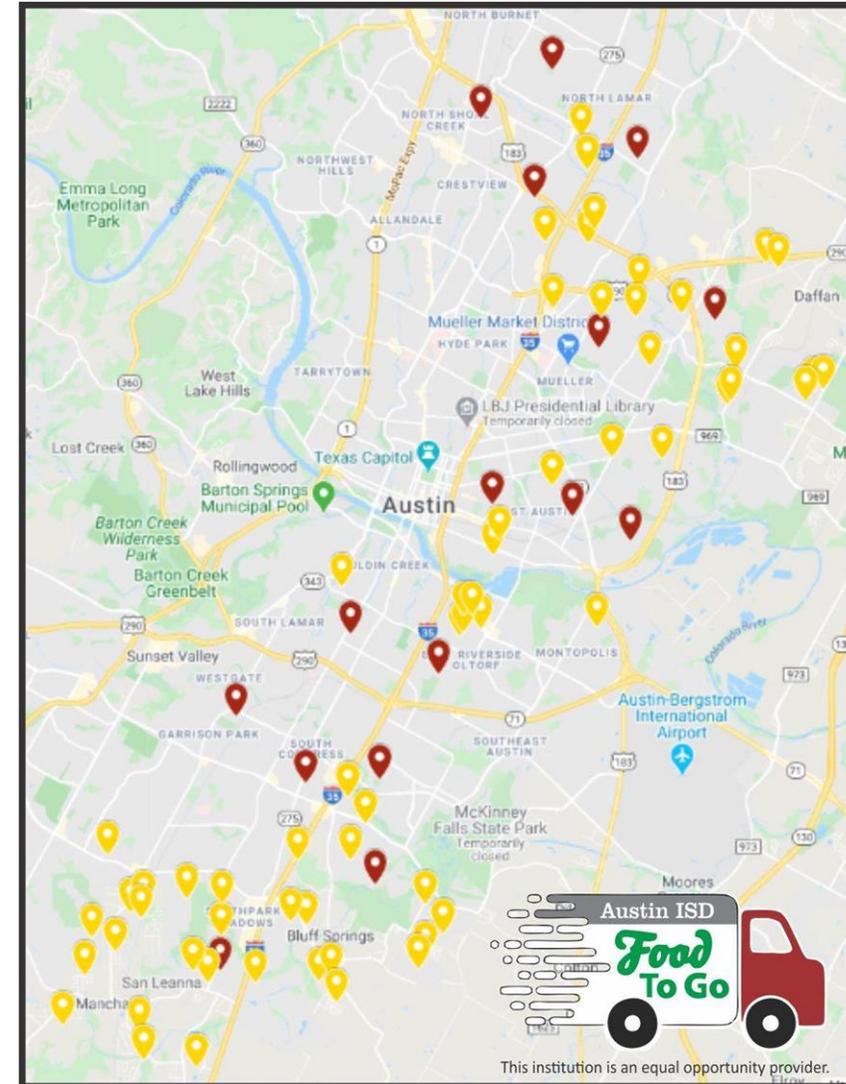
Emergency Feeding - COVID-19

- Served **750,000+** meals March 23-June 19
- Serving two meals—**breakfast and lunch packages**—to children under the age of 19 at more than **70 locations** throughout the city, **Monday- Friday**.
 - Serving 3 day meal packs on Friday



Emergency Feeding - COVID-19

- **Curbside meals at 18 schools.**
- **Austin ISD school buses deliver meals at more than 60 bus stops** in neighborhood communities throughout Austin. Bus stop locations include schools, as well as apartment complexes and mobile home communities where the most qualifying students reside.



Emergency Feeding - COVID-19

Caregiver Meals

- Partnership with the Austin Ed Fund and the city of Austin.
- Meals are prepared by local restaurant vendors and distributed Monday–Friday at AISD curbside and bus stop delivery sites.
- 59,193 caregiver meals have been served in the first two weeks of service. 28k average each week.
- Local restaurants providing caregiver meals include: Easy Tiger, Henbit, Good Work Austin (which includes Contigo, L'Oca d'Oro and Colleen's Kitchen)



District Partners

- **Office of Innovation & Development**
 - Manages all offers of **financial and in-kind support**
 - [In-kind support form](#)
 - Supported the [Austin Ed Fund](#) to create the [Austin ISD Crisis Support Fund](#) on March 17 - an effort to support our school communities by supplementing access to food services, health programs and remote learning.
 - H-E-B \$100,000; Google \$100,000
 - **Meal Service Support** – Additional costs of meal service including staffing and expansion of meal service to serve caregivers with daily breakfast and lunch.

