

StarkFresh

2020 Year End Report



I've found in the 8 years I've been with StarkFresh I've learned that each year starts with a certain level of uncertainty but when 2020 started, I certainly did not expect the degree of unexpectedness that we were about to undergo.

Being a nonprofit that is small in size, yet mighty in our community impact, we are used to constantly pivoting to adjust to obstacles that we face every day regarding funding, volunteers, and staffing but one thing we were not expecting was a global pandemic.

As a largely volunteer-run organization, we were forced to take a hard pause and assess all of our programming in order to ascertain what we could reasonably continue with during a pandemic, especially with our Food Justice Campus being closed to the outside public, no volunteer groups available as a result of the stay-at-home orders, and much of our staff working from home. Like we always seem to do, we were able to quickly adapt to our changing community and focus all of our collective efforts on three main programs. The pandemic hit just as we were about half-way through distribution of seeds through our Seed Library and we, along with our distribution site partners, were able to ensure that more seeds were distributed than we have ever done in previous years.

We were able to adjust our Mobile Grocery Market procedures to ensure safe, contactless interactions and make sure that people who had the greatest need continued to have affordable food access. Despite the pandemic, and our world literally getting turned on its end, we opened our first Grocery Store within our Food Justice Campus and kickstarted the beginning of our Food Incubation Center programming.

2020 was a year that for many reasons, many of us would like to forget. When I look back on 2020 I will see a year where StarkFresh underwent consolidation of programming and resources in order to put together some of our most impactful programming in the history of our agency. I will look back and remember the resilience, tenacity and sheer amount of work that our team did to bring these projects to fruition. I will look back and be thankful for those that helped us become a better agency and in-turn, be able to create a greater community impact.

Tom Phillips
Executive Director