



2022 Mid-term Report | UpRoot Colorado



Summary

[UpRoot Colorado](#) (UpRoot) began 2022 with momentum from a number of successful achievements realized and celebrated in 2021: the hiring of the organization's first two full-time employees, the hiring of a fourth part-time gleaning & food-systems coordinator (coordinator), a significant increase in the amount of surplus food recovered and redistributed to the

community, and fundraising in the fall and early-winter that led to a continuation of current staff roles and responsibilities along with new project initiatives.

UpRoot received its Letter of Determination from the U.S. Department of the Treasury in early 2020 and, after more than three years under fiscal sponsorship, via Impact Charitable, to prove concept (2016-2020), UpRoot entered its second full year as a nonprofit organization in 2022.

Rita Mary Hennigan and David Laskarzewski, UpRoot's co directors, along with UpRoot's Board of Directors, outlined several goals for 2022:

- Create a development plan to broaden and diversify UpRoot's funding portfolio
- Establish a living wage for full- and part-time staff
- Implement a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database to improve UpRoot's data management
- Leverage UpRoot's newly created Theory of Change document to develop a medium- and long-term organizational strategy
- Improve the efficacy of UpRoot's gleaning operations within the 10 Colorado counties where UpRoot staff currently works
- Develop a Volunteer Harvest Leader Program to increase volunteer engagement and the supply of surplus nutrient-dense food to Colorado residents facing nutrition insecurity
- Transition the Farm & Food Mobile Workforce pilot project into an agricultural services, worker-owned cooperative to support Colorado's producers
- Leverage AmeriCorps Harvest VISTA three-year program to assist UpRoot in its pursuit of establishing resilient capacity; Step One: secure a Harvest VISTA for 2022 to begin making connections in Mesa County

Status

UpRoot partnered with Denver-based ZIM Consulting in Q1 and Q2 to create a development strategy, including a case statement—which will include both printed and PDF versions—designed to share UpRoot's efforts and goals. (We are currently working with a designer to finish the layout of the case statement and anticipate we'll have printed versions in hand in July.)

UpRoot's Board unanimously approved a pay increase, effective June 1, 2022, for both full- and part-time staff. Full-time staff are now compensated at \$45,000 per year and part-time staff are paid at the rate of \$19.00 per hour.

UpRoot's co directors began working with a consultant to build our CRM database in April 2022. We have nearly completed building out the portion of the database that will allow us to better manage fundraising data, and we are fundraising to continue database construction so that it can also be used to manage program and volunteer data.

UpRoot's co directors will be working on an outline of a medium- and long-term strategy, beginning early summer 2022.

The coordinator roles were sustained through the cold season thanks to year-end funding realized in 2021. Although currently part-time (i.e., ~20 hours/week) in nature, the coordinators act as connectors within food systems—collaborating with both local producers and hunger-relief agencies, and advocating for community volunteerism. The coordinators' cold season efforts set the stage for the increase in the number of early season gleans and on-farm pick ups we've held thus far this growing season, exceeding the same period in 2021 by a considerable margin.

We are partnering with Colorado State University (CSU) to establish a paid summer internship at CSU-Pueblo. Sierra Gomez, who is a senior at CSU-Pueblo and who hails from Pueblo herself, has jumped into her internship role of program design. Specifically, she is making connections within the Pueblo food system in her efforts to create a Volunteer Harvest Leader Program template.

The Farm & Food Mobile Workforce pilot project—a collaboration between Rocky Mountain Farmers Union (RMFU) and UpRoot Colorado—brought on-demand, supplemental and skilled labor to Colorado producers (mostly along the northern Front Range) between 2018-2021. UpRoot is taking the lead role in an effort to create an agricultural services, worker-owned cooperative based on the pilot.

We have submitted an application to the AmeriCorps Harvest VISTA program in an effort to secure a Harvest VISTA over the next three years to expand our programming along the Western Slope and to assist staff in establishing resilient organizational capacity.