Community Partners

- **City of Austin**
 - Daily calls - Coordinating continuous conversations with area districts and organizations re: food access
 - Developed [ConnectATX.org](https://connectatx.org) w/ United Way compiling all food access resources in Austin
- **Keep Austin Fed**
 - Picking up and distributing leftover food from meal sites
- **Vendor Partners**
 - Continuing to support Texas economy when possible by featuring local foods on menus:
 - Johnson's Backyard Garden - organic carrots
 - New World Bakery - bread, burger & hot dog buns
 - Farm to School - oranges, grapefruit

Good Food Purchasing

1.3.e, 7.1.e

- Committed to **healthy, clean, sustainable & fair procurement.**
- **Recently recognized as first district in Texas to adopt the GFPP**
 - Pilot program for the City of Austin along with UT, Austin Convention Center since 2016
- The goal of the GFPP is to **improve regional food systems** by utilizing **meaningful purchasing standards in five key categories:**
 - Local Economies
 - Environmental Sustainability
 - Valued Workforce
 - Animal Welfare
 - Nutrition



Local Procurement

- **45% of food budget spent within Texas**
 - Bread, Tortillas, Yogurt, Beef
 - Produce: Farm to School, Farm Fresh Fridays, Harvest of the Month
- **Farm Fresh Fridays**
 - Johnson's Backyard Garden
 - **Fall:** Sweet Potatoes
 - **Winter:** Mixed Greens
 - **Spring:** Carrots

1.3.e, 7.1.e, 10.1.e



Local Procurement

1.3.e, 7.1.e, 10.1.e

- Farm to School Fruit

Texas Grown

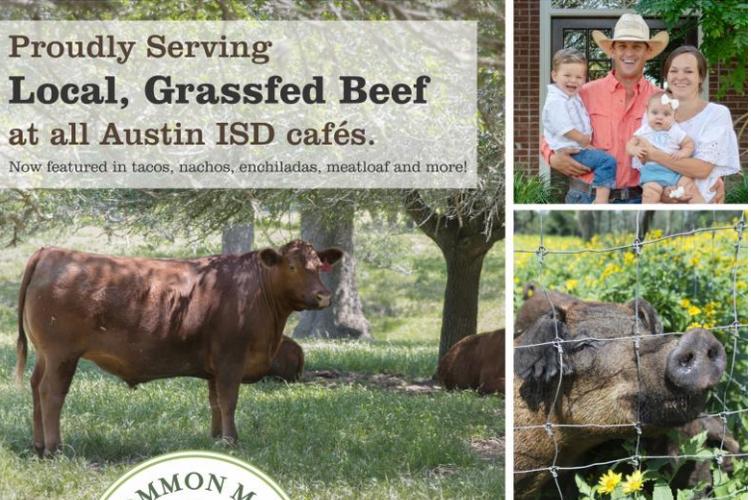
- Oranges
- Grapefruit
- Watermelon



Local Procurement

1.3.e, 7.1.e, 10.1.e

- Transitioned to offering all Texas raised grass fed beef in 2020
- Used in all ground beef recipes
- August Ranch- Yoakum, TX



Augustus Ranch
YOAKUM, TX

— meet your farmer —

Augustus Ranch is a family operation now in its sixth generation of ranchers who manage nearly 5,000 acres of beautiful land in South Central Texas. The family raises beef cattle and pigs that are entirely pasture-raised with natural living conditions and an abundance of health, diverse grasses and forest for them to roam. Their custom humane processing ensures high-quality, consistent, and nutritious proteins. You can taste the difference with local meats from the Augustus Ranch family while representing their commitment to quality, health, and conservation.

Distributed by The Common Market Texas
THECOMMONMARKET.ORG

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Local Veggie Samplings

- **Local veggie samplings**
 - School Lunch Week (Oct. 15-19)
 - TDA CACFP Farm Fresh Challenge (March)
 - Earth Week (April 22-26)
 - Summer (Partnership with Andy Roddick Foundation)

1.3.e, 7.1.e, 10.1.e



Contact & Social Media

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Dietitian

Austin ISD Nutrition & Food Services

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Please connect with us through our social media outlets:



@AustinISDFood

www.austinisd.org/nutritionfoodservices



Farm to School during the Covid-19 pandemic

1. Background
2. Pandemic & the Supply Chain
3. New Programs & Partnerships
4. Opportunities for Schools & Community Partnerships



Background

The Common Market mission is to connect the good food from family farms to communities.

- Local Food Distribution
- 100% Local & Buy-American
- Supports small- and mid-sized family owned farms and ranches
- Food Safety
- Educational materials & opportunities



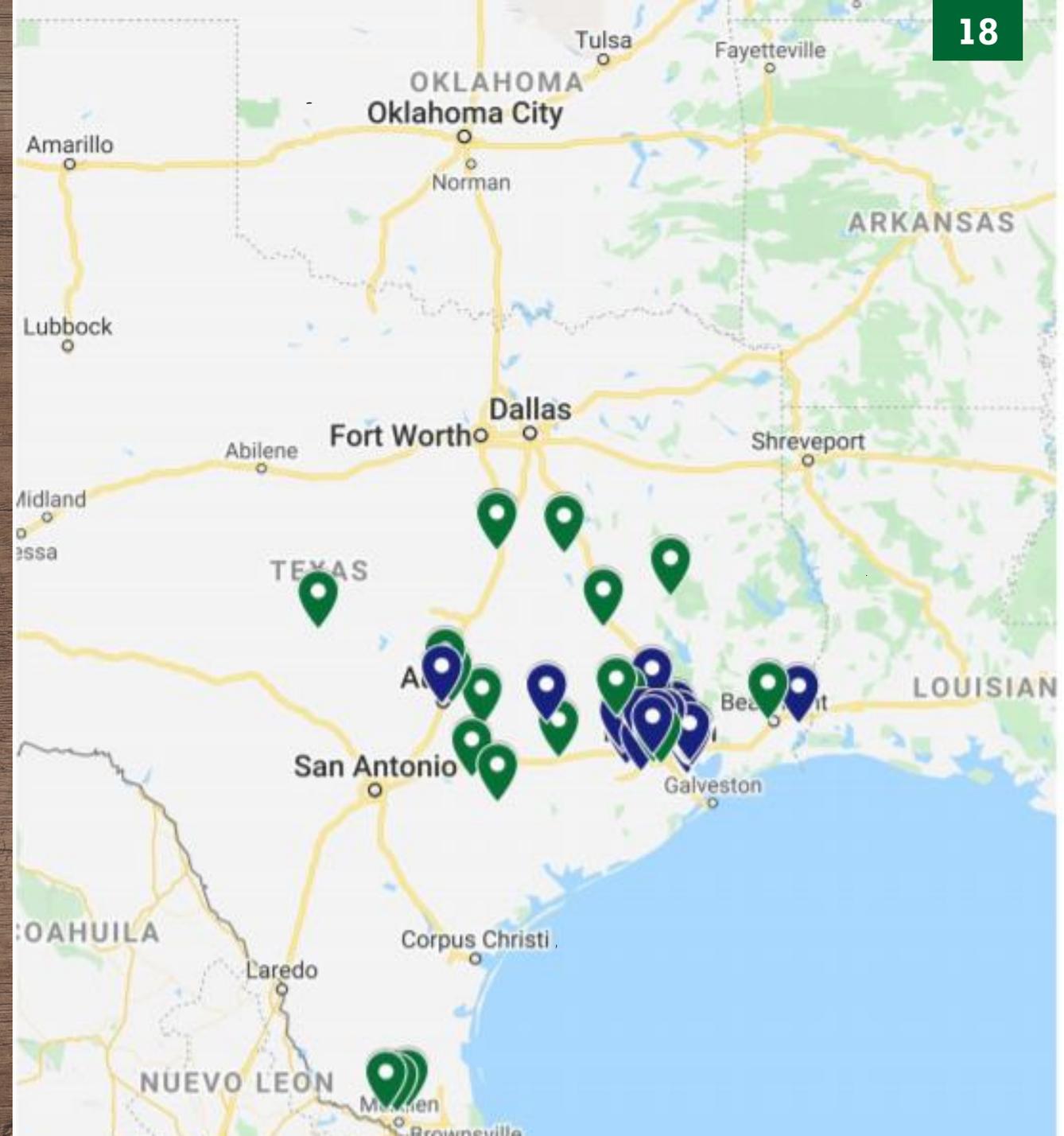
Texas Farms

40+ TX producers

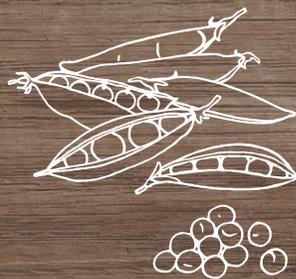
- Produce growers
- Value-added
- Grains/mills
- Ranchers

Top TX products

- Texas beef
- Lettuce
- Rice
- Oranges



Covid-19 & Supply Chain



- Food product shortages in retail distribution channels
- Disruption through closure of restaurant and institutional outlets for food
- Local farmers proved able to adapt
- We continue to have a safe and secure product supply
- Families and schools innovating to feed children and families
- Changes to distribution operations to enforce safety protocols



New Programs

Emergency Food
Distribution

Farm Fresh Box Program

Farm to Cafeteria





Farm-Fresh Boxes

SAFE • FRESH • DELIVERED

Our individual Farm-Fresh boxes offer a safe solution for your communities to get healthy food, while supporting our hardworking, local family farms. Place an order for our

boxed food, and nourish your communities with fresh, local, healthy options. The Common Market will deliver directly to your community's site! Flexible pricing options available.

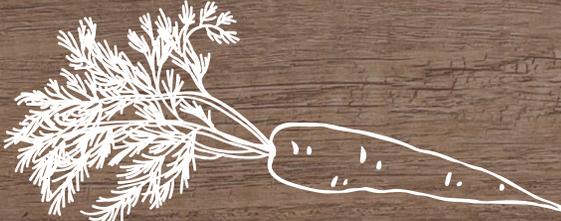
- 5-7 seasonal produce items per box