We continue to work to establish a full-time Bilingual Gleaning & Food-Systems Coordinator to shepherd our gleaning and outreach initiative in Garfield County. We have experienced some challenges in hiring for this position in its part-time iteration; specifically, we have not received many applicants for the role. After receiving feedback from various community leaders and guidance from an experienced Human Resources professional, we are actively recruiting for the part-time role while fundraising to support a full-time position.

Longmont Community Fridges is a collaborative effort between Longmont Food Rescue (LFR) and UpRoot to increase access to healthy, nutrient-dense food. Our initial effort in this project includes two refrigerators that will be cleaned, painted and housed at Longmont United Hospital and Agape Safe Haven. The fridges will be accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week and will include sensors to alert staff and volunteers regarding temperature and if the doors become ajar. UpRoot will supply the fridges with a supply of locally grown, nutrient-dense food.

Current Initiatives

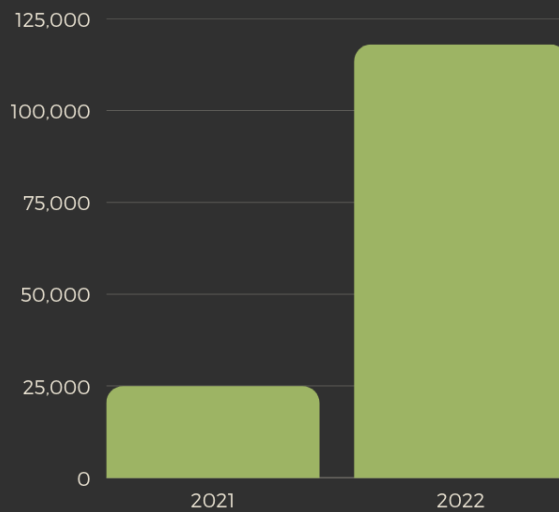
- Volunteer Gleaning Corps
- Farm & Food Mobile Workforce Worker-owned Cooperative project

- Safe and Abundant Nutrition Alliance (SANA)
- Roaring Fork Food Alliance's Home Food Garden Project
- CAFE Food Rescue
- Legislative Advocacy
- Longmont Community Fridges

Data

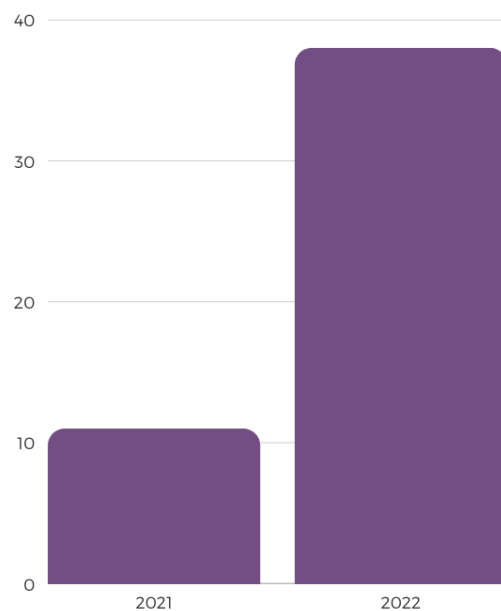
SERVINGS GLEANED

Through June 20th, 2022, we increased the amount of servings of nutrient-dense surplus food we recovered & redistributed to hunger-relief by 372% compared to this time frame in 2021.



NUMBER OF GLEANING EVENTS & ON-FARM PICK UPS

Through June 20th, 2022, we increased the amount of gleaning events and on-farm pick ups by 245% compared to this time frame in 2021.



We approach our work on both a symptoms level and a systems level.

Work-boots-on-the-ground action and strategic planning, outreach and advocacy (including legislative) are how we are working to increase food equity in Colorado. The positive results that we've witnessed, and celebrated, could not take place without your support. We love the work we do and we hope you enjoy hearing about our progress. We look forward to sharing a more detailed report with you at year's end.

With gratitude,



Rita Mary Hennigan
Co Director
UpRoot Colorado



David Laskarzewski
Co Director
UpRoot Colorado