- All items grown and harvested by local Texas farmers
- Delivered in a convenient, safe, pre-packed box

Farm Fresh Boxes



New Partners

- Food Banks
- School Districts
- Community Organizations



Opportunities

- Local Food Procurement from a safe & reliable network of Texas farmers
- Family Support & After School Program partnerships with the Farm Fresh Box program
- Micro-Purchases
- Small Purchases
- Bids



Contact

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www.thecommonmarket.org





**Galveston's Own
FARMERS MARKET**



Galveston's Own Farmers Market

WHO WE ARE

Founded in 2012, Galveston's Own Farmers Market is a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to connecting our community to local foods through year-round weekly farmers markets, food access initiatives, school gardens and health & food education opportunities.

OUR MISSION

To build and sustain a local food community through a vibrant, producers-only marketplace, improved food access, and educational programming.



Young Gardeners Program

Mission: to cultivate a community of healthy and happy young people by encouraging them to put their hands in the dirt, eat well, and learn the transformative power of growing their own food.

How: integrates high-production gardens & advanced curriculum with the after-school programming at Galveston ISD schools. Our aim is to transform the health of the community by transferring real farming knowledge + practical skills, nutrition education & community activism & awareness

Young Gardeners Program

Basic Information

- 151 children enrolled in YGP for SY 19-20
- 40 recurring, highly-engaged volunteers
- 150+ volunteers over the year
- School closed in early March
- Garden production never paused

In “normal” year

- YGP garden sites are active only during school year
- Garden plots are “put to bed” over the summer with cover crops & sweet potatoes
- Students & volunteers work together in the garden everyday, up to 30-40 people dependent on site
- Operations management of each site is co-run between Garden Leaders, Garden Specialist & Curriculum Coordinator
- Harvest from gardens goes home with every child at least 1x per week, 1-2lbs
- Cooking Days & Family Dinners happen at least 1x per month
- Emphasis on crop-growing is mix of yield & experimentation

Young Gardeners Program

COVID-19 Operations Pivot

- YGP garden production has not paused--we've increased production & are planning for minimal cover cropping
- Heavy emphasis on high production crops and controlled experimentation
 - Using crops that are tested & can reliably produce well in our climate over summer (peppers, tomatoes, okra, etc.)
- Garden Leader employees are responsible for all management of each site
 - Volunteer engagement & communication
 - Crop planning
- Volunteer participation is highly controlled, only 1 family at a time
 - NO more than 10 people in any garden site.
- PPE available in gardens, signage encouraging use of sanitizer & masks
- Weekly harvest of all garden sites is aggregated and distributed directly to families through doorstep delivery.
 - Garden Leaders work together to harvest, pack and deliver
 - 20-25 families every week



MARKETING OPERATIONS

HOW: Prior to COVID-19

- 2 markets weekly, Thursday & Sunday
- Extensive Community involvement
- Family-friendly
- Live Music
- Food Access Programming:
 - SNAP retailer since 2014
 - Distribution of Fresh Bucks, Bonus Bucks, & FMNP-WIC Vouchers



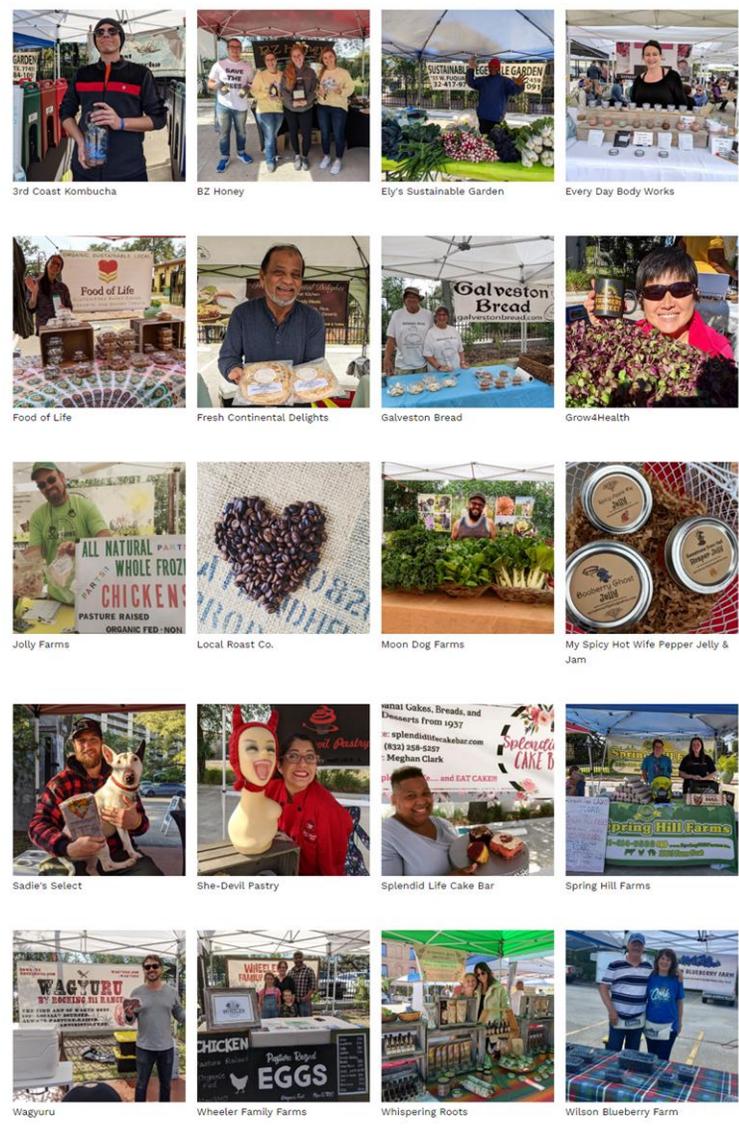
Marketing Operations

COVID-19 Operations Pivot

www.GOFMToGo.com

- Physical open-air market adapted into GOFM To-Go, an online marketplace
 - Debut week: March 15
- Allowed us to support vendors & drastically reduce infection risk
 - Our market population has high numbers of older customers & healthcare workers
 - Strong social community culture at market--we wanted to eliminate all potential for marketgoers to interact
- Eliminated Thursday market, concentrated all efforts on seamlessly moving all vendors onto online platform for Sunday “market” operations

Vendors



Marketing Operations

How it Works

- Orders can be placed online starting 10:00 AM Tuesday to 5:00 PM Friday.
- Pick-ups are on Sunday.
- We are currently using Square as our e-commerce platform.
- We reach out to vendors weekly, just as with open-air operations
 - Inventory updates are due Mondays at 5:00 PM
 - Updating stock, photos, etc.
 - Answering questions and handling customer questions on their behalf
 - Packing orders, handling vendor product
 - Distributing orders




GOFMTOGO.COM

Online Market
Opens on Tuesdays at 10:00 AM.
Closes on Friday at 5:00 PM.

Pick-up is on Sunday
Opens at 10:00 AM &
Closes promptly at 12:00 PM.

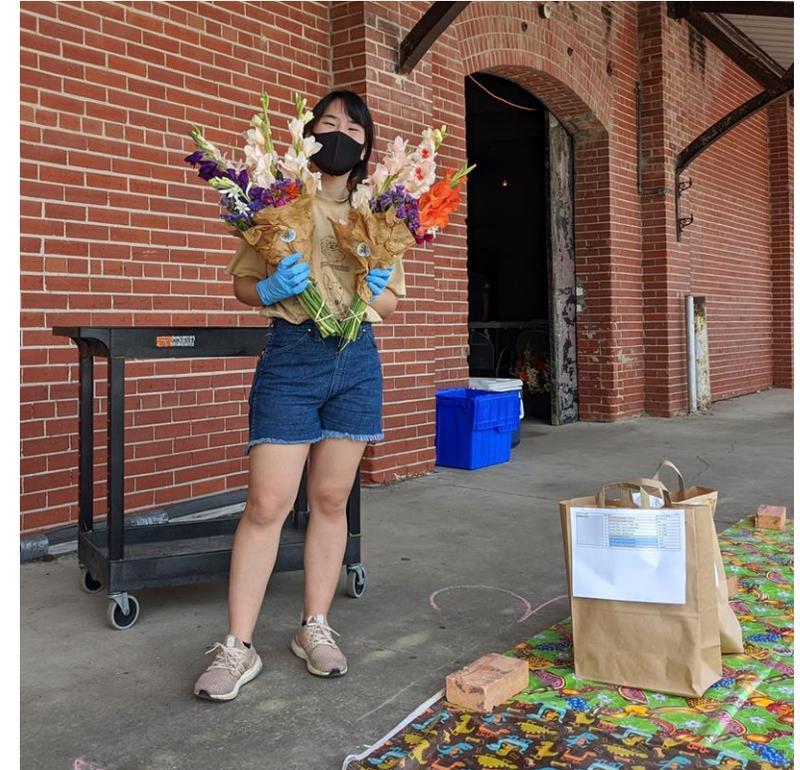
SHOP SMART, SAFE & LOCAL

 If you have any questions, please contact
info@gofarmersmarket.com

Marketing Operations

How it Works Cont.

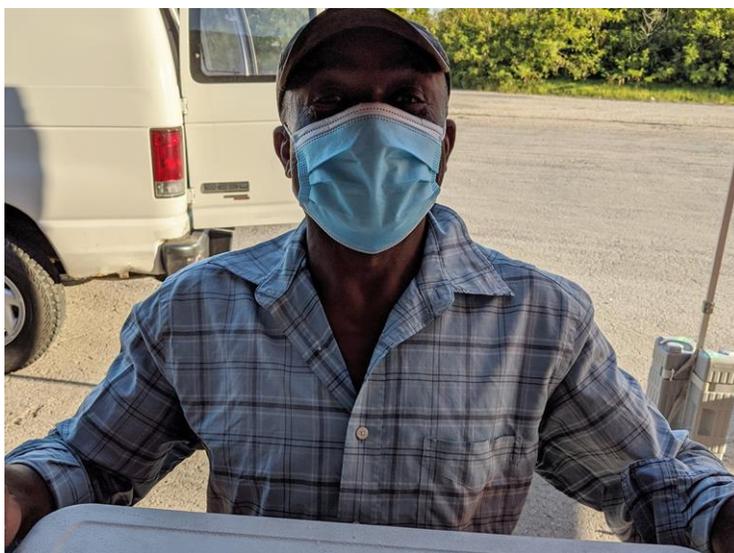
- The online store opens on Tuesday at 10:00 AM
- Vendors receive their pack list on Friday evening after 6:00 PM.
- Vendors are paid the Monday after, and provided a digital folder with monthly digital updates of all GOFM To-Go receipts
- Day of Pick-ups:
 - Vendors drop off their items to GOFM on Sunday morning before 8:30 AM.
 - Volunteers pack products
 - Customers arrive to pick-up spot (a partnered location with local nonprofit, Galveston Historical Foundation's "Depot on Market") for curbside pick-up
 - Initial first 4 weeks we refined the process, customers would wait up to 30-45 minutes
 - Now, customers wait a maximum 10 minutes to receive orders!



Marketing Operations

Vendor Fees

- Listing Fee
 - Vendors are charged 10% of overall sales in exchange for GOFM:
 - Managing their online inventory
 - 10 items included with 10% fee
 - Items beyond 10 cost \$2 each to list
- Late Fee
 - If vendors arrive late to pick-up day
 - If vendors submit inventory updates late
 - If vendors wish to add more items mid-week (Wednesday cut-off)
- If product is unsatisfactory/missing:
 - We deduct value of product from the Vendor Payout & offer customers choice of refund, gift card or “donation to market”



MARKETING OPERATIONS

Vendor Response:

- GOFM administered vendor survey end of May
 - Over 75% LOVE the new system
 - Out of 20 vendors, only 2 reported sales that were less than average, the majority report sales exceeding their “normal average”

Marketing Operations

Customer Response & Sustainability

- Haven't administered official survey, but anecdotally, it is VERY popular
- Very few questions on "Why we haven't reopened"
- Since March 15, GOFM To-Go has done over \$100k in sales for our vendors!
- Galveston County currently experiencing highest sustained spike of COVID infections, with predictions that we will be in this current pattern until September
 - GOFM To-Go can be sustained in perpetuity, and we plan to keep market operating in this model for as long as needed to keep our community as SAFE AS POSSIBLE





REAL FOOD PROJECT

What: In late 2017, GOFM initiated the Real Food Project, a multifaceted set of programs that all support increased food access, nutrition and community building in Galveston. The RFP includes Community Cooking Classes offered free or low-cost to the public & to private groups, Community Dinners coordinated with partners across Galveston County, and most recently, our FreshBox initiative.

Real Food Project

COVID-19 Operations Pivot

- We suspended our Cooking Classes & Dinners, but still had ample funding for programming that supports food security. After a week of talks with other area organizations & philanthropies, we decided to do what we do best-- FEED PEOPLE!
- GOFM's FreshBox was our immediate response to an unmet hunger gap among Galveston families with school-aged children during the fallout of the Coronavirus crisis.
- A free parcel of local foods sourced from GOFM's farmers & makers is delivered to the doorstep of local families.
- FreshBox contents have a total retail value of \$30-45 each week & are always vegetables, proteins & bread
 - All ingredients sourced from GOFM farmers & makers
 - Vendors contacted each week by RFP Coordinator to ascertain harvest/product yields
 - Bilingual Recipes based on seasonality & actual crop availability



Real Food Project

COVID-19 Operations Pivot Cont.

- We currently deliver to 35 families per week.
- Recipient families were identified for us early on through the Boys and Girls Club, colleagues from the Family Service Center, Urban Strategies, and teachers at Galveston ISD.
- We have a waiting list that allows us to maintain the same number of deliveries when families regain stability and no longer need the weekly delivery.
- We added a donation button to GOFM To-Go website in April, and we have since received nearly \$3,000 in donations to support this program, in addition to local funding from Galveston County Recovery Fund





Q&A

Questions and Answers

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www.SquareMeals.org



512-475-0082

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